

## **Terms of Reference of the Donor Board on Decentralization Reform in Ukraine**

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### **1. Background and objectives**

The Donor Board on Decentralization Reform in Ukraine (further referred to as the Board) is a community of donor agencies, foreign diplomatic missions to Ukraine, international organizations financing and/or implementing large scale programs and projects (further referred to as the Donors), as well as the Government of Ukraine, represented by the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, Housing and Communal Services of Ukraine (further referred to as the MinRegion). The Board is aimed at supporting the decentralization reform in Ukraine (further referred to as the Reform), created in order to ensure strategic coordination between the Government of Ukraine, the MinRegion, other central executive authorities and the Donors to align the Donors' support with the priorities of the Reform.

### **2. Objectives of the Board**

- to coordinate strategic priorities and areas of work, as well as approaches, efforts and activities of the Donors in line with the Concept of Reforming Local Self-Government and Territorial Organization of Power in Ukraine as approved by the Government of Ukraine, and Action Plans of the Government, strategic plans of the MinRegion with regard to implementation of the Reform;
- to constitute a functional platform for coordinating the Donors' efforts and cooperation in providing expert, methodological and other technical and financial assistance, as well as to coordinate activities in the course of the Reform implementation and in particular with regard to the thematic and geographic focus of the projects and programs;
- to assess the implementation of the Reform by key indicators (outputs and outcomes level) as defined by the Common Result Framework of the decentralization reform in Ukraine - <https://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/vhid> (hereinafter - the CRF) and in the relevant strategic documents of the Government of Ukraine;
- to discuss any issues of common interest or concern, as identified by the Co-Chairs of the Board raised within the Working Groups under the auspices of the Board (see below), and to agree on possible joint actions to address those issues.

The Board is created for the period of implementation of the decentralization reform in Ukraine and functions until a decision on its termination is taken upon mutual agreement of the Government and the Donors.

### **3. Composition of the Board**

The Board comprises authorized representatives of the MinRegion and the Donors.

The Board is co-chaired by the current Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Regional Development, Construction, Housing and Communal Services of Ukraine or his Deputy Minister, and by a representative of the Donors, who is delegated by a general consensus of the Board members for the next year at the last meeting of the current year.

#### **4. Format of work of the Board**

The Board shall only work on the strategic issues.

The strategic level is represented directly by central executive authorities and the Donors, who meet in the format of the Board meetings. At the meetings, the Donors coordinate their objectives and tasks in line with respective midterm and annual plans of the Government, assess the Reform progress and discuss challenges affecting the implementation of the Reform and the Donor-funded projects/programs.

Any decisions of the Board shall be adopted at the Board meeting by consensus and accordingly recorded by the Board's Secretariat (further referred to as the Secretariat, whose role, mission and mandate are described below).

The minutes of a Board meeting shall be drafted in two languages (English and Ukrainian) and approved by both Co-Chairs. The minutes shall be distributed to all members of the Board, and published on the website [http://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/donor\\_board](http://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/donor_board) within ten calendar days after the meeting.

Organizational support of the activities of the Board is ensured by its Secretariat. On the part of the MinRegion, the work of the Board is coordinated by the Directorate of Development of Local Self-Government, Territorial Organization of Power and Administrative and Territorial Division in Ukraine.

##### **a. Secretariat of the Board**

The number of staff members of the Board Secretariat is set by the Board Co-Chairs. The operational costs of the Secretariat are covered from the budget of respective donors and their projects.

##### **Responsibilities of the Secretariat**

- in coordination with the MinRegion, regularly updates and monitors the CRF progress at <https://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/vhid>;
- ensures organizational support and documenting of the Board meetings;
- provides logistics/technical support to Working Groups under the auspices of the Board;
- monitors the needs of the Working Groups and provides support to their coordinators in formulating tasks of the Working Group meetings;
- provides information and technical support to the Board web-page [http://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/donor\\_board](http://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/donor_board);
- prepares analytical materials related to CRF implementation progress.

Members of the Secretariat shall attend all meetings of the Board, ensure the preparation of Board meetings (invite participants, form participants' lists, provide copies of meeting related materials, organize provision of simultaneous translation at the meetings, etc.), facilitate its work and take minutes.

##### **b. Meetings of the Board**

The Co-Chairs facilitate the organization and holding of the Board meetings during the term of chairmanship.

The Board shall meet at least every quarter upon the initiative of at least one Co-Chair.

Agenda items for the Board meetings shall be suggested by the Secretariat, taking into account proposals of the Board members and coordinators of the Board's Working Groups under the auspices of the Board, and shall be approved by the Co-Chairs of the Board at least 14 calendar days before the meeting of the Board.

An invitation to the Board meeting as well as all documents to be discussed shall be sent out by the Secretariat to the Board members at least 14 calendar days prior to the event.

The list of participants in each meeting of the Board is approved by the Co-Chairs of the Board. Any member of the Board has the right to invite to the Board meetings any person who is not a member of the Board but whose attendance may be useful for discussing a specific agenda item. Invited participants, who are not members of the Board, are not authorized to take decisions and shall take in the Board meetings as observers.

Representatives of the following stakeholders may participate in the meetings of the Board as observers, but cannot be given any voting rights:

- relevant Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,
- central executive authorities,
- Central Reform Office under the MinRegion,
- Reforms Delivery Office (RDO), an advisory body to the Cabinet of Ministers, coordinated by the Prime Minister and headed by the Minister of the Cabinet of Ministers,
- All-Ukrainian associations of local self-government bodies.

**c. Working Groups under the auspices of the Donor Board on Decentralization Reform**

Working Groups under the auspices of the Donor Board on Decentralization (further referred to as Working Groups) are established for the purposes of operative expert work on issues outlined in the CRF and coordination of work in separate thematic areas. A decision on the establishment of new or liquidation of existing Working Groups shall be adopted by the Co-Chairs of the Board after consultation with the Donors and at the suggestion of the Secretariat or the Donors.

An up-to-date list of the Working Groups, their composition, schedule and minutes of meetings are published on the Decentralization web-portal in the section "International Cooperation" [http://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/donor\\_board](http://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/donor_board)

Within a specific thematic area, each Working Group:

- Identifies the key challenges of the Reform and coordinates activities, approaches and implementation modalities of different programs/projects operating within the given thematic area throughout Ukraine;
- Monitors progress achieved against the CRF in the given thematic area and provides relevant data and information to the Secretariat of the Board;
- Regularly reviews the CRF in a given thematic area and makes proposals to the Board for the CRF modification;
- Formulates expert opinions and proposals on matters within the competence of the group;
- Makes suggestions related to priority tasks of the Reform implementation.

WG coordinators (authorized projects staff members, CRO coordinators) facilitate WG work.

The WG are composed by MinRegion, TA programs/projects, central executive authorities, All-Ukrainian associations of LSG, analytical centres and independent experts (donors may delegate their reps).

WG meetings to be announced at least 3 working days in advance.

WG documents shall bear a disclaimer / WG coordinators and members cannot speak on behalf of the Board.

## **5. Monitoring**

Successful functioning of the Board and its Working Groups will be monitored based on the electronic CRF <https://donors.decentralization.gov.ua/vhid>.

Authorized representatives of the Donors programs and projects, involved in the respective Working Groups, fill out an electronic CRF on a semi-annual basis (deliverables and planning of future tasks).