

Ukrainian Standardized External Testing Initiative Legacy Alliance (USETI Legacy Alliance)

With USAID funding under the GDA paradigm, the American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS (American Councils), in collaboration with American Institutes for Research (AIR), and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MOES), Ukrainian Center for Education Quality Assessment (UCEQA), Ministry of Health Testing Center, International Renaissance Foundation (IRF), Fakt Publishing House (Fakt), Malardalen University (Sweden/TEMPUS), National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy (NAUKMA), Lviv National University named after Ivan Franko (LNU), Petro Mohyla Black Sea State University (BSU), The National Academy of Management (NAM), OPORA Civic Network (OPORA), “pro.mova,” and the Center for Educational Policy (CEP) (together – Partners) have formed the **Ukrainian Standardized External Testing Initiative Legacy Alliance (USETI Legacy Alliance, or Alliance)**. The Global Development Alliance Ukrainian Standardized External Testing Initiative (USETI) was ratified by the United States Agency for International Development on April 8, 2010 with a current estimated project completion date of December 31st, 2012.

The USETI Alliance builds on accomplishments of previous assistance, including USETI (TCP), the International Renaissance Foundation, World Bank, British Council, and others. USETI Alliance planned outcomes are:

- A sustainable strengthened UCEQA capable of independently and transparently developing and implementing secure tests that meet international standards;
- A secure legislative basis for testing and higher education admission, and an institutionalized partnership between business, higher education, and policymakers;
- Public support for testing transformed into a proactive contemporary public expectation; so that grass roots support will ensure the sustainability of testing no matter what government comes into power, and
- A basic, yet high-quality test-preparation industry driven by informed consumer demand.

The USETI Alliance has one broad goal: that by project completion, Ukraine’s system of testing-based HEI admissions be institutionally secured and self-sustainable. This goal will be reached by attaining the four project objectives through implementation of the four program areas and corresponding activities.

Objective One - UCEQA’s test development and operational capacity are reinforced and self-sustainable for the long-term. By project completion, through “next level” training in item and test development, UCEQA will have a skills set and institutional capacity to independently develop and administer the full range of tests needed for merit based, fair admissions to HEIs with enhanced quality and ensured reliability between forms each year. UCEQA management will be better networked nationally and linked to international professional communities such as AEA-Europe (Association for Educational Assessment) upon which they can draw to stay current in areas of test development and operations, and will work with the community to secure external research of test validity.

Objective Two - Legislative foundations are secured and university admission policy and practice in operation, with integrated involvement from business to support external standardized testing as key to economic growth. By project completion, the MOES and UCEQA should be operating in a legislative and regulatory environment where all the fundamental aspects of test-based HEI admissions are codified in law. UCEQA's mandate and regulations should also be institutionally secured via government regulation. The business community and Ukrainian HEIs should be working in support of and in partnership with the MOES to solidify and normalize testing-based admissions reform as key to Ukraine's economic development.

Objective Three - Public support for testing is transformed into a proactive contemporary public expectation. By project completion, corruption-free testing-based admissions will become a commonplace facet for admissions to higher education, and UCEQA and MOES will be savvy in managing the public's engagement with the topic. The general public and testing participants will receive timely and complete information from UCEQA and the MOES via traditional and new media concerning testing and admissions. The business community and other opinion leaders will more proactively speak out on behalf of objective higher education admissions as a boon to economic growth and to assist in attaining political consensus. Ukrainians generally will insist on fair practices in admissions and their impulses to fairness will be echoed by the economic motivations of the private sector.

Objective Four - Demand for test preparation is informed and fundamentals of a competent test-prep industry are established. By project completion, UCEQA and the RCEQAs will be capable of independently setting the tone for minimum quality requirements in the budding test prep industry. Test prep materials and practice testing operational platforms will be better presented and hence more available to all interested audiences. Rural test takers will have improved access to quality test prep materials. The test-taking public will more actively seek and pay for quality test prep materials, being better informed of what constitutes quality.

USETI Alliance is the Successor to the Ukrainian Standardized Testing Initiative (USETI (TCP), 2007-2010)

About our Predecessor – USETI (TCP)

The Government of Ukraine acknowledged in 2005 that corruption had become a serious impediment to the country's economic, political and social development. In an effort to address this challenge, the Government of Ukraine implemented a Millennium Challenge Corporation (www.mcc.gov) Threshold Country Plan (TCP) with a single Strategic Objective of Reduction of Corruption in the Public Sector. The two-year Plan, implemented in 2007 – 2009, contained five components of which Component Five addressed combating corruption in higher education, through the Ukrainian Standardized External Testing Initiative. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) acted within the Threshold Country Plan approved by the Millennium Challenge Corporation, provided funding for the initiative