



GOVERNANCE AND DECENTRALIZATION

OVERVIEW

USAID promotes participatory, transparent, and accountable democratic processes in Ukraine through a bottom-up approach focused on strong local democratic governance. Local governance has become even more important as Ukraine's communities grapple with the humanitarian crisis caused by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Amid Russia's war, USAID supports emergency response efforts in nearly 170 communities in 19 oblasts, delivering supplies and providing technical assistance to help local governments ensure access to critical public services for local residents and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

At the local level, USAID assistance: (1) empowers government officials, civil society, and the private sector to work together toward effective and accountable local governance; (2) strengthens the legislative and constitutional framework for decentralization; (3) stimulates local economic development; (4) improves public service delivery; (5) promotes independent and transparent financial planning and management strategies; and (6) increases revenue and resources for Ukraine's cities, towns, and villages.

At the national level, USAID also works with Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, to expand public representation in the legislative process; expand the role of citizens in monitoring the work of the Verkhovna Rada; and strengthen the legislature's role in providing independent oversight of the Presidential Administration, the Cabinet of Ministers, and other public institutions.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Continued decentralization and territorial reorganization of Ukraine.
- Strong local governance systems, processes, and institutions that are self-reliant, accountable to citizens, inclusive, and capable of providing effective public services.

- Local governments that effectively use their increased authority, resources, and responsibilities.
- A more open and representative parliament with enhanced capacities to make laws and oversee the executive branch.
- Increased citizen engagement in, and oversight of, local government and parliament.

OUR ACTIVITIES

USAID GOVERNANCE AND LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACTIVITY (HOVERLA)

USAID's Governance and Local Accountability Activity (HOVERLA) is a six-year, \$150 million activity to support the Government of Ukraine's decentralization reforms. The activity helps create and strengthen local governance systems, processes, and institutions so they are more self-reliant, inclusive, effective, and accountable to citizens. HOVERLA also supports the development of a strong legal framework for local governance to ensure an appropriate balance of authority and responsibility between local government institutions, primarily at the consolidated community level, and on a more limited basis at the rayon (county) and national executive levels. The activity supports sectoral and fiscal decentralization.

Amid Russia's invasion, HOVERLA supports emergency response efforts in 65 communities in seven oblasts in western, central, and southern Ukraine (Lviv, Volyn, Rivne, Zakarpattia, Zhytomyr, Poltava, and Odesa). The activity procures laptops, printers, Wi-Fi routers, power generators, firefighting equipment and uniforms, public warning systems, beds, kitchen and laundry equipment, and hygiene kits to help local governments deliver critical services to local residents and IDPs. In addition to providing emergency assistance, USAID continues to build the governance capacity of more than 500 communities in 14 oblasts, providing training on land management, spatial planning, human resource management, budgeting, and legislative reforms, including local regulations. USAID also continues to support the implementation of local service improvement and local economic development projects in partner communities. USAID has also provided roughly \$4 million worth of emergency response assistance to the State Emergency Service of Ukraine, including personal protective equipment and special purpose equipment, to help emergency responders meet the needs of citizens amid Russia's aggression.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE EAST (DG EAST)

USAID's Democratic Governance East (DG East) activity is an eight-year, \$107 million activity launched in 2018 to promote an inclusive civic identity, democratic civic values, and a more unified Ukraine by addressing the divisive impacts of Russia's aggression against communities in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. In partnership with local governments and communities, DG East strengthens connections and trust between government and citizens and fosters citizen participation in community development and local decision-making, thus building support for reform processes, European integration, and Ukraine's democratic transition. DG East has provided a range of capacity building assistance to 23 departments of social protection and administrative service centers in the Government of Ukraine-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk. Supported communities have improved service delivery to citizens, with a focus on support for IDPs and persons crossing the line of contact. DG East also works with civic groups and activists to foster greater acceptance of a shared civic culture and stronger relations between citizens and government institutions.

Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, DG East pivoted to providing emergency assistance to war-affected communities. Since February 2022, through its rapid humanitarian support, DG East delivered 1,044 units of information and communications technology (ICT) equipment, 2,820 pieces of

furniture, 484 sets of personal protective equipment (PPE), and 714 winterization items, including 40 generators, to 20 national and regional government counterparts throughout Ukraine. DG East supported 11 cities and territorial municipalities by equipping dormitories with IT equipment, kitchen appliances, and furniture for 3,270 IDPs fleeing from eastern and southern regions of Ukraine. To create a better shared understanding of basic IDP management standards and planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating humanitarian assistance, DG East partnered with 12 Local Government Entities in a pilot activity to improve their capacities. DG East helped these entities assess their needs and challenges in IDP management, which in turn helped the activity to improve the training based on feedback, reflection, identification of key needs, and best practices for integrating displaced persons into local economic life.

DECENTRALIZATION OFFERING BETTER RESULTS AND EFFICIENCY (DOBRE)

USAID's Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency (DOBRE) activity is a nine-year, \$107 million local government activity launched in 2016 to help 100 local communities build effective and responsible local governance processes that better serve citizens. The activity promotes the effective implementation of decentralization reform and territorial reorganization in all of Ukraine's oblasts. Amid Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, the activity supports local governments in 67 war-affected communities in 10 oblasts (Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kirovohrad, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil), including 23 liberated communities and 10 occupied communities (in the latter case, working with mayors and executive committees in exile). As part of the emergency assistance, DOBRE provides a wide spectrum of items ranging from toolkits for vehicle repair, water tanks and pumps, and screw drivers, to generators, stoves, mobile kitchens, office equipment, and special purpose equipment such as backhoes.

RADA NEXT GENERATION

USAID's Rada Next Generation (RANG) is a five-year, \$10 million activity launched in 2021 to advance the "next generation" of reforms in the Verkhovna Rada. The activity supports the Rada to become a modern, effective institution advancing accountability and democratic development in Ukraine. The activity is focused on expanding public participation in legislative processes, including stronger engagement between MPs and their constituents. The activity also strengthens the Rada's analytical and oversight capacity.

RANG provides legal and expert development advice to the Rada for emergency wartime legislation and supports public information campaigns to explain martial law requirements. RANG improved the Rada's institutional capacity by helping establish the Parliamentary Research Service and finalizing its long-term strategy and operational plan. RANG also provided increased expert support to the Rada in EU integration processes. Despite the war, RANG continues to support the Rada's efforts to relaunch parliamentary reform by providing the necessary expertise required for a more robust National Recovery Plan. RANG assisted the Rada's Communication Task Force in developing a wartime communication strategy, and initiated legal and expert support for a now-adopted parliamentary declaration on the genocide of the Ukrainian nation. RANG assisted the Rada with foreign parliamentary delegation visits by providing translation services and developing communication rules for foreign press teams.