PROVISION FOR POST-PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND
Contract NO.PD:C0110/10

EVALUATION REPORT

UDF-REU-08-263: Strengthening Civil Society Across Borders to Develop Democracy

Date: 23 January 2012

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I. Execut

might be added that the two approaches are complementary, as the enhanced involvement of civil society in national policymaking in both Ukraine and Moldova was in part a result of the contribution of this project.

The success of this project demonstrated again the crucial importance of high-quality implementing partners, whether international or national. UNDEF has understandably tended to move away from international implementing agencies, but this project provides another example where the presence of a reliable, experienced international partner contributed significantly to the success of the project. However, it also points to the emergence of second-generation international implementing NGOs, namely those who are national in charter but have substantial experience in implementing international projects and are beginning to find their feet in international funding circles.

The project provides a good example of the value added of regional approaches when there is an appropriate group of countries and / or NGOs involved. In this series of evaluations, examples have been found both of projects where the regional dimension detracted, and where it added. This project clearly fell into the latter category. The sharing of cross-border experiences clearly leveraged results and impacts (although the extent to which these cross-border ties are maintained could have been enhanced by a better sustainability strategy).

Local NGO sustainability remains challenging. However, the key result is that local NGOs were empowered to present themselves as a credible claimant on local fiscal resources, a key for long-term sustainability.

As evidenced by the lacklustre recommendations that emerged from the final project conference, **the value added of this project was at the concrete level of collaborations formed to address mutually recognised problems; it was not at the broader level of re-defining the relationship between civil society and government (which is where the recommendations tended to lie)**. This is consistent with the project strategy, which was to promote concrete collaborations with positive results. The *Handbook* documenting these experiences in the form of case studies is only being finalised as of this writing.

Dissemination of these concrete experiences will depend on the web. While the decision to not emphasise web-based approaches is defensible, **the project would have benefitted from better use of the web**. This is especially true in the area of sustainability, where a more coherent web structure would help beneficiaries stay in touch, develop new partnerships, and seek support. Resources are clearly limited and tradeoffs are real, but with hindsight, more attention to web strategy would have improved the project.

(iv) Recommendations

Following from the conclusions, it is recommended that the local NGOs participating in the project ***develop long-term relationships with local authorities; for example, permanent consultative status in an issue area or a multi-year arrangement to provide services.*** This will enhance financial sustainability in the most convincing way and help to avoid the trap of being dependent on recurrent one-time projects.

It is also recommended that local NGOs ***maintain the cross-border ties that were formed in this project through twinning arrangements.*** This

Closely related to this, it is recommended that UNDEF **consider putting in place a web-based inventory of all projects supported**

instinctively looks to Russia as its natural partner. No such fracture exists in Moldova, whose traditionally strong ties with Romania (and the fact that a substantial proportion of the population is entitled to a Romanian passport) have led to a strongly pro-European stance.

III. Project strategy

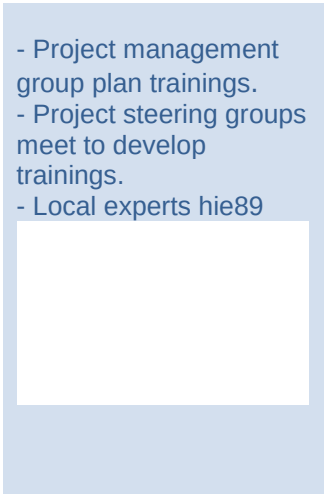
(i) Project approach and strategy

The grantee /implementing partners. The project was implemented by one international

Project structure. The overall goal, and impact, of the project, was to move from a dynamic of opposition between civil society and government authorities to a dynamic of constructive cooperation. The basic principle was that local government and CSOs should be represented equally in dialogue. The project was to help CSOs understand the challenges of being in government and to help government officials understand the challenges of representing civil society. It was important to identify overlapping interests; to identify and strengthen existing means of cooperation, and develop new ones. The project sought to overcome the prevailing discourse of complaint and to mobilize CSOs as a source of expertise and solutions for local government, as well as to serve their function in implementing legislation and local government decisions. The goal was

(ii) Logical framework

An approximation of the project logical framework, drawn from the project document, is given below. The figure maps the logical path from activities/outputs through intended outcomes/objectives to anticipated impacts. The mapping of activities and intended outcomes to medium and long-term impacts is not one-to-one: an individual intended outcome may give rise to various impacts through the influence of particular activities, and multiple intended outcomes are likely to have similar impacts.



- Presentations by Euclid Network and national implementing partners were of high quality and contributed to keeping the Round Table and conference on track and on target.
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- While the amount of money involved was not large, the ample length of the project (2 years) was impact-friendly.

The project sought to identify practical examples of small-scale, local-level effective cooperation between government and CSOs which could be replicated and scaled up.

- One successful point of engagement by a beneficiary NGO with local government in Ukraine was in the domain of social services.

(v)

Network must ultimately bear responsibility. However, national implementing NGOs, especially capitol-based and internationally-linked NGOs devoted to strengthening the role of less well-

VIII. Annexes

Annex 1: Evaluation questions

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not? Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?
Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability? Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address? Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact? Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?
UNDEF value added	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc). Did project design and implementing modalities exploit mandate to focus on democratization issues?

Annex 2: Documents reviewed

Project Document
Final narrative report
Study visit report
Case study 1: Cancelling a corrupt competition
Case study 2: Opening up a new budget line
Case study 3: Supporting people with HIV and AIDS
Case study 4: Building the structures for long-term engagement
What needs to be done for CSOs and government cooperation to be effective? Summary of final conference recommendations.

Annex 3: People interviewed

1. Ms. Juliana Abramova	Center for Support and Development of Civic Initiatives
2. Mr. Filippo Addarii	Euclid Network
3. Ms. Aliona Badiur	CReDO (Moldova)
4. Mr. Taras Boyarchuk	GURT Resource Centre (Ukraine)
5. Mr. Constantin Cojocaru	Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova, Mayor of Edinet
6. Mr. Lucas Fülling	Euclid Network
7. Mr.Maksym Ieligulashvili	Youth Center of Regional Development (Ukraine)
8. Ms.Victoria Kravchuk	UNDP (Ukraine)
9. Mr. Vlada Lisenco	OSCE Mission in Moldova
10. Ms. Daria Mandziuc	CONTACT (Moldova)
11. Ms. Tatiana Mihailova	Automobile Club of Moldova
12. Ms. Svitlana Mytryayeva	National Institute for Strategic Studies Regional Branch in Uzhgorod (Ukraine)
13. Ms. Olga Ozernaya	OSCE Mission in Ukraine
14. Mr. Ben Rattenbury	Euclid Network

Annex 4: Acron