

DESPRO NEWS

MARCH 2010

SWISS-UKRAINIAN
DECENTRALISATION SUPPORT PROJECT

Decentralization in Action



Dissemination of best practices in the implementation of the Swiss-Ukrainian Decentralization Support to Ukraine Project DESPRO for decentralization and local governance support and the project's contribution to regional development support in Ukraine were among the issues addressed at the "Decentralization in Action" conference. It took place on March 16 in Kyiv. DESPRO partners summarized results of the project phase I over the years 2007 - 2009 and spelled out main goals and priorities for the phase II.

According to the **DESPRO Project Senior Coordinator Oksana Garnets**, the phase II budget has been increased almost twice. The Swiss Confederation invested 3.2 mln. Swiss francs within the framework of phase I in years 2007-2009. The funds were used to introduce decentralized services models, in water supply in particular, at rayon, village and municipal levels in Vinnytsya oblast' and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, and also to increase the executive capacity at various administrative levels and to support the decentralization reform process. On February 1 this year phase II of the project, which will last till December 31, 2012, was launched. We intend to spend 4,9 mln. Swiss francs, granted as technical assistance, for the consolidation of accumulated expertise, creation of the efficient knowledge management

system and further support of nation-wide reforms. DESPRO will also expanding the scope of its operation and influence. That means that now the project will be implemented in Sumy oblast' in addition to Vinnytsya oblast' and Crimea, stressed Oksana Garnets.

The main tasks for the project phase II include improved quality of services and their availability in the target rayons as well as the implementation of efficient knowledge management models in decentralization and local self-governance, integration of DESPRO project best practices into the operation of all levels of government and overarching support to nation-wide reform process in decentralization and local-self-governance. Logistic approaches and experience accumulated within phase I of the project will be used for future administrative and territorial reforms. It means that DESPRO is instrumental in establishing an effective dialogue between various branches and levels of government and contributes to the broad discussion on reform-related issues in the regions. Ministry of Regional Development and Construction remains DESPRO main partner in these endeavors.

The **Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Construction Anatoliy Tkachuk** underlined that a close working relationship has been established between the

Ministry and Swiss partners in the course of DESPRO project implementation. A strong legal and conceptual basis for reform process has been set up: Concept for the reform of local self-governance, Draft Law "On introducing amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine", Draft Law "On introducing amendments to the Law of Ukraine on local state administrations" Draft Law "On administrative and territorial division", Draft Law "On hero-city Sevastopol", Draft Law "On Procedure for administrative and territorial reform and local self-governance reforming". Ministry of Regional Development and Construction of Ukraine devised the draft Concept for administrative and territorial division of Ukraine, which has been approved at all levels of national executive power and submitted to the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers' consideration. In addition, a Draft Concept for upgrading and retraining for self-governments' officials and local councils' members has been designed.

"I am sure that any segment reforms as well as nation-wide reforms are doomed to failure, unless we set up an effective, well-planned and accountable system of authority at all levels of administrative and territorial structure", argued Anatoliy Tkachuk. He also suggested that "joint activities of DESPRO project and newly appointed ministerial officials should be of synergic nature".

The participants of the conference included: Director of Swiss Cooperation Office in Ukraine (Manuel Etter), Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Construction (Anatoliy Tkachuk), first Deputy Head of Vinnytsya oblast' State Administration (Valery Koroviy), Director of Swiss-Ukrainian Decentralization Support to Ukraine Project DESPRO (Juerg Christen), representatives of international organizations and DESPRO partners from rayons and rural communities. •



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skat Swiss Resource Centre and
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Швейцарсько-український проект
Підтримка децентралізації в Україні

DESPRO

DESPRO is a Swiss-Ukrainian Decentralization Support to Ukraine project, funded by the Swiss Confederation through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by the Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development (Skat).

The mission of the project is optimizing the governance system and supporting the efficient local development in Ukraine, thus creating new impetus for further democratization processes as well as for improvement in services supply at the community and municipal levels.

The project stipulates three phases: preparatory phase (years 2007-2009), consolidation phase (years 2010-2012) and completion phase.

Goal of the project phase I consisted in implementing decentralized services models at rayon, village and municipal levels.

Goal of the current project phase (II) - developing and implementing feasible mechanisms of decentralized public service delivery in pilot regions that are documented and taken up in the national decentralization reform process.

The tasks for project phase II

- Enhancing quality and availability of the services in the target rayons based on participatory planning and decision-making.
- Introducing efficient models for best practices/knowledge management in decentralization processes and local self-governance to increase local capacities.
- Supporting nation-wide reform process in decentralization and local self-governance.

DESPRO project operates at the national level, in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, in Vinnytsya and Sumy oblast's.

SUCCESS STORY: “Dreamers” from Nova Hreblya



Nova Hreblya resident has water supply at her home

“...Turning the tap will replace for us tiresome trips to the well with water-pails, will give us the opportunity to water our vegetable gardens in the drought season. Water, as an element, is very diverse in its manifestations – it can be both life-giving and destructive. Let it be only the life-source for our villagers...The bidding will occur pretty soon, and then, if we are lucky – we’ll be constructing water conduit. We can already taste pure sweet water, its silver drops – fresh and cool, as they are. Just dreaming?” – these poetic lines were part of the project proposal submitted to DESPRO by the self-organization group “Street Committee “Vy dumka-Center” from Nova Hreblya village of Kalynivka rayon (Vynnytsya oblast).

There was no central water supply system in the village of Nova Hreblya. The village residents had to use the wells, where the water level decreased annually. Understanding the need for water, “Nadiya” (“Hope”) enterprise by its board decision transferred one of the wells in the village into the communal property. The well was in emergency maintenance state and needed repair, as it has not been used for nearly 20 years. A new water network was also necessary for better water supply in the village. Making the best use of the opportunity offered by the DESPRO, the self-organization group “Street Committee “Vy dumka-Center”, supported by local community, proceeded with the implementation of the project.

Interestingly, the community already had experience in public self-organization, acquired in the process of village gasification and territory improvement for “Zatyshok” nursing home. The houses in Nova Hreblya are located far apart from each other, therefore the ratio of the water conduit length and the number of residents was very problematic. Therefore more money was needed and each community member had to contribute with financial means, higher than expected. That is why the Street Committee divided the money collection process into two stages. Every resident was approached individually.

“Fruitful partnership between the Street Committee and local power contributed to the further community mobilization – for the cleaning of the well in the middle of the forest, keeping night watch over the equipment used by contractor in renovation. People did these jobs taking turns. The villagers also cleaned up the part of the forest where the water conduit was to be laid”, says Natalia Chernenko, the Head of the Street Committee.

Nova Hreblya “dreamers” managed to implement the project which resulted in making high quality drinking water available for the public. It was possible due to the irrepressible desire of improving life standards for the community. **Dreams come true!** •

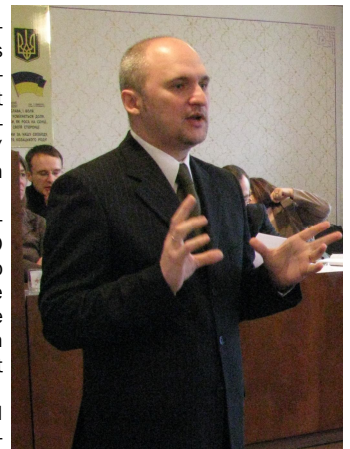
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From communal services improvements to reform processes

“From communal services improvements – to reform processes” – that was the title of a presentation given by DESPRO expert Vyacheslav Sorokovsky at the conference for municipal departments employees, organized by UNDP/MGSDP. It took place on March 18-20 in Yaremcha (Ivano-Frankivsk obalst’). In his presentation Vyacheslav Sorokovsky outlined the areas of DESPRO operation with focus on its partnership with UNDP/MGSDP. He underscored the importance of cooperation between the projects, as they complement each other’s experience on implementation at various levels of government.

The conference participants discussed new provisions, introduced into Ukrainian Law, specifically, those addressing housing and communal services, residential houses management, energy-saving efforts, designing and implementing communal projects with UNDP/MGSDP support, opportunities for international assistance in municipal governance and building up communities’ capacities etc. •



Swiss Cooperation Office—10 years of successful operation in Ukraine

On February 25 the Swiss Cooperation Office in Ukraine, which is the funder of DESPRO, celebrated its 10th anniversary together with its partners. Guests of honor were Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Ukraine His Excellency Georg Zubler and Minister of Regional Development and Construction Mr. Vasyl Kuybida. Also Ms. Oksana Garnets, DESPRO Senior Project Coordinator, was among the guests.

Talking about the results of the Office 10-years’ presence in Ukraine, the Director of Swiss Cooperation Office in Ukraine Mr. Manuel Etter described the successful operation of the DESPRO project: “We have wonderful achievements in various areas, various spheres. I would like to mention specifically cooperation developed over the recent years in the area of governance system improvement and efficient local development support through decentralization processes. I am talking about public and local communities’ mobilization into the processes affecting our area of operation, and into decision-making, in particular. It results in enhanced responsibility for the implementation of these decisions. For example, different associations and organizations more and more

often take part in the planning procedures, even on the nation-wide level. It means that the strengthening of civil society basic principles, which is very important in the development of any country”.

Switzerland has a long-term tradition and experience in providing international assistance. Last year, the scope of its assistance exceeded **2 billion USD** (over 0,4 % of GDP). The Swiss practice of providing humanitarian aid and support for multilateral donors’ projects sets an example for other donors. Switzerland is most active in international discussions addressing the issues of efficient governance and technical cooperation in the developing countries and countries with transitional economy.

How SCO originated: In 1997 Swiss Confederation and Ukraine entered into a bilateral agreement on technical and financial cooperation. It was ratified and came into force in 1999. For the effective coordination of the projects within cooperation framework Swiss Cooperation Office was set up in early 2000. In Ukraine the Office represents two Swiss governmental agencies - Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). •