

Stockholm 23 March 2006

Ukraine Public Dialogue

Visit to Kyiv 8th to 11th of March 2006.

Memo 1

Lars Tallert,
David Isaksson,
Global Reporting.

Swedish delegation

Mats Sundgren, information officer, Sida Europe Division
David Isaksson, consultant, Global Reporting
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Meeting at Cabinet of Ministers March 9

Participants:

#	Name	Organisation, position
1	Andriy Masalskyy	Secretariat of the President of Ukraine, Service for Drafting Presidential Speeches, Head of the Service
2	Tamara Yakovleva	The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Information Department, Analysis and Planning Division, Deputy Head
3	Natalya Dniprenko	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Deputy Director
4	Natalya Oksha	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Head of the Sector



5	Kateryna Momot	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Leading Specialist
6	Hanna Zotsenko	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Leading Specialist Media relations
7	Yuriy Hulenok	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department
8	Kristina Salomonsson	Swedish Embassy in Ukraine, First Secretary
9	Mats Sundgren	Sida HQ Stockholm, Europe Department, Information officer
10	David Isaksson	Global Reporting, Managing Director, Communication expert
11	Lars Tallert	Global Reporting, Leading Specialist Strategic Communication

The Cabinet's information department doesn't cooperate very closely with Parliament and the Secretariat of the President. In fact, this was the first time ever a meeting was held with representatives from public communication departments from the Secretariat of the President, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Parliament.

Despite this, or maybe just because of this, it was a unilateral agreement on the benefits of a closer cooperation, something that all participants believe will be one of the positive side-effect of the Sida financed project "Ukraine Public Dialogue".

Cabinet of Ministers

In 2004, a resolution was taken on consultancy with public. The resolution had two parts. The first part concerns the organisation of public hearings, round table discussions, with representatives from civil society. The second part dealt with the implementation of opinion polls among the general public.



A fruitful dialogue with the public is among the highest priorities for the government in order to create a better dialogue with the citizens. As a response to this ambition, a large number of public hearings with civil society have been organised. A Law on Public Dialogue is being drafted. 66 Public Collegiums have been formed, one for every National State Authority and the Regional Administrations. The Cabinet has also produced a booklet with FAQ:s, based on questions from citizens regarding different topics. An address book with all State Authorities and their respective Public Collegiums has been produced. The Parliament publishes all laws and draft laws on their website.

The Cabinet is presently reorganising and strengthening the Public Communication Department. Staff will double, from 25 to 50 employees. The ambition is to recruit new professionals and increase competence. The aim is to create a fully professional information department.

The mission of the department is not only to conduct a dialogue with the public, but also to involve all state authorities in this process and monitor that they follow communication standards set up by the Cabinet. A separate unit will be concerned only with civil society. A similar effort has never been made in Ukraine.

The goal of the dialogue is to strengthen civil society, to improve the quality of decisions taken by state authorities by taking into consideration the views of civil society. There is a strong focus on civil society and less on the general public.

Natalya Dniprenko will be the Head of the Department for relations with civil society. She stressed the importance of learning more in this area, both from Sweden and from other countries.

The Parliament (the Verkhovna Rada)

Tamara Yakovleva, Deputy Head of the information Department at the Verkhovna Rada, explained that the main task of the Parliament's department is to make the public aware of what is going on in the Parliament. One area is to increase the public knowledge about new laws. All laws, as well as draft laws, are published on the Rada website. The Parliament website also have different sites for each committee.



The Rada produces a daily newsletter (except on Mondays). There is a particular section in this newsletter where questions from the public are published together with answer of a Committee or a particular MP.

The department also produces a monthly magazine, but the ambition is to publish it biweekly soon. The department also organises special visits on request by interest groups. There are no tours organised for the general public.

People can also visit MPs, but in reality this opportunity is reserved to a very limited number of people.

21 persons work in the Rada's Information Department. In addition, 7 persons work with media relations, mostly for the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada.

Secretariat of the President

Andriy Masalsky is in charge of the service that is dealing with public communication. The entire organisation dealing with this task was formed very recently.

According to Andriy there is a lack of adaptation of information to fit target groups, which he sees a major problem. The President makes a weekly speech to the public on the State owned Ukrainian Radio, the radio station that reaches most people today in Ukraine.

General discussion

All three departments underline the need for developing feedback- and monitoring mechanisms. There is a request that this should be one of the focus points of the project.

The ambition is to monitor public opinion on a professional level. There is also a need for technical equipment: faxes, Internet and resources to organise events.

We discussed different arenas where public communication can take place: through mass media, through civil society or directly with the general public.



Another important topic is to find new ways to work with mass media. Some reflections:

- Commercial media covers the majority of readers.
- We also have a big number of newspapers owned by the State, but they are not read to the same extent.
- The means are not used efficiently. On the other hand it is important to provide public with information, but it is difficult to do this when one cannot tell the media what to report, as was done before the Orange Revolution.

There is presently a process of formulating a new law that will regulate the dialogue between the State and civil society organisations. There have been 5 round table discussions about the contents of the law. It will probably last up to a year before the law will be passed by Parliament.

Discussion on the project structure

The importance of including communication between different State authorities was stressed during the discussion. At present, it is a very bureaucratic procedure when State authorities want to communicate with each other and it is even more complicated for national State authorities and municipalities to communicate. This should be taken into account when study visits are planned.

Referring to earlier discussions with the Cabinet of Ministers, we brought up the proposal to make several study visits to Sweden, a Baltic country and Brussels. The reaction of this proposal was very positive from all three parties. Estonia has recently produced a Concept Paper on how to ensure a constructive public dialogue with civil society and it would be very fruitful to visit the people who have worked on this proposal.

The need for professional training of public communication specialists was also discussed. At present there are no such education in Ukraine. Such training could be organised at the Ukrainian Academy of Public Administration and could in the future be part of a possible next step of the project.

We discussed the length of each study visit. Five-days-visits to each country was seen as ideal. We also discussed a possible timetable for visits.



LUNCH AT THE RESIDENCE OF THE SWEDISH AMBASSADOR, MARCH 9

Participants:

#	Name	Organisation, position
1	John-Christer Åhlander	Embassy of Sweden in Ukraine, Ambassador
2	Ivan Ratushnyak	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Vice Minister
3	Natalya Dniprenko	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Deputy Director
8	Kristina Salomonsson	Swedish Embassy in Ukraine, First Secretary
9	Mats Sundgren	Sida HQ Stockholm, Europe Department, Information officer
10	David Isaksson	Global Reporting, Managing Director, Communication expert
11	Lars Tallert	Global Reporting, Leading Specialist Strategic Communication

The ambassador's invitation for lunch gave us the opportunity to present the project proposal to the responsible vice-minister. We discussed general problems and possibilities with regard to public communication. The vice-minister confirmed that this is an issue of high priority within the government.

MEETING WITH NGOs AND MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES March 9

Club of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
7 Instytutska str., Kyiv

#	Name	Organisation, position
State Authorities		
1	Natalya Dniprenko	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications



		Department, Deputy Director
2	Kateryna Momot	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Leading Specialist
3	Hanna Zotsenko	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Leading Specialist
NGOs		
4	Natalya Berezhna	Radio ROCKS-Ukraine, Senior Director
5	Adel Bosak	Ukrainian Ecological Association "Green World", Director of the Executive Council
6	Volodymyr Venger	Centre for Strategic Analysis of Economic Transformations, Head
7	Lyudmyla Gumenyuk	Mediareform Centre, Deputy Director
8	Galyna Levadna	NGO "Television Studio for Women", Head
9	Oleg Musiy	Public Collegium at the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, Chair
10	Polina Mykhaylenko	Science and Information Centre "Ecology. Woman. World", Director
11	Vasyl Slesarenko	NGO "Public Committee on National Security of Ukraine", Deputy Head
Swedish representatives		
9	Mats Sundgren	Sida HQ Stockholm, Europe Department, Information officer
10	David Isaksson	Global Reporting, Managing Director, Communication expert
11	Lars Tallert	Global Reporting, Leading



		Specialist Strategic Communication in Development Projects
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The NGOs present at the meeting are some the most active and professional in Ukraine. The purpose of the meeting was to give them the chance to, in an informal way, voice their opinions about the information flow between State authorities and civil society. It was however made clear that the Ukraine Public Dialogue project will be focused on civil servants and the State sector, as there are no other projects in this field.

We discussed the role of NGOs. One tool for influence from civil society is public hearings, organised by State Authorities when a new law is drafted or when an important development occurs in a sector.

At present, the most important fora for NGOs are the 66 Public Collegiums, tied to respective State authorities at national and regional level.

As an example of the growing dialogue, representatives from all Public Collegiums are invited to a meeting March 29-30 to state their opinion on the draft Law on Public Dialogue.

We discussed how these collegiums work in practice. Some collegiums have been functioning for several years, but most of them are newly constituted and are not sure of their function and how they should work towards the State authority. There is also a lack of technical recourses, such as premises for meetings, phones, faxes, Internet etc. Representatives from the Public Collegiums meant that this was a proof of that the State did not support them in practice.

Some Public Collegiums meet every month, but most meet only a couple of time per year. There are not yet steady routines for how the Public Collegiums should function in practice.

Oleg Musiy, Chari of the Public Collegium at the Ministry of Health, said: "Only when we will become financially independent we will have influence." One problem is that there is no tradition in people paying to become member of an NGO, which means that the available funds are either from government, private



donations or from international cooperation. Representatives from NGOs that participate in Public Collegiums receive no economic benefits.

We discussed the role of civil society. Some representatives see the Public Collegiums not primarily as advisory bodies, but believe that they should also provide State authorities with statistics, as certain NGOs have expertise in this field. One example where NGOs played an important monitoring role was during the presidential elections, when NGOs made opinion polls available, contradicting the first election results.

During the discussion, there was a clear tendency among many NGOs to view the State as a potential client rather than an entity that the civil society should monitor. This is a complex issue, especially when bearing in mind that some NGOs represent huge economic interests and can be powerful in lobbying for their interests.

Many participants meant that the State must support the NGOs and that this must be regulated. This is probably the main reason why the discussion is so focused on legal matters on how to regulate the dialogue between the State and civil society.

Several representatives said that first of all we need a good legislative act, otherwise we will just be talking in chaos.

The Swedish representatives explained that the view of civil society in Sweden is quite different. The strength of an NGO is due to the amount of popular support and the level of competence within the NGO. There is no law regulating this, even though most NGOs receive some kind of State support. Public movement is self-organised and has to be self-organised, not relying too much on the State. On the other hand, balancing financial needs of NGOs with independence from the State is indeed a problem in Sweden as well.

Proposals on possible activities in the project

The following proposals were made during the meeting:

- All legislative acts have to be discussed. Can the project find mechanisms on how to achieve this?



- Use the possibilities of the Internet! There should be a possibility to ask questions as well as to discuss issues on each State Authority's website.
- Give professional training to civil servants on how to handle the public, civil society and representatives from the media.
- Use experiences from other countries on how to communicate with the public, techniques on how to reach the public.
- Use experiences from other former Soviet countries on legislative matters.
- The project should use this question as a point of departure: How do we want to be treated by State authorities? The authorities must be public and they must answer questions.
- The project should evolve around an analysing process of legislative acts in other countries and then view how this could be adapted in Ukraine.
- Countries within the European Union should share mechanisms on how to have a dialogue with the public.
- Civil servants from PR- and press services in the State should be trained in understanding the role of mass media in a democratic market economy.
- How can the decision of an NGO conference be brought to the Parliament? How can we find ways to achieve this?
- Lastly, there was a fear that the Ukraine Public Dialogue project will only lead to a big conference and after that nothing will happen.

Additional conclusions

We had the impression that very few of the representatives at the meeting had actively searched for information in State entities. For instance, there were no clear answers on what people thought about access or comprehensibility of information from the State. In other words, there are two sides of the problem. On the one hand, the State has to make information comprehensible and accessible. On the other hand, the dialogue between the State and must "teach" civil society to search for information in order to actively monitor the State.

Planning meeting with Natalya Dniprenko March 10



1	Natalya Dniprenko	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Deputy Director
2	Kateryna Momot	The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, State Authorities and Public Communications Department, Leading Specialist
9	Mats Sundgren	Sida HQ Stockholm, Europe Department, Information officer
10	David Isaksson	Global Reporting, Managing Director, Communication expert
11	Lars Tallert	Global Reporting, Leading Specialist Strategic Communication in Development Projects

The purpose of the meeting was to plan the project in detail. Based on earlier discussions with the Cabinet of Ministers and meeting of March 9, Global Reporting had written a first draft proposal in consultation with Mats Sundgren. The meeting evolved around this draft proposal and the list of key-issues that had been formulated by the staff at the Cabinet of Ministers (see Appendix 1).

Some of the key aspects brought up were:

- How is high quality production of information made? How do we go about to produce information adapted to the community? How is dissemination of public information made in the most efficient way?
- How are press conferences and information campaigns organized?
- Are there experiences of joint projects between the State and the media in Sweden and other EU countries?
- How is the legal framework functioning in Estonia, regulating the relation between the State and civil society?
- What are the different techniques to receive feedback? What tools exist to get feedback from the public?
- How do you monitor the media? How are TV- and radio licenses issued in Sweden? How does public TV function?



Natalya stressed the importance of good documentation in the project. We agreed on that producing material for a “Resource book on Public Communication” is a good way of spreading lessons learnt in the project. This Resource Book can later be developed and used for training of communication staff in the Ukrainian State in all State sectors. There are 80 different State entities on national and oblast level. All these work – or should work - with public communication.

As many projects are directed towards NGOs, but no project directed towards civil servants working with public communication it is important that we keep the focus. This will also help to strengthen the feeling of ownership among the Ukrainians.

We discussed the timetable and participants. We agreed that there should be at least one representative from each of the three governing bodies participating in every study visit to assure that key staff have an overview over these complex issues. These three people would be the core group of the project. Mats stressed that this project aims at capacity building for civil servants working with public communication.

Material to be produced prior to the visit:

- An introduction to all persons and institutions that will be visited in Sweden and the Baltic countries. Produced by Global Reporting.
- A short presentation of the Ukraine context that could be distributed to those that will receive the group before the visits. Produced by the Ukraine participants.

Meeting with Oksana Potapenko, March 10

Oksana Potapenko is the political advisor to Parliament candidate Klitshko, Reforms & Order Party. She is also a young political activist with experience from the orange revolution and working at the Parliament. She has been in Sweden on the invitation of the Jarl Hjalmarsson foundation.

There are many obstacles for a dialogue between public information officers and the general public/media. The physical



assess is one aspect. It is today very difficult to get access to the Parliament. There are no open visits such as in Sweden when ordinary citizens can visit the Parliament's open sessions.

Another problem is that many politicians purposely avoid contacts with the general public. Many parties prefer not to have visitors' centres where they can be contacted during campaigns. Once elected to Parliament many politicians don't even publish their contact information at the Parliaments website. One explanation is the fact that several of them have become Parliamentarians with the main purpose to benefit from the immunity laws.

Oksana agrees that there is a need for capacity building for public communication officials.

It would be useful for the project to keep an informal contact with persons like Oskana Potapenko as she can give a fresh and fairly objective insight into current problems, related to the Ukraine context.

Meeting with Luda Gumenyuk, NGO Media Reform
(www.mediareform.com.au)

Mediareform is formed jointly by the Mohyla School of Journalism at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and several media companies. The idea of the programme "People and power: dialogue through the media" is to establish links between civil servants, media and civil society. In the programme, financed by DFID, training sessions have been organised in the following manner: firstly, NGOs, civil servants and media work separately for a day on issues concerning their own work. On the second day all three are brought together for discussions on how to improve dialogue and contact. As a tool, Mediareform has published separate handbooks for the three stakeholders. The project is now coming to an end. In the future Mediareform will focus more on round table discussions.

The experience acquired by Mediareform could probably be useful during a possible second part of the project. It is however, at present, important that the project keeps the focus on civil servants and public communication.



Stockholm, March 22, 2006

Lars Tallert

David Isaksson



APPENDIX 1

This appendix was written by staff at the Department for Public Communication, Cabinet of Ministers, Ukraine, prior to the start of the project. This document can be seen as the point of departure for the project.

THE MOST RELEVANT QUESTIONS WITHIN THE AREA OF COMMUNICATION

1. Legislative formalisation of the openness and transparencies procedures with respect to state authorities' functioning:

- What is the regulation for the provision of official information, access of the public and journalists to information?
- Is there an established procedure employed by State authorities to consider journalistic enquiries, and what is the timeline for a response?
- Is there a legislative formalisation of the technologies and forms used to give coverage to State authorities' functioning, and to cooperate with media (democratic standards in the area)
- Do mass media and Internet-editions register themselves? Is there a regulation for the registration procedure?

2. Relations between State authorities and mass media

- What structural units within State authorities have the responsibility to ensure media coverage about their activities, and interact with mass media? What are the aims, objectives and main functions of such units? What technologies and forms are employed by State authorities to ensure media coverage about their activities and the interaction with media?
- What is the allocation within the State budget for ensuring media coverage about State authorities' activities and interacting with media? Are there mass media financed from State budget?
- Do the State authorities employ resources of public broadcasting services to ensure coverage about their activities?



- Do State authorities monitor mass media to make suggestions and respond to criticism with respect to their functioning? How are the monitoring results taken into account?
- How does copyright and mechanisms of following copyright laws function?

3. IT application to set interaction between State authorities and certain target audiences (children and youth)

- Are there targeted projects of the State authorities for children and youth (web sites creation for children and youth, publication of bulletins, creation of specialised TV and Radio-programmes about the functioning of State authorities)?

4. Formation of the image of public servants, interacting with mass media

- Are there any requirements towards appearance, language spoken, manners and behaviour of public servants in general? What are the ways of getting public servants to know business etiquette requirements (trainings)?

QUESTIONS

Public information

1. Is there legislative formalisation for the technologies used to interact with the public and to provide coverage about the activities of State authorities (democratic standards in the area)?
2. Access of citizens and media to information. Is there an established procedure employed by States authorities to consider journalistic enquiries, and what is the timeline for the answer?

The concept of official information

3. Do mass media and Internet-editions register themselves? Is there a regulation for the registration procedure?



4. Do state authorities monitor mass media to make suggestions and respond to criticism with respect to their functioning? How are the monitored results taken into account?
5. Are there mass media financed from the State budget?
6. Is there an Code of Ethics for journalists on their conduct with the State authorities?
7. What is the allocation within the State budget for ensuring coverage to state authorities' activities and interacting with media?

Interaction between the state authorities and media

1. What structural units within State authorities organise for public consultations, and interact with media?
2. Is there a separate central authority responsible for interaction with media and public relations? What is the organisational structure of such an authority, its organisational chart, regulations, stipulating its functioning?
3. What technologies and forms are used for the interaction of State authorities with society?
4. What are the mechanisms to address the interests of the public as showed by public opinion research, when forming and realising State policies?
5. Are there consulting bodies to the State authorities? How do they function?
6. How is public monitoring of the functioning of State authorities carried out?
7. Interaction of State authorities with the public during picketing, rallies at the state authorities' buildings. In what ways are State authorities interacting with participants on these actions?
8. What is the budgeting for consultation with the public?
9. Regulations on the governmental order from NGOs?
10. Are there any requirements towards appearance, language spoken, manners and behaviour of public servants in general? What are the ways of getting public servants to know professional etiquette requirements (training)?