



RGD – Making a Difference

Regional Governance with a Vision: Supporting Community Initiatives and Equal Rights in Zakarpattya (Part II)

This is the success story of a genuinely breakthrough project which has deservedly achieved great results in a remarkably short time. The Vynogradiv Hospice project is without doubt one of the strongest implemented in either of RGD's partner oblasts as part of regional development strategy realization. In 9 short months during 2008-9, the Hospice was transformed from being a bright idea with a handful of supporters into a concrete project already taking shape on the ground, with guarantees of financial backing from Ukrainian and international institutions. This is overwhelmingly due to the energy and commitment of the multi-agency team which originated the idea of a Hospice for Vynogradiv district. But it also shows how practical support and encouragement from the RGD team of Ukrainian and Canadian experts was able to make a decisive difference to the prospects of this team achieving the success it has.

The Project

The Hospice in Vynogradiv is a 7.4m Hryvnia (\$1m CAD) project to develop palliative and respite care facilities for up to 30 patients and their families. There are currently no such services in the district and only a very small number in Ukraine. The nearest are in Ivano-Frankivsk and Volyn oblasts, but these are not open to residents of Vynogradiv. In 2009, official estimates showed 464 terminally ill people in the district in need of palliative care, with some 1300 family members, 75% of them women, wholly responsible for the unpaid care of their loved ones at home. The gender equality aspect was central to RGD's decision to work with the project.

How RGD Made a Difference

The original 'initiative group' for the Hospice was one of the first to sign up for RGD's training and mentoring program in development strategy realization through project management, starting in October 2008. What the group were looking for above all, and what RGD promised to do its best to deliver, were the organizational and networking skills to broaden support for their idea and the presentational and negotiating skills to secure the necessary finance to get it off the ground. Between October 2008 and the summer of 2009, the initiative group successfully completed the following major steps:

Team Building – RGD Ukrainian and East European experts advised the loose initiative group on how to transform itself into an effective project team, broadly representative of key stakeholder interests but also capable of speedy and effective decision-making. A core team of 8 members emerged, with representation from the district health care department, district council, the local hospital, a regional charity 'SOS' and the Vynogradiv development agency. This was the team which participated in RGD's training and mentoring program.

Stakeholder Analysis – RGD Canadian experts mentored the team through the process of identifying who they needed to bring into the project in order to define the need properly and to make the right decisions about the form Hospice care should take.

User Participation – RGD Ukrainian and Canadian experts impressed on the team the need to involve not only principal stakeholders but, most importantly, potential users and their families, as an essential step before committing any project design to paper. Experts also explained that a basic social impact analysis, including gender considerations, would be a requirement of any serious funding institution. Canadian experts provided training on how to carry out this analysis to the necessary standard.

Learning Lessons from Others - At an early stage, the project team was advised to visit the limited number of other hospices operating in western Ukraine to learn from their experience, and RGD was able to arrange small-scale study visits for this purpose.



Vynogradiv

Writing and Costing a Professional Proposal – RGD’s training and mentoring placed great emphasis on the importance of written communication with potential donors and investors, Ukrainian or international. Most Ukrainian public servants, and many NGO activists, have little idea of the requirements of European Union programs for example, and of the need to write ‘Euro-Speak’ fluently if a project proposal is to stand a chance of success!

Presentation Skills – No less important is the ability to stand up and make a case for support to an audience, whether it is a public meeting, a district or regional council committee or a visiting representative of a donor institution. All participants in RGD’s training and mentoring program were given intensive coaching in presentation skills and were expected to practice these repeatedly in front of their co-participants.



Hospice ward in the district hospital

land around it available for the hospice, and paid for engineers’ and architects’ plans for its conversion. The combined value of this support is almost 3.9m *Hrivnia* (\$510,000 CAD).

- A grant of 20,000 Euro has been received jointly from the Carpathian Foundation and a Dutch charitable trust, to enable an initial training unit in palliative care to be set up in the district hospital. This is already operating.
- The Hospice project has been awarded 500,000 *Hrivnia* (\$65,000 CAD) in a Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine competition for innovative proposals submitted from local government.
- The project team has taken practical steps to widen its support network and sustain its activities in the longer term. With RGD’s help the team has made a visit to the well-regarded Palliative Care Association of Ukraine of which the Hospice has since become an affiliate member. In a separate development, USAID has recently invited project team representatives on a study visit to the USA.
- Contact has been also made with partner hospices in Poland and Slovakia, and joint applications for financial support have been submitted to 2 of the European Union’s Cross-Border Programs (‘Hungary-Ukraine-Slovakia’ and ‘Poland-Ukraine-Belarus’). Each is valued at 495,000 Euro (\$700,000 CAD). If either application is successful, the Hospice is well on the way to achieving its financial target. Let’s hope that RGD’s training in ‘Euro-Speak’ pays dividends!



Hospice in Slovakia

The Vision Takes Shape on the Ground

Even while the 9-month RGD program was in progress, the Hospice project team was able to make remarkable progress. Today the situation is as follows:

- Vynogradiv district council has made a building and the

Project Information

The Regional Governance and Development (RGD) Project is a five-year (2005-2010) cooperation project of the Canadian Urban Institute, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency. The Project promotes civic engagement in regional governance, providing opportunities for Ukrainian citizens and communities to shape their common future and to put their region on the path towards sustainable development.

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