IREX METHODOLOGY FOR CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT WITH THE REFORM PROCESS

**Developed for the Ministry
of Internal Affairs of Ukraine -
National Police Reform**

IREX, within the Citizen Engagement and Reform Communication project, engages libraries and other civic platforms to establish cooperation between citizens, mass media, and patrol police. The project works in all regions of Ukraine with particular focus on the cities of Kramatorsk, Sloviansk, Mariupol, Severodonetsk, Rubizhne, Lysychansk, Kropivnytskiy, Vinnitsa, Chernihiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Uzhgorod, and Mukachevo.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Equip platforms such as libraries and civil society organizations in target cities with the skills, tools, and connections to hold public information and engagement events that build understanding, trust, and productive relationships among citizens, police, civil society, and government stakeholders

- Educate and engage local media professionals on police reform and media's role in reform coverage and communications

- Conduct a public information campaign to inform citizens and raise awareness about the new national police force and reform in the target cities

- Facilitate establishment of regular meeting structure for community members and patrol police in high crime neighborhoods

- Support roll out of communications training for the Ministry service centers' staff throughout the country

- Support information provision and engagement of citizens into the development and implementation of the new emergency responders/volunteer firefighters reform

The project is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) and implemented in partnership with the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and in close cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine.

PURPOSE OF METHODOLOGY:

- Provide step by step guidance on how to build partnership relationships between citizens and the reformed government/public service by changing attitudes and behaviors through provision of relevant information and demonstration of the value of cooperation.

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK:

- In each community, government representatives, citizens (broadly defined and inclusive of civil society, entrepreneurs, activists), and media are all stakeholders and participants in the reform process. For reform success and effectiveness, they need to be engaged in a participatory and meaningful way that would allow to overcome stereotypes and prejudices and to build trust and productive relationship. This can be achieved through conversations around issues of mutual concern facilitated at neutral platforms which provide timely and relevant information about reforms and help establish effective and useful interaction patterns between stakeholders. Trust-building and objective useful information will lead to **attitude change.** This, reinforced by interactions around issues of mutual concern will facilitate **positive behavior change** resulting in **new relationship and dynamics** and **successful reform effort.**

Citizens / Government / Media

Neutral communication platforms and skillful facilitation of initial conversations

Relevant and timely information / Effective and useful interaction patterns

MAJOR STEPS IN THE PROCESS INCLUDE:

1. ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS:

Engage a diverse citizen base representing a full variety of backgrounds. Make sure to include different demographics (youth, adults of voting age, pensioners) and socio-economic backgrounds:

- Conduct community surveys/questionnaires that contain some open ended questions to allow citizens to relay perceptions, hopes, criticisms, and fears as a starting point for dialogue. Build in periodic data collection into operations to guide reform implementation process

- Utilize existing data (health, economic, and other) to identify underserved groups and ensure that outreach strategies targets these groups

- Identify local reform champions/advocates that are respected in communities to help build local enthusiasm for dialogue with government actors

Engage active civil society:

- Work with civic activists and leaders for general population (champions described above could be in this group):
    - Identify civil society groups with strong networks (donors and international and Ukrainian organizations can assist)
    - Ensure inclusivity across demographics and geographies
    - Who are the most vocal supporters/detractors of reforms? Look for constructive voices within these camps, those who are forward looking, are not using inflammatory rhetoric

- Reach out to and engage organizations representing groups with specific needs, such as visually impaired, cyclists, LBGTI, small businesses, and others

Engage local media and acknowledge their important role in communicating reforms:

- Initiate conversation with media to explain what reform is hoping to accomplish, solicit their feedback to ensure buy in

- Invite media to community engagement events

- Do not dictate or just provide written statements to be broadcast

- Encourage media to deliver information in creative ways to reach non-traditional audiences and young people

- Government/public sector actors should be encouraged to participate in media roundtables or live call-in shows, make themselves available to journalists for interviews

Ensure that local representation of the government reform body (in this case patrol police) is open to building relationships of trust and connect with civil society and citizens and work productively with local media on the reform effort. Trust-building needs to be rooted in mutual respect: use "we statements" in initial meetings, refrain from criticizing tactics or actions of citizens/civil society actors, acknowledge concerns, be forward looking "how do we get there together?"

IREX has utilized over 65 public libraries in 14 cities to bring together and build trust between citizens, patrol police, and media since January 2016. They have proven to be effective as convening spaces, especially since their traditional audiences – youth and pensioners - could be hard to reach otherwise. They also provide free space and resources, as well as a trained librarian facilitator, if it was a Bibliomist library http://bibliomist.org/map/ua/

IREX developed (in collaboration with MoIA) a facilitator's package, now available to MoIA, which includes presentations, activity cards, sample event schedules, and organizing tips for community engagement. The guide also contains short activity cards with «lesson plans» - scenarios for how to conduct series of events.
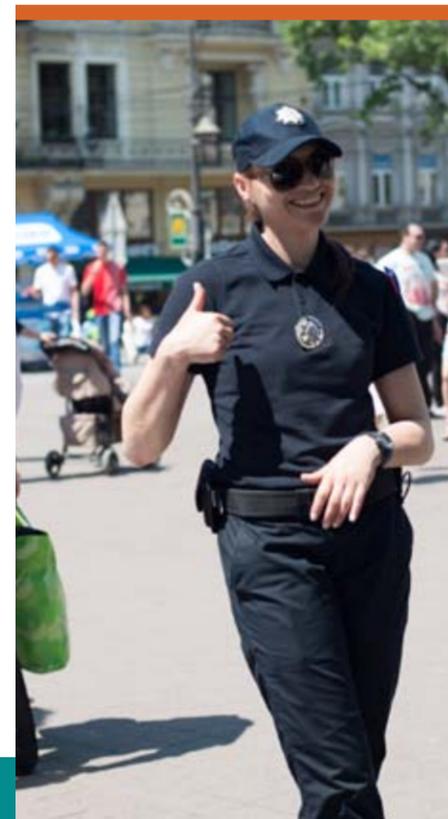
2. CREATE NEUTRAL PLATFORMS FOR ENGAGEMENT:

- Create/use effective and neutral spaces to start the conversation (community platforms, non- political, not associated with economic powers, not associated with outside donors)

- Look for sustainable platforms that will be available in the future. Examples include: public libraries and ОСББ (condo association spaces)

3. USE SKILLFUL FACILITATORS FOR INITIAL COMMUNICATIONS:

- Engage community-based facilitators with conflict mitigation and moderation skills for initial dialogues

- Facilitators should aim to build positive awareness, then understanding, and then engagement

- Facilitators should have good facilitation skills and knowledge of reform effort and progress and do not have to come from government entity

- With time, communication patterns will be established and the need for facilitators will diminish as community liaisons will come forward in the process

4. PROVIDE RELEVANT AND TIMELY INFORMATION TO STAKEHOLDERS:

- Approach design and content of information materials with equal care: it should be concise, relevant, visually appealing and easy to grasp, yet by no means "dumbed down"

- Materials and information should add value for all stakeholders:
    a. For citizens – highlight what's different and why it is relevant and important to each person's life
    b. For media – where to get current factual data and who is the go to person in the government entity for updates
    c. For civil society groups with niche interests – what is the new policy and how can better service be provided for their constituents

5. SEEK TO ESTABLISH NEW, TRUST-BASED, EFFECTIVE INTERACTION PATTERNS:

- Acknowledge existing dynamics and history and the need to undo stereotypes and existing patterns of interaction

- Model new dynamics – that of collaboration and partnership - to create new patterns of interaction

- Create a habit of interaction – facilitate sustainable space and time and process

6. REINFORCE THE EFFORT WITH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION:

- Select effective media – rely on width of coverage and innovation (for example, combination of TV, radio, and social media)

- Design campaign to communicate relevant changes and call for desired support/partnership: e.g.: not that police is now great, but that police is now professional and it takes a partnership with citizens to bring down crime

- Reinforce with other materials designed for citizens, keep updating them on the reform process through media and through the communication channels

www.irex.org

+38 044 537 06 04

info@irex.ua

[f] irexinternational

[t] IREXUkraine

[in] company/irex

[YouTube] user/irexdc