

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

## **Note on overview of support provided to Free legal aid centers in years 2017-2019**

2019

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## 1. Background and Usefulness of support

In years 2017-2019 the project “Strengthening of Ukrainian Communities Hosting Internally Displaced Persons” started cooperation with the system of secondary free legal aid provision in Zaporizhzhia and Dnipropetrovsk regions. The main prerequisite for the cooperation between the Project and the system of secondary free legal aid provision was inclusion of IDPs as direct target category for serving by the secondary free legal aid centers.

In Ukraine, an issue of legal and social isolation of vulnerable layers of society, including IDPs, is getting quite acute as a result of lack of information of their rights and mechanism of rights’ protection. Free legal aid centers (FLA) are new entities of Ministry of Justice of Ukraine but position themselves as a bridge between government and local authorities and population, providing legal aid to vulnerable categories in the frames of existing legislation. It was communicated by FLA regional authorities that despite the existing system FLA centers have a modern approach of work with society, are eager to meet the needs, have motivation and will to develop they also lack government attention on several crucial subjects and require additional support.

## 2. Description of support

The Project “Strengthening of Ukrainian Communities Hosting Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)s” of the Initiatives of the Infrastructure Programme for Ukraine (IIPU) considered to support FLA centers in core municipalities in their requests for development and sustainability. Key interventions were:

- Provision of equipment;
- Ombudsman training conducted;
- Planning workshop conducted;
- Trainings conducted
- Consultancy support provided.

## 3. Types of support. Key messages

### 3.1 Provision of equipment

To support Zaporizhzhia and Dnipro regional FLA centers and local centers and bureaus in indicated regions in order to

- Conduct law educational activities for population
- Strengthen collaboration with local NGOs and local authorities, conduct joint activities (discussions, round tables);
- Decrease the time of provision legal aid in remote areas

The following equipment was provided: furniture, IT equipment, audio equipment, video equipment, moderation equipment.

### 3.2 Legal trainings conducted by Ombudsman

In the frames of the project implemented in conjunction with the Regional Center for Secondary Legal Aid, series of trainings with Ombudsman Office representatives were provided on current legal topics for communities, staff of free legal aid centers and advocates working with IDPs within the framework of the FLA.

The purpose of trainings was to raise awareness and, as a consequence, to improve the quality of legal aid in Ukraine, as well as to create a network of contact persons able to provide primary information on rights and responsibilities, as well as coordinate IDPs with regard to state institutions to which they can apply to resolve legal issues.

Three training blocks were conducted for communities, employees of the FLA Centers and advocates providing FLA in Zaporizhzhya Oblast, as well as in controlled territories of Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts.

Trainings for communities were held in cities of rayon importance, with the invitation the participants from rayons. Trainings for lawyers and staff of the centers were held in Zaporizhzhia, where representatives from all over the region were gathered.

To determine the thematic content of the trainings, a survey of target groups was conducted regarding their interest or need to enhance practical and theoretical knowledge of legal issues. The topics of trainings were following:

- 1) For communities:
  - Basic legal provision in the scope of IDPs rights protection: international practices and national peculiarities.
  - Enforcement of social rights of IDPs.
  - Practical aspects of the enforcement of equality and non-discrimination principle.
  - Free legal aid (FLA).
  - Case-study on personal data protection.
  - Preventing and combating domestic violence.
- 2) For staff of free legal aid centers:
  - Preventing and combating domestic violence.
  - Case-study on personal data protection.
  - Practical aspects of the enforcement of equality and non-discrimination principle.
  - Methods of psychological relief for employees, which work with vulnerable groups.
- 3) For advocates working with IDPs within the framework of the FLA:
  - Recent amendments of legislation in the scope of the IDPs rights protection.
  - The practice of ECtHR in the scope of IDPs rights protection.
  - Judicial practice in the scope of the personal data protection.
  - Judicial practice in cases of discrimination.
  - The procedure for entry into inheritance on objects on the temporarily occupied territory.
  - Re-issue of lost documents, which were issued by state and local authorities in the temporarily occupied territory.

### 3.3 Planning workshop conducted

The event was attended by 1

2 participants from 9 Secondary Legal Aid Centers from 6 partner municipalities of Dnipro and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts and a representative of the Dnipro Interregional Resource and Communication Platform.

The objective of the event was to determine strong and weak sides of FLA system on regional, city and bureau level, to form future vision of institutions on regional, city and bureau level, to think on the ideas for capacity development measures on the 3 levels: individual, institution and networking, to create the map of stakeholders in the FLA system, to make the list of prioritized CD measures that can be supported by GIZ, to create the roadmap of activities: identified and agreed timeline of CD activities (for 2018)

In order to achieve the objectives of the workshop, a methodology was introduced based on the practice of conducting strategic planning sessions. During the event participants were invited to analyze the current situation in the organization using the SWOT analysis tool. After assessing the current situation, a general vision of the development of the organization was developed, the groups were divided into levels - local centers and regional centers. Based on the vision, participants were asked to come up with innovative actions that would help to achieve the vision using the brainstorming technique. The next step was to select strategic growth directions and process key stakeholders. After the workshop participants received materials on operational planning based on the Logic Matrix, as well as the elaborated project plans selected by the participants as the most relevant ones.

At the workshop, representatives of the Free Secondary Legal Aid system had the opportunity to analyze the work of their centers: strengths and weaknesses, possible external opportunities for system development, and threats. SWOT analysis was conducted in groups by region.

### 3.4 Communication training conducted

The target audience of the training consisted of front office staff from the free secondary legal aid centers and bureaus, which work with a large number of visitors and documents on a daily basis and additionally serve vulnerable stratum of population (IDPs, participants of military activity etc.).

That was a 2-day trainings for 60 participants in three cities, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia and Kryvyi Rih.

The purpose of the trainings was to increase customer satisfaction with the quality of the services provided through the improvement of communication literacy of employees and skills to resolve conflict situations at work, prevention of professional burnout and increase the level of stress resistance among employees.

### 3.5 HR training conducted

The training was attended by 17 heads of regional and city centers of free legal aid in Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhya regions.

At the training, participants received knowledge about the personnel management system in the organization, its functions and role in the process of organizing labor and increasing staff efficiency. Participants got acquainted with modern trends and directions of HR development. Participants systematized personal managerial experience, compared it with the experience of colleagues and the management paradigm formed in 21st century. Participants looked at Leadership from a new perspective, realizing their strong zones and development zones. They appreciated the importance of applying competencies during the selection, evaluation and development of personnel. Participants trained the ability to conduct competency based interviews. Participants have compiled a list of questions for conducting an interview on the Leadership competency. Participants examined the relationship between the needs of employees and their motivation, developed a list of non-material activities that promote employee motivation. Participants recognized the importance of internal communications and compliance with agreements in working with the team, considered a list of their daily tasks from the perspective of delegation. Participants discussed the specifics of one's work and identified issues that are subject to delegation, substantiated the list of cases, which is not subject to delegation, taking into account the specifics of work. Participants learned how to determine the level of maturity of employees in the organization and found the relationship between the maturity of the employee and the management style most effective in relation to him. Participants got acquainted with the features and advantages of situational management, revealed how situational management affects the motivation of employees, dismantled practical cases for the choice of management style, met with new tools and methods of interaction with subordinates, found answers to the main questions of delegation.

### 3.6 Public relations trainings conducted

The specific objectives of this assignment were to increase the awareness of public, including IDPs, about availability of the free legal aid services, increase trust of the public in the legal aid centers and their work and to improve the information and communication policy of the legal aid centers and make it more oriented for the target groups (e.g. youth, single mothers, pensioners, IDPs, etc.)

The achievement of these specific objectives was based on the following elements:

- qualification of legal aid centers' management in principles, policies and innovative approaches of communication with media and public presentation;
- qualification of legal aid centers' subject matter employees (integrators and communicators) in approaches and instruments in mass media communication and public presentation.

For the above-mentioned objectives after consultations with Regional FLA centers' authorities it was decided to conduct following series of trainings for integrators and communicators, heads of the regional and local centers:

- 1) Social media marketing (development of SMM-strategy and SMM action plan; interest of auditory and increase of auditory; maintaining the page in the social network (e.g. Facebook, Instagram and YouTube);

- basic principles of effective SMM; writing texts and stories which will be interesting for the target auditory; selection of visual materials for the social media; reacting on the negative comments in the social media; making video from the life events; monitoring and analyses of the pages in the social network.)

2) Technical aspects of communication with media and public (definition of the target auditory and adaptation of the materials for them; key factors for preparation of effective press kit (announcement, press release, fact sheet etc.); formulation of key messages; practical advices on attracting media using innovative formats; preparation of informational materials according to organization's standards (posters, banners, news printed materials for meeting with media); working with negative feedback from clients using communication tools; how to use the social advertisement for advance of the institutions.)

3) Strategic principles, policies and innovative approaches of communication with media (communications policy and communications strategy; sources of communication with public; new approaches and trends in communication with public; analysis of existing communication tools; development of media plan for organization; building sustainable relationships with media; algorithm of cooperation with media.)

4) Basic principles of public speaking (building a speech, timing; preparation of the presentation; innovative formats of the presentation; key factors of successful interview; how to adapt the specific vocabulary to the target auditory; methods of the way out from the stalemated situations during the public speaking.)

19 persons from 14 centers were approached by the training.

### 3.7 Facilitation training conducted

The training was conducted for heads of regional and local centers and integrators aiming to provide basic knowledge in the understanding of facilitation, group process management and group dynamics, and to develop a methodology of several tools. The achievement of this specific objective was based on the following subjects risen at training:

- Determining who is the facilitator, considering the facilitation rhombus: general introduction to the process. In the working groups, participants found out who the facilitator is and what is facilitation, basic principles. When facilitation is possible and when is not. Participants considered rhombus tools or how a group should be managed
- The dynamics of group processes and the role of the facilitator. Through the game, participants have better learned how group dynamics is manifested and what stages it has. In the groups, participants worked on the role of facilitator at each stage
- The position, interests, fears of the participants, how it affects the group. Participants in the two live cases were able to understand the difference between positions and interests, and also followed the importance of understanding these concepts in practice.
- Conflicts in groups: why they arise and how to work? Based on the iceberg method, attendees were able to understand where the conflict came from and how to help resolve it
- The World Café, Open Space, Consensus Achievements, Activity Planning; Participants were involved in the implementation of these methods and were able to act as facilitators using them.

21 persons from 15 centers were approached by the training.

### 3.8 Consultancy support provided

The specific objective of this assignment was to support regional FLA center of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast in reaching its concept through improvement of communication inside legal aid centres, increasing the expertise of public in basic legislation and development of joint regional project ideas and project applications.

The subject for consultancy was determined as: Development of external communication strategy for Dnipro region on;

- Dissemination of information on free legal aid (FLA) system during elections process – how to benefit from it and what should be avoided.
- FLA new informational channels, including issuance of publication at the level of the region: risk assessment and assessment of benefits.
- Establishing of long-term partnerships with mass media.
- Expert recommendations on center's communication strategy improvement at the level of the region.
- An example of FLA system communication strategy at the regional level.

- Analysis of potential partners in external communication, not involved in the work with the FLA system.

The result of consultancy was a created Communication Concept and plan of action for the second half of 2019 on the subject "Responsible parenthood", which will allow to attract media representatives and, if possible, promote the main activities of the regional center. The Communication Concept identifies the main stages and identifies target audiences with an emphasis on impact using the basic communication tools.

### 3.9 Guide on effective communication, stress tolerance and specifics of work with difficult clients methodological

Methodological and teaching guide was created for managers and specialists of FLA Centers, especially for those who provide consulting services to various categories of clients, including internally displaced persons.

The guide was supplemented by client typology materials described by social service professionals, indicating typical reactions of verbal, non-verbal, and manipulation types by which a client type can be identified and recommended ways of communicating to a specialist with different types of clients.

## 4. Lessons Learned

- Based on the experience of the support implementation it was extremely important to have high level of motivation from the management of the partner side and the staff of organization. In case of high motivation of partner it appeared possible to achieve significant positive changes even without considerable financial expenditures.
- While providing support to FLA system it is advisable to take into the consideration the strict information flow, hierarchy in system and inner bureaucracy even though it is newly appeared organization of Ministry of Justice
- It is advisable to combine several support activities, such as: consultancy, trainings, seminars, educational trips, procurement of equipment, refurbishment of the premises etc. Synergetic effect in this case is extremely visible.
- Staff of FLA centers, who receive support show high performance and appreciation for the opportunities, high level of motivation, active position and openness. At the same time experts notice lack of atmosphere of trust and fixation on material motivation. Participants of trainings and consultancy have a very high level of psychological culture in terms of awareness and prevention of professional burnout, individual means of protecting the psychological limits of their own personality. Though not everyone understands the differences between empathic care and contact with a depleted client, reduces the work efficiency, leads to professional burnout, the development of an employee's aggressive or depressive features and diseases.
- Commenting on the level of awareness of the population about the activities of the FLA network and the ways of further dissemination of information about the services available here for the population, the representatives of the centers note that, subject to intensification of the dialogue with the population, the specialists of these centers would literally choke their work. According to them, the flow of clients who come to get services is quite large at the moment. Even though not all of the population has received the services from the FLA network that they could get, the center's experts see better education work, especially with young people and school-age children, to prevent problems.
- On working with teenagers, there is conclusion that professional use of videos on social networks, in particular, on the YouTube network, can be a tool that will inform the younger generation of their rights and responsibilities.
- Among the reasons for the low public awareness of the FLA network services system staff of FLA note there is low level of interest in coverage of this topic by national TV channels, which remain the main source of information dissemination for older people. Due to the lack of direct access to these channels of

communication from the representatives of the regional network of BPVD, they establish intensive work with the local media.

- Also, FLA staff have poor competencies in writing quality texts. Exactly texts, until the mastering of the centers of video work, remain the main tool to convey information about the work and services of the network.

## 5. Recommendations

The following recommendations were continuously received from experts on further support to FLA system:

- There is need in knowledge of staff whose daily work is connected to legal education in storytelling, creating presentations (scribing), creation and implementation of scripts of work with clients, counteraction to professional burnout, stressfulness both in a team and in work with clients, non-judicial conflict resolution (mediation), team management, time management;
- Identifying and detailing the specific target audiences that the centers work with, as well as producing clear key messages for these beneficiaries is the main purpose of further work and skills development;
- Messages created by Coordination Center should be the same in all centers and should be distributed synchronously, reaching precisely specific beneficiaries and not the general public;
- There should be conducted systematic training on "Effective communication with the client" in accordance with corporate standards, current work needs and individual inquiries of specialists;
- Systematic lessons on psycho-emotional and psychophysical unloading and prevention of professional burnout, groups of psychological support (professional format) should be introduced.
- In order to raise the level of awareness among the population about the services provided by the network of FLA centers the staff of the centers should have the inner conviction that the arrival of citizens to the centers for consultations is a key factor for the further efficient operation of the centers. And this should be addressed to all target audiences. The centers should not just have a team discussion but a written communication policy, based on the target audiences that the centers work with, for example, this year.
- Center's staff should master the skills of message rendering - working with graphics, collages, infographics, videos - as it allows to convey large amounts of information in a concise manner and to attract the attention of the audience. Despite the fact that the centers will receive a lot of graphic information from the capital, at the local level, by communicating information to the population through the media, they can offer media infographics about their work and the situation in the territory, which will attract attention due to local numbers and quality design.