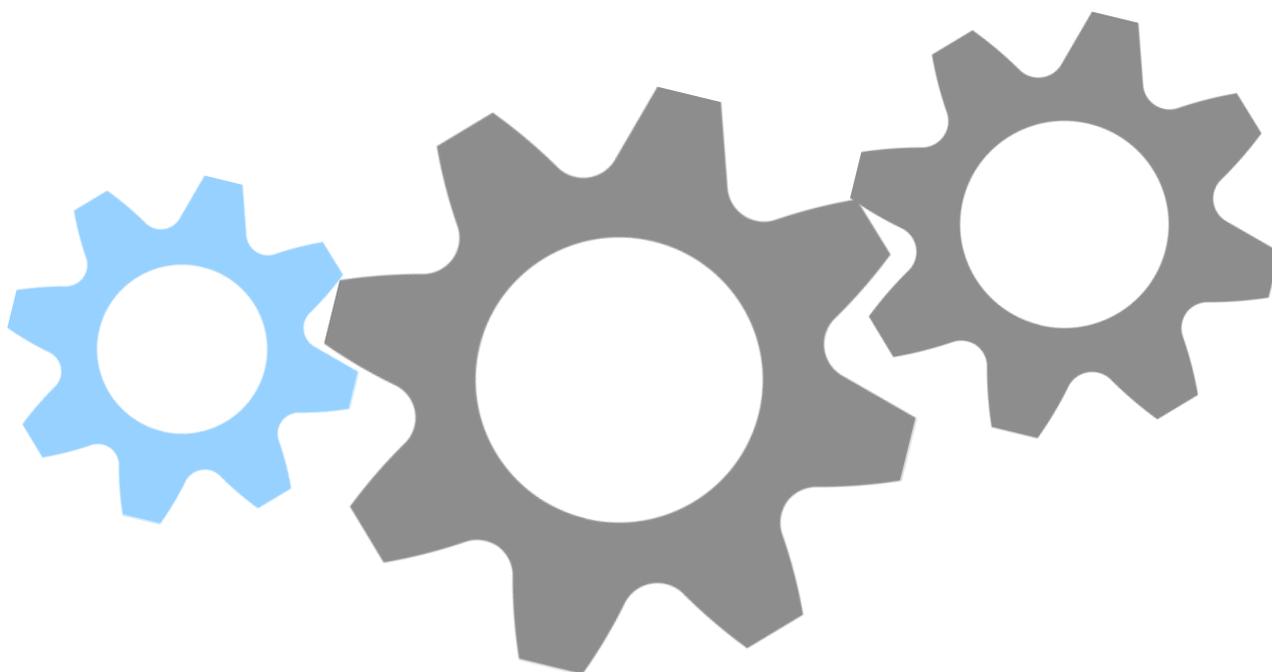




Виконавець:

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Initiatives of the Infrastructure Programme for Ukraine
Project “Strengthening of Ukrainian Communities Hosting Internally Displaced Persons”



Mentorship **for Public Institutions**

Guidelines for Practitioners

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Published by:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Project “Strengthening of Ukrainian communities hosting IDPs” as a component of the “Initiatives of the Infrastructure Programme for Ukraine” implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

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Kharkiv, 2019

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INTRODUCTION

The “Methodology of Mentorship for Public Institutions: Guidelines for Practitioners” was developed in the framework of the project “Strengthening of Ukrainian communities hosting internally displaced persons” as a component of the Initiatives of the Infrastructure Programme for Ukraine (IIPU) implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The document unites the three-year project’s experience (2017-2019) of the mentorship programs for different types and sizes of institutions and organizations which provide directly or indirectly services to the residents.

The Methodology is useful for experts, consultants and other practitioners who work with public institutions and strive to make positive changes.

- In the **first chapter**, it is described why the mentorship approach is important for the improvement of the performance of institutions providing public services but also organizations which support the provision of basic services to residents and lobby for rights and needs of the civil society.
- The **second chapter** strives to explain the objective and general character of the approach which was applied.
- In the **third chapter**, the individual elements of the approach are presented: how to start, how to select partners, how to introduce improvements, which are organizational and logistical challenges, which tool or methodology is appropriate for a particular purpose, what are typical positive or critical issues per each element, etc.
- The **fourth chapter** deals with the presentation of lessons learned, how we see the implemented approach retrospectively, what explicitly we judge as positive, what we experienced in the cooperation with individual partner institutions or organization in the frame of the mentorship process.
- The **fifth chapter** provides recommendations on possible improvements of the approach, of individual steps or of the application of tools; also hints are given in which way this approach should be further applied and disseminated.

1. BACKGROUND AND USEFULNESS OF THE APPROACH

The conflict in the eastern part of Ukraine has forced around 2.5 million people to flee the conflict territories. Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia regions (oblasts) became one of the most popular destination and transit places. Officially, there are approximately 350,000 people registered as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the mentioned three regions. The large number of IDPs and their unregulated influx create major challenges for host communities. Municipal and civil society institutions are challenged to meet the increased demand for basic public services.

In the course of capacities development activities for partner institutions it became obvious that training of individual employees and local decision makers as well as procurement of necessary equipment is by far insufficient to develop service provision to the necessary extent, quality and sustainability. Individual qualifications and equipment turned out to be necessary complementary functions. However, the core of capacity development must be the focused strengthening of institutions by providing consultancy and coaching in a tailor-made manner.

This approach, labelled “mentorship”, allows to reflect and to respond to particular strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of individual institutions. Activities can be developed and implemented jointly by the mentor, employees and other relevant stakeholders; the participation of residents as service receivers can be enhanced.

Beside the technical benefit of the mentorship, i.e. the effective and sustainable improvement of service provision, the mentorship enhances also mindset and motivation of employees of the institution. The discussion with the mentor and the mentor’s inputs to the (self-) assessment of the institution’s performance, the participative formulation and implementation of action plans and the actual short- and long-term improvements open ways for the employees to better identify themselves with their work and the institution.

Getting qualification and sophisticated knowledge on the improvement of one’s performance (e.g. off-the-job training) is one side of the medal - and often not the decisive one. To see how changes can be planned and initiated and how individual professional knowledge can be considered and set into value in the institution’s performance presents a motivational and mental asset which is an even more important side of the medal!

Mentorship processes (of its various forms) were implemented during 2017 – 2019 for the following institutions. In the beginning, mentorship was offered to Centres for Administrative Services; after realization of good results and receiving positive feedback from the partners and the mentors as well, the application of the approach was extended to institutions of other sectors. Eventually, the mentorship program covered the following institutions:

- Centres for Administrative Services
- Social Protection Units and Territorial Centres for Social Services
- Libraries
- NGOs
- Youth Hubs

Adopted in the institutions of various types, mentorship programs proved to be highly effective: within several months of their implementation, it was managed not only to initiate positive changes but also to lay the solid foundation for the further sustainable development of the institutions.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE APPROACH

In our understanding, mentorship is the provision of support, guidance and consultancy to institutions or organizations by a highly qualified expert (“mentor”). The mentor, due to her/his professional experience, knowledge and qualification, initiates and pushes for changes in an institution’s performance and self-perception. Moreover, the mentor often provides moral support by inspiring and invigorating the personnel of the institution.

Our approach is based on the mentoring provided by an external and independent expert (mentor), who is not an employee of the institution for which she or he provides support. The mentor provides support on the following 3 levels:

- **Individual level:** The mentor urges personal and professional development of personnel of the organization, by sharing his/her experience and knowledge and by increasing professional qualification of the employees. This can be done by providing on-the-job-training, seminars, personal supervision, etc.
- **Institutional level:** The mentor aspires to ensure a sustainable development of the organization by forming its internal and external procedures more efficient, optimizing organizational structures, increasing the level of transparency, installing and implementing feedback systems, increasing residents’ power to contribute to decision making processes, etc.
- **Networking level:** The mentor initiates and supports endeavours of the institution’s management to establish and develop cooperation among institutions/organizations and communication between colleagues from different institutions/organization in the sphere.

The mechanism of the mentorship approach is realized via consecutive implementation of phases in which the internal logic of the program appears and which ensures the integration of various elements into a unified comprehensive process (**Figure 1**). The phases are to be implemented in the strict consequence. In following chapter 3, the listed phases are closely considered:

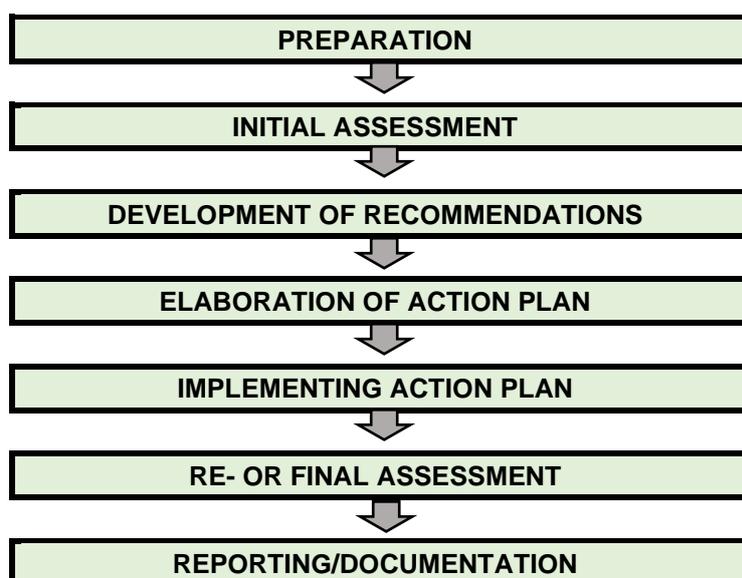


Figure 1. Phases of Mentorship

An important understanding of mentorship is that the mentor is **NOT** a consultant implementing tasks on behalf of the institution/organization but supports and advises institutions/organizations in the planning, implementation and management of improvements and positive changes.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL PHASES

3.1 Preparation

Preparation creates the basis for the whole mentorship program. The overall success of the project considerably depends on how effective this very stage is. Preparation consists of three essential sub-stages:

- Selection of the mentors
- Presentation of the program (information and motivation of potential partners in the mentorship program)
- Selection of partners

3.1.1 Selection of the mentors

The mentor plays a crucial role in the process. It is her or his qualification, knowledgebase and working experience, which determine success or failure. For this reason, the selection of mentors should be well planned and accurately considered. In our case the selection was conducted on the competition basis in order to ensure transparency of the process and involve the most qualified experts. This can be done by formal limited or open tender, call of interest, or similar procedures. How it is done in a particular program depends on the required expertise, on available experts, the extent of the mentorship program, etc.

Crucial selection criteria are:

- Experience: The required period of professional practical experience in the corresponding sphere should be not less than 10 years.
- Expertise: The mentor should possess profound knowledge in the respective sectoral sphere.
- Attitude: Respect to colleagues and employees is a necessary precondition for developing trustworthy relations between partner organizations and mentor to ensure confidence in the mentor's recommendations and the advice.
- Communication skills: The mentor should be an experienced communicator and should possess diplomatic and oratorical skills to perform in front of an audience.

Apart from personal characteristics of the mentor, it is equally important to consider other factors, which also contribute to the overall success of the process:

- Workload: It is critically important for the mentor to have a sufficient amount of time to process the information, coming from the institution/organization, timely develop and implement measures aimed at the institution development. Naturally, all the institutions/organizations vary in their sizes, characterized by different working processes and their complexity. In order to ensure effective implementation of the project, 1 mentor should be responsible for not more than 5 – 6 institutions/organizations.
- Understanding local specific features: It is highly appreciated for the mentor to be knowledgeable about the aspects like behind-the-scene processes, local political situations and local institutional restrictions. It becomes possible if the mentor worked and lived in the same region.

- Flexibility of the mentor: Experience has shown that mentorship process requires a lot of dedication, frequent travels, and presence in partner organizations. Therefore, it is important that the mentor should have enough flexibility to constantly assist the partner institutions/organization in a timely manner.

It might be necessary to jointly qualify the selected mentors in the particularities of the process (e.g. initial assessment methodology, participation of residents) although they are experienced experts already.

3.1.2 Program presentation

The presentation of the mentorship program is an excellent opportunity to inform the partner organizations about peculiarities of the mentorship process and provide answers to the questions, asked by the heads of the organization and municipality in order to give a clear and full explanation to the concept “mentorship”. Moreover, the presentation also serves as the possibility for the mentor to:

- get acquainted with the representatives of the municipality and get first impression about the heads of the organization;
- evaluate the impression the partners have about the mentorship approach and their attitude towards it;
- preliminary visit the organization to get the first impression about it.

The presentation is conducted in the municipality. It is of outstanding importance to involve representatives of political-administrative responsible bodies for the institution at municipal (or in case regional) level. Those representatives may be the heads of the municipality (the mayor or his/her deputies), the heads of the department responsible for the development of the sphere in which the institution operates and who manage it. The presentation usually consists of subsequent parts:

- Brief presentation of the mentorship program (10-15 minutes):
It is necessary to inform about the idea of mentoring, opportunities and advantages of this approach, beginning and end of the process, free-of-charge participation for the partner organizations, selection of partners on a competitive basis, deadline for application, application procedure). In order to prevent unjustified expectations, it is important to mention about the limitations of the program (for example, if no reparatory works or equipment will be provided as in case of our mentorship program). It is vital to emphasize the obligations of the parties (for example, the necessity to provide the mentor with the access to the institution’s information and documentation, the need for the partner institutions to follow the mentor’s recommendations). **Particular emphasis should be placed on the guarantees provided that any information, obtained during the mentorship are kept absolutely confidential.**
- Question-and-answer session (up to 40 minutes):
The partners have a chance to ask questions in order to clarify specific features of the approach, the implementation process and the selection procedure. Partners are asked about their interest in participating in mentorship, their motivation and expectations from the process. The aim is inter alia to ensure that the partners, in case they are selected, are willing and ready to provide access to information and documentation of the organization and follow the mentor’s recommendations. It is important to remind about guarantees that strict confidentiality is ensured and the information can be shared only in case it is approved by the partners.

- Study visit to the organization (10-30 minutes):
This visit gives the mentor a preliminary impression of the organization, allows to get acquainted with its processes and staff. In addition to a preliminary visual examination, the mentor can address questions to the head and the employees of the institution.
- Summarizing the presentation (5 minutes):
The participants summarize the visit. Participants are reminded of the deadline to apply for the mentorship program and emphasize the partners' ability to contact the mentor to clarify issues.

The partner should be briefly informed about the format of the presentation to make sure the appropriate persons will participate from the partner's side (decision makers of the institution and municipality). It is also advisable to request for a list of participants from the partners with the indication of their positions– this information will be helpful for the mentor to prepare her-/himself at best and it will be also helpful for record keeping (protocolling).

The following documents should be printed (several copies each) for distributing among the partners during the presentation:

- short description of the mentorship program – in fact it is a printed version of the presentation of the mentorship program
- application form for the participation in the mentorship program (see chapter 3.1.3)
- contact details from the project representative and the mentor.

It is advisable to develop a **logistic plan** for the presentation of the mentorship program to the different partners. The logistic plan contains information about:

- Date, time, venue of the mentorship program presentation
- List of the participants of the presentation from the partner side (first and last names, contact details, position occupied)

The impressions got during the mentorship program presentation in the respective municipality and the study visit to the respective institution/organization should be documented as these impressions are then complementing the evaluation of the possible application.

3.1.3 Application and selection of partners

It is primary important to select the partner, who is inspired, motivated, understands peculiar features of the program and his/her own role in it and responsibility, and is ready for changes.

Selection is usually conducted on the competitive basis. More or less differentiated procedures can be applied according to the specific objectives and circumstances of the mentorship program.

Sector examples of the project:

Mentorship for NGOs

For the selection of NGOs, a less complicated procedure was applied. Four main selection criteria were used:

- “History” of the NGO, meaning realized activities for particular target group/s and experience of projects implementation,
- At least several persons and some rudimentary organizational structure

- Strong motivation and willingness for changes
- Readiness for intensive work with mentors and open for recommendations and advise

The interested NGOs had to complete an application form, in which information to relevant questions were needed to be provided. All approached NGOs were partner of GIZ in various previous activities.

Mentorship for Centres for Administrative Services and Social Protection Units and Territorial Centres for Social Services

An **application form** was designed as a decisive formal document which contains the following information and declarations:

- The official request (application) by the municipal authorities, not from the institution/organization- needs to be signed and stamped.
- Concise statistical information about the municipality and the institution/organization which gives general understanding of the partner's profile
- Description of motivation to participate in the mentorship program and expected results
- Declaration about readiness to provide the required information and to respect mentor's recommendations
- Contact details of the head of municipality and the head of the institution/organization

The submitted application forms are assessed by the **selection committee** which consists of the responsible representatives of the initiating project/organization and the mentor(s). The selection is made by assigning points for the applications, while the criteria for evaluation are the following:

- Motivation level of the head of the organization
- Motivation level of the head of the municipality
- Readiness from the partners' side to collaborate closely with the mentor, particularly in the joint assessment of performance and internal structures of the institution/organization, the development of recommendations and strategic objectives as well as the formulation and implementation of a short- and long-term action plan
- Need of improvements based on provided information on municipality and institution/organization

The evaluation of the description provided in the application form should be complemented by the impressions got during the mentorship program presentation in the respective municipality and the study visit to the respective institution/organization.

For the selection of the program participants an **evaluation table** was developed which is based on assessment points allowing to rank the applications and to determine the participants of the mentorship program in an objective manner. The table reflects the points each partner organization gets for each criterion and the final results of the selection (**Figure 2**).

Beside the evaluation criteria and related assessment points, the evaluation table needs also to include first and the second names of the members of the selection committee, list of the municipalities and institutions/organizations, to whom the mentorship program had been presented and who timely submitted the application form for the participation in the program.

The evaluation table also contains information about the declaration of neutrality of the selection committee, its duty to fairly evaluate the partners and not to divulge the number of points for one or another applicant.

The evaluation table is to be signed by each member of the selection committee.

The results of the selection process are to be announced for all the institutions/organizations, which applied for participation in the mentorship program.

		Institution 1		Institution 2	
Name of Partner Institution					
Municipality					
Date of Presentation					
Persons the Mentorship Programme was presented to (Names, Positions):					
-Representative(s) of CAS					
-Representative(s) of social institution					
-Decision-maker(s)					
		Points		Points	
Criteria	Max Point	<i>Coordinator's Name, Surname</i>	<i>Mentor's Name, Surname</i>	<i>Coordinator's Name, Surname</i>	<i>Mentor's Name, Surname</i>
Motivation of a Head of CAS expressed	5				
Motivation of a Head of Social Institution expressed	3				
Motivation of a decision-maker expressed	5				
Readiness to follow recommendations of the Mentor	5				
Motivation expressed in the submitted application form	3				
Sum of the points					
Selected to participate in the Mentorship Programme		YES/NO		YES/NO	
<p><i>I hereby declare that I conducted this evaluation independently and to the best of my knowledge and belief. I will treat the information confidentially and not pass on any particulars of the on-going evaluation procedure.</i></p>					
Coordinator:		Mentor:			
_____		_____			
Date, signature		Date, signature			

Figure 2. Template for Evaluation Table for Centres of Administrative Services (CAS) and Social Institutions

Mentorship of Houses of Culture

In case of Houses of Culture, there was a different approach: Mentorship for Houses of Culture was conducted for all 5 GIZ partner institutions without competition. Confirmation from partners for their interest and readiness to participate was received by email. A particular application was not necessary for them.

Due to this approach, the presentation of the mentorship program as a separate stage of the preparation (see chapter 3.2) to make the program known to potential candidates, was not needed and not organized. It was included into the 4-hours workshop during first field visit of the mentor for initial assessment of the institutions.

3.2 Initial Assessment

Initial assessment is aimed at reaching these two main goals:

1. Documentation of the current state of affairs in the organization (status-quo).
2. Formalized identification of issues in the institution's structure and the processes; challenges, the organization faces, its potential and opportunities for its further development.

The initial assessment can be done either by a mentor or an independent external expert. In case the assessment is conducted by a mentor, it provides him/her with a deeper insight of the organization, issues it faces and potential for the development it has. Anyway, whoever does it, an objective assessment has to be ensured. A joint discussion of the methodology and the results of the initial assessment with the partner institution/organization (head and employees) contributes to that.

The following tools can be used while conducting an assessment:

- **Interviews** – a mentor acquires information about the institution by asking people (management and staff of the institution, partners, clients, visitors, local dwellers, etc.)
- **Questionnaire (poll)** – different types of surveys according to the particular situation and needs
- **Observation** - a mentor acquires information about the institution/organization visually (as an observer in the premises) and from primary sources ((internal statute, local statutes, staffing list, etc.)
- **Secondary source data analysis** – reports of the institutions/organizations, websites, etc.
- **SWOT-analysis** -a method which allows a mentor to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the institution
- **Focus group** – a small (usually, up to 12 persons), but a diverse group of people (e.g. different kind of customers) to discuss the institution's/organization's performance
- **Special assessment tools** – special methodological tools are available to assess crucial elements of particular types of institutions/organizations, for their application expertise often is needed

Whatever tools will be applied for the assessment of an institution/organization, the entire assessment process needs to be implemented in collaboration of the institution/organization and the mentor!

In case of institutions/organizations with a small number of staff the assessment should be done jointly by the head (or deputy head) of the institution/organization and the mentor. In case of institution/organization with bigger number of staff it is advisable to form a small working group (3-5 members) which - together with the mentor – conduct the assessment and develop recommendations or strategic objectives and the action plan.

The involvement of relevant stakeholders and the public (residents, customers, patients, etc.) is an excellent and absolutely necessary approach to assess and improve the performance of a public service institution.

For the assessment of an institution/organization, either all the above listed tools can be applied, or only some of them: for instance, for the mentoring of the social sphere institutions the following set of the tools was applied: interview, observation, SWOT-analysis, focus-groups, a special methodology (assessment sheets).

Application of various assessment tools allows to view an institution/organization from different perspectives and thus get a more detailed and clearer picture about it.

However, in practice it is not always possible to apply the complete toolbox, mainly due to budget and time limitations. It might be also necessary that the project/organization initiating the mentorship program conduct qualification measures for the mentors or other external assessors in order to optimize the application of the tools, particularly special methodologies, focus groups discussions, questionnaires.

Sector examples of the project:

Assessment of NGOs

Beside by application of more “classical” tools, the capacity of the shortlisted NGOs was assessed using methodology introduced by INTRAC (UK) (<http://dhrp.org.ua/uk/publikatsii/260-20131121-ua-publication>). The INTRAC methodology emphasizes the importance of using different sources of information to prepare comprehensive NGO development assessment. This may include self-assessment from NGO representatives as well as assessment from community representatives and partner organizations.

During the organizational capacity assessment process, the “Three Circles” methodology was used. The 1st circle represents ‘Organisation’, the second circle represents ‘Activities’ and the 3rd circle represents ‘Relationship’. This approach is a useful tool, that allows monitoring changes an NGO undergoes through gaining conceptual understanding of an NGO development stage. The methodology covers three key aspects of an organization and allows identifying cause-and-effect relations in an NGO activity. This tool helps to identify key activity areas of an NGO, which need improvements. The “Three Circles” methodology explains specific changes and measures required for CSO development.

The following components and capacity areas of the selected NGOs were assessed:

- Strategic and operational planning, NGO’s vision and mission
- Democratic management, accountability and transparency
- Leadership, Membership, NGO management, HR management

- Financial sustainability, financial control, internal resources mobilization, lesser dependency on external donors
- Program development for target groups, expertise development activities, managing small grants
- Learning culture and innovations support
- Building positive bilateral ties with other CSOs, public relations and mass media, interaction with government authorities

Assessment of Social Protection Units and Territorial Centres for Social Services

The methodology for evaluating social institutions (hereinafter - Methodology) was developed by the NGO "Institute for Social Policy of the Region" with the support of the GIZ. It allows assessing social institutions (e.g. social welfare offices) and social service providers (e.g. territorial social service centres) and can be applied by both governmental and non-governmental institutions, including non-governmental organizations (for example through the tool of public examination) as well as by independent experts. In total, the methodology was applied and tested in 20 social institutions of Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv regions. As a result of the implementation, the methodology has been revised and refined in the light of the recommendations made by the mentors.

Each indicator is rated on a 6-point scale. Scoring is performed by scoring points (0 to 5). For determining scores for each metric, criteria were developed and listed in the electronic template. Estimates for each indicator are automatically calculated by multiplying the score by the corresponding coefficient.

The indicators are grouped into four categories:

1. Organizational and legal support
2. Logistics
3. Staffing
4. External communication

The calculation of the amount of assessments in each category as well as the final result of the evaluation of the social institution is performed automatically.

Assessment of Centres for Administrative Services

For the purpose of assessment of the centres for administrative services, the methodology was applied, developed by Center for Political and Legal Reforms in cooperation with Center for Local Self-Government Studies / Center for Information Consulting (Lviv), Foundation of Local Democracy (Kharkiv) and Center for Support of Civic and Cultural Initiatives "Tamarisk" (Dnipro)¹.

¹ **Адміністративні послуги: стан і перспективи реформування.** Збірник матеріалів / [Тимошук В.П., Добрянська Н.Л., Курінний О.В., Школьний Є.О. та ін.] / Заг. ред. Тимошука В.П., Курінного О.В. – Київ, 2015. – 428 с.

The CAS are evaluated by an expert during the institution's survey according to the indicators aggregated into the following groups:

1. Organization of work
2. Location of the CAS, requirements for the premises and its arrangement, other amenities
3. Staff
4. Functioning of back-office operation (organization of services provision)
5. Analysis of functioning

The mentor evaluates the CAS by remotely examining information about a particular institution from open sources (primarily web resources), as well as a personal survey of the CAS operating conditions and monitoring its activities: inspection of the premises (its convenience for consumers, including persons with special needs and compliance with the criteria for "one-stop-shop"), communication with staff and clients. In addition, the documents regulating the activities of the CAS (for instance, Regulation, Provision), information and technology cards of administrative services are studied and analyzed.

The information obtained in the course of information processing, study of the CAS, and communication with the staff and clients is recorded in a special protocol, where for each indicator points are given according to the established criteria, as well as comments with justification of these points.

The final score for the CAS is formed as sum of the points. The maximum possible score (excluding points for territorial branches) is 1000 points.

Assessment of Houses of Culture

Evaluation of cultural institutions was done using “Capacity Assessment” methodology and Buyer Utility Card.

“Capacity Assessment” methodology has been proposed to assess the capacity of local communities by the experts of the EU / UN joint project "Community-Based Local Development" and adapted by mentor to the assessment of cultural institutions. Participants can independently assess development of their organizations at present stage by answering 25 questions grouped in 5 thematic blocks:

1. Organizational development
2. Institution sustainability
3. Joint planning / coordination with other stakeholders
4. Implementation of projects
5. Quality of life of local population

After completing the test, general sum of points is calculated for each block and visual diagrams are created by mentor.

Mainly, the strengths of cultural institutions were defined as “activity planning” and “project implementation”; the weak sides – “organizational development”, “institution sustainability”, “quality of life”. It is recommended to repeat this analysis at least once in half a year (in particular after introduction of new services) to see the dynamics of changes.

Buyer Utility Card (value map). To determine the value and customer orientation of new cultural services, Buyer Utility Card model was selected, described by W. Chan Kim and R. Mauborgne in “Blue Ocean Strategy”. The card was adapted by mentor to analyze value of services delivered by cultural services:

- Value levers (“value creators”): accessibility, emotionality, aesthetics, entertainment / image, added value, risk;
- Purchase cycle: ordering service, delivery, usage, additional services, quality of service provision by employees, completion.

The respondents had to analyze their services from perspective of users. Are the steps of services delivery easy and user-friendly? Do they contain an emotional or aesthetic component? Is there feedback process introduced? “Yes” and “No” answers were provided for each segment of Buyer Utility Card.

3.3 Development of Recommendations and Action Plan

Data and information collected in the course of the initial assessment are to be analysed thoroughly. An important element of this analysis is the balancing and treatment of possible contradictory information, estimations, and suggestions to the same topic. This might be caused by differing interests of the relevant stakeholders.

The head or the working group of the institution/organization together with the mentor need to assess the status-quo from different perspectives to reach an optimum objective impression. In the

scope of this assessment it easily could come to disputes between representatives of the institution/organization and the mentor. Even if the mentor needs to have a good and trustful working relation to the head of the institution/organization to implement the process successfully, s/he should challenge her or his information and opinion - as the mentor should do for other stakeholders as well.

Based on the results of the initial assessment of the partner organization, the head or the working group of the institution/organization together with the mentor works out short-term and long-term recommendations. These recommendations represent the list of steps, required for the development of the organization, solving issues, optimization of the processes inside and outside the organization.

The recommendations are presented in the form of a document and need to be signed by the mentor.

The recommendations as the result of the initial assessment need to be formulated as specific objectives of further development of the institution/organization and form the decisive input for the development of an Action Plan – a list of concrete actions, aimed at the development of the institution/organization. For each agreed objective of necessary improvement and change, two or more activities are to be elaborated and included into the Action Plan (see explanation box), including responsible people, deadlines, indicators of completion and expected results.

Explanation:

If only one activity can be identified needed for the achievement of a defined objective, this activity is naturally just another formulation of the objective! Otherwise additional activities are needed.

In that case, either the objective is formulated too narrow and needs to be redefined describing something broader than the identified activity and asking for additional activities. Or the activity will be shifted to the higher level and replace the previous defined objective and steps (than activities) need to be identified to achieve it.

For the development of the Action Plan, a thorough and qualitative assessment of cause-effects-relations is inevitable. Any definition of activities not based on cause-effects-assessment faces the risk to approach symptoms and not the roots of existing problems and of required improvements.

The Action Plan is prepared in a table format and includes the following elements (**Figure 3**):

Action Plan for

(Name of Organization)

Nº	Activity (Task) and sub-activities	Responsible Person	Milestones/ Deadline	Indicator(s) of Completion	Expected Result(s)
Objective A					
1					
2					
...					
Objective B					
1					
2					
...					
Objective ...					
1					
2					
...					

Figure 3. Template for Action Plan

In principle, the development of the Action Plan includes the following stages:

- Development of a draft of the Action Plan
The established working group for the assessment with the methodological and technical support of the mentor develops a draft of the Action Plan based on the recommendation provided by the mentor. In case of small institutions/organizations when the head or deputy head was involved in the assessment only, the Action Plan can be developed by the entire staff jointly. The size of the working group depends on the size of the institution/organization. The draft Action Plan should be as detailed as possible already, simply to ensure an effective following discussion with the entire team or workforce of the institution/organization.
- Discussion and detailing of the draft of the Action Plan
The draft of the Action Plan is presented to the team or workforce of the institution/organization to provide opportunity to discuss and comment it. Suggestions and further recommendations by the employees are taken into consideration; if required, the corresponding corrections are to be done.
- Presentation of the draft of the Action Plan
The final draft of the Action Plan is presented by the head of the institution/organization together with the mentor to the management of the municipality. It is important that the Action Plan is presented as a product of the institution/organization, not a product of the mentor!
- Signing of the Action Plan
The finalized version of the Action Plan is signed by the head of the organization and approved by the management of the municipality.

The approved and signed Action Plan is to be seen as the official document for the development of the institution/organization and should be published on the website of the institution/organization.

3.4 Implementing the Action Plan

The main role in the implementation of the Action Plan belongs to the partner organization and the management of the municipality.

The mentor provides professional expertise and consultation support for the implementation of the Action Plan, as well as moral and mediation support, by inspiring partners and acting as a mediator in case of opposition between personalities or structures.

The mentor fosters the implementation of the Action Plan by conducting events directly in the organization (trainings, seminars, master classes, workshops) and remotely by phone, e-mails, video conferences providing consultation, documents, advice, and clarification.

On this stage it is critically important to constantly monitor the process of the Action Plan implementation, ensuring decent and timely realization of the events, listed in this document. To realize this prerequisite, the mentor and partner representatives are in frequent contact to inform each other about the progress in implementation and to discuss and agree mutually on possibly required changes or adjustments of the Action Plan.

It is necessary to monitor interim results according to the milestones set in the Action Plan or after some previously determined time periods (as a rule, once a month). Interim results of the Action Plan implementation are to be discussed and documented according to each action, stated in the program. The person responsible for the respective action from the partners' side, provides a brief summary of the current state of affairs regarding the action plan implementation, taking into consideration the indicators, determined for this very action in the action plan.

If the action implementation is behind the schedule or even at risk not to be implemented, the issue is to be documented and the reasons for it are to be mutually discussed by the head of the partner institution/organization and the mentor. Findings of this discussion and decisions by which steps or procedures the right track can be taken again have to be described precisely and be part of the internal documentation.

The responsible person should sign for the corresponding line – interim results of the Action Plan implementation. The mentor should also sign it, thereby confirming that the information provided by the partners is adequate and correct. Moreover, mentor is allowed to comment on the information, thereby expressing his/her own professional point of view regarding the implementation process of the actions.

After the period of Action Plan implementation is up, the final results are to be prepared. Their document format is the same as for the documentation on the interim results of the Action Plan implementation (**Figure 4**).

Interim and final results of the Action Plan implementation should be discussed by the mentor and the management of the institution/organization by involvement of the management of the municipality.

An important task of the mentor is the qualification and awareness raising of the partner institution/organization that the Action Plan, even if a large share is implemented successfully, needs to be updated and continued with additional activities if there is the need for further improvements as an ongoing process. The mentorship process provides a qualified push to the institution to change and improve but it should not be perceived as a stand-alone or one-time effort. The mentorship should enable the institution/organization for a structured management and a sustainable improvement based on assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring methodologies and tools.

Report on Final Results of Implementation of the Action Plan for

(Name of Organization)

No	Activity (Task) and sub-activities	Milestones/Deadline	Indicator(s) of Completion	Factual Result(s)	Comments on implementation	Responsible Person's Name and Signature	Mentor's Signature
Objective A							
1							
2							
...							
Objective B							
1							
2							
...							
Objective ...							
1							
2							
...							

Figure 4. Template for Report on Interim/Final Results of Implementation of Action Plan

Sector examples of the project:

Mentorship support to NGOs

To support the implementation of the Action Plans, the mentors conducted five separate field visits by duration of 2 working days each for qualified support provision to each NGO.

12 mentors were involved in the Mentorship program. During two months each organization was visited by 4-5 experts in various spheres of organizational development according to the particular requirements revealed during assessment. In total, the mentors spent 10 working days field visits to each NGO.

In addition to field visits mentioned above, distant consultations were provided by the experts to each organization.

As a result, the mentors provided joined reports on each organization with description of results of the mentorship process and recommendations for further actions.

Mentorship support couldn't cover all areas and issues of organizations, but was concentrated on the most urgent and important problems that were identified by during the assessment and planning phases by the mentors together with the NGOs.

3.5 Re- or Final Assessments

Re-assessments have the aims to evaluate the current condition of the organization after the implementation of the Action Plan by identifying achieved changes and improvement due to realization of the Action Plan.

In order to conduct a re-assessment, the same toolbox could be applied as for the initial assessment: interview, observation, SWOT-analysis, focus-groups, specific methodological tools, and questionnaire.

In order to trace the changes initiated by the mentorship program and to allow comparisons between the initial assessment and the re-assessment, it is important to apply the identical methodology and tool mix during the initial and re-evaluations.

The re-assessment should be done by the mentor together with the management of the institution/organization! It is important that the management of the institution/organization learns how a (re-) assessment has to be conducted. The assessment is done by the mentor because s/he knows the methodology. But it is of course a tool which should be used by the management of the institution/organization in future as a tool for self-assessment and further development of the institution/organization.

Results of the re-assessment should be documented.

3.6 Reporting and documentation

Reporting and documentation are decisive integral elements of a successful mentorship process!

Only by preparing clear and meaningful reports and by keeping a structured documentation, the mentorship process can develop its full impact because ideas, approaches, motivation, effects, implemented activities, results, etc. can be tracked and verified in a retrospective manner. This is highly important if the mentorship process should not be a one-time-event but should leave traceable marks and footprints.

Meaningful reporting and structured documentation are the base for effective monitoring. Monitoring in turn is the base for successful management of any service provision and sustainable, ongoing improvement processes.

In general, it can be distinguished between internal reporting and external reporting:

- In the frame of the mentorship processes, we understand by internal reporting all documents which are formulated and generated in the course of the process for better management and development of the institution/organization's operation and which are required by the institutions/organizations but also can be of interest for the municipal management:
 - Results of the initial assessment of the partner organization
 - Recommendations developed by the mentor
 - Formulated and agreed Action Plan
 - Interim results of the Action Plan implementation
 - Final results of the Action Plan implementation
 - Results of the re-assessment

- Additional documents (photo- and video- files, list of training and seminar participants, acts which have been worked out during the program implementation etc.)
- External reporting covers those documents which are prepared for getting the mentorship program on track and to monitor the implementation of the mentorship program; these documents are documented and used by the project/organization which initiates and finances the mentorship program:
 - Logistic plan of the mentorship program presentation
 - Evaluation table of the partners for the program participants selection
 - Report provided by the mentor (inter alia it should include information on the program implementation in this particular organization; comparative analysis of the initial and re-assessments; information about the obstacles and challenges the process faces; recommendations for the partner organization and additionally for the initiating project/organization)
 - Additional documents, which reflect the process of mentorship program implementation

Internal documents need to be filed as the institution's documentation of the management and development process; external documents will be filed by the initiation project/organization.

3.7 Complementary support

Mentorship supports the institution/organization in a better, more structured and more effective use of human, financial and physical resources in order to improve the results of its operation. As part of the mentor's support in-house- and on-the-job-qualification of staff can be done on specific topics.

But mentorship is not able and it is not aim of mentorship to organize and to provide of-the-job-trainings and qualifications in basic skills needed for better performance of the staff. Also, not part of mentorship is - and should not be - procurement of required equipment and technology.

However, it is also obvious that according to present staff qualification and equipment of institutions/organizations successful mentorship without support in basic qualification, equipment and also networking with other similar institutions/organizations cannot be expected in many cases.

The approach of the project "Strengthening of Ukrainian communities hosting internally displaced persons" responded to the existing critical conditions for many partner institutions/organizations. Most of the partner institutions/organizations received several kinds of support beside the mentorship. Predominantly this included off-the-job-training for various skills, but also procurement of IT- and other equipment. Some of the partner institutions participated in study tours and exchange visits.

Complementary support measures can also be recommended by the mentor having revealed particular issues or challenges in the institution, e.g. additional capacity development for the head and staff of the institution, renovation, etc.

Sector examples of the project:

Complementary support to NGOs

In parallel with the mentorship program trainings in five topics were conducted for the NGOs:

- Strategic Planning and Fundraising for NGO
- Management of Non-Profit Organizations
- PR for NGO
- Teambuilding and conflict management for NGO
- Social Entrepreneurship and Social order

The participation in each training was mandatory for those NGOs who were involved in the mentorship program. The remaining free places were proposed for NGOs on competitive base (open call).

2-3 (in some cases 4) persons from the same organization participated in the same training. This approach received very good feedback from participants. Participants mentioned that it gives them opportunity to be “on the same page” with colleagues in their NGO, to discuss, to better understand and to apply new knowledge. It’s a good way for achieving sustainable results!

In general, the mentorship might be complemented by the following activities:

- capacity development measures (trainings, seminars, workshops)
- networking events (conferences, study trips)
- procurement of materials and/or equipment
- reconstruction / renovation of premises

4. LESSONS LEARNED

- ! Based on the experience of the mentorship program implementation we can confirm that in the case of a high level of motivation from the management of the partner side, it is possible to achieve significant positive changes in the partner organization even without considerable financial expenditures.
- ! It is advisable to combine mentorship processes with other activities, such as: trainings, seminars, educational trips, procurement of equipment, refurbishment of the premises etc. Synergetic effect in this case is extremely visible.
- ! The mentor and the head of the institution/organization should constantly communicate with each other to ensure the appropriate running of the process and respond quickly to challenges that occur.
- ! Regular periodical meetings of the entire staff to discuss the completed tasks, progress achieved, challenges revealed, and planning the next steps, are very important.
- ! In case mentorship processes are implemented in several institutions simultaneously, it is necessary to initiate activities, aimed at the establishment and further development of professional network of the program participants.
- ! Success of the mentorship program depends not only on the management of the organization, but also on the municipality authorities (management of the upper level). The actions taken for the improvement of institutions/organizations need to respect the context conditions of the individual institution or organization. No institution/organization acts independently but is part of an institutional hierarchy or net.
- ! The mentorship process contributes directly to the development of the institutions/organizations, but the key factor is still the involvement and dedication of the people who work at the institution/organization and their willingness to bring about change, for them a mentorship program can be helpful and stimulating for changes.
- ! The training component as complementary support of the mentorship processes, besides the content, also had a significant impact on the networking and partnerships between the institutions/organizations involved in the program.
- ! The flexibility of mentors, not only in the technical collaboration with the institution/organization but also in negotiating the date and time of visits (for example, weekend visits) is crucial.
- ! The mentorship process did not always look coherent and coordinated to the partners; the overall picture of the process, including two assessments of organizational development, was sometimes not clear.
- ! The mentorship process is much more effective, accompanied by other types of activities, in case of working with several institutions of the same kind and the mentors promote and/or arrange effective networking.

- ! Based on mentor's and partners feedback, a field visit to the institutions, providing eye-to-eye consultations to the head and employees is a more effective way of mentoring compared to distant communication tools i.e. skype sessions and phone consultations. Minimum 2-3 field visits should be planned during mentorship program.
- ! It is important that not only the management, but also employees participate in integrated or complementary trainings in order to get better understanding of institution functioning and strengthen communication inside the team.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ☑ It is critically important to include the management of the municipality from the very beginning. The initiating project/organization and the mentor need to communicate with the city Mayor or his deputy, coordinate and agree crucial questions of the program implementation with the management of the municipality.
- ☑ For the most long-term activities, listed in the Action Plan, it was only possible to develop the ground base for their further implementation due to a relatively short period of the mentorship process implementation. If limited periods are possible for the process, it makes sense to follow up with the supervision program after the mentorship is formally finished. The supervision foresees a less intensive support from the mentor side comparing to the one, provided while mentorship. The supervision should end with an additional assessment, done jointly by the supervisor and the management of the institution/organization.
- ☑ In case sufficient time is available for the mentorship process, it is advisable to integrate the supervision into the process. An intensive phase (“genuine mentoring”) could be followed by a less intensive phase (“supervision”). In this case, mentoring and supervision are implemented by the same expert.
- ☑ Apply a mentorship process only if the team is ready and prepared for changes and there is a clear request for such a program.
- ☑ Before starting a mentorship process, clear plan and meeting with the team should be done to present the mentorship idea; the institution/organization must clearly understand goals and phases of the mentorship process.
- ☑ It is inevitable to offer qualification measures linked to the mentorship. Those measures can be organized as integrated elements of the mentorship or as complementary trainings adjusted to the identified needs of the partners.

For Centres for Administrative Services and Social Protection Units and Territorial Centres for Social Services, training for the entire staff were organized during the mentorship for instance:

- Legal bases of the activity of Centers of Administrative Services
- Effective Communication in Centers of Administrative Services
- Stress Management in Centers of Administrative Services
- Organizational Development. Quality Management
- Communication for Social Services
- Work with Clients
- Organization of Services for Social Support of Population in ATC. Problems and Perspectives
- Legal Basics in the Area of Social Protection of Population
- Ethic Rules of Behavior for Public Officials: Peculiarities of Application in Social Area
- Professional Development of Public Officials in Social Area
- Resistance for Emotional Burn-Out in Public Service: Self-Help.

For Houses of Culture, employees participated in the trainings:

- Advocacy and cooperation with local authorities
- Engaging community and building network with stakeholders
- Local Fundraising.

- In respect of NGOs, the support by mentorship is very useful for organizations that are already transitioning from basic-level to moderate level of development; for basic-level organizations are needed:
 - Introductory knowledge about the public sector, management models, etc.
 - Support in the development of strategy, values, etc.
 - Teambuilding support (establishment of a team)
 - Legal support
 - Basic institutional support to launch processes.
- The possibility of further (after completion of the mentorship process) individual consultations with mentors (offline or online) could be considered; however, for the purpose of sustainability it would be better to focus on strengthening the self-development capacities of the institution/organization in the course of the mentorship process.
- Provide a networking element as a part of complementary training component to a mentorship; also, specific events for networking of the institutions/organizations could be considered as a part of a Mentorship.