



PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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**Canadian
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Institute**

The Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in cities and regions in Canada and around the world. Our work is dedicated to building strong communities within equitable, sustainable and competitive urban regions. The CUI is an innovator and catalyst engaged in capacity building, research, networking, leadership development, planning and policy development. We collaborate with a range of international partners – in Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa – to improve local and regional governance and management. The Regional Governance and Development (RGD) Project is a five-year (2005-2010) cooperation project of the CUI (www.canurb.com), supported by funding from Canadian International Development Agency (www.acdi-cida.gc.ca). It is implemented in association with the National Association of Regional Development

Agencies (www.narda.org.ua) in Ukraine and with the Foundation for International Training (www.ffit.org) in Canada. The project is designed to promote civic engagement in regional governance, providing opportunities for citizens and communities to shape their common future and to put their region on the path towards sustainable development.

The project works at several levels. It helps strengthen regional development policy in the country by providing advice to the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine and sharing know-how from other jurisdictions in Europe and North America. It supports two pilot oblasts — Zaporizhzhia and Zakarpattia — to launch participatory processes that give a voice to civil society in regional planning and decision-making. And it promotes open, accountable and effective government institutions at the regional level, responsive to the needs of citizens and working strategically towards its developmental goals. The experiences in the two pilot oblasts are intended to foster model approaches to good governance in Ukraine that can inform the country's policy and practice into the future.

IMPLEMENTING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES THROUGH SMALL- SCALE PROJECTS

A major objective of the RGD Project has been to not only assist in strategy planning in Zaporizhzhia and Zakarpattia but also to demonstrate strategy implementation. The Strategy Implementation and Project Management Training Program (PMT) has contributed to this, and its recent completion marks a significant achievement for the RGD Project and its partners as well as represents a step toward sustainability of regional development strategy planning and implementation in the two oblasts. The PMT Program can also be replicated at the national level as well as in other oblasts in Ukraine. The nine-month PMT Program consisted of intensive training workshops on project management, financial planning, team building, communication and presentation skills, as well as skills for accessing funding and attracting investors. As a result of the PMT Program, 50 small-scale projects were developed based on the strategic priorities of the respective oblasts. All of these RGD-supported projects take into account priorities set out in the respective regional strategic plans and therefore are an integral part to their successful implementation – and ultimately to regional development. Described below are a few examples of small-scale projects and the progress that has been achieved to date.

ZAPORIZHZHIA OBLAST

Strategy of the Local Producer Support *Buy Zaporizhzhia Products – Choose Ours!*

Supported by the Zaporizhzhia Oblast Council, the project “Buy Zaporizhzhia products – Choose Ours!” was developed and is being implemented by a group of entrepreneurs, the public and oblast authority representatives. The goal of the project is to support local producers, promote local products, strengthen Zaporizhzhia producers' competitiveness, and ultimately increase employment opportunities in the region. Additionally, project participants have been provided with opportunities to become members of sector committees at the municipal council.

Since February 2009, the project team has been working on developing a logo and as well as setting up membership requirements. The team has also been successfully implementing the project's marketing strategy. This strategy consists of the following initiatives: broadcasting a promotional video on regional TV channels; displaying “Buy Zaporizhzhia Products” billboards that provide project information in partner shops and supermarkets; distributing booklets (around 2000 copies in 2 months); posting relevant information on the website (www.buy.zp.ua); and placing “Buy Zaporizhzhia products – Choose Ours!” logo on shops or vendor

kiosks. The first store to take part in the project's marketing activities was “Lik”. During a special event where Lik's involvement with the project was announced, the Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration officially stated its support for the project and helping local producers overall.

The following steps toward project implementation have been taken: The project has achieved significant increase in support from and participation by local producers. The number of producers has grown from 6 to 18 in the period from July to August 2009. All participants pay membership fees which are used for further project development, educational and informational campaigns, and the support for producers who have been negatively impacted by the current economic crisis. Also, the Zaporizhzhia Oblast State Administration allocated 60 000

UAH to support the project to develop a 25-minutes promotional video which is to be broadcasted on two regional TV-channels. According to the contest results the Zaporizhzhia TV-studio for children entitled “Razom” that plans broadcasting of 25-minutes promotion video on two Zaporizhzhia regional TV-channels was identified as winner.



VILNANSKY RAYON, ZAPORIZHZHIA OBLAST Historical and Cultural Site *Ethnovillage*

The main goal of this project is to tackle one of Ukraine's most complex and so far unresolved problems - social and economic regression of rural communities following the collapse of the soviet collective farm system and the subsequent depression in Ukraine's agricultural sector. This highly ambitious project, managed by Inessa Nosenko (Head of "Dyvosvit" NGO), aims to restore the village to its original form - an effectively functioning village. This is to be achieved by stimulating a local crafts economy, establishing education programs for children within the region, as well as stimulating green and rural tourism that attracts tourists from other Ukrainian oblasts and from abroad.

The project receives enthusiastic support of the village, rayon councils, and the rayon administration – the latter of which has made all the necessary land-use permissions available for the initial project implementation phase to commence as well as has allocated funds available. This then has also facilitated the possibility to attract investments for the project. Among the first steps of project implementation has been the creation of a parkland area with nature reserves and a small lake.

The following steps toward project implementation have been taken:

- Agreement of support from village residents, following village community meeting to discuss the proposed "Ethnovillage" project
- A community event in the village was held on the Orthodox Easter to draw attention to the project
- Land-use permissions were granted by the Rayon Administration (7 hectares close to centre of the village)
- The lake bottom was deepened, the dam was constructed and the lake coast protected
- Village residents have taken an active part in project implementation, ensuring wide public participation



MELITOPOL RAYON, ZAPORIZHZHIA OBLAST Production Cluster for Beekeepers *Bees Without Boundaries*



The aim of this project is to establish a network of small local beekeepers and honey producers with its own agency that provides administrative and logistical support. The cluster will contribute to the sale and marketing of beekeeping products, as well as increase the competitiveness of honey production sector. The project has also been promoting honey to local residents as part of a healthy diet as well as to tourists visiting the oblast. The innovative cluster concept has attracted great interest of local business people, rayon administration and local beekeepers – most certainly due to its enthusiastic leadership.

The following steps toward project implementation have been taken:

- Formal establishment of the cluster as a registered legal entity, under the auspices of the regional branch of the National Taxpayers' Association.
- Step-by-step business plan for the first year of operation starting from June 2009.
- Conference promoting the establishment of the cluster was held on July 17, 2009 in association with the "Establishment of a Machine-Tool Innovation and Technology Cluster "Agroboom" in the city of Melitopol, Zaporizhzhia oblast" conference

BEREGOVO RAYON, ZAKARPATYA OBLAST Industrial Park with Logistics Elements *Beregovo - Karpaty*

The goal of this project is to establish an industrial park in the border territories of Ukraine (Beregovo rayon) and Hungary (Sabolch – Satmar - Beregovo region). The industrial park is to be an international industrial trade zone, a transport and logistics hub, as well as provide large-scale facilities for domestic and foreign manufacturing companies.

The Beregovo rayon is situated in the South-western part of the Zakarpattia oblast, and neighbours the Sabolch-Satmar-Beregovo district on the Hungarian side of the border. Considered industrially underdeveloped, the region has a relatively weak transportation infrastructure and outdated manufacturing system – endemic to former Soviet countries. But the experience of other countries shows the positive influence of industrial parks in attracting investment into an area, and in that way stimulate regional economic growth.

The following steps toward project implementation have been taken:

- The project concept for the Beregovo industrial park was developed and approved by the Beregovo Rayon State Administration.
- In cooperation with project partners from Hungary (Regional Development Agency, KIUT) the project team has submitted the application for funding to the Regional Capacity Building Initiative Program (RCBI). The amount, as indicated in the application, required to implement the Ukrainian part of the project is 300,000 EURO.



VYNOHRADIV RAYON, ZAKARPATTYA OBLAST Hospice-type Institution for Providing Palliative Care

This project addresses the great need for palliative care in Vynohradiv rayon. Each year up to 500 persons require specialized palliative and hospice care that cannot be provided within ordinary hospitals or medical establishments. Since there are no hospice institutions in the rayon, family members are responsible for caring for their terminally ill relatives. This responsibility predominantly falls on women.



With RGD support, the project team held meetings with the Association of Palliative and Hospice Care in Kyiv as well as visited a hospice in Lutsk where they learned about the operations of a hospice institution, palliative medicine and training of medical staff. Also, the project team participated in a workshop entitled “Economic, Medical and Humanistic Aspects of Palliative Care: Economic Efficiency to Assist Incurably Ill people - the Belgian experience” in Kyiv in order to learn about international experience in palliative hospice care. Recently, the team held a working meeting with representatives of Mother Teresa Hospice from Slovakia on the issue of joint development and implementation of the project. They agreed to a partnership and signed an agreement to consolidate organizational and scientific capacities in order to submit an application proposal to the EU Program Regional Capacity Building Initiative (RCBI). The team has also prepared an application to compete in “Support and development of NGOs work in the sphere of palliative care in Ukraine”, organized by the International Renaissance Foundation. Recognizing the need for a palliative hospice in the rayon, the team has received a letter of support from the Deputy Director of the Institute of Hospice and Palliative Medicine of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, A. Tsarenko. He expressed his readiness to support the initiative and confirmed a commitment to provide scientific, methodological, legal and advisory assistance.

The following steps toward project implementation have been taken:

- Building for hospice was allocated by the Vynohradiv Rayon Council (value of the building – 250,000 UAH, land parcel – 2,5 hectares, value – 3,5 million UAH);
- Agreement was reached with the Head Doctor of Lviv hospice on providing practical assistance during the starting period of the hospice;
- 70,000 UAH were allocated from the rayon budget to conduct the project feasibility study;
- The project received a grant from the Co-operating Netherlands Foundations for Central and Eastern Europe (CNF-CEE) and the Carpathian Foundation (Ukraine) to commence with the first stage of the project. The objectives are to train medical personnel, carry out construction works, and purchase medical equipment. The total budget for this stage of the project is 22 000 Euro, of which 20 000 Euro comes from the CNF-CEE and Carpathian Foundation and 2 000 Euros from the project.

UZHGOROD RAYON, ZAKARPATTYA OBLAST Tourist Information Center for People with Disabilities

Over the last several years, the tourist and recreation sector in Uzhgorod region has been growing at a fast pace. While this growth is of course beneficial to the region, this sector has traditionally been exclusionary to individuals with disabilities, due mostly to the lack of accessibility features in buildings, vehicle and terrains. Entertainment and recreation for people with disabilities, estimated at about 56,000 currently living in Zakarpattya, have so far mostly been provided by family members.

In line with the priorities set out in the Zakarpattya Development Strategy, the main goal of this project is to improve the social welfare and quality of life of people with disabilities by providing appropriate tourist and recreation facilities. The project team has been working diligently to provide high-quality information on appropriate facilities located within the oblast, as well as logistical support for mentally and physically challenged tourists. The costs associated with the implementation of this project is to be shared among various partners: the Uzhhorod Rayon Administration -13,000 UAH; the NGO Tourism Association for Disabled People – 10,000 UAH; and sources of financing yet to be identified) – 25,000 UAH.



The following steps toward project implementation have been taken:

- Tourism Association for Disabled People was established and officially registered as an NGO;
- Location for the tourist information center was identified and construction has started;
- Agreements with partners for 2009 (22 sites in villages of Novoselytsia, Tura Pasika, Vyshka, Lazy, Korytnyany) achieved;
- 3,000 tourist centre information leaflets were printed with financial support of RGD project;
- A partnership agreement with the Regional Development Agency “Pareh” (Pryashev, Slovakia) was signed and a joint application for funding to the Regional Cross Border Cooperation Programme (RCBI) was submitted.

CAPITAL GRANTS TRAINING IN KYIV

From September 7 - 11, 2009, a Capital Grants Training workshop was held in Kyiv that trained specialists at the national and regional levels to develop infrastructure investment project proposals. Representatives from the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction of Ukraine, the Zaporizhzhia and Zakarpattya oblast state administrations, the rayon and city councils from two pilot oblasts, as well as the representatives from the RGD-supported small-scale projects developed during the PMT Program took part in the training. Over 25 people participated in this training, delivered by the Jacek Kawala, a Polish expert with Art Capital Consulting, and facilitated by RGD experts Vitaliy Lysenko (Zaporizhzhia) and Svitlana Slava (Zakarpattya). For the attendees, and especially for former participants of the PMT Program, the Capital Grants Training provided the necessary and useful skills to transition their projects into a successful implementation phase. Specifically, the participants of the workshop obtained in-depth practical knowledge in writing proposals that meet the standards and requirements of international donors and other financial institutions.

GENDER AND CIVIL SOCIETY MISSIONS TO ZAPORIZHZHIA AND ZAKARPATTYA OBLASTS

From May 20 to 28, 2009, a group of RGD experts visited several rayons in Zakarpattya and Zaporizhzhia oblasts to learn how citizens are involved in the implementation of the specific Regional Development Strategies. The group consisted of Ann Szyptur (Canadian Civil Society Expert), Mariana Kolodiy (Gender Expert) as well as RGD Regional Experts from Zaporizhzhia and Zakarpattya.

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". She was also extremely impressed with the level of youth engagement. The involvement of youth is important as it provides opportunities for young people to cultivate new skills and knowledge, and is also extremely beneficial to the projects as they become enriched with fresh perspectives. Additionally, based on discussions with each project team, Ann concluded that the most important aspect of project implementation process is team's clear understanding and vision of their project goals.

Collaboration is undoubtedly a key component to the projects' success and their sustainability. For example, the cooperation between RGD project experts and community representatives within the PMT 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, particularly city mayors and representatives of the Rayon State Administration, in project implementation is also important. Further stressing the importance of 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: "Everyone can contribute to the 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".



PROJECT PUBLICATION

Between April and October 2009, the RGD Project finalized and published the *Handbook on Municipal Infrastructure Project Proposal Writing*. The handbook was prepared and edited by a team of international and Ukrainian experts, including Zbigniew Jedrzejewski (Poland), Duncan Leitch (Great Britain) and Vitaliy Lysenko (Ukraine). Based on training delivered by experts of the RGD Project team, this handbook has been written to provide assistance to municipalities, rayons and oblasts in writing proposals that seek funding from international financial institutions for infrastructure projects. The Handbook will be distributed among RGD Project stakeholders from Zaporizhzhia and Zakarpattya, as well as during the National Forum 2009 in Kyiv.

All RGD Project reports are also available on the RGD Project's website at www.rgd.org.ua

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