

**THINK TANK DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FOR UKRAINE**

**Semi-Annual Review Report**

**July 2014**

**International Renaissance Foundation**



**In partnership with the Think Tank Fund of the Open Society Foundations**



**Funded by the Embassy of Sweden to Ukraine**



### Introduction

The International Renaissance Foundation (IRF) in partnership with the Think Tank Fund (TTF) of the Open Society Foundations (OSF) have launched the Think Tank Development Initiative for Ukraine (TTDI) with financial support of the Embassy of Sweden to Ukraine. The Initiative aims at making a difference in policy research and analysis, management and communication capacities of Ukrainian think tanks by making them more relevant for policy processes and the market of ideas. We believe this collaborative effort will strengthen a group of Ukrainian think tanks and enable them to further contribute to building an open society in Ukraine as a prerequisite of the country's transformation into a just and functioning European democracy. The TTDI seeks to create the conditions for independent public policy institutions to grow organizationally, strengthening the voice of independent think tanks in the policy process, making their output relevant for key stakeholder groups in Ukrainian society, and enabling them to make stronger impact on policy-making.

To assess the TTDI's progress, as provided by Article 6 (p.6.1.) of the Agreement between Sida and IRF, a Semi-Annual Review of the Think Tank Development Initiative (TTDI) will take place by July 15, 2014. This report outlines the progress in the implementation of TTDI to date in the following areas:

1. Improvements within International Renaissance Foundation following the SDA review;
2. Update on the TTDI project implementation;
3. Update on plans for the Education Component;
4. Review of the Results Matrix;
5. Updated Risks Assessment Matrix;
6. Progress on the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan;
7. Budget report and proposed update;
8. Next steps in 2014.

Since January 2014, TTDI has been implementing in a dramatically different and rapidly changing context. Unprecedented people's power of Ukrainian citizens and civil society in November 2013 – February 2014, caused by the regime's decision to turn away from the European integration course and subsequent violent suppression of the protests known as the Maidan brought down the increasingly authoritarian Yanukovich regime, brought in a new pro-reform government,

and resulted in a free and fair early presidential election on May 25, 2014, followed by signing Ukraine's Association Agreement with the EU on June 27, 2014. The new President and the Government declared reforming Ukraine, resolving the conflict in the East, ensuring the rule of law, improving governance, fighting corruption, and speeding up Ukraine's European integration as the key priorities.

Galvanized by the Maidan and their newly-discovered national identity, Ukrainians have high expectations for fast and positive changes. The Maidan has created a new momentum of civic activism, which the government at all levels can no longer ignore. Civil society has taken a lead in drafting and piloting reform solutions for fighting corruption, promoting government accountability, decentralization and local self-governance, reforming the judiciary, law-enforcement, education and public health, and controlling the government's performance on the reforms. Yet, Ukraine and its civil society continue to face multiple challenges of simultaneous profound political, economic and social reforms, Russia's occupation and annexation of the Crimea, its international anti-Ukrainian information campaign, and ongoing support for separatism in the East and South of Ukraine. The aggression in the Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk, has created massive human rights abuse and endangered civil society and pro-Ukrainian activists in the regions.

The new context has created significant challenges and opportunities for Ukrainian think tanks. On the one hand, a number of the think tanks identified and invited to apply to participate in TTDI, were at the forefront of the Maidan and, after the collapse of the regime, have taken an active role in pro-reform civic initiatives, including the Reanimation Reform Package. Their activism enhanced their visibility and strengthened their connections with decision-makers, advocacy groups and the media. On the other hand, their organizational resources and staff have been stretched to respond to numerous opportunities and deal with a number of new projects. The challenge for TTDI and the partner think tanks is to ensure that organizational capacity development and improvement of the think tanks' internal systems are not shifted off their priority lists.

### **1. Improvements within IRF following the SDA review**

The Systems-Based Audit (SBA) of the IRF was held in the period of October - November 2013 by Maria Ekström Johansson and Anders Pettersson of the Swedish Development Advisers AB (SDA). The SBA review produced a range of recommendations focusing primarily on the development of particular procedures, criteria, guidelines, and specific documents necessary for due implementation of the SIDA-funded TTDI activities. SDA also offered recommendations for further strengthening IRF's systems and operation, including updating its tendering and anti-corruption procedures, specifying measurable results in IRF's Strategy and Annual Workplan, formalizing its risk

assessments of projects supported by the IRF, updating its communication strategy, enhance and formalize its delegation of responsibilities, building capacity of IRF staff in applying results-based management methodology to its own operation and its work with grantees, and establishing measurable goals for IRF's own organizational development.

IRF Administration agreed with the predominant majority of recommendations and drafted an implementation plan. By the end of 2013, IRF had updated its anti-corruption procedures as a separate Anti-Corruption Policy, which now includes (a) information on possibilities to report suspicions anonymously, (b) protection of whistleblowers, and (c) detailed steps of investigating a possible case of corruption. IRF's Policy Committee has reviewed the application and reporting forms to ensure that grantees are informed about the Anti-Corruption Policy and the conflict of interest provisions of the IRF and comply with them while implementing projects supported by IRF. Some delays occurred due to the political crisis in Ukraine in January – February 2014 and the changes caused by the new context after the Maidan, however, the TTDI implementation was back on schedule as of the end of March 2014. The majority of the recommendations for improvements have been fulfilled. Implementation of some recommendations is planned for the end of 2014 and in 2015. IRF is in process of updating its 2014-2017 Strategy and the related communication strategy to reflect the changes in the civil society and the general context in Ukraine. *(Please see the implementation progress update on the SDA recommendation in **Annex 1** attached as separate file).*

## **2. Update on the TTDI project implementation**

The 3.5-year Think Tank Development Initiative for Ukraine was launched in January 2014. In accordance with the TTDI Implementation Plan, the team is in process of implementing Stage I of the Initiative *(please see Annex 9 at the end of the report)*. Specifically, the progress to date has been as follows:

- IRF staff received new skills through a training course on governance and results-based management (RBM);
- IRF TTDI team and the Policy Committee have developed and introduced a package of new templates and procedures, including application forms and report templates for TTDI; think tank selection procedure; contract templates for TTDI grants;
- an online TTDI management module was created and introduced to enable the team and the International selection Board to review proposals submitted to TTDI;
- the work of the International Selection Board has been launched;

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- the 1<sup>st</sup> wave of organizational assessment of pre-selected applicant think tanks has been completed;
- based on the 1<sup>st</sup> wave of institutional assessment of the think tanks, recommendations and assessment reports have been produced for the review by the think tanks and the International Selection Board;
- the International Selection Board meeting was organized to select the think tanks that qualify for the Improvements Mini-grants;
- development of the online capacity-building tool (policy analysis portal) and the Think Tank Index continued;
- a complex education component has been designed to provide for capacity-building needs of selected think tanks, participants of TTDI.

These achievements are described in detail below.

### 2.1. Training courses for the IRF staff

The training courses for the IRF staff have been held within the TTDI in the following areas:

- 3-day training on organizational development issues, SDA
- 2-day training on data visualization, Agency for Journalistic Data ([texty.org.ua](http://texty.org.ua))
- 3-day training on results based management, SDA
- Follow-up consultation on RBM and organizational assessment, SDA

#### Outputs:

- 14 IRF officers passed the training on organizational development issues
- 10 IRF officers passed the training on data visualization and public presentations creation
- 12 IRF officers passed the training on RBM

#### Outcomes:

Based on the new skills gained through the training course on organizational development, TTDI team created organizational assessment criteria for the assessment of TTDI applicants, and produced the assessment forms. 22 think tanks were evaluated and 22 reports on their organizational level were developed with specific recommendations on improvements. The think tanks received detailed criteria for self-assessment of their institutional development. To facilitate the assessment, TTDI developed criteria for project proposal evaluation and formulated specific technical tasks for educational plans to ensure measurable improvements in each development area.

The training course on data visualization resulted in the creation of new skills of IRF staff to communicate better IRF's own and grantees' activities as interactive graphics and presentations. The results of the RBM training were creation of the TTDI monitoring plan and improvement of TTDI application forms and reporting forms. Also, the IRF general activity plan scheme was updated accordingly.

### **2.2. Procedures developed**

IRF developed the following procedures and policies according to SIDA requirements:

- Application forms (for the pre selection and mini grants);
- International Selection Commission statement;
- Evaluation criteria for the International Selection Commission and TTDI team;
- Application's evaluation criteria (for the pre selections and mini grants);
- Organizational assessment forms;
- Grant agreement;
- Logo and disclaimer statement;
- Manual for grantees;
- Reporting form for mini grants.

According to SIDA recommendations, the new application and reporting forms are oriented on results; they also cover SIDA priorities: non-discrimination, gender, anticorruption, European integration, and the environment.

### **2.3. Think Tanks selection criteria developed**

The TTDI team developed TTS selection criteria according to SIDA and TTF experience and IRF practices. The selection consists of two levels.

Level 1: pre-selection of TTs made by TTDI team according to the following criteria:

- Organization must be registered according to the Ukrainian legislation as nongovernmental organization or charitable organization and have non-profit code 005 or 006.
- Organization has written mission and actual strategic plan.
- Organization has functional governing bodies and confirmation of their activities (governing body minutes for the last two years).
- Organization the reports published annually.

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- Organization has the analytical and policy experience and publications and projects on policy analysis.
- Organization has the system of the internal management (policy and procedures, good governance, conflict of the interest policy etc.).
- Organization has financial and accounting control.

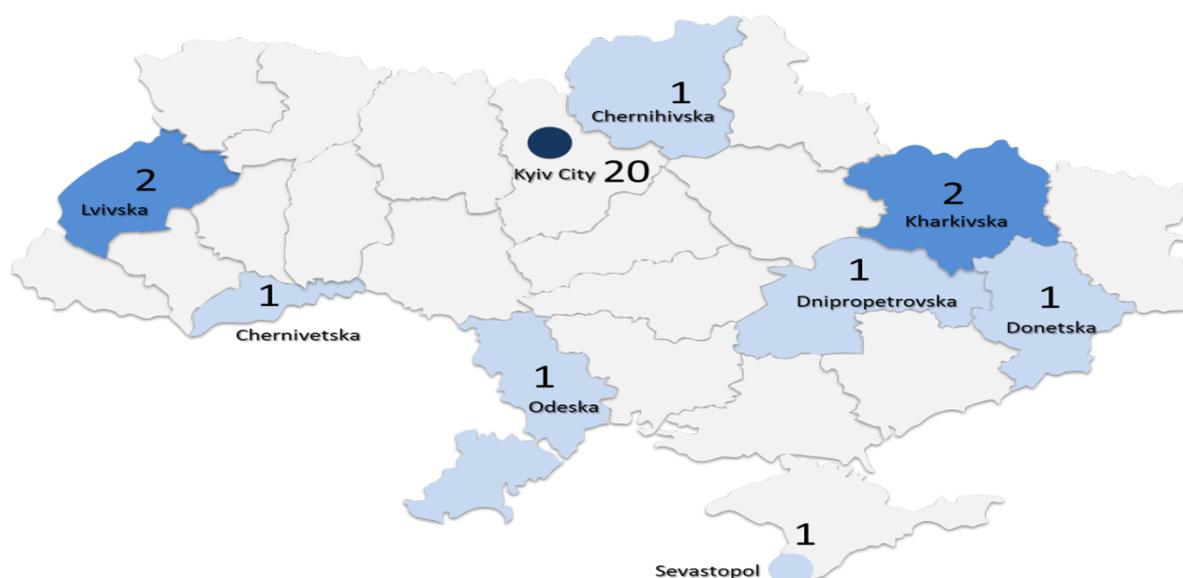
Level II: organizations were selected by filling in the questionnaire. The questionnaire has the following sections:

- General information
- Mission and vision
- Strategic plan
- Governing bodies
- Management
- Accountability
- Communication
- Partnership
- Analytical and policy products
- Sustainability

### **2.4. Think Tanks selection process**

To participate in TTDI there were selected 30 organizations, according to the criteria described in the previous chapter (*please see **Annex 2** at the end of the Report and attached as separate file*).

*Figure 1: Regional representation of selected think tanks*



Thematically, the preselected TTs covered the following spheres:

- Anticorruption policies and monitoring;
- Budget analysis;
- Environmental issues;
- Policies and regulations for small and medium businesses;
- Gender and antidiscrimination policies;
- Analysis of the protest movements in Ukraine;
- Education policy reform;
- Local democracy and self-organization policies and practices;
- Data analysis;
- European integration;
- Health care reforms and their impact of human rights;
- Human rights and legal empowerment;
- Energy saving.

At the first level, TTDI received 26 applications. A Crimea-based think tank, a well-known research center, “Nomos”, could not apply because of legal issues connected with the annexation of Crimea. One application was rejected because it missed the deadline. Three more applications were rejected because of the conflict of the interest concerns.

## 2.5. Organizational audit of selected think tanks – participants of the Initiative

TTDI has conducted the organizational audit of 22 organizations. Four of the applicant think tanks also were covered by the independent financial audit to facilitate the assessment of their financial systems. The organizational audit covered the following spheres:

- a) governance (mission, management system, conflict of interest, anticorruption, gender and environmental policy and procedures).
- б) management (annual planning, HR policy, communication, project management).
- в) financial management (financial procedures, financial control, audit and fundraising).

The main conclusions according the results of the financial audit:

- The majority of the TTs partners need the essential improvement of their governance system;
- Most of the activity strategies are too general and do not include the risk analysis, the benchmark system and also they has not always been actually;
- The vast majority of the organizations have the weak financial system and poor or no financial controlling mechanism;
- All the applicants are strongly dependent on the donors funds and need to diversify the source of funding;
- The public reporting system of TTs need also further improvement;
- The communications of TTs (both internal and external) are not sufficient and need the strengthening.

According to the results of the organizational audit all TTs received recommendations on the organizational improvement and audit reports. All organizations have a possibility to comment organizational development recommendations.

### **2.6. International Selection Commission activity**

TTDI has identified a number of functions and tasks for the International Selection Committee:

- Evaluate 22 applications to TTDI;
- Provide recommendations for the TTs' conference agenda and the list of the speakers/participants. Provide recommendations on of the topics for TTs' public debates;
- Provide recommendations on the selection criteria's for the institutional grants;
- Provide recommendations on internship programs of think tanks;
- Provide recommendations on the Initiatives training program.

The selection the **International Selection Committee (ISC) members was based on** the following criteria:

- work experience in the TTs / TTs' consultations;
- work experience in the field of the NGOs institutional development;
- awareness of the Ukrainian TTs' activities;
- awareness of the major international trends of TTs work.

Based on those criteria, TTDI's selected members of the International Selection Committee (ISC) included:

- Vladyslav Halushko, program officer of the Think Tank Fund (TTF), expert on policy analysis.
- Olga Tarasov, OSF former regional director, expert on organizational development.
- Orysia Lutsevych, Chatham House, expert on think tanks activities.
- Edward Rahimkulov, East Europe Foundation, expert in policy analysis.
- Volodymyr Sheyhus, ISAR- Yednannia, expert on organizational development.
- Inna Pidluska, IRF Deputy Executive Director, expert on think tanks activities.

The ISC members reviewed each applicant think tank according to the set criteria in the following spheres:

- Organizational development of the applicant;
- Policy activity;
- Risk assessment of the project implementation;
- Evaluation of the organizational development plan.

### **2.7. Selection process for improvements mini grants**

13 think tanks were selected finally as a result of competitive consideration according to mentioned above criteria (*please see the list of the supported TTs in – Annex 3 attached as a separate file*).

Figure 2: Regional representation of the mini grant grantees



By the end of July 2014, IRF will conclude grant agreements with the selected think tanks that will receive mini-grants in the amounts up to \$ 10,000 for the implementation of their Improvement Plans created on the basis of the 1st wave of institutional assessments conducted by IRF in May 2014. Each of the think tanks has received improvements recommendations from the IRF and from the International Selection Committee.

Both the IRF team and TTDI International Selection Committee noted that understanding principles of good governance was one of the most important developmental needs for the think tanks. The recommendation was to give strong input good governance to the partner think tanks as early as possible in the process of implementation of their improvements mini-grants in order to help the partner think tanks establish solid foundations for governance in their organizational development process.

Another major developmental area identified as a priority for all partner think tanks was the concept of results-based management (RBM) that is very new in Ukraine. In order to build skills for applying RBM in the think tanks' strategic planning process, as they will move on with developing / refining their strategies within the improvement grants period, all of the partner think tanks will receive a training on RBM from the Swedish Development Advisors (SDA) in September 2014. SDA will also deliver training on good governance to the partner think tanks in September 2014.

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We expect that the partner think tanks will complete their improvement grants by the end of December 2014. The results of the improvement grants will be the think tanks' documents and practices that meet the criteria outline in the table below:

<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>Criteria for the documents</b>
Mission	Have a written mission that matches the Strategic Plan and is well-rooted in the organization.
Strategy	The TT has a result-focused updated strategic plan and a Result Assessment Framework (RAF) valid for at least the time period of the organizational grant.  The strategic plan must have reasonable indicators and risk mitigation.
Risk Management	Have a risk analysis and plan for risk mitigation in its Strategic Plan
<b>MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS</b>	<b>Criteria for the documents</b>
Annual Planning and reporting	Have written annual plan  Have written annual report
Conflict of Interest policy	TTs have a documented Conflict of Interest policy. Conflict of Interest policy regulated the following questions: - what is a conflict of interest; - how is a conflict of interest resolved.
Decision-making processes	The TT has a documented delegation of authority in line with the charter. This document regulated the following questions: - the scheme of decision making processes; - who is on the top of the decision-making; - who approves main documents (strategy, budget etc)?
Gender/non-discrimination	Have gender and nondiscrimination policy \ procedure or regulated in other procedures (HR policy, handbook)

HR	Have written HR policy
	Have written job descriptions for all staff members
Anti-Corruption	The TT has an anti-corruption policy that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) gives possibilities to report anonymously</li> <li>b) provides protection for the whistle blower</li> <li>c) gives clear instructions on how the investigation should be performed and by whom</li> </ul>
<b>FINANCIAL SYSTEMS</b>	<b>Criteria for the documents</b>
General financial systems	The TT has a financial manual or similar documentation of its financial systems
Financial Reporting	The TT produces balance sheets and profit and loss statements, which are approved by the Board.
Authorizations and Transfers of Funds	The TT has an authorization system and a system for payments that ensures at least two signatures The TT has a business travel policy
Budget	The TT has project budgets for all its projects The TT has a budget policy and performs regular budget monitoring on board and management level.
Procurement	Has a written and adopted procurement policy
Fundraising	The TT has a fundraising plan and a staff member responsible for the fundraising

### 3. Update on plans for the Education Component

The Education component includes Training Courses, Individual coaching for each think tank, Study visits to Central European think tanks focused on governance, organizational development,

and strategic communication, as well as activity within Online Policy Analysis Learning and Communication Platform – please see details as described below.

### 3.1. Training course

The Training course is designed to develop knowledge and skills of the Initiative participants in the fields important for think tanks everyday activity (*please see Annex 4 at the end of the Report and attached as separate file*). The educational program has been formed in the following areas:

- Organizational development of think tanks (key expert – Lyubov Palyvoda, PhD, Independent Consultant, President of CCC Creative Center)
- Public policy analysis (key expert – Roman Kobets, Independent Expert)
- Communication of think tanks (key expert – Dmytro Krykun, Strategy Director of the PR-House Social Communication Company)
- Cross-cutting topics prioritized by SIDA and IRF:
  - Anticorruption issues (key experts – Oleksiy Khmara, Executive Director of the Transparency International Ukraine, and Oleksiy Shalaysky, Chief Editor of the “Our Money” investigation portal)
  - Non-discrimination and gender equality (key expert – Tamara Martsenyuk, PhD, Sociology Department of the Kyiv Mohyla Academy)
  - Environmental issues (key expert – Olena Kravchenko, The Environment, People, Law NGO Lviv)
  - European integration (key expert – Volodymyr Yermolenko, Internews Ukraine)

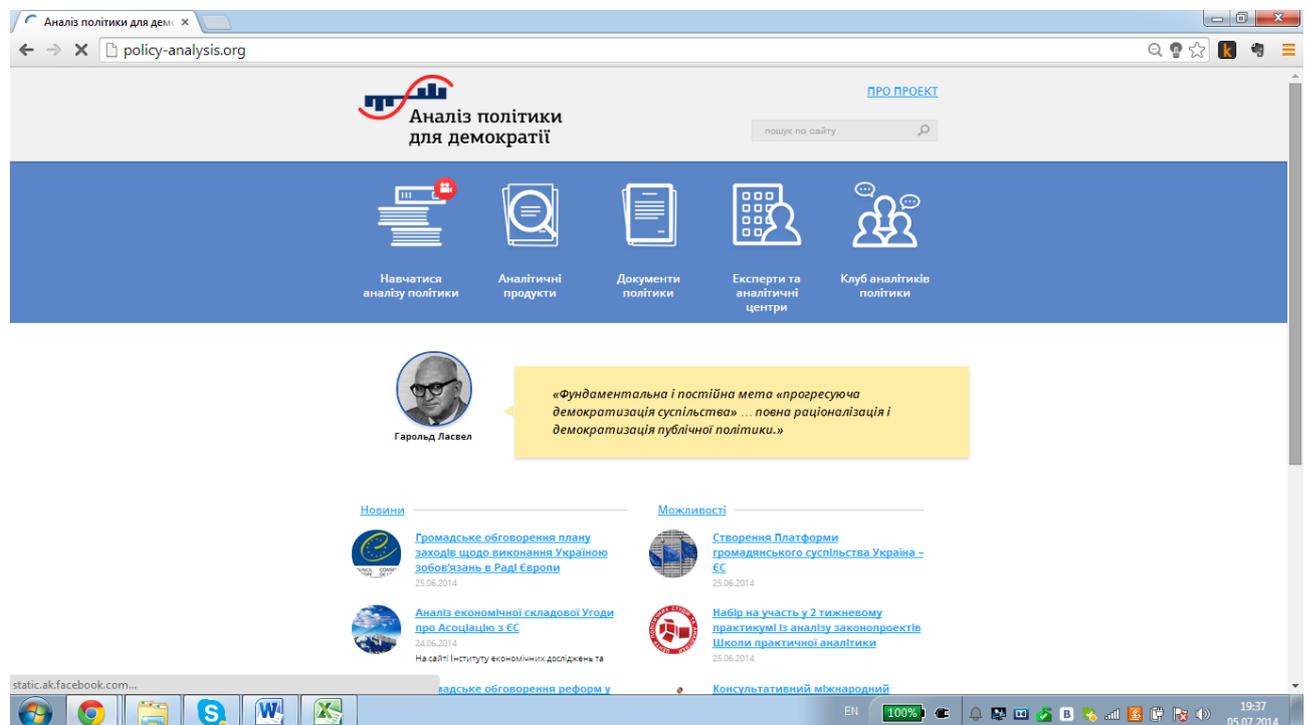
Partnering think tanks will be done in two levels in accordance with their levels of organizational development.

In addition to the training courses, the selected experts will provide a coaching program and individual consultations to the TTDI participants between trainings. Also, study visits to Central European think tanks will be organized, focusing on governance, organizational development, and strategic communication, and designed to give the Ukrainian think tanks staff some hands-on experience of running and developing think tanks.

### 3.2. Online Policy Analysis Learning and Communication Platform

The online platform, Policy Analysis in Ukraine (<http://policy-analysis.org/>) will contain information and training resources, including video lectures, webinars, presentations on organizational development of think tanks and policy relevant research. The platform will provide think tanks with free access to educational, methodological, capacity-building, legal, financial, and reference materials, research papers and public policy publications, collaboration proposals and expert databases. Special emphasis will be made on dissemination of policy research methods, including gender and environmental impact analysis of budgets and policies. IRF and Internews will develop a separate communications strategy to spread the information about the resource among relevant target audiences. The online platform will also be instrumental in facilitating exchange and collaboration between policy analysis and public policy producers, and in introducing the practice of structured policy consultations that are applied by institutions of the European Union. The platform will also be available for use by governmental agencies, advocacy institutions, the media, business associations and other potential users of policy research.

IRF have developed this portal together with Internews Ukraine. At the beginning of the 2014 the Internews team developed 9 video lectures of the policy analysis topic, created on-line TTs and policy analysis experts bases, beginning to collect learning literatures for the TTs.



### 3.3. Public debates

TTDI team is planning to engage the partner think tanks in conducting a series of public debates on policy issues of the think tanks' focus. In July 2014, the TTDI team will work together with the International Selection Committee to develop the debates concept and format. For the TTDI project, public policy debates are a tool for building policy dialogue between governmental decision-makers and think tanks. Also, policy debates are instrumental for the development of political culture, increasing relevance of public policy research and think tanks themselves for domestic clients and donors, including government, the business sector, media, and advocacy groups. The debates will help strengthen the think tanks' positions as key providers of evidence-based analysis and knowledgeable interlocutors on public policy issues.

### **3.4. Think Tank Index**

The TTDI team is planning to assess the partner TTs with the Think Tank Index in the second half of 2014. The Think Tank Index is a system of indicators and benchmarks that will be used as a tool for identifying best performing public policy think tanks, which have achieved notable influence on policy-making. The Index will look into quantitative results of think tanks' output (number and variety of policy products, policy proposals and drafts submitted to relevant government agencies and taking into account in the policy-making process; number of staff and external experts; volume of annual budget etc.) and qualitative indicators (methodological approaches to analytical work; principles and motivations for selecting policy issues, sources of data gathering, etc.).

The Index will focus on a specific set of think tank activity and recommend actions to be taken to strengthen it. Specifically, the Index will look into:

- Institutional capacity of think tanks;
- Involvement in and influence on public policy decision-making;
- Think tanks' clients, target audiences, and constituencies;
- Partnerships and collaborations;
- Policy products and quality assurance mechanisms;
- Visibility, communications and outreach;
- Internal governance and management

The Index will also be used as a tool to assess changes in organizational capacity and performance of the think tank community as a result of the Think Tank Development Initiative in 2017.

Currently the TTDI team is preparing an external review of the Think Tank Index methodology by an international peer reviewer to be identified by the Think Tank Fund.

### 4. Review of the Results Matrix

Please see the Results Matrix review in the **Annex 5** attached as a separate file.

### 5. Updated Risks Assessment Framework

The changing political context created new risks that need to be taken into account by TTDI. The Risks Assessment Framework has been updated accordingly. The key new risks include the following:

#### Internal:

Think tanks devote most of their resources to projects and lack capacity and time to deal with their organizational development. We see this risk as high. To mitigate it, we will undertake ongoing monitoring of mini-grants; recommend to think tanks to hire / contract an organizational development manager; build awareness of TTs boards and senior staff about the importance of organizational development; set clear organizational development benchmarks as conditions for qualifying for core grants; and work with other donors to reiterate importance of organizational development.

#### External:

Deterioration of the armed conflict and separatism in the East of Ukraine will divert attention and resources from good policy-making. We assess this risk as high. To mitigate this risk, we plan building collaboration with stakeholders in the government and the society and organizing public policy debates to find commonly acceptable policy solutions.

Donors have different requirements to organizational development and / or do not emphasize strong organizational systems in their grantees. We assess this risk as medium. To mitigate it, we will promote common organizational standards and build awareness of the importance of organizational development.

Please see risks review in the **Annex 6** attached as a separate file.

### 6. Progress on the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

IRF produced its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan in May 2014. The M&E Plan aims at ensuring thorough and regular review and analysis of the progress towards meeting the TTDI objectives, monitoring of outputs and efficiency of any events, and the project outcomes in accordance with the TTDI logical framework (Results Summary). It focuses on collecting and analyzing data obtained through the process of implementation of the project activities, and is designed to reflect progress in the following aspects:

- 1) Compliance with the project timeline
- 2) Achievement of the planned results
- 3) Evaluation of results achieved in the TTDI's three cross-cutting priority areas:
  - Institutional capacity development of participating think tanks;
  - The level of visibility of participating think tanks;
  - The relevance and dissemination of the participating think tanks' policy products.
- 4) Monitoring and evaluation of the results achieved by the participating think tanks in four thematic priority areas:
  - Relevance for Ukraine's European integration objectives;
  - Non-discrimination and gender equality issues within the participating think tanks;
  - Environmental awareness issues within the participating think tanks;
  - Relevance of the participating think tanks' work for dissemination of standards of transparency, accountability, and countering corruption (at the levels of products, communication and internal procedures).
- 5) Monitoring of the changing context in which the project is implemented with the focus on monitoring of risks and adjustments that need to be made in accordance with them.

The M&E Plan helps the ongoing learning and feedback throughout the TTDI implementation. Given the dynamically changing political, economic and social environment in Ukraine, the M & E Plan allows TTDI implementers to foresee and propose adequate levels of flexibility and adaptability of tools used by TTDI

The M & E Plan is used for:

- reviewing the flow of activities provided by TTDI and its compliance with the planned timelines;
- evaluating how the interventions (outputs) are meeting the TTDI stated goals / purpose;

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- tracing whether the achieved results correspond with the planned objectives of TTDI;
- engaging implementers and partners in the assessment of efficiency and effectiveness of the project;
- assessing prospects for sustainability of the project results.

This is a brief plan of the M&E activities within Stage I of TTDI:

<b>Date/period</b>	<b>Monitoring and evaluation activities</b>	<b>Documents reflecting the activities</b>	<b>Status</b>
Weekly	TTDI update by Implementing Team for the IRF staff (during staff meeting)	Presentation	done
Monthly	TTDI progress update by Implementing Team for the IRF Democratic Practice program Initiative Program Board	Presentation and report	done
June 2014	1 <sup>st</sup> wave of organizational assessment of 22 pre-selected applicant TTs. Preparation of reports based on organizational assessment findings	22 reports were prepared	done
June 2014	Report prepared for TTDI International Selection Commission	Presentation and report	done
July 2014	Preparing and presenting a report for the semi-annual project review meeting	Presentation and report	done

Detailed analysis of the Monitoring and evaluation plan has been presented in the **Annex 7** attached as a separate file.

### 7. Budget report and proposed update

Proposed changes to the budget are reflected in the **Annex 8** attached as a separate file.

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The changes have been caused by several reasons:

- All improvements mini-grants awarded by the decision of the International Selection Committee amount to less than \$100,000. This is because of lower than expected number of granters.
- The increase of amount directed to mentoring. This is connected with the recommendation of International Selection Committee to finance the costs of hiring senior-level consultants to help the think tanks work on improvement of their strategies and action plans beyond the mini grants and to increase the amount available for expert fees for the development of strategy plans for advanced level organizations.
- The amount of \$200 000, initially planned to be disbursed for the institutional core grants, will need to be postponed to 2015, because the organizational assessment of partner think tanks found that all of them will have to go through substantial improvement work and will not be able to complete their mini grants, go through the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of organizational assessment and, in a number of cases, independent financial audits, by the end of December 2014.

The total *admin* expenses on TTDI Admin for 6 months are \$47,946.15 (the total admin budget is \$121,965.00). The balance for admin budget is \$74,018.85.

### 8. Next steps in 2014

The TTDI team plans to make the following steps in July – December 2014

#	Activity	Time
1.	Implementation of improvement mini-grant projects (13 organizations)	July- November
2.	Training program delivered for the partner TTs	July-November
3.	Expert support provided to the partner TTs	July-November
4.	Short-term study visit to European TTs	September-October
5.	TT index – assessment of TTs	September-November
6.	Development of the Online policy analysis learning and communication platform	July-December
7.	Policy debates	September-November

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8.	TTs conference	September-October
9.	Organizational and financial audits (2 <sup>nd</sup> wave)	December
10.	Monitoring and evaluation of mini grants program, including training components	December
11.	Prepare and announce the institutional development grant program	December

**Stage I of the TTDI Implementation Plan  
(July 2014 update)**

**Stage I (2014)** – Inception of the initiative, launch of project infrastructure, selection and institutional assessment of partner think tanks

January - February 2014 - Developing the standards for institutional development of think tanks and mechanisms of quality assurance of policy-relevant research products (based on IRF's and TTF's previous work with think tanks in Ukraine). A detailed questionnaire will be used for the initial assessment and pre-selection of think tanks to participate in TTDI.

January - February 2014 - 6-8 IRF managers will be trained in organizational assessment and system-audits skills.

The training by SDA took place in March – April 2014 due to the political crisis in Ukraine

January - March 2014 - The first edition of the Think Tank Index will be produced. Its findings will inform the Initiative as to the relevant standards and benchmarks.

Due to the peer review results, TTDI team decided to postpone the Index survey and engage an international reviewer to the Index. The Index survey of think tanks will be performed in November – December 2014 and serve as a baseline for assessing the partner think tanks.

March - April 2014 - Based on IRF's and TTF's previous work with think tanks in Ukraine, and the standards of institutional development, agreed with SIDA, about 20 mid-level and upper-mid-level Ukrainian think tanks will be pre-selected for participation in TTDI.

April 2014 - Think Tank Index results presentation.

April - May 2014 – First wave of institutional assessment of the pre-selected think tanks and make recommendations for their capacity development.

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June – August 2014 - First wave of mini-grants to implement short term improvement plans (up to \$10.000). Recommendations will be given about the strategy, financial control, boards, audit, procurement. Each of the think tanks will receive assistance in devising their improvement plans (creating, updating or revising its strategy, take other organizational development measures, reviewing the Board arrangements, financial control).

June – November 2014 - Based on the think tanks' individual organizational development plans/ improvement and the recommendations given to them, IRF and TTF will provide tailor-made training inputs for the two groups of think tanks, trainings will be focusing on issues, including but not limited to governance and procedures, strategic planning, management and staff development, and communication. The purpose of the trainings will be to give momentum to the think tanks' further self-development. It is possible that some of the think tanks will drop out at this stage either as a result of the audits and/or voluntarily.

The training for think tanks will begin in July – August 2014 after the contracts for mini-grants are signed.

November - December 2014 – Second wave of institutional assessment: a series of verification visits to the think tanks to assess their achievements in implementing the institutional development recommendations. Based on the assessment results, Selection Committee selects about 15 think tanks for awarding core funding. Grants ranging from \$40.000 to \$120.000 – to \$200.000 will be awarded.

Given that 13 think tanks were selected as a result of the 1<sup>st</sup> wave of institutional assessment and awarded improvement mini-grants, we expect that 10-12 think tanks will graduate through the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of assessment and qualify for the core institutional grants.

January – November 2014 - Grants for cooperative projects of think tanks and advocacy groups / NGOs. In order to assist policy professionalization of the think tanks, IRF will provide its own funding for their policy work on the condition of partnership between think tanks and advocacy groups that would join efforts in advocacy of improving policies affecting women's rights, access of vulnerable people to employment in the SME sector, making university education relevant for

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the labour market, developing local democracy tools, and evaluation of regional environmental policy.

January – December 2014 - The online platform, “Policy Analysis in Ukraine” will become operational and filled with learning materials, databases, blogs, video lectures and other resources. Think tanks, other policy institutions and experts will be informed about the resource and encouraged to use it. The partner think tanks will receive special consultations and training courses through the online platform.