

FINAL REPORT

Project name: **Initiate Society Power in Land Reform and Rural Development**

(Abbreviation and popular work-name is: **INSPIRE**)

Reporting period: August 2014 – August 2015
Organisation: International NGO Primavera
Date of report: October 15, 2015
Duration of project: August 11, 2014 to August 11, 2015

1. **Context of activity/programme at the outset**

The project is prepared and implemented under the Matra European Partnership Programme 2014 of the Netherlands.

2. **The context, goals, target groups, results, activities etc. are described in two parts:**

- A. the original application of April 2014 and
- B. some adaptations in the elaboration plan of September 2014

3. **General objectives; target group**

Project Goal: To introduce and develop good governance (GG) and participatory instruments supporting further rural development (RD) and an open and transparent land market development in Ukraine. This goal is reached by starting social learning processes via establishment of Public Platforms (PPs) on Land Reform and RD issues, in each of the (pilot) projects under the Ukr / NL Cooperation Agreement. This is done in order to draw lessons and develop guidelines on national level, and therewith implement the principles of GG and Human Rights

Target groups:

On Ukrainian governmental level:

- Ministry of Agricultural Policy and Food Production (MAPF),
- Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR),
- State Agency on Water Management (SAWM),
- State Agency on Land Resources (SALR), now succeeded by State Geo Cadastre (SGC)
- NUBIP University was invited to support the dissemination of the MATRA results

On non-governmental and business level:

- The Association of large agro businesses (Ukrainian Club of Agrarian Business), small farms associations,
- Village council associations,
- Land users union and other NGO's, which can be involved as important players (list of NGOs presented), as well as
- Relevant international projects and donor organisations.

On regional and local level, a wide range of public local representatives as well as important regional and local stakeholders from government organizations and private sector were involved in the project.

4. Interim and final goals defined at the outset:

Interim- and sub-goals were to gain awareness and experiences on the following issues:

- how to develop awareness in governmental organizations about GG and human rights
- how to decrease the 'fighting' attitude and develop a win/win attitude.
- how to come from the 'conflict model' to the 'harmony model'
- how to express opinions and interests
- how to organize and deal with cooperative unions (enhancing public influence)
- how to apply and maintain the process of participation
- how to organize appropriate and effective control from society
- how to balance different interests and solve conflicts
- how to use mass media and public hearing more efficiently
- how to organize an interactive participation that will influence policies
- how to use capacities of existing NGOs to help in the process of public participation

Interim adjustments to goals agreed with the NL Embassy

The embassy has not formulated additional or different goals; the goals in the Application Plan and the Elaboration plan were considered as sufficient and promising.

5. Planned activities

Quote from the Application Plan of April 2014 (written with Italic fonts):

The following activities are proposed on different levels (experimenting on pilot level and therewith learning and publishing recommendations on national level):

1) Communication of GG examples to government and society

a) To announce and introduce the Matra project via government authorities on national and local level (via official letters, web-sites of authorities and Press).

b) Selection and publishing on the web-sites of government authorities examples of good international practice on national and local level on broad interactive participation of civil society and stakeholders in policy making and implementation processes in Land Reform and RD issues.

c) Create training materials for organization during a Matra project of permanent training process on national and local level.

Concrete results will be: *clear publishing, awareness and explanation in society and Press of the goal and approach of this Matra project*

2) To establishment a Public (multi-stakeholder's) Platform on each of the pilot projects :

a) in Kherson region on integrated planning and implementation of a pilot project on irrigation-restoration, in which the land property problems will be solved via land consolidation and public-private cooperation;

b) in the Irpin river basin near Kiev to support development and implementation of an Integrated River Restoration (IRR) project mainly aiming at gaining experience with IRR processes and to apply the principles of the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) in participatory interactive manner.

c) SALR and SLB will be stimulated to add their pilot projects. If yes, this Matra project can invite and support these pilots as well.

Concrete results will be: In two or more pilot projects, real case experience with transparency and public participation via Public platforms will be developed and published.

3) To guide these Public Platforms within the pilot projects of the CA via practical exchange training on participatory process that will bridge civil society and authorities, (MAPF, MENR, SALR, SAWR, SLB) during a number of workshops (4 workshops in each pilot) on local pilot area level. Local stakeholders will learn to participate effectively in the pilot projects organization and implementation and, at the same time, representatives of national authorities will be invited for multi-stakeholders' workshops and seminars to the pilot area to observe and learn about participatory process.

Concrete results will be: giving local stakeholders real influence and position on the planning process in these Irrigation- and river restoration (and maybe also land management) pilots, publish outcomes and convince the national authorities of the advantages of this approach.

4) To organize two times a National Round Table (RT) with participation of representatives from national authorities (MAPF, MENR, SALR, SAWR, SLB) and national NGOs as well as a representatives from the pilot areas PPLs, to introduce a participatory process on national level via demonstration of pilot area experience and starting of open discussion about Land Reform and RD. The first RT will be organized after two workshops on the local level and will demonstrate the real participatory process that is held in the pilots. The second RT will be organized after next two local workshops and will present the results and recommendations of PPLs that can be taken into account by government in their Land and RD policy and in laws making processes.

Concrete results will be: Practical awareness and experience of the central authorities. National authorities are convinced of the advantages and necessity of public participation in land reform policy making.

5) To disseminate project results by a brochure about participatory process on the pilots. For broader informing of population, the results of the work of PPLs will be disseminated via national, regional and local newsletters, and by open involvement of Press in all events on local and national level.

6) Concrete results will be A public brochure, available in Press and websites of the involved Authorities, which will stimulate a further transparency on their next policy and projects.

7) To organize training in participatory techniques/methods for the government authorities on the national level (MAPF, MENR, SALR, SAWR, SLB). To develop a guideline brochure on establishment and functioning of Public Platforms.

Concrete results will be: Dozens of relevant policy makers of the five organisations will be trained and experienced in public participation and GG.

8) To organize a final seminar of the project with wide invitation of key players on the national level, representatives from the local PPLs and mass media. To develop public recommendations from the Matra project for government, Parliament, pilots and NUBIP University on further development of participatory process. To take these recommendations into account by other government organizations and other national stakeholders

Concrete results will be: A clear set of recommendations how to set-up, from now on, all public participation in many new policy processes and projects.

9) *The MATRA project will stimulate and make the pilot projects more accepted by local stakeholders and therefore more stable. Real implementation of the projects will be arranged / managed via the self-financing or from other sources.*

10) *The benefit of this MATRA project will be support in formulating and applying the principles of GG and Human Rights, and free public participation in the preparation phase and the dissemination of the project results.*

In ANNEXES, 1-10, see below, all results and outcomes of the planned and realised activities are described. All have been realised and succeeded.

Adjustments:

No serious adjustments were needed.

Planned implementation period:

All activities have been performed according to the application plan in the period Aug 2014 – Aug 2015.

Activities carried out:

To have a complete overview of all activities: see Annexes 1-10 below

To have a very short resume:

- Autumn 2014: Visiting and convincing the local stakeholders to participate in the Public Platforms (PP's), inclusive overcoming their sceptical basic attitude
- December 2014 : Establishing the PP's , and agreeing on their Protocol of tasks
- December 2014: Inventorying their main problems in Land and Rural development issues (firstly a long list, later, selection of issues on a shortlist)
- February 2015: 'Convert these problems into recommendations and address them to most-responsible authorities and politicians, who have the position to realise these recommendations
- March 2015: Present the recommendations in an attractive and inviting way, in a brochure, and explain them during the First National Seminar in Kiev
- May 2015: Make Action Plans on the Public Platforms covering ambitions, strategies, project initiations and other activities (also after this Matra project).

- June 2015: Training for central authorities and presenting GG-Guidelines for new PP's
- Aug 2015: Final Seminar in Kiev with NL Ambassador and Ukrainian Deputy Minister of MAPF, both appreciating and supporting the results of this Matra project strongly and publicly

6. Further information as far as different to planned activities or problems identified

It is important to mention that a part of the challenges and also the success of this Matra project were the regular overcoming of cynical and sceptical attitudes of several PP-members, who got de-motivated because several central authorities did not react or reply to the recommendations of the PP's. For the NGO Primavera, it was regularly necessary to re-motivate the PP's, increase their self-confidence and to keep their mood high! This psychological issue should be taken into account and treated in new GG projects.

Actual implementation period:

During the workshops of the PP's, several initiatives for new local projects were taken and discussed. This project was too small and short to really support the PP's in professionally formulating new project or business plans. This is a special project-wise skill, that needs to be developed among the PP's, supported by concerned Ukrainian authorities and/or by international projects as e.g. the UA/NL Program of Cooperation, (together with NL Agency RVO) !

7. Further information if different from planned over the implementation period

Nothing more than already mentioned to report

8. Your assessment of the activities / programmes

"The Matra project on GG in the fields of land reform and rural development has been started in August 2014. The NL Embassy has assigned the project to the Ukrainian NGO Primavera. In autumn 2014, discussions were held to compose two Public Platforms (PP) in two pilot areas, being in Fastiv district, Kiev Oblast and in Belazorvska district in Kherson Oblast. In December 2014, both PP's have been established and first rounds of local workshops were held to prepare an inventory of the most important problems in the fields Land Reform and Rural Development. In February 2015 a second round of Workshops were organised in the pilot areas to formulate solutions and recommendations to overcome the noted problems. These recommendations were written in formal letters to the relevant central authorities and are summarised in a brochure. In March 2015, a national seminar has been organised in Kiev, chaired by Deputy Minister Lapa of MAPF, to present and discuss the recommendations with central authorities, who have the responsibility to adapt the relevant legislation. Besides, the Matra website www.goodgovernance.org.ua was launched. In May 2015, a third (and last) round of workshops was organised to develop an action plan for further Matra activities towards the Final Seminar and start project planning for new initiatives in both pilot areas. In June 2015, a training for central authorities was organised and a Guideline for new PP's in other areas was developed".

During local meetings and workshops it was achieved strong involvement and participation of local communities and other local stakeholders. Beside a permanent communications between NGO and PPs were established. The members of Public platforms learn a lot about following issues: how to join forces to start local initiatives; how to develop action plans; how to use tools of influence; how to present and formulation their problems and recommendations. They successfully demonstrated their knowledge and capacities during many events on the National level. They initiated their self a number of local projects: creation of water user's organization for restoration of irrigation: start ecotourism business; development of local small enterprise for bioenergy production.

After project implementation, it became clear that to reach such results that increase civil society influence and strength it capacities support and facilitation from NGO is very necessary. This support gave people braveness, helped to act their self, gave them important knowledge and inspiring examples from the different European countries. Public platform's leaders asked to continue cooperation with NGO and hope for follow up to reach more feasible results to see real improvements and development of their areas and feel results from government reforms and see real changes in legislation.

"On August 20th, the Final Seminar was organised. The purpose was to present how the Matra project is organised, how the PP's have functioned, which main recommendations on GG in the fields of Land Reform and Rural Development were given, how the central authorities reacted to consider and partly realise these recommendations and how to disseminate the results further in the society of Ukraine. A broad audience of around 45 representatives from central authorities, Parliament representatives, NGO's, Institutes, Universities, Press, a.o participated. The Ambassador of The Netherlands, Mr. Klompenhouwer, has opened the Final Seminar by holding a speech about the purpose, approach and results of this Matra project. Dep. Minister Rutytska has held a speech about the project and the further process of embedding the Matra recommendations in the Strategy of MAPF. Both key speakers were positive about the content and process of the project and the functioning of both PP's, and emphasized that further introducing GG in Ukraine is very much needed and is still a huge job. The director of NGO Primavera, Olga Zhovtonog, has presented the further content and process of the project and how the Matra recommendations have been discussed with the central authorities. Chairperson Olena Pashun of the PP of Fastiv has presented her view on the results of the project and which new project initiatives the PP has started. A representative of the PP of Belazorvska did that for their pilot area. After a coffee break a press conference was held where a variety of questions were answered by Deputy Minister Rutytska, Mr. Rozgon of the State Agency of Water Resources and by a representative of the Ministry of Regional Development. The Dutch Consultant Henk Moen held a presentation, on behalf of the EU Twinning about opening of the rural land market and about the GG experiences from the Twinning".

The results on the national level can be evaluated also very positively because it was reached strong commitment from the government side and participation of representatives of government in all project events. The results of National Round tables was than published in internet and spread around other regional departments of MAPF and Ministry of regional development. Representatives of NGO Primavera on the name of the Matra project participated in the meetings of the working groups of MAPF for development of Strategy of

agriculture and rural development and managed to incorporate recommendations from the Pilots to the text of the Strategy. It was organized number directly meetings of Public platforms representatives with deputies ministries and members of parliament. It can be concluded that this Matra project did significant contribution to the implementation of GG principles into the work of MAPF and other authorities.

During the project implementation a very nice and strong relationships were developed with many other NGOs that work for land and RD issues as well as organized cooperation with number of muss media and also with Gromadske radio.

In general, it is possible to tell that due to the project implementation it was gained an important experience on development and implementation of GG principles in sphere of Land relationships and RD. This experience and skills can be disseminated and developed further by functioning PPs and also by new one that can be established within next project.

9. Interim and final goals achieved.

Further information if they do not correspond to the problems identified/planning:

This Matra project was a very small project with yet very positive results. It is desirable to continue this type of work and to keep the small GG 'flame' burning. It can be expected that following GG-projects, maybe focussing on other issues and in more/other pilot areas with more PP's, will be even more successful.

Have the overall goals been achieved?

Yes. for sure, even above expectations: the PP-members have felt and experienced how their small PP can have real influence by clever processing and direct speaking with decision-makers, and verifying, whether they keep their promises.

Has the target group been reached?

All concerned, important local stakeholders have been reached.

The support on Oblast level could be a bit more pleasant.

The central authorities and Parliament are not yet used to deal with local action groups that influence their superordinate, 'un-touchable' position. Decision makers in the MAPF behave however more friendly. The SGC, alas, did not show-up most times. Press has been present but has not broadly participated.

Conclusions with regard to the skills of the implementing body:

NGO Primavera has done a very stimulating and motivating job to let the PP members grow in their self-believe and influencing role; this was done beside the management of this urgently needed, complex project.

Further comments on the above conclusions:

Suggestions for future lessons to be learned:

Such a project was very necessary and this calls for many more of such projects, of course, focussing on different and broader issues. GG is only at its starting stage in Ukraine. Further needed efforts in the field of GG are still huge.

ANNEXES / DELIVERABLES of the Matra project, that have been sent to the NL Embassy officially and to many stakeholders and externals, have been:

1. Illustrated resume and results of the first round of Matra workshops in the pilot areas on December 2 and 4, 2014
2. Illustrated resume and results of the second round of Matra workshops in the pilot areas on February 24 and 26, 2015
3. Illustrated resume and results of the first National Matra Seminar on March 25, 2015 in Kiev
4. Brochure in Ukrainian and English on the *2 x Top-10 Recommendations* of the 2nd Public Platforms of Matra, sent to all stakeholders, incl. the main responsible central authorities, disseminated at the 1st Matra National Seminar in March 2015
5. At the 1st National Matra Seminar in March 2015, NGO Primavera has also 'published' the Matra / GG web portal : www.goodgovernance.org.ua
6. Illustrated resume and results of the third round of Matra workshops in the pilot areas on May 5 – 6, 2015
7. Illustrated resume and results of the Matra Training for central authorities, on June 25, 2015
8. Further, at the Training on the 25th of June, the Matra Guideline / Brochure for new Public Platforms was presented and disseminated.
9. Illustrated resume and results of the Final Matra Seminar in Kiev on August 20, 2015
10. All above mentioned Deliverables can be viewed at: www.goodgovernance.org.ua

NGO Primavera, 15, October 2015