



2022



WORLD EVALUATION CASE COMPETITION



Evaluation of a project to strengthen local governments in Ukraine during the conflict with Russia

Contents

The Scenario	3
The Case	4
Your Team's Task	9
Guidance	10
Rating Criteria and Weights	11
Appendix 1: Guidelines for Preparing a WECC Submission	12

Acronyms

CC	Consolidated Communities
DOBRE	Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency
EU	European Union
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
LSG	Local Self Government
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency

This case was developed by a group of WECC organizers using material that is freely available in the public domain or was provided to them by representatives of the Ukrainian organization that delivers DOBRE. It is intended strictly for educational purposes.

Cover photo: Aerial view of a village that is part of a consolidated community in Ukraine. The photo was taken prior to the February 2022 invasion by Russian forces..

The Scenario

Global Communities has delivered the DOBRE program (Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency) from 2016-2022 to support Ukraine's efforts to decentralize government following their Revolution of Dignity in 2014.

Global Communities recently received funding for an extension of DOBRE for the 2022-2025 period. This will include a refocusing of the program in the context of the ongoing war with Russia.

Your team was previously provided with [background information](#) on DOBRE. You will now be given information on the extension of the program. The team's task is to develop an evaluation plan for the extension of the program and to propose some indicators for measuring community resilience in a situation of continuing conflict.



The Case

Evaluation of a project to strengthen local governments in Ukraine during the conflict with Russia

Purpose of DOBRE

USAID has provided funding of 40 million (USD) to Global Communities to extend DOBRE for three years (2022-2025).

DOBRE provides comprehensive assistance to support local governance to deepen democracy, improve conditions for community development and promote stability in Ukraine.

DOBRE strengthens local government effectiveness and responsiveness to citizen priorities by developing consolidated communities (CC) capacity to promote local development, improve service delivery, and increase transparency of local budgeting and finance management. DOBRE also works with the demand side of governance to encourage transparency and openness, increase citizen engagement in local decision-making, and improve communications about reform.

In the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, DOBRE will support the local government in government-controlled territories during the war and post war period. DOBRE will focus on activities to address the principal challenges that DOBRE's partner CCs are facing to increase the communities' resiliency, bolster the ability of local governments to meet their communities' needs, and to support the communities' local economies during the war and its aftermath.

Background and Problem Statement

Decentralization is widely viewed as the most successful reform process in Ukraine since the 2014 Revolution of Dignity. It is popular among citizens, community leaders, politicians and decision-makers as the one reform that can successfully devolve authority and resources to the local level.

Ukraine has significantly advanced decentralization reform. Over a period of just six years, Ukraine has made progress that some EU countries have been going through for decades. The major achievement of the reform was completion of the community consolidation process under which more than 12,000 small and unsustainable villages, settlements, towns, and cities were organized as 1,469 consolidated communities. At the subnational governance level 490 districts (rayons) consolidated into 136 bigger rayons. This way a new administrative and territorial structure of the country was formed on which basis local elections were held in October 2020, thus enabling more distributed governance.

Decentralization also reallocated resources and responsibilities toward local communities, resulting in a more transparent, accountable and participatory governing system.

Decentralization reform also has a geopolitical dimension. It embodies westernization of governance. Establishing new local government entities (consolidated communities) and building their capacity has meant that local Ukrainians are increasingly able to manage their own affairs and step irreversibly away from the country's legacy of Russian-Soviet authoritarianism and towards a more democratic, European way of life.

The security situation in Ukraine deteriorated rapidly following the launch of a Russian Federation military offensive on 24 February 2022. According to UNHCR, since the onset of the Russian invasion nearly one-third of Ukrainians have been forced from their homes. This is the largest human displacement crisis in the world today. Within Ukraine, over 6.2 million people remain displaced by the war. As of today, UNHCR estimates there are over 5.4 million refugees present across Europe, and over 3.5 million refugees from Ukraine have registered for temporary protection or similar national protection schemes in Europe. More than 8.4 million refugee movements out of Ukraine have been recorded since 24 February, while more than 3 million movements back into the country have been recorded since 28 February.

DOBRE Program Approach

DOBRE is the only international assistance activity focused on CCs. Since 2016, DOBRE has worked closely with 100 CCs throughout Ukraine to enable them to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities that decentralization has brought.

DOBRE has applied the following core approaches in its work with CCs. They have greatly contributed to the success that the CCs have achieved:

- Inclusiveness -- actively engaging citizens in key decision-making, using broad, representative working groups, citizen surveys, and ongoing feedback and dialogue between LSGs and local residents;
- Systematic planning that is based on the analysis of empirical data and reflects general consensus; and
- Facilitating cooperation and collaboration among CCs and sharing lessons learned and best practices.

DOBRE staff indicate that CCs have found the following assistance particularly valuable in their capacity building:

- financial management including participatory budget processes;
- sound asset management;

- design and execution of service delivery;
- skills in developing strategic documents;
- engaging citizens; and
- writing effective funding proposals.

The extension of DOBRE will provide assistance to as many current and new partner communities as possible - but no less than 60 - prioritizing communities that have the greatest needs, have been liberated from occupation, and for which assistance is feasible. The support will need to be flexible and responsive to the needs and changing situation of each community.

Objectives and Activities

DOBRE has two objectives:

Objective 1: Local Governments Effectively Manage Resources and Services that Respond to Community Priorities.

1. *Training to build capacity and increase efficiency of local governance personnel.* As a result of the massive displacement of the Ukrainian population some local governments, especially in the areas most affected by war, have suffered the loss of qualified officials and managers. The new cadres will require orientation and management training to help them meet their CCs' challenges.
2. *Assistance to adjust planning to short-term and contingency planning.* The drastically changed circumstances have made many strategic plans outdated and inadequate. This, coupled with the loss of local leaders and managers, underscores the communities' need for instruction and technical assistance on effective short-term and contingency planning linked to the budgeting process and communications in the current uncertain, unpredictable and rapidly changing operational environment.
3. *Assistance for improvement and renovation of the infrastructure and public service delivery.* The direct damage to infrastructure of Ukraine is estimated at the level of \$95 billion and counting. Communities that have been under occupation or affected by active combat have significant infrastructural damage, and this is impeding the provision of basic services to meet the needs of the population. Communities report problems in the repair and maintenance of roads and sidewalks, in solid waste management, drinking water systems, sewage systems, transportation services, street lighting, warning systems and bomb shelters, problems with telephone connection and Internet access. Many utility services stand idle. In addition, in communities that are

hosting a large number of Internally displaced persons (IDPs), the demands on infrastructure and services have increased.

There is a huge demand for restoring and improving service that DOBRE could support. The number of community in-kind projects, particularly medical equipment can potentially increase.

4. *Assistance in improving financial and asset management practices.* As a result of war and additional expenses that occur, the drop in tax payments due to economic activities reduction and business closures, and martial law limiting local governments authorities, many communities report budgetary problems. Communities are also experiencing difficulties related to procurement. There is a high demand for assisting communities to account for damage, budget losses, accounting, and procurement. Likewise, there is a need for guidance to CCs on leasing and using municipal property, and managing communal land to support recovery.
5. *Assistance to strengthen the capacity of local economic development as a driver for community development.* Local economic development becomes one of the main sources for local budgets during war and defines the ability of local governments to provide essential services, especially in a situation when national budgets are also experiencing a deficit of resources. However local economic development is challenged by the war. Some communities suffer from the closure or out-migration of local businesses, other communities are grappling with the challenge of accommodating businesses that are relocating into their communities. The loss of available labor from out-migration and damaged infrastructure are inhibiting business activity.

DOBRE will help communities to adjust local regulatory policy to make it as easy as possible to open or operate a new or relocated businesses, provide guidance to communities on how to make the best use of IDPs for local economic development, and help communities attract outside investment and support the increase of local productive capacity for critical goods.

6. *Assistance with learning international best practices in project management and post conflict recovery to leverage resources.* Under current circumstances other countries' experiences, including those that went through the war and post war recovery, could be good examples to follow for Ukrainian communities, particularly in the area of economic development and investments attraction. DOBRE will provide opportunities to CCs to learn about international best practices in local governance.

Objective 2: Improved Citizen Engagement and Oversight in Local Governance.

1. *Assistance to strengthen citizen engagement and transparency in a new demographically challenged environment.* Due to the massive internal population displacement, IDP influx in some of the communities and population drought in others, refugee crisis, and military mobilization, Ukrainian communities are facing serious demographic changes and challenges. While volunteerism in communities has increased in response to the war, communities are undergoing significant changes and strains. Local governments' capacity to perform their functions is significantly lowered owing to the loss of qualified personnel, a lack of resources, the complexity of problems they face, and new and unfamiliar challenges.

DOBRE will work with communities to transform the new wave of volunteerism into a new resource for inclusion-based local development and will work intensively with youth and civic activists to secure their active participation in civic activities, engaging CSOs and local groups to advance these efforts.

Activities may include training and awareness-raising for various local actors, and strengthening local advocacy, for example, advocacy for the interests of potentially marginalized groups, such as women, the elderly, and physically challenged citizens. Other activities include supporting local initiatives and projects, and holding events to foster social cohesion.



2. *Supports for developing and promoting community resilience, social cohesion and well-being.* Massive population displacement and significant influx of IDPs in some Ukrainian communities creates new challenges related to IDP integration into the social fabric of hosting communities. DOBRE will offer an array of programs and initiatives to help CCs overcome the shock and trauma of their recent experience and to increase social cohesion.
3. *Supports for promoting local governments accountability and civic oversight.* The post war recovery process will be supported by a significant influx of foreign government and donor resources that foreign partners will direct toward Ukraine's recovery. Such influx of resources would create opportunities for corruption and embezzlement of resources. DOBRE will continue its supports to CCs to achieve transparency in government decision making, implementation of corruption prevention tools, and civic oversight over local governments decisions to keep government accountable.

Measuring Resilience

DOBRE is planning to develop an index to measure resilience as a support for Ukraine as it copes with war and its aftermath. Operational definitions of community resilience in times of peace and times of war, or a major natural disaster, will be determined in consultation with communities.

Your Team's Task

Please structure your submission as follows:

1. Situational Analysis

- Provide a concise analysis of the progress with government decentralization in Ukraine and the contribution of DOBRE to date. Discuss the main challenges that the war presents to future decentralization efforts and DOBRE's contribution to them.

2. Evaluation Planning

- Develop a logic model for the extension of DOBRE that shows your understanding of how project activities contribute to the two objectives. Indicate external factors impacting on the project and results. Provide a

short narrative to help readers understand your modelling of the project extension.

- Describe the type of evaluation you would conduct and explain why it is appropriate.
- Provide an evaluation matrix for **Objective # 2**, including key evaluation questions, indicators for each question, and data collection methods.
- Describe anticipated challenges to an evaluation and how your team proposes dealing with them.
- Propose at least four indicators to measure community resilience – suggest at least two for measuring community resilience in normal times, and at least two for measuring resilience in the face of extreme disruption such as war or major natural disaster.

Guidance

- Be innovative and creative. The WECC judges will be looking for and assessing innovativeness and creativity in all aspects of your proposal.

Make good use of your team's imagination and common sense.

- Aim for clear, concise communication.
- Be aware of the rating criteria (next section).
- Take photos. Please! The organizers of the competition need photos of team members working on the case - either collaborating in person or online. When sharing photos with the competition organizers, send them in a separate [email](#), right after you have submitted your proposal. Be sure to identify "who is who" in the pictures.
- Support each other and enjoy the learning experience.

Rating Criteria and Weights

Assessment Area	Criterion	Weight
Situation Analysis	Understanding of the context for government decentralization efforts in Ukraine and for DOBRE	20%
Evaluation Planning (Logic, practicality and methodological strength)	Logic Model for the DOBRE extension	20%
	Type of evaluation proposed	5%
	Evaluation matrix for Objective # 2 (table of questions, indicators and data collection methods)	20%
	Anticipated challenges and ideas for dealing with them	15%
	Proposed indicators of community resilience	10 %
Effectiveness of presentation	Clarity and flow of ideas; impact on the reader	10%
		100%

Appendix 1: Guidelines for Preparing a WECC Submission

Language

Submissions may be in English, French or Spanish.

Amount of time

Teams whose working language is English will have seven (7) hours to prepare their submission. Teams preparing their submission in French or Spanish will have eight (8) hours. Other teams will have nine (9) hours. All teams will have 15 minutes leeway to allow for difficulties encountered in downloading the case or uploading submissions.

Anonymity

Do not include in your submission any information that might reveal to the judges your institution or your country. Be sure that the logo of the team does not give away its location. A team should identify itself only by a pseudonym (e.g., Bright Futures). Your team's name must be shown clearly at the beginning of your submission.

Format of submission

Your submission may be a regular text report or a PowerPoint slide presentation (with or without narration). Teams that do not respect the following technical requirement for their submission may have their score reduced by up to 5%.

Regular text report

- Maximum 12 (twelve) pages including tables and diagrams. Any cover letter, cover page, or table of contents is not counted.
- Page size: A4
- Minimum margin size: 2.54 cm (1 inch) on all sides (left, right, top, and bottom)
- Minimum font size: 12-point for text, 10-point for tables or figures.

Slideshow presentation

- Minimum font size: 16-point for text, 14-point for tables and figures
- Non-narrated presentation: no more than 25 slides, in English, French or Spanish
- Narrated presentation: 15 minutes maximum. Slides and narration must be in English to be accessible by all judges

Inputs

Teams are free to access the Internet and use reference materials. If you provide references, you may use any format, e.g., MLA, APA or Chicago, but please be consistent. A team is not allowed to consult with its coach or any other advisor while preparing the submission.

Dealing with problems

If the team encounters serious unexpected difficulties, such as a long period without internet connection, ensure that a third party, such as the team's coach, is informed of the nature and duration of the disruption. The team should [contact WECC](#) organizers to report the problem and ask for an extension of time.

Delivering Your Documents

File type

The submission must be one file, not a zipped file of multiple documents. Label the file with your team's name, e.g., *Teamname.pdf* for a text file or *Teamname.pptx* for a PowerPoint file.

If your submission file is very large, as may be the case for a narrated PowerPoint presentation, you have the option of uploading a one-page pdf in which you provide a link to your work wherever it has been stored on the Web.

Sending the file

Upload your submission via the same link that your contact person used to download the case. The upload will be automatically acknowledged.

For backup, send the submission as an email attachment to [WECC organizers](#).

You may expect your email to be acknowledged within a few hours.