



Information
on the activities within the framework of the Canada-Ukraine Partnership
Project for Regional Governance and Development (RGD)
in December 2007

- In follow-up to the **monitoring and evaluation workshops** held in November, Zakarpattya and Zaporizhzhia oblasts held activities to develop and finalize monitoring indicators for the operational plans of Regional Development Strategies.
 - On December 4, in Zakarpattya oblast, a *workshop-training* was held for working groups facilitators. The goal of the workshop was *to develop a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for operational programs*. The training was facilitated by Myroslava Lendiel and introduced working group facilitators to international methodology for monitoring and evaluation of operational plans. As a result of the workshop, it was decided that each working group should develop a plan for monitoring and evaluation of operational programs within their strategic priority. The plans will be reviewed by Myroslava Lendiel and finalized in accordance with her recommendations.
 - On December 5, in Zaporizhzhia oblast, a *workshop* was held to *finalize indicators for monitoring of operational plans* included into the draft Zaporizhzhia Region Development Strategy. The participants of the meeting included representatives of the priority area working groups, academia, NGOs and Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration. Indicators were identified for each of the three priorities of Zaporizhzhia oblast: environmental, cultural, historical tourism and resort industry, and innovative investment. RGD Project experts Vitaly Lysenko and Volodymyr Nazarenko facilitated the work in groups. During the first half of the workshop, Vitaly Lysenko presented methodology for developing monitoring indicators. In the second half, participants were split into groups by strategic priority and developed indicators in accordance with operational goals and actions for the priorities. The indicators were summarized in a table and submitted to the RGD Project Zaporizhzhia regional office to be included into the Regional Strategy. The indicators were also reviewed by the Ukrainian Gender Expert, Olga Pischshulina, who provided recommendations to ensure they are gender sensitive.
- Within the framework of **regional strategy implementation in Zaporizhzhia oblast**, a number of meetings of local initiatives project teams were held during the month of December.
 - On December 4, a meeting of the project teams of the tourism development initiatives was held. The participants included representatives of tourism agencies, tourism NGOs, academia, local government representatives responsible for culture and tourism, and Zaporizhzhia RGD project staff. Majority of the participants of the meeting were youth. They were active in the meeting discussions. The main topics of discussion were project design and business-planning. The project team working on establishing a tourism business center developed a project work plan and assigned responsibilities for project implementation. It also decided to register the Association of rural tourism in the first quarter of 2008. The project team working on developing an electronic tourist map of Zaporizhzhia identified and discussed key tasks related to map development: collection and systematization of the information, technical support, informational campaign, number of objects to be placed on the map and development of a web site.
 - On December 7, a meeting of the project team working on establishing of a rural tourism information centre in Melitopol rayon took place. The participants of the meeting were Sergey Dyachenko, representative of Culture and Tourism Department of Melitopol Rayon State Administration, representatives of five local civil society tourism organizations, and Zaporizhzhia RGD Project staff. During the meeting the following issues

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were discussed: drafting of a business plan for the project, budgeting, drafting of an action plan for project implementation, technical assistance from the RGD project, launching of center activities and types of services to be provided by the centre.

Each project team decided to develop a draft business plan for their initiative. These business plans will be finalized on December 12 during a seminar with RGD international strategic planning experts. The events were widely covered in local mass media.

- On December 4, **a seminar to explore the readiness of public and private sectors in Zaporizhzhia to create a network of tourist and resort services providers was held in Zaporizhzhia**. Participants of the event included representatives of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration, Zaporizhzhia Oblast Council, Rayon departments of culture and tourism, universities, museums and RGD Project. Larisa Sizintsova, Head of Department of Culture and Tourism of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration chaired the meeting. She presented a group of researchers, who had conducted a sociological study on the readiness of private and public sectors to undertake initiatives to create a network of tourist and resort services providers in Zaporizhzhia oblast. They presented results of the research and a database of historical-cultural and resort-tourist sites located on the territory of the Zaporizhzhia oblast. At the end of the meeting Larisa Sizintsova expressed gratitude to Zaporizhzhia RGD Project team for their cooperation and support on local initiatives. She also noted that Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration plans to closely co-operate with the project in future.
- During the month of December, several **working group meetings** took place in **Zakarpattya oblast**. The working group for the priority “Development of competitive and viable economy” took place on December 4. During the meeting, Vasyl Papp, Deputy Head of the Main Department of Economy of Zakarpattya Oblast State Administration, emphasized that the operational program for the priority should include investment projects. He suggested that proposals for these projects should be developed and discussed at the local level and then presented at the next working group meeting. The most feasible proposals would be finalized and selected.

On December 18, a meeting of the working group for the priority “Spatial Cohesion and Environmental Protection” took place. Participants of this meeting discussed the operational goal of providing comfortable housing.

On December 21, a joint meeting was held by the working groups for priorities "Expanding Cross-border and Euro-regional Cooperation" and "Developing Tourism, Recreation and Health Resort Industries." The members of these working groups discussed ways to cooperate on the development of cross-border cooperation and international tourism. In addition, participants ranked operational goals in terms of priority, and discussed mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of operational programs.
- In the month of December, RGD Project commenced preparation for its **annual planning process** for the following fiscal year. As part of this process, RGD staff held training sessions on key aspects of project planning. The sessions were led by RGD Kyiv staff. The topics covered by the training include linking planned activities to project goals, outcomes and outputs; logical linkages between project components; linkages between annual work plans for the third and fourth fiscal years and ideas for the annual work plan for the fifth and final year of project implementation, gender considerations, and the processes for drafting of the workplan, including the roles of regional offices, experts, and regional state administration. Training sessions were held in Zaporizhzhia on December 6 and in Uzhgorod on December 18.
- From 8 to 17 December, a mission by **RGD international strategic planning experts to Ukraine** took place. The purpose of the mission was twofold: to enhance the capacity of RGD regional partners and stakeholders to formulate action plans for the strategic priority goals identified in the Regional Strategies, and to enhance the capacity of RGD regional partners and stakeholders to design and implement projects for regional development that were identified in the action planning stage. RGD International Strategic Planning Experts Beate Bowron and Gary Davidson visited Zaporizhzhia and Zakarpattya oblasts. Two thematic workshops were held in each region. One workshop was dedicated to action planning and was prepared for the regional priority working groups. The other workshop addressed implementation of regional strategies and involved project teams for local initiatives.
 - On December 11, the action planning workshop for priority area working groups was held in Zaporizhzhia. The participants of the workshop included representatives of the three priority area workings groups, and RGD Canadian and Ukrainian strategic planning experts. During the workshop, Beate Bowron and Gary

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Davidson briefly outlined major stages of the strategic planning process and reviewed two Canadian case studies related to strategic plan implementation, Toronto fashion incubator and Huron County tourism association. After the presentations, participants worked in groups by strategic priority area. Each of the groups discussed issues related to the development of operational plans, ranked operational goals within the draft operational plan for their priority area, and ranked measures/projects within the top ranked operational goal. RGD strategic planning experts for Zaporizhzhia oblast, Sergiy Mogylny, Volodymyr Nazarenko and Vitaly Lysenko, facilitated the work in groups. In the second half of the day, the groups shared results of their work with the rest of the participants, followed by a discussion about implementation of the top-ranked projects. As a result of the discussions, international experts summarized the work accomplished during the workshop and provided the following recommendations:

- to reduce the number of operational goals and actions/projects to the number which can be realistically achieved and implemented;
 - to expand the membership of the working groups and include more local government, business and civil society representatives;
 - to focus on implementing priority actions/projects identified by the working groups for each strategic priority; and
 - to ensure that planned actions/projects are feasible and realistic.
- On December 12, a workshop on strategy implementation took place in Zaporizhzhia. The workshop focused on local initiatives for tourism development in Zaporizhzhia oblast. The workshop was held in Zaporizhzhia Youth Regional Center and included representatives of the working group on Cultural and Historical Tourism and Resort Industry, members of the local initiatives projects' teams, and RGD Canadian and Ukrainian experts. Both men and women participated in the workshop. Youth representation was significant through civil society organizations involved in the tourism industry. During this workshop, participants developed business plans for the implementation of the two tourism initiatives. These initiatives involve developing a tourism network in Zaporizhzhia, establishing a promotional image for Zaporizhzhia oblast, and establishing a rural tourism information centre in Melitopol Rayon. Work in groups was facilitated by Beate Bowron and Gary Davidson. As a result of the workshop, two draft business plans, one for each of the projects, were prepared. The event was widely covered in regional mass media.
 - On December 14, the action planning workshop for priority area working groups was held in Zakarpattia. It was structured similarly to the workshop in Zaporizhzhia. Gary Davidson and Beate Bowron shared Canadian experience in action planning and provided examples of successful development planning. Then, participants worked in groups to rank operational goals, and identify measures/projects for implementation, and then shared results of this work. Representatives of the priority area working groups also presented results of their work on developing mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of operational programs. As a result of the workshop, participants decided to continue developing operational plans for strategic priority areas in the upcoming working group meetings based on the ranking of the operational goals completed during the workshop. More than 30 persons participated in the workshop; half of them were women and youth.
 - On December 17, Gary Davidson and Beate Bowron held a meeting in Uzhgorod with representatives of working groups involved in the development and implementation of local initiatives. The initiatives discussed during the meeting involve establishing a Centre for Strategic Planning in Zakarpattia oblast and preservation of cultural traditions. The discussion focused on the relevancy of the initiatives to regional priorities, the content of these projects, assigning responsibilities for different tasks associated with their implementation, and the required and available resources for implementation. During the workshop, the international experts provided their comments and recommendations on how to improve the initiatives, and on ways to raise the required resources.
 - On December 13, a **meeting of the Regional Working Group** (RWG) was held in Zaporizhzhia. Ella Slepian, Head of the Main Department of Economy of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration, chaired the meeting. Two thirds of the participants were female. The following decisions were made during the meeting:
 - To accept the first drafts of the full, short and presentation versions of Zaporizhzhia Regional Development Strategy. The Main Department of Economy committed to post the full version of the draft Strategy on the website of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration.

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- The members of working group should provide the Main Department of Economy with written expert analysis about the main directions for regional development envisioned by the Strategy.
- The Main Department of Statistics should provide information about gender policy that is required to be included into the draft Strategy.

This event was widely covered in regional mass media.

- During the month of December, Zakarpattya oblast continued to implement the **informational and educational campaign**. On December 17, a press conference was held to inform the public about current achievements and future opportunities for bringing together local and international regional development expertise to support Zakarpattya oblast development and also to provide an update on the regional action-planning process. This press conference was held at the end of the visit by RGD international strategic planning experts. Beate Bowron, RGD International Strategic Planning Expert, participated in the press conference. She summarized the results of the action planning workshop held on December 14, and highlighted that priority area working groups identified key operational goals and measures/projects for implementation of the Regional Strategy. It was also noted that Zakarpattya oblast is developing three local initiatives, "Seven Wonders of Zakarpattya", "Revival of Local Craft Traditions", and "Establishing a Strategic Planning Centre." RGD project will support the oblast in mobilizing different sources of financing for implementation of the Regional Strategy, including state and local community resources.

On December 25, Oleg Luksha, Zakarpattya Regional Strategic Planning Expert, participated in a television program "Good Evening, Zakarpattya." The program was broadcasted live on regional TV-channel "Tysa-1." In his presentation, Oleg Luksha provided an overview of the results of RGD project activities in 2007 and outlined plans for further development of the oblast. He highlighted success of the project in terms of promoting public engagement into the process of regional development and strategic planning. He also summarized results of the strategic planning process in rayons and cities of the oblast and provided an update on the activities of the priority area working groups and the regional action planning process. He expressed his confidence that operational programs will be finalized and the strategy implementation process will begin in the near future. He underlined that current achievements were made possible through mobilization of local resources, cooperation between government authorities and the community, and support from leading international experts.

- On December 20, a **draft of Zaporizhzhia Regional Development Strategy** was presented to Zaporizhzhia Oblast Council to give an opportunity for council members to comment on the draft document. Leonid Anisimov, Deputy Head of Zaporizhzhia Oblast Council chaired the meeting. The heads of main departments of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration, representatives of the Zaporizhzhia RGD Project staff and mass media also participated in the event. The majority of the council members were men. Ella Slepyan, Head of the Main Department of Economy of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration briefed the Regional Council about the work accomplished on the development of the Regional Strategy with RGD Project support. She outlined the contents of the Strategy, described the main chapters and presented operational plans within the regional strategic priorities. As a result of the meeting, the Regional Council decided to review the draft Strategy in more detail and provide recommendations to the Main Department of Economy of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration. The event was widely covered in regional mass media.
- On December 24, a **Regional NGO Forum** was held in Zaporizhzhia Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The title of the Forum was "The Role of Civil Society Organizations in the Development and Implementation of the Regional Strategy in Zaporizhzhia oblast." The purpose of the Forum was to discuss the draft Zaporizhzhia Regional Development Strategy until 2015 and to identify the role of civil society in regional policy development. The Forum was organized with support by the RGD project, Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration and Zaporizhzhia Oblast Council. This was the fourth Regional NGO Forum held in Zaporizhzhia, however, it was the first time that leaders of the regional government participated in the Forum. Leonid Anisimov, Deputy Head of Zaporizhzhia Oblast Council, chaired the meeting. More than 50 civil society organizations of Zaporizhzhia oblast participated in the event. Also, representatives of national minorities of Greece, Germany and Armenia, who reside on the territory of the Zaporizhzhia region, participated in the Forum for the first time. In his welcoming remarks, Volodymyr Kaltsev, Deputy Head of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration, emphasized the valuable input of the RGD project into the development of Zaporizhzhia Strategy and in supporting the cooperation between regional government and civil society.

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The Forum allowed for a positive dialogue between the developers of the draft Strategy document and the regional government and civil society representatives. Suggestions expressed by the participants of the Forum will be taken into account in finalizing the Strategy document. The first strategic priority, Environment, was one of the main points of discussion; it is one of the main concerns in Zaporizhzhia oblast. As a result of the Forum, it was decided to take the following actions:

- to ask RGD Project Zaporizhzhia regional office to collect all suggestions expressed during the Forum;
- to address Volodymyr Kaltsev, Deputy Head of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration, who is responsible for the development of the Strategy document, requesting to take into account all provided suggestions;
- to accept the draft of the Regional Strategy, provided that all remarks and suggestions will be incorporated;
- to note that civil society development is taking place in the region, but the majority of civil society organizations do not have experience cooperating with the regional government;
- to thank the RGD Project for its support in facilitating public engagement into the regional strategic planning process and to address the project with a request to continue this activity in future;
- to create an effective database of regional NGOs, establish a website where this information will be posted, and carry out capacity building activities (seminars, trainings, «round tables», annual forums of NGOs, etc.) in order to increase the number of civil society organizations engaged in the process of regional development; and
- to continue to actively participate during the implementation and the monitoring and evaluation stages of the strategic planning process.

The Regional NGOs Forum was an important event in the process of Strategy development in Zaporizhzhia oblast. It was widely covered in regional mass media.

- On December 27, a **meeting of the Regional Coordination Council on Entrepreneurship Development** took place in Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration. The representatives of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration and NGOs working in the field of business-support participated in the event. Volodymyr Kaltsev, Deputy Head of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration, and Vice-Chairman of the Regional Coordinating Union on Entrepreneurship Development chaired the meeting. One of the issues discussed during the event was the draft Strategy of Zaporizhzhia oblast until 2015. It was presented by a representative of the University of Humanities "ZISMG," Lyudmila Sergeeva. As a result of the meeting, the members of the Regional Coordinating Union were instructed to provide proposals and suggestions on the draft Strategy to the Main Department of Economy by January 08, 2008.

The discussion of Zaporizhzhia Regional Development Strategy until 2015 was completed in December. Volodymyr Kaltsev, Deputy Head of Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration, addressed RGD Project with a request to arrange for an evaluation of the Strategy document. Accordingly, he promised that all relevant suggestions expressed during the discussion process would be taken into consideration while finalizing the Strategy.

More detailed information about Project events and activities can be found at www.rgd.org.ua.

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