

Summary

The evaluation was commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as part of Polish Development Cooperation. It was carried out from August until December 2014 by a consortium comprising two entities: IDEA of Development Foundation and EGO – Evaluation for Government Organisations s.c., a limited partnership specialising in research. The evaluation focused on selected initiatives carried out in the framework of four components of Polish Development Cooperation in 2011-13, including:

- the *Scholarship Programme for Students of Specialised Eastern Studies at the University of Warsaw*;
- projects carried out in the years 2011 - 2013 in the area of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Ukraine;
- projects carried out in the years 2011 - 2013 in the area of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Georgia;
- the performance of a coproduction agreement by the Belarusian Radio Racyja (BRR) entered into with the MFA for 2013.

General assessment of the project

The general assessment of all components is positive.

The *Scholarship Programme for Students of Specialised Eastern Studies at the University of Warsaw* addresses the actual needs of the beneficiaries. Graduates develop academic and professional careers and thus prove that the initiative is sustainable. The project has contributed to creating “leaders of change” in the participants’ countries of origin and has yielded image benefits for Poland. Thanks to its relatively long history and high (in the students’ opinion) quality of offered services, the programme is now a recognisable brand in the project’s participants’ home countries.

The Ukrainian SME component should be appraised positively. The analysed projects were well linked to the objectives of the Multiannual Development Cooperation Programme for 2012-2015 and the Millennium Development Goals. Initiatives implemented within this priority were highly appraised by all parties involved. Most of the organizations involved in the projects have been engaged for many years in various activities in Ukraine, where they have reliable partners. However, entrepreneurship projects in general were not part of their core activity. They expressed an interest in SMEs because by adjusting their statutory activities to fit the priority, they were eligible for financing allocated to its implementation. At the same time, a competent implementation of the project’s activities has made a positive contribution to Poland’s image as a donor of development cooperation.

Georgian SME component should be carried out in the future. Assistance priorities included recipients groups being in particularly bad position as well as regions with deep socio-economic problems. The offer of the Polish Aid was perceived as attractive, precisely focused on achieving objective and well suited to beneficiary needs. Study visits in Polish farms and agritourist farms with additional trainings in Georgia strengthening competences acquired during the project were of the most sustainable character. The key restrictions to the sustainability were lack of support from local authorities and beneficiaries' limited access to the credits, that could financed development of newly founded companies.

The performance of a coproduction agreement by the Belarusian Radio Racyja (BRR) entered into with the MFA for 2013 can be assessed positively. BRR has taken far-reaching steps to increase access to objective information for target groups.

At the same time, the implementation of all researched projects had a positive impact on the image of Poland as a donor of development cooperation.