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ENGAGE
**Enhance Non-Governmental Actors
and Grassroots Engagement**



MEMORANDUM

Re: Enhancement of Civic Education in Ukraine

From: Pact Inc

To: Interested parties

Date: September 25, 2018

Background of the educational reform and introduction of civic education curriculum in schools

The reforming processes in Ukraine, initiated by the government, include among others the reform in the system of education. According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MOES) in 2018 the educational reform effects at least 65% of Ukrainians (teachers, children in the formal system of education and their parents). Thus, the success of educational reform does not only influence the future of the state as it strives to up bring educated and competent citizens but is currently an important transformation process directly affecting most Ukrainians.

On December 2016, the concept of New Ukrainian School was approved by the government as a policy paper. The Concept aims to reverse negative trends and turn Ukrainian schools into entities able to promote consolidation, economic development and competitiveness of Ukraine. One of the main aspects of the New Ukrainian School Concept is the new content of education based on competence approach, where social and civic competence are one of the key ones.

On September 5, 2017 Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine passed a new law on education, which legitimized educational reform initiated earlier. One of the key changes is the development of civic competences of participants of educational process and the state shall provide conditions for obtaining civic education. Article 5 of the law says that civic education aims at “forming competences related to realization of rights and duties by a person as a member of the society, awareness about values of civil (free democratic) society, rule of law, human and civic rights and freedoms”.

Over many decades education in Soviet schools aimed at accumulation of knowledge by kids. Slowly such approach minimized the motivation for thinking independently. During lessons teachers mainly talked and acted while students stay passive listeners. Teachers presented correct answers and did not allow for discussions. They believed that a child has knowledge if he/she repeats what a teacher or text book says. It is expected that if a kid learns and repeats the presented information then he/she understand it. Teachers always try to provide an algorithm of actions to allow for easier perception and better memorizing of knowledge. Such system of teaching does not allow for initiative, interactive activities, critical thinking and developing skills. Wrong answers are treated as mistakes. So, children are afraid to make mistakes which kills their will and ability to be active and initiative.

ENGAGE achievements in civic education to date

USAID/ENGAGE Activity to Enhance Non-Governmental Actors and Grassroots Engagement understands civic education as the **competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) required to be an active, democratic, responsible and critical citizen**. The ultimate goal of USAID/ENGAGE is to facilitate an understanding by children and their parents of the need and importance of the rule-of-law state and civil society as its partner.

Civic education in formal education

Civic education in Western countries is seen mainly as an integral part of primary and secondary education, that is, directed to those young citizens who are preparing for adulthood as active citizens. In other words, for those who will soon acquire new rights and freedoms, school forms the initial civic foundation (knowledge and understanding of the nature of the society and the rule of law). School performs this task, in part, through a specialized curriculum on citizenship (variously named *ethics, social studies or social science, civics or citizenship education*). Knowledge is a key component of the engaged citizen and is an important element of civic education. People, who are unaware of the basic political structure of their society are less likely to be actively engaged in civic life. The content of civic education should include practical and relevant information about the political realities of their society.

Over the last two years ENGAGE has been working closely with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MOES) to design civic education curriculum for schools. The program had perfect timing and offered support to MOES right after the approval of the New Ukrainian School during preparations to the introduction of innovations into Ukrainian schools. To achieve the task, ENGAGE in close cooperation with MOES formed the Civic Education Cohort that consisted of five Ukrainian CSOs with the vast background and expertise in civic education. The selected CSOs designed civic education curricula for students ranging from primary school to high school. The creation of civic curricula for all grade groups ensures consistency and continuity of civic education.

The critical element of the civic education curriculum became a mandatory civic education course for 10th graders, which was approved by MOES for further implementation in Ukrainian schools starting September 1, 2018. Detailed manual for teachers “3D Of Democracy: Think, Care, Act (**Dumaemo, Dbaemo, Diemo** in Ukrainian)” was developed for this school course. This new teaching manual got the highest rating of all educational materials from MOES experts (86% of maximum number of scores). Anti-discrimination expertise also highly assessed the manual. Civic education course manual became the basis of a new textbook for pupils of 10th grade that incorporates its materials and teaching methods. 60,000 students from around 2,500 schools all over Ukraine will get a new textbook “3D Of Democracy: Think, Care, Act” published with state budget funds in fall 2018.

In spring 2018 Pact partner tested the new course. The assessment conducted during the testing phase indicated that knowledge of the Civic Literacy Test (CLT) questions among high school students and pedagogical university students exposed to civic education curriculum is relatively high: 40% has passed civic literacy test (10 correct answers out of total 13 questions) vs 11% of adult Ukrainians according to the last national poll conducted by USAID/ENGAGE in spring 2018. In 2018/2019 school year ENGAGE partner will conduct a full-scale piloting to assess the new course and track increase of civic literacy among students exposed to the civic education course.

Another important characteristic of the new Ukrainian school is an integrated approach to organization of the educational process, so the Civic Education Cohort has designed civic education modules integrated into other subjects throughout the school covering primary and middle school. Special attention was given to the primary school as the educational reform starts with the 1st graders. Last year MOES piloted New Ukrainian School approaches in the 1st grade of 100 schools. At the same time ENGAGE partners designed special learning materials on civic education to integrate into the program of the 1st grade and tested it in 10 schools of those 100 experimental schools. This way experimental schools all over Ukraine have also integrated civic education and ensured the integrated approach to learning while forming civic competences among the youngsters. ENGAGE is planning to further support the experimental schools by providing support with integrated civic education materials for other primary school grades.

The process of designing effective civic education for Ukrainians focused on the methodology to be employed in the classroom as much, if not more than, the content that will be covered. Educators should teach civic content in an active and engaging way in a classroom environment that has been deliberately structured to encourage students to express and discuss their opinions and views in the classroom and to empower them to think for independently, make their opinions heard, and practice their participatory skills.

Extra-curricular civic education

ENGAGE idea of civic education is not restricted to formal education, but also includes non-formal education and practical experience.

During its two first years Pact has supported 43 projects in its pipeline for extra-curricular civic education, implemented by Pact's partners. Both local and national extra-curricular civic education initiatives were supported through 2 thematic RFAs and open-door mechanism to promote learning leading to bigger engagement of people.

The main spheres of activities covered by partners within the civic education component of ENGAGE:

- Raising civic awareness and civic engagement among the youth (students, teenagers).
- Empowerment and capacity development of CSOs to work with local state authorities to address local problems.
- Inclusive governance (internally displaced persons (IDPs), people with disabilities (PWDs), women, civic activists, elderly people etc.).
- Public oversight of strategic plans and programs introduced by local governments.
- Promotion of anti-corruption activities /transparency of local governance.
- Encouragement of citizens participation in social and political life.
- Promotion of an open democratic society, that values gender equality and antidiscrimination.

The largest number of beneficiaries covered by partner organizations (13 projects) within USAID/ENGAGE Program constituted youth, namely **over 8700 students** of high schools and universities took part in **230 extracurricular activities/events**. The other sub-awards were focused on women, representatives of local and national state authorities and NGOs, local activists, IDPs, PWDs, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning and Intersex (LGBTQI), media representatives, and average Ukrainian citizens.

Over 17000 individuals took part in more than **500 various events**, organized by the sub-awardees. These events included trainings, forums, conferences, workshops, presentations, study visits, master classes, open public events (festivals, hackathons, fairs, film screening), pitching, site visits, webinars, public discussions, round tables with the representatives of state authorities

119 interactive presentations were conducted for more than **5000 students and pupils** in 9 regions. More than **700 IDPs** attended study and public events (round tables, conference, courses, panel discussions and fairs) during first two years of ENGAGE. These events were organized to raise awareness about their constitutional rights, responsibilities and opportunities for their further integration into communities. ENGAGE partners implemented **21 forum theaters, 12 flash mobs, and 11 awareness raising campaigns** to popularize civic activism (namely among youth and elderly people), to counteract corruption, to inform citizens about human rights and inclusive governance, and to increase tolerance towards PWDs.

The projects activities, implemented by the sub-awardees, resulted in the **development of a range of policies**. Thus, 7 sub-awardees developed policies mainly focused on introduction of inclusion into work of youth centers, on establishing youth council, providing public monitoring, planning and promotion of resolution of energy and water supply issues at local level, which were approved by the authorized state bodies for their further implementation.

The media coverage encompasses all projects activities, implemented by the Pact partners. However, there are projects, where the main focus was on informing citizens of Ukraine about current social and political situations, and therefore engaging citizens into active social and political life, as well as raising their awareness on the ongoing reforms and promoting of the role of civil society in the country.

USAID/ENGAGE plans to further enhance civic education in Ukraine

In the formal education system:

According to its commitments Pact has provided timely support to MOES in designing civic education curriculum for schools. Further efforts shall be directed on supporting the implementation of the new curriculum.

To ensure the successful introduction of the civic education curriculum in schools Pact will address the following challenges:

- While educational materials were tested in spring 2018 they require a full-scale piloting to monitor effectiveness of both the content and teaching methodology applied. As civic education programs in Ukraine begin to expand to reach more and more students, it is important to continuously and systematically assess and evaluate those programs and make adjustments and revisions when necessary. Program design, curriculum planning and material creation should not be viewed as one-time process. Piloting will also allow to monitor and maximize the increase of knowledge of CLT among high school students exposed to the mandatory civic education course.
- Re-training of teachers constitutes the biggest challenge for effective introduction of civic education curriculum in schools. There are total 406 000 teachers in Ukraine, all of which shall

possess knowledge and ability to form social and civic competence of students. Pact will concentrate its efforts on re-training of the following groups of teachers:

- There is a critical need to support primary school teachers who have started to implement the new educational standards in September 2018, to implement civic competence in their work with children and their parents according to the new educational standards based on integrated approach. The Ukrainian government put special emphasis on re-training teachers of primary schools as the success of the educational reform depends on the successful launch of the New Ukrainian Schools in primary school which should demonstrate the effectiveness and benefits of the reform to parents and broader public. Pact will support efforts of the government in re-training primary school teachers in new interactive pedagogy and ways of forming civic competences among the youngsters.
 - The obligatory course on civic education in the 10th grade starts in all Ukrainian schools in fall 2018. Pact will support both off-line and on-line trainings to teachers that start teaching this course. It will also try to reach more teachers through the design and introduction of special courses for teachers in the state-run In-service Teachers' Training Institutes in each oblast.
- To compliment trainings of in-service teachers Pact will support introduction of special course or educational modules on civic education and methods of its teaching into the curriculum of pedagogical universities. This way in the upcoming years Ukrainian schools will get new young teacher that are already adequately trained and supported to properly teach the course.
 - To support MOES through the design and implementation of integrated modules on civic education for 2nd-4th grades of the primary school as part of the national educational experiment in 100 schools around Ukraine that pilot new educational standards in primary school.
 - To enhance the curriculum and lessons of civic education programs it is also important to pursue external partnerships and engage organizations and individuals outside of the educational sphere into the educational process. Skilled teachers are an obvious and critical elements of high quality civic education. There are, however, many other individuals and organizations who, although they may not be officially affiliated with the education sector, can add to students' civic education experience. Representatives from the local government, private corporations and law firms, civil society organizations can be engaged into specific lessons or activities to create a rich and diverse learning environment for students. This is a sustained way for CSOs to connect with the young generation and engage them into civic activism. While both civic education curriculum and extra-curricular efforts of Pact are interlinked this element together with community projects of high school students described below is the strongest cross-cutting point of two civic education components.
 - While the civic education curriculum aims to form practical skills, it is important to promote community projects initiated and implemented by high school students. This way students put into practice the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom. They also form social networks important for further civic engagement. Learning by doing is proved to be the most effective way of studying. According to the research in fall 2017 among activists engaged by Pact partners in

various extra-curricular civic education activities the level of civic knowledge is very high. 76% of almost 350 responded activists passed civic literacy test. Though this number is not representative of the sector it is very high comparing to 11% of CLT among wide population and 40% among students. While CLT is rather high among high school students, local community work shall be the most effective approach to successful learning and further civic engagement.

To effectively address challenges described above, ENGAGE will continue providing sectoral support to the Civic Education Cohort, including sub-award support, workshops, international technical assistance when needed, study tour and consulting on strategic communications and sectoral leadership.

In extra-curricular civic education.

During two first years ENGAGE has reached over 17K Ukrainians through various extra-curricular civic education activities. Further Pact efforts will be focused on:

- Networking previously supported civic education initiatives and involving them into national and local coalitions promoting key reforms in Ukraine that will be supported by Pact in the next couple of years. ENGAGE will continue to award broad-based extra-curricular civic education grants in the form of follow-on or new subawards. National CSOs and core partners will also be supported to engage and integrate local-level counterparts; local and regional activists and organizations to address local issues and influence national-level policies; and, networks and coalitions to build on civic education results and increase civic education in campaigns.
- Creation and support of anti-bullying coalition of Ukrainian CSO which would also work closely with MOES to make Ukrainian schools safe and inclusive. 67% of children in Ukraine aged 11-17 faced bullying in the past three months. 24% of children were victims of bullying, and 48 % of these victims did not tell anyone about the incidents. These are the results of a research conducted for UNICEF in 2017. These are alarming figures, particularly at a time when Ukraine is going through a conflict, which has left almost 1.6 million people internally displaced (IDPs), including 220,000 children. This work would complement Pact efforts to enhance civic education curriculum, reduce gender stereotypes and engage marginalized groups such as PWDs, IDPs and LGBTI.
- Pact will continue working on the promotion campaign of the civic education curriculum launched in Year 2. The campaign to build demand for civic education is interlinked with the issue-based sectoral civic education grants that designed and piloted the civic education curriculum. Pact expects to continue the campaign and focus it on other pressing civic education needs, such as the anti-bullying campaign.