In February, 2004 a US$ 30,430 PHRD grant agreement to support preparation of Third Programmatic Adjustment Loan (PAL-III) was signed by Ms. Ludmyla Musina, Deputy Minister of Economy and European Integration and Mr. Dusan Vujovic, World Bank Country Manager for Ukraine. The Japanese Ambassador, Mr. Kishicho Amae, also attended the ceremony.

PAL-III continues a series of five programmatic loans which support the Government’s efforts to address policy, institutional and structural weaknesses, and thereby generate sustainable economic growth, increase real incomes and reduce poverty. Significant progress is being made on the program as reflected by approval of the PAL-II loan in December 2003. Thus, PAL-III is already under preparation, and like previous PAL’s, it is being designed to support concrete and measurable outcomes reflected by completion of benchmarks in five thematic areas: (a) improvement of financial discipline; (b) development of a market-supporting regulatory system; (c) development and enforcement of property rights; (d) establishment of transparency and efficiency in financial management of public resources; and (e) management of social and environmental risks.

The PHRD Grant will facilitate the PAL III program through provision of research, surveys, policy advice, and public consultations. Among the numerous topics to be covered are the following:

• development of a “Corporate Governance Index” for monitoring problems and improvements in Ukraine’s corporate governance system;
• analytical support for the budget process, expenditure policy, tax policy, intergovernmental finance and for development of a system of investment grants for local governments;
• implementation of the second nation-wide Cost of Doing Business Survey, with continued focus on the official, employee time and unofficial costs of registration, licensing and inspections. For the first time, this study will also focus on the costs of tax compliance, customs procedures and standardization requirements for importers and exporters;
• harmonization of legislation with the Land Code as well as further review and improvement of the system of land title issuance;
• research on how to better target social assistance;
• assistance in designing a fiscally responsible and effective system of public health insurance;
• institutional development of the civil service and creation of a system to improve strategic decision-making within the public administration.

The PHRD Grant is provided by the Government of Japan and will be executed by the Ministry of Economy and Issues of European Integration of Ukraine.

Who can apply?

Civil society organizations which are based in Ukraine can apply for a grant.

Civil society organizations that work in rural areas will have preferences. Civil society organizations must be in good standing and have a record of achievements in the community.

Civil society organizations have to have a good reputation and experience in grants’ management (jury panel will take into account not only grants form the donor organizations but also successful experience of organizations in raising additional funds from local businesses, municipal government and other institutions). Priority will be given to organizations not supported by the Program in previous years (organizations are not eligible for more than three grants from the Small Grants Program within a five-year period).

What Kind of Activities are Supported?

The Small Grants Program supports activities related to civic engagement for the empowerment of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Activities should:
• Promote dialogue and dissemination of information;
• Enhance partnerships between civil society organizations, government agencies and private sector (in particular provide support to the initiatives on development of public and corporate governance).

Activities may include, but are not limited to, workshops and seminars, costs for publications or audio-visual materials, or other innovative networking efforts that small organizations generally find difficult to fund through their regular program budgets. The activity should be completed within one year of the date the grant is awarded.

How to find the application form?

You can find the application form on the web-page of the World Bank Country Office in Ukraine www.worldbank.org.ua. It is also possible to order the application form via the e-mail by sending your request to mturyanytsya@worldbank.org. You can address your questions to Yuriy Savko, Coordinator on Third Sector Activities or to Maryana Turyanytsya, Consultant on Third Sector Activities by phone: (044) 490-66-71/2/73.
Although HIV/AIDS is spreading swiftly in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, immediate application of coordinated measures aimed at preventing the spread of the epidemic among all groups of the population could avert immense socio-economic losses in the future. This is the message of the regional strategy document of the World Bank to support measures combating HIV/AIDS, titled "Averting AIDS Crises in Eastern Europe and Central Asia", whose implementation commenced last year.

"Acting immediately today and ensuring broad political support at the national level, governments and partners in co-operation that is development-oriented can prevent a serious crisis that would have a negative effect on the health of the population and on economic development, numbers of workable population and the effects on both the health of the population and the economy. The focus is on the Bank's focus on the community's focus and the advantages and productive partnership co-operation in various sectors.

According to specialists, in the ECA there are over 1.2 million persons living with HIV/AIDS. The number of new cases of HIV-infections is increasing faster in the ECA than in any other region of the world; this epidemic needs to be addressed with the same attention that is being paid to the existing epidemics of intravenous drug use, STI, and tuberculosis. Particularly difficult is the work with pregnant women, who are most troubling, given that it is structurally vulnerable and exposed to factors that increase the risk of spreading infection in their environment.

The abovementioned regional strategy presents the approach of the Bank to resolving this problem, and assessments are made as to the scope of the epidemic and the results of research on the financial, sociopolitical, and also institutional limitations obstructing the successful elimination of HIV/AIDS in the region.

The regional strategy notes that the World Bank intends to promote the strengthening of political and social commitments of countries, the respective authorities and communities, and the effective dialogue between the two. The Bank aims to foster an environment where communities could avert the threat of HIV/AIDS in their regions.

The project, initiated by three community organizations, the Counterpart International, the Civil Society Institute, and the Committee of Voters of Ukraine. Recall that the goal of the project was to assist territorial communities ("hromadas") in developing a mechanism for initiating consideration of the issues of local self-government, establishing an effective dialogue between the government and the public. Eighteen months have passed, and certain successes have already been achieved, as reported by Lyudmila Yelcheva, Director of the Toloka Project.

In one of the past issues of the newsletter we described the Toloka Project, initiated by three community organizations Counterpart International, the Civil Society Institute, and the Committee of Voters of Ukraine. Recall that the goal of the project was to assist territorial communities ("hromadas") in developing a mechanism for initiating consideration of the issues of local self-government, establishing an effective dialogue between the government and the public.

In the Toloka Project, which was founded during the preparation stage of the project, the Toloka Project aims its efforts on helping women to take advantage of one's active participation in finding solutions, this is the mechanism of local democracy is valuable and useful.

The new pilot communities were chosen on January 2004 during the competition between communities for the participation in "Toloka" Project. Those communities are from the city of Zhytomyr, village Cherni, from Cherkasy region and the village Chaplynka from Dnipropetrovsk region. Thus, by uniting the efforts of non-government organizations, the government, interested active citizens, we can carve out for ourselves a new local self-government in Ukraine. Thus, the ancient Ukrainian word "toloka" materialize in voluntary work for the benefit of the community.

More information about the "Toloka" Project is available on the web-site: http://toloka.kiev.ua
The transition of market relations was a sudden and unexpected change for many in Ukrainian society. It has led to bewilderment, depression, feelings of an uncertain future, and a significant reduction in people's self-confidence. How to recover and ensure safety and enabling environment to recover after undergoing therapy, in persons with psychiatric illnesses, persons with disabilities, the poor, and the elderly. These people require an approach that has been colourfully titled “assistance for self-sufficiency.” The essence of this approach is to provide individuals with the possibility of acquiring and exercising skills, ideas, and creative potential. The “assistance for self-sufficiency” approach is used in many developed countries throughout central Europe. By promoting respect for these people, they in turn will gain new positive life experiences. This form of activity assists people in acquiring experience and the feeling that independent, they have the power to change their own lives. In regaining trust in them- selves and in their strengths, as well as in regaining their autonomy, they in turn will gain new positive life experiences.
**The Grants of Our Colleagues**

**Democratization of Ukraine: A small projects program**

Struggling the democratic voice of communities and their role in economic development in Ukraine is the desired goal of the project “Democratization of Ukraine: A small projects program”, which have been started at the Digital Information Society Institute. The goal of the project is a mutually beneficial cooperation (a win-win situation) in promoting dialogue with local governments, mass media, and small and medium-sized companies. The purpose is to effectively realize common social and economic problems. It being implemented by the British Council in co-operation with three Ukrainian non-governmental organizations: the Counterpart Creative Center, the Center of Volunteers of Ukraine, and the Ukrainian Independent Center for Policy Research (and financially assisted by the British Department for International Development (DFID)).

For more information on the Program “Democratization of Ukraine: A small projects program”, please contact: Yulia Brody, Drohobych, Sambir, Sokal, and prepare the small projects; and (2) project consultations, and publishing necessary literature by conducting training, providing legislative, expert, and methodological assistance to communities addressing the most urgent social and economic problems in their region or city. The program is to be implemented in two ways. (1) providing consultation and support for community leaders, by conducting training, providing consultation, and publishing necessary information in all, in order to help the communities prepare applications for small projects or project implementation by communities. Five communities of low level (cities of 1,000 to 10,000 residents) from Chernihiv, Vinnytsia, Ternopil, and Chernovizh) are the first to host the implementation of the program.

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**The Path of Making Ukrainian Communities More Handicap Friendly**

Voilodymyr Kryshkanych
Head of the Ukrainian Information Center for Disabled People

H ome, often do we see people in wheelchairs or sitting in wheelchairs in our cities and villages? Generally we see them near churches, in underground passages and in elevators, where they ask for alms. The first impression one gets from meeting such people is the miserable ones, who have no right to the sympathy and care of their relatives. Whether in our country there has been such an attitude towards people with special needs? It is worth recalling to you thatotherapy is not a matter of charity. Unfortunately, it remains today.

In Ukraine there are 2.7 million people with varying degrees of disabilities, which is nearly every 18th inhabitant. This represents a large human resource potential that is not being exploited by the state. Needless to say, not only the first 2.7 million have visible signs of disability. However, it is very rare for us to see people in wheelchairs, or sitting in wheelchairs in our cities and villages. They can lead an active life, and so we ask, where are these people, where do they live?

As a rule, the life of people with special needs is confided to the walls of their house or apartment. This is a tragedy for the families, a burden for the state, and a depression for the disabled. But everyone wants to avoid this situation. We know of many instances when people with disabilities achieved considerable and significant successes in discovering their talents: they integrate in the education system, are successful entrepreneurs. A shining example of success is our Ukrainian parishioner. Ten years ago, we almost never heard about sports for people with disabilities. The upbeat attitude of the travelers was incredible, not even spoiled by inconveniences such as the exhausted state of the replacement of punctured tires caused by using the wheel chairs on the bumpy roads. The project organizers visited the hostels of the expedition, where the participants received the videotapes of the expedition, and the ideas about the project were aired on local and foreign TV companies. In organizing projects like this, the project authors are striving not only to communica- te healthy lifestyle among people with special needs, but also to give them the inspiration to improve their social activity. In our opinion, an effective way of promoting the tourism research-experience of wheelchair users is the development of commuter transport. The idea is to create regular transport for wheelchair users. The wheels of the bus should be equipped with wheelchair ramps of variable length. This is a modern technique of getting people who use wheelchairs to different places. It is a question of creating a special transport system for people with special needs. The project has already taken flight and been successful. Project organizers found a potential for a 15-day expedition for people with wheelchairs, camp- ing gear was assembled and prepared and the organizational aspects realized with the help of organizers of the

The most human society is one in which people with special needs feel comfortable. These documents testify that the issue of protecting the rights of the disabled is an indisputable part of state policy in this country, and have practical steps and measures to create equal opportunities for all. While looking for certain ways to improve our society for the better, the creation of a truly barrier-free environment for persons with special needs is the only just. Unfortunately, we have only a few examples of social, medical, public, commercial, and educational barriers which are equipped with ramps and elevators; there are very few audio- and visual warnings for the blind. The most tragic part of this issue is that children with special needs have to face these barriers. The lack of conditions in school and preschool buildings: to accommodate children in wheelchairs prevents them from studying and socializing with their peers, which has a very negative effect on their psychological development.

For example, in the city of Bla, the Aviodora Association of Disabled Children and their parents initiated the project to re-equip the municipal Elementary School No. 20 in accordance with the needs of children in wheelchairs. Thus began the process of improving the conditions for Children with Special Needs in General Schools. Within this project architectural modifications to the premises of the school have been made: a ramp and a raised floor have been installed; ramps and elevators have been installed. The school has been adapted for children with special needs. In addition, educational and prac- tical courses on integration of children with special needs have been held for teachers and parents at school. Children on wheelchairs are very happy that they have finally been given the opportunity to study in an ordi- nary school environment. In the near future, the Mission of the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) will visit the school. Unfortunately in Ukraine, people with special needs are perceived as incapable of being effective. They are seen as helpless people who cannot work – yet they require pension support and other privileges. Sadly, this opinion is widespread, not only among healthy people, but also among the disabled themselves, who explain this as extremely low involvement in social activities.

The Odesa Computer Center for Training and Employment of Persons with Disabilities at the Odesa Municipal Disabled Association contributed to the development of the interesting idea of helping people with special needs need not stop at employing them, but including their own. The idea entailed organizing projects for the purpose of expe- dient for wheelchair invalids along the coast of the Kuyalnyk Liman and at the mouth of the Dnipro. "We were excited about having had the opportunity to conduct an ecological investigation by experts and study the natural and environmental conditions in the region. Their emotions are understandable because of their own disability. We offer them the opportu- nity allowing them to discover the secrets of nature, to sit around a campfire at night, and to sleep in tents. The harsh reality is that disabled people more commonly just stay at home or perhaps, go for a walk close to home with the help of relatives.

Project authors expect that organizing eco- tourism for wheelchair invalids will define the medical benefit of the natural environment in the city of Odesa for the region for the treatment of disorders of the musculoskeletal system, as well as treatment of spinal cord damage.

The main goal of the project is to undertake a scientific investigation by experts and specialising in neurology and spinal injuries, as well as studies examining the possibility of using the medical effect of the natural environment by people with special needs. The main hypothesis of this research is: the Odesa Computer Center for Training and Employment of Persons with Disabilities at the Odesa Municipal Disabled Association is a significant step in removing the barriers impeding these people from leading an active life in society. This is a new outcome in projects undertaken by the Center, and also represents changing public attitudes to persons with disabilities.

Another exciting idea of helping people with special needs is by increasing the com- mercial activity of invalids in the tourism sector. We want to prove this by using the example of the Odesa region”, noted Oleksander Lukanevych, manager of the Odesa Computer Center for Training and Employment of Disabled at the OMGDA.

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**For more information on the Program “Democratization of Ukraine: A small projects program”, please contact:** Yulia Turyanizya, Maryna Turyanizya, Yuriy Savko, Mi- nistry of the UN Children’s Fund

**The Path of Making Ukrainian Communities More Handicap Friendly**

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**The first stop for the kinase (On the photo: participants of expedition from Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova)**

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