



Information
on the activities as part of the Canada-Ukraine Partnership Project for
Regional Governance and Development (RGD)
in May 2009

On May 6, a press conference was held in Zakarpattia on two major projects being developed in Zakarpattia: the project on improving the environment in the city of Berehovo by reconstructing the flood-gate on the Verke Canal, and the project on establishing a Tourist Information Centre for the disabled people in Uzhhorod.

Anatoliy Povazhuk, Lead Specialist of the Municipal and Housing Department, Berehovo City Council presented on the rayon's project. He explained that the project aims to improve the ecological situation in the city by cleaning up the Verke canal and reconstructing the public beach. This canal, with a total length about 36 km crosses the city (7.2 km of the channel goes through the city of Berehovo), was built during the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1892. Currently, household wastewaters flow into the canal; this is detrimental to the region's environment as well as reduces the attractiveness of the canal's recreational facilities. During the course of the project, the canal is to be cleaned, walkways on the bank of the canal are to be constructed for resident and visitor use, as well as two gateways to regulate the water are to be built. Since the Borzhava river connects with Hungary's Tysa river, several proposals for co-financing of the canal reconstruction have already been brought forward by that country. There are also good prospects to attract funds from European cross-border cooperation programs.

Emerih Matsko, Lead Specialist of the Department of Culture and Tourism, Rayon Administration (Uzhhorod rayon) spoke on the project in Uzhgorod. According to him, tourism in Uzhhorod rayon has been developing intensively with the number of new hotels and resort centers increasing steadily. However, disabled people face numerous challenges to take part in these tourist developments. That is why this new center will provide important and useful information about recreation opportunities in appropriately equipped areas, will develop and coordinate special touristic routes and programs for the disabled people as well as will publish and disseminate informational materials. The center will be located in the city of Uzhgorod. The project is being developed in collaboration with the recently created Tourism Association for Disabled People.

On May 13-15, as part of the Strategy Implementation and Project Management Training Program (PMT training), the practical workshop on project monitoring was held in Zakarpattia. RGD experts Valentin Ratch and Svitlana Slava facilitated the workshop and provided practical advice to the teams on developing and completing small-scale projects. The experts worked individually with the project teams and reviewed each project based on its concept, logistical framework, WBS structure, stakeholder involvement, financial components as well as assisted in preparing the projects' presentations for the final training module. Project funding was a major topic of discussion and the experts recommended that the teams commence the implementation of the projects on a step-by-step basis instead of waiting for the total necessary amounts to be collected. After presenting the structure for the Project Defense Module, Valentin Ratch also provided practical lessons on project monitoring. For this, he presented on how to collect and analyze necessary data, how to follow a determined timeframe, how to manage the project budget, and how to involve the community at large in the monitoring process.

On May 15, a meeting on the Regional Council on the Zaporizhzhia Regional Development Strategy Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation was held in Zaporizhzhia. The main topic of discussion at this meeting was the result of a six-month reprioritization process for the Regional Development Strategy implementation. Developed on request of the Regional council, this newly established list of priority tasks

takes into account the new economic realities of Ukraine. Having officially been approved on May 15, 2009 by the Regional Council on the Zaporizhzhia Regional Development Strategy Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation, the list is now the principal document for the oblast authorities for the Regional Strategy implementation for 2009-2010.

From May 20 to 23, the Gender and Civil Society Mission to Zaporizhzhia oblast was held. The participants of the mission included Marianna Kolodiy (RGD Ukrainian Gender Expert) and Ann Szyptur (Canadian Expert on Civil Society Involvement of the Foundation for International Training). Jointly with Zaporizhzhia regional experts, they attended the meetings of five small-scale projects teams. This included: the project to create a network of inter-rayon centers for providing environmental information and education for the oblast community; the project to create a system for dealing with solid waste in the Khortytsy National Park; the project to establish the *Ethnoselo* historical-cultural site in the Vil'nyansk rayon of Zaporizhzhia oblast; the beekeeping project in the Zaporizhzhia oblast based on the cluster model of Melitopol rayon; and, the project "Buy Zaporizhzhia products! Choose your own!", an initiative to support local enterprises. The experts provided advice to the project managers on how to further incorporate gender issues into their projects. They also reviewed the gender and civil society analyses conducted, as well as the level of incorporating these within the documentation of the projects. Lastly, the experts provided advice on how to include gender and civil society considerations as part of the presentation at the Project Defence.

On May 21-22, the 6th Project Management training module was held in Zakarpattya. The training on the theme of preparing a project presentation was conducted by Jurgitta Kersyte Gazaryan (The School of Democracy and Administration (VDM), Director, Lithuania) and Olga Pashko (Director of the Western region project "Develop Your Business", financed by the Swedish International Development Agency). The experts provided some background on information dissemination, presented skills for persuasive presentations as well as how to prepare for and structure public presentations. To practice their newly acquired skills, the participants prepared presentations on their small-scale projects and presented these to the audience. After the presentations, the audience and experts were able to provide critical insight and useful feedback to the presenters.

On May 21, within the framework of RGD project, a presentation on the establishment of the *Ethnoselo* historical-cultural site in Vil'nyansk rayon of Zaporizhzhia oblast was held. This project is one of the identified priorities of Zaporizhzhia Regional Development Strategy until 2015 that seeks to move Zaporizhzhia toward becoming a region of historical, cultural, recreational and touristic importance, both nationally and internationally. The *Ethnoselo* project was developed by Dyvosvit NGO as part of the Project Management and Strategy Implementation Training Program of the RGD project. The major objective of the project is to develop a place of learning where the oblast's ethnic diversity can be demonstrated. With this in mind, an inhabited village will be established in Chervonokazatske village of Vil'nyansk rayon. Each of the dwelling houses in the village will represent national and cultural traits of a certain ethnic group. The rural community will include present residents of the village; experts will hold classes on agriculture, mowing, sheaves bunching, pottery, embroidery, cookery, weaving and wicker-work for tourists. This unique project and tourist attraction site is expected to attract tourists from within the oblast, other oblasts of Ukraine as well from abroad. Hence, by applying effective methods of tourism development and regional promotion, the *Ethnoselo* project will create an attractive tourist site within the oblast. The project is highly regarded by oblast authorities. Oleksandr Sin, Deputy Head of Zaporizhzhia, Oblast State Administration, described the project as a successful venture due to the project participants' desire for it to come to fruition as well as the high interest of local authorities and the public. Due to the project's success, it was decided that it should be shared not only among the local community but also among the heads of village councils during the workshop in Chervonokazatske village in the near future.

On May 21, the fourth press conference on small-scale projects was held at the Uzhhorod Press Club. Two projects were detailed: the Bereg-Karpathy industrial park, which will be located in the Berehovo rayon and the Sobolch-Sotmar-Bereh region of Hungary; and the Mukachevo Tourism Information Centre.

Volodymyr Nesterovskiy, Lead Specialist of the Department of Economy of the Berehovo Rayon Administration, presented on the Bereg-Karpathy industrial park project. He explained that this project is unique in that it is located in both Ukraine and the Hungarian region of Sobolch-Sotmar-Bereh. Each country has agreed to allocate 200 hectares for the industrial park. While a similar industrial park exists between the

3, Triohsvyatyetska Str, office 60, Kyiv 01001

Tel.: 390 70 87, fax: 278 07 14, E-mail: info@rgd.org.ua

Regional Governance and Development Project is implemented by the Canadian Urban Institute
with funding provided by the Canadian International Development Agency

Hungarian and Austrian borders, this one is the first of its kind in Ukraine and other CIS countries. Based on a duty-free cross-border corridor, the project seeks to create an international industrial, economic, transportation and logistical zone. This will provide companies located in the region direct access to markets that were previously difficult to reach. An agreement has also been established that only environmentally friendly enterprises would be located in Bereg-Karpathy. According to Matviy Kadar, Investment Project Manager of the Zakarpattya Oblast Agency for Attracting Investments and Economic Development of Territories, the industrial park will be operated by a professional management company. It will include warehouses as well as provide industrial and administrative buildings capable to accommodate a number of enterprises and companies with various operating cycles.

Another investment project was introduced by Natalia Galyant, Deputy Head of the Department of Economy, Mukachevo Rayon State Administration. The Mukachevo Tourism Information Centre, she explained, aims to develop touristic services in the area. Currently, thirty different tourist sites, including nine rural estates, operate in the area. While these have been relatively successful, there exists the need to provide potential tourists with sufficient information on tourist facilities in the area. For this purpose, a website will be created to provide information on the history of the area, its attractions, recreation facilities, camp-sites, resorts and SPA establishments. The website will also provide maps and descriptions of tourist routes; eight bicycle and pedestrian routes have already been established in the rayon. In addition to the website, leaflets in different languages will also be published and widely distributed. Discussions with the Mukachevo City Council to cooperate on establishing a tourist information centre are also currently underway.

On May 25 - 28, a group of experts from the Regional Governance and Development (RGD) project visited several rayons in Zakarpattya, to learn how citizens of the oblast are involved in the implementation of the Regional Development Strategy and nine small projects in particular. The group, including Ann Szyptur; Canadian Expert on Civil Society Involvement; Mariana Kolodiy, Expert on Gender Issues; Svitlana Slava, Planning Expert; and Lyudmyla Hrytsak, Expert on Monitoring and Evaluation, visited Rakhiv, Vynohradiv, Berehovo, Mukachevo and Uzhgorod rayons.

Commenting on the general development of the projects, Ann Szyptur pointed to the considerable progress made: "Within six months, we can see significant progress in the teams work. Some of them already have a certain amount for funding, others are looking for investors. There are positive attempts in attracting international donors, because Zakarpattya borders with several countries of the European Union and many things planned in the projects have an international importance". She was also extremely impressed at the level of youth engagement. The involvement of youth is a very positive experience as they have the opportunity to cultivate new skills and knowledge; it is also extremely beneficial to the projects as they become enriched with fresh perspectives. Additionally, based on discussions with each project team, it became clear to Ann that the most important aspect to the project implementation process is that project teams have a clear understanding and vision of their project goals.

During the visits, the importance of collaboration as a key component to the projects' success and sustainability became clear to Ann. For example, cooperation between RGD project experts and community representatives within the Project Management and Strategy Implementation Training Program gives the latter not only the opportunity to implement a specific project but also to develop required skills and expertise to establish similar projects in the future. Active engagement of local authorities to assist in project implementation, particularly city mayors and representatives of the Rayon State Administrator is also important. Further stressing the importance and need for collaboration, Ann emphasized the necessity to attract greater number of community members to the project implementation process, as each project reflects the real needs of towns and rayons in Zakarpattya: "Everyone can contribute to improvement of life in their own city or village. For example, if entrepreneurs can help financially, other citizens can cooperate as volunteers. Cooperation is very important. Together you can bring all plans to life." Ann also noted that representatives of various nationalities, living in one territory, fruitfully cooperate with one another; this is successfully demonstrated by the European Home project.

On May 26-27, as part of the Strategy Implementation and Project Management Training (PMT) Program, Ukrainian and international experts held a seminar on presentation and communications skills in Zaporizhzhia. Good ideas and how to put them into action are not the only components to successful project implementation. Equally as important is the effective communication of good ideas to project partners and

3, Triohsvyatyetska Str, office 60, Kyiv 01001

Tel.: 390 70 87, fax: 278 07 14, E-mail: info@rgd.org.ua

*Regional Governance and Development Project is implemented by the Canadian Urban Institute
with funding provided by the Canadian International Development Agency*

various stakeholders. Project experts, including Valentin Ratch, RGD Project Expert (Ukraine), Olga Pashko, RGD Project Expert (Ukraine), and Jurgita Kersyte-Gazarian, RGD Project Expert (Lithuania), focused particularly on how to successfully prepare presentations and effectively communicate to various audiences. After having provided useful tools and techniques, seminar participants who were project developers were also able to put their new knowledge into practice. With the use of video equipment, participants presented on their projects; afterward, other participants and seminar experts provided comments, opinions, and suggestions for improvement. The presentation skills obtained during the training module were meant to become part of a powerful as well as highly useful tool-kit for all project teams. These skills were particularly important to garner for the project defense process as part of PMT training; these took place June 15-17, 2009 in Zaporizhzhia.

On May 28, the regular session of the Oblast Council was held in Zaporizhzhia. Two small-scale projects, both developed within the Project Management and Strategy Implementation Training Program, were discussed: the project to establish the historical-cultural site Ethnoselo in the Vil'nyansk rayon of Zaporizhzhia oblast, and the project to implement the Seacoast Rayons Recreation Potential Development Strategy. The concepts for both projects were developed by two remarkable women, Oksana Orhiets, Deputy Head of Berdyansk Regional State Administration, and Inessa Nosenko, Head of "Dyvosvit" NGO. Currently both projects were submitted for Ukrainian Local Self-Government Contest. Moreover, at the Zaporizhzhia Oblast Council and Rayon Councils' meetings the decisions were made to co-finance these projects from oblast and rayon budgets given that they win the Contest. Thus, the projects have a good opportunity to obtain funding from the following sources: the Contest prize fund, oblast budget, rayon budgets and local businesses.

On May 29, an extended meeting of the Oblast Union of Manufacturers and Entrepreneurs was held in Zaporizhzhia. The primary topic of discussion was the development of business opportunities within the ongoing economic crisis. More than 100 representatives from regional businesses participated in the meeting. Iryna Lekh, RGD Project Regional Manager in Zaporizhzhia oblast, spoke on the RGD Project support in developing and implementing investment projects identified as priorities in the Regional Development Strategy. Two of these projects, the "Buy Zaporizhzhia products" and project on establishing the "AgroBoom" cluster, were presented on by Victoria Chykalova and Edward Oreshkov respectively.

Providing the closing statement, Oleksandr Sin, Deputy Head of Zaporizhzhia OSA, underlined that oblast authorities regard it as necessary to follow the approach of specific project development and implementation in order to implement a regional development policy. He thanked the RGD project experts for their support and expressed his hope that the successes of the RGD small-scale projects be shared within the Zaporizhzhia oblast and among other oblast of Ukraine as well.

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