

2015 Innovative Solutions Scheme

Innovative Solutions Scheme functions as a multistage mechanism, which allows to:

- identify successful innovative solutions in public administration;
- facilitate deeper understanding of the identified solutions by supporting the process of case studies and manuals preparation for potential replication;
- support replication of these solutions in other countries.

Every year the scope of the Scheme will be identified based on the priorities of participating countries.

In 2015, the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana launched the Innovative Solutions Scheme. It has been facilitated by UNDP in Kazakhstan and Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS (UN Istanbul Regional Hub). As a result of evaluation by the International Selection Panel that included representatives of the Hub's participating countries in the region and partners, the following bidders have been identified as winners:

National Anticorruption Centre (Moldova)

Project: Integrity Testing Mechanism of Civil Servants

Colin Knox, Professor of Ulster University (United Kingdom)

Project: Quality of Life Framework for Public Services in education

Saltanat Akhmetzhanova, Director of Centre of Scientific Economic Expertise, JSC "Economic Research Institute", Ministry of National Economy (Kazakhstan)

Project: Improving the process of preparing professionally competent personnel for public administration through the development and implementation in the educational process of the new discipline of "Evaluation of socio-economic impact of legal acts".

Call for Applications was launched on 10 August 2015 and closed on 26 October 2015. Overall, 21 applications were received – 12 applications focusing on Enhancement of Service Delivery in Public Education and 9 applications – on Innovative Methods of Protecting Meritocratic Principles in Selection and Promotion Processes of Civil Servants.

Geography of applications received includes 9 countries: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Turkmenistan and UK. 8 proposals out of 21 were received from individual applicants/groups of individual applicants. All of them are affiliated with public institutions. 13 proposals were received from public organizations/agencies, at national and sub-national levels, Academies of Public Administration, think tanks, public associations, non-profit organizations.

Every year the winners of the Scheme receive funding to cover the costs of preparation of a case study and a manual for potential replication by other countries.

Project: Quality of Life Framework for Public Services in education

Colin Knox, Professor of Ulster University, UK

Background and statement of the problem. One of the key problems in the planning and delivery of public services is that provider organisations (ministries, oblast, akimats and government agencies) focus on inputs and activities while neglecting the outcomes and impact of services on citizens. In that sense public services are provider-led and lose sight of the end user – the public for whom services are intended. This innovative solution is an attempt to refocus the provision of public services on citizens.

Using Kazakhstan as an example illustrates the potential of moving towards outcomes-focused public services. In May 2015 President Nazarbayev, soon after his re-election, launched the 100 concrete steps programme, entitled *Plan of the Nation*. The plan was designed ‘to provide a strong national platform needed to overcome both short-term challenges and achieve the country’s ambition of joining the top 30 developed countries by 2050’.

The problem with complex multi-level governance structures is that ministries, oblasts, and akimats work through separate functional mechanisms which offer citizens very fragmented public services, resulting in a lack of ‘joined-up’ government. Yet citizens’ needs in health and social care, education, employment etc. often straddle several public sector organisations. This results in provider-led public services which are disjointed for citizens. Decentralisation of functions to local government creates further opportunities for fragmentation of provision and institutionalism with a greater propensity for ‘budget maximizing bureaucrats’, more concerned with their own career aspirations than the efficient and effective delivery of public services for which they are responsible. In short, the problem is one of top-down bureaucratic paternalism (‘we know best’) which emphasizes processes and outputs but fails to focus on outcomes or the impact of public services on those who use them. One example of turning this model ‘upside down’ is through life episodes research which essentially charts the experience of public service users to major episodes in their lives: a major health incident; losing their job; the experience of poverty - living on social protection/security etc. To what extent can public services react in a coordinated way to these major episodes in people’s lives?

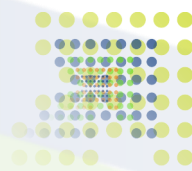
The Innovative Solution. There are three parts to the innovative solution in this research:

- Develop an outcomes based accountability (OBA) model for public services
- Devise a framework for quality of life indicators
- Consider an appropriate implementation mechanism which will deliver user-led public services.

Roll-out to other Regional Hub countries. Each country will develop its own measures of what constitute ‘quality of life’ based on their specific context, but drawing directly on the framework in this research. Although the broad principles are likely to apply – quality of life in most places will be affected by education, health and housing services – clearly, the baseline and expectations of progress will be different. Each Regional Hub country will therefore develop its own quality of life indicators using the innovative solution rubric contained in this research.

Deliverables:

- (a) Quality of Life Framework for adaptation by regional hub members
- (b) Guidance notes/manual which helps explain in more detail the elements of the innovative solution and how it can be put into practice and replicated in regional hub countries.
- (c) An example (or a case study) from a developed country of how the innovation is used in practice.



Project: Integrity Testing Mechanism of Civil Servants
National Anticorruption Centre, Moldova

Professional integrity testing is internationally promoted and recommended mechanism, with such examples as the OECD toolkit on “Managing conflict of interest in the public sector,” which describes integrity testing as a “powerful specialised corruption detection tool,” a notion supported also by the World Bank working paper “Preventing Corruption in Prosecution Offices: Understanding and Managing for Integrity”; the OSCE “Best practices in combating corruption” denoting the essence and use of integrity testing in the follow-up and monitoring pursuant of a clean-up procedure meant to eradicate corruption in a sector, a fact also supported by the UN handbook on practical anti-corruption measures for prosecutors and investigators.

Background and statement of the problem. In an effort to lighten the task of responsible institutions in promoting and enforcing the honest and efficient supply of public services, the National Anticorruption Centre has launched in 2013 the initiative of testing public servants in their day to day activity, in view of revealing behavioral patterns that might pose a risk to the overall public interest, and more specifically, would lead to corruption. With the efforts of NAC, the civil society and Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, in February 2014, the Law on professional integrity testing was published.

The Innovative Solution. The National Anticorruption Centre has launched in 2013 the initiative of testing public servants in their day-to-day activity, in view of revealing behavioral patterns that might pose a risk to the overall public interest, and more specifically, would lead to corruption.

The testing procedure represents a dissimulation of daily activities and tasks and gauges the capacity of the civil servant to respect the responsibilities and attributions of their function, their professional integrity and non-admission of external influences and corruption. The testing results with a report that establishes whether the civil servant has proven integrity in their activity or not.

Deliverables:

- (a) Case study on Integrity Testing Mechanism implementation in Moldova.
- (b) Manual for replication of the innovative solution.

Project: Improving the process of preparing professionally competent personnel for public administration through the development and implementation in the educational process of the new discipline of "Evaluation of socio-economic impact of normative legal acts".

Saltanat Akhmetzhanova, Director of Centre of Scientific Economic Expertise, JSC “Economic Research Institute”, Ministry of National Economy, Kazakhstan

Background and statement of the problem. In the face of a deteriorating economic situation many countries now see regulatory improvement as a key focus of their governance strategy. For example, in Belgium, reforms aimed at simplifying regulation for citizens and businesses have led to a EUR 1.25 billion reduction in administrative costs for citizens and businesses over the period 2008-2014 (with roughly 65% of these savings benefitting business and 35% benefitting citizens). In Australia, reforms to reduce regulatory costs increased GDP by 1.3%. In the United Kingdom the “Red Tape Challenge” which is a government-wide strategy for reducing the stock of existing regulation was launched in 2011.

Since 2013, the United Kingdom has operated a “One-in, Two-out” regulatory management system. As of March 2015, these measures had together delivered savings to business of some GBP 10 billion.

The Innovative Solution. There is no complete cycle of assessment in Kazakhstan. That leads to the impossibility of carrying out a full and objective regulatory impact assessment. The assessment process lacks anticipation, meaning that it is conducted too late in the decision-making process (too often after developing a law draft without assessing alternatives). It also lacks quality control and ex-post assessment. At the same time the existing problems can't be solved without providing this sector with qualified personnel.

Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) is a regulation quality improvement tool used by more than 70 foreign countries. RIA best practices are observed in OECD countries, where 33 of 34 countries have adopted an explicit regulatory policy and require regulatory impact assessments and public consultation for all new regulations, while 29 have a designated minister to promote regulatory reform. Among the CIS countries the RIA process is being used under different names in Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan. In Russia it is called Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), in Kyrgyzstan – Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA), in Uzbekistan – the System of impact assessment of legislative acts.

In Kazakhstan, this process was introduced in 2011, it is represented by the assessment of the socio-economic consequences of law drafts that is carried out by government officials. The assessment results are subject to scientific economic expertise. However, despite the availability of RIA tools in Kazakhstan, this process has a number of problems and requires improvements. In this regard, the project goal is development of a course “Assessment of socio-economic consequences of regulatory legal acts” and its further implementation into educational process for Master's program in "Public and local administration" in order to improve professional competencies of civil servants.

Deliverables:

- (a) Research on the problems and prospects of the process of assessment of regulation in Kazakhstan, including analysis of successful international experience and justification of its application in Kazakhstan;
- (b) Teaching materials for the proposed course.

Besides the winning applications, there were three more proposals, which were recognized as interesting solutions worth to be described in separate case studies. The international Selection Panel decided to support these individuals/organisations listed below that will receive funds to prepare a case study:

1. National Anticorruption Centre (Moldova)

“Innovative Legal Solutions: Preventing Corruption in Law Drafting“

2. Dr. Karl O’Connor (UK)

“A Q Methodological Analysis of the Norms, Beliefs and Values of Hub Participants”

3. State Bodies Efficiency Evaluation Center (Kazakhstan)

“Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Performance of State Bodies in Personnel Management”

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