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Democracy promotion through schools in Ukraine:

Mid-term evaluation of the European Wergeland Centre's Schools for Democracy Programme

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Abstract: The Schools for Democracy programme supports education reforms in Ukraine in the period in 2017-2021. The mid-term evaluation found that the programme is in accordance with national and donor priorities and is well linked up with the ongoing reforms. The programme is being carried out in an effective way and has reached out to all Ukraine's regions. For the remainder of the programme period stronger emphasis should be put on qualitative analysis of results in order to secure future impact.

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Preface

This report has been written by a team consisting of Jørn Holm-Hansen (team leader) and Maryna Rabinovych.

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The report was commissioned by the European Wergeland Centre.

We would like to thank all those having shared their time, information and insights with the evaluators.

Oslo, February 2021

Kristian Tronstad
Research Director

Innhold

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Summary

Jørn Holm-Hansen and Maryna Rabinovych

Democracy promotion through schools in Ukraine: Mid-term evaluation of the European Wergeland Centre's Schools for Democracy Programme

NIBR Report 2021:3

The Schools for Democracy programme (SfD) in Ukraine is a national programme run by the European Wergeland Centre (EWC) and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This report presents findings and recommendations from the mid-term evaluation of the current programme period (2017-2021). The evaluation is based on SfD's reporting of results as well as findings from the interviews and general programme documents.

The Oslo-based EWC is a European resource centre on education for human rights, democratic citizenship and intercultural understanding. The centre was established in 2008 by Norway and the Council of Europe (CoE). EWC cooperates with two Ukrainian NGO's as implementing partners for SdD. These are Lviv-based Education Initiatives Centre (CEI) and Kyiv-based ISAR Ednannia.

The programme

The SfD programme been designed as a broad-spectrum intervention to democratize the contents of teaching, the ways schools are run and the role of schools in their local communities. All relevant categories of actors within the educational sector are targeted. Consequently, students, parents, teachers, teacher trainers, ministerial officers all the way to the minister as well as local community representatives are included in the manifold project activities under the programmes four components.

The programme's goals for 2017-2021 are to:

- Facilitate implementation of four key priorities of the New Ukrainian School reform:
 - a) a new national curriculum aimed at development of competences for living in a democracy (by 2022)
 - b) decentralization of school governance, strengthening school autonomy and democratization of teaching and learning processes
 - c) access to new teaching and learning materials for all, including practitioners and students in occupied areas of Ukraine
 - d) in-service training of teachers and school heads in line with democratic teaching and learning approach
- Strengthen the capacity of regional teacher training institutes and NGOs to offer professional development for teachers in line with the new reform
- Facilitate dialogue and cooperation between educators in different regions of Ukraine
- Contribute to policy development, dissemination of good practices and regional cooperation in education for democracy and human rights between Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova

In line with these objectives, the programme is divided into four programme components, for the new national curriculum, democratization of schools, online learning for democracy, and experience exchange and regional cooperation respectively.

Relevance

The mid-term evaluation found that the programme has been carefully designed to link up with the ongoing reforms of the Ukrainian educational reform. This enables the programme to have an impact on systemic level and helps avoid the pitfalls of merely carrying out sporadic and stand-alone activities with individuals as target groups without anchoring it in an overall reform.

The four programme components correspond with core elements of the reform. Despite frequent changes of personnel on top level in Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Science, the programme has been able to work closely with the ministry, and in particular with the ministerial working groups underpinning the various reform elements. Thanks to the sequencing of its activities, SfD has been able to respond to new needs as the educational reform evolves. An example of this, is the programme's recent support to pre-school education reform.

The programme is based on the Whole School Approach to foster democratic citizenship through respect for human rights, participation and inclusion in all areas of school life. This approach is promoted by major international organizations, like the Council of Europe, UNESCO and Amnesty International.

Effectiveness

The programme is being carefully monitored by EWC and its progress reports make it possible to gauge its outputs and outcomes in numerical terms as the programme proceeds. These reports show that the programme machinery is on tracks in all its four components. Some of the programme effectiveness lies in its use of local experts and trainers as well as its cooperation with regional Teacher Training Institutes and local NGOs providing teacher training. The programme targets the most willing, those who would like the educational sector to be democratized but need the skills and tools.

Effectiveness of the programme implementation is challenged primarily by two factors. Firstly, there is always a risk reforms remain declaration of intentions. Nepotism, corruption, and clientelism still permeates Ukraine. In schools, among others, authoritarian teaching methods, authoritarian management practices and rejection of parental participation are commonplace. Tendencies for schools to join the programme for the prestige of it, more than to actively engage with the programme's core mission, has been observed. Secondly, and on a less fundamental level, comes the problems with donor overload and overlap. EWC has taken initiative to coordinate various international initiatives in Ukraine's educational sector but this has proved difficult. In 2020, however, a multi-level architecture for donor coordination, among others for the educational sector, was initiated by the government.

Results

So far, 96 874 teachers, students and parents have been involved in programme activities. More than 300 schools have been involved and 72 trainers have been actively engaged.

The first programme component to support Ukraine's new national curriculum has contributed to include education for democracy in the curriculum. This has been done through policy advice, a pilot study on the development of transversal competencies, a pilot on education quality standards and material on transversal development of civic competences. The concept of transversal competencies refers to a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed to be critically important to success under contemporary conditions. In addition, SfD has strengthened the capacities of teachers, school heads, education experts, Teacher Training Institutes and local NGOs in the fields of democratic citizenship and human rights.

The second programme component on democratization of schools provides support to decentralized and transparent governance of schools to replace top-down management. So far

150 schools have taken part in this programme activity. According to self-reporting through a questionnaire, school staff and students are overwhelmingly convinced their schools and teaching processes have become more democratic. The component also includes activities to improve relations between schools and their surrounding community. Several manuals have been produced to this end. So far more than 60 000 teachers, school heads, students, parents and local community representatives have been reached. Another important element in the programme's endeavours to democratize schools consist in training national teacher trainers to apply democratic methods. As a result, a network of 72 teacher trainers has been established. This project component reaches out to 24 out of Ukraine's 25 regions, all except Crimea. In total 8 regional hubs for better trainer cooperation were established for logistical reasons. The educators report that they appreciate the experience of networking across regions. In regionally diverse Ukraine, this is important.

The third programme component to develop online learning for democratization makes online resources on democracy and human rights available and accessible. The programme component also offer training in making use of the online resources. Among others, manuals and Massive Open Online Courses have been put in place by the programme. The online toolbox of instruments the field of democracy and human rights education has almost 1550 users by now and includes all the programmes categories of target groups. Around 40 experts have been trained within this programme component.

The fourth programme component on experience exchange and regional cooperation has enabled fruitful exchanges with Norwegian policy makers and educational institutions, among others on Norway's renewed curriculum and pre-school education. Norwegian INN University contributed to development of online learning in the programme. The Norwegian Students Survey has been translated. Meetings have also been held with peers in Moldova and Georgia.

All in all, the results so far for the four programme components are very satisfactory on output level. In other words, the planned concrete activities are being carried out and products delivered. The programme's meticulous counting and reporting on outputs removes all doubts about this. Analysis of the detailed figures reveals a programme that is well thought out and that keeps a close eye on implementation of activities.

Recommendations

More emphasis on outcomes to identify potential impacts

Both for outputs (the immediate results, «deliveries») and outcomes (what the deliveries make project participants and target groups do as a result of the activities), the programme applies a predominantly qualitative approach, meticulously reporting number of participating students and school staff at various programme activities, numbers of governmental committees in which the programme is engaged etc. For the first half of the programme, this is good. Mid-term, however, it is time for the programme to go more in-depth on outcomes by asking what the recipient target groups make out of the programme outputs. In other words, more emphasis should be put on outcomes and to what extent they point towards impacts. Impacts, if ever, mainly come to fruition after programmes are over. They take time and are contingent upon a wide variety of factors, the programme being only one. It is therefore recommendable to start analysing the likelihood that target groups make use of the observed outcomes in ways that impact on the democratic contents of Ukraine's schools. Then a more narrative approach has to be added, in which the likelihood of effects is in focus. Large number of participants and activities and self-reported improvements in democratic attituded is just a beginning.

Recommendation: For the remainder of the programme period, for analytical purposes, it is recommendable to scrutinize what lies behind all the positive scores on the indicators and go in detail on what the improvements consist in in concrete terms and to what extent they are likely to strike roots to the extent that they will survive the programme. One way of doing this, would be to

seek out participants in the programme component who took part in 2018 and do in-depth interviews with them about what use they have had of the insights, tools and skills from the programme in their everyday activities in the aftermath.

More and better dissemination

Although reaching out to a large number of targeted individuals, these latter only constitute a small percentage of the total. In cooperation with relevant educational authorities and institutions SfD has developed a large number of tools and materials that are ready to be used. In order to create further interest for this in the educational sector, more dissemination of results would be conducive to create a demand among e.g. teachers and school heads. In doing this, it might be worth considering the discursive framing.

Recommendation: As soon as possible the SfD should develop a dissemination strategy where pragmatic arguments complement the already established normative arguments underlying the programme.

Pre-service initial teacher training services

A recent law gave access to a wider group of civil society organizations (NGOs) to carry out in-service training of teachers. As a result, the regional TTI's stand at risk of losing power and influence. It is unclear what will be the quality of future in-service training as long as efficient certification procedures and systems are not in place.

Recommendation: The programme should consider the possibility of strengthening the cooperation with institutions for pre-service teacher training. A possible output in this regard could be semester modules on democracy in schools and the democratic role of schools. Well-prepared semester modules are likely to outlive the programme.

Planning for the programme's afterlife

Mid-term it is time to start planning the programme's exit. The fact that the programme is so carefully interwoven with Ukrainian policies and actors is an enabling factor in this regard. Among the issues to be addressed is the future role of the well-trained and experienced corps of trainers and the subsequent use and maintenance of the materials and tools produced. There may be good reasons the programme gets funding for another programme period but a transfer to the ordinary, everyday Ukrainian educational sector of what has been developed in the current period is nonetheless relevant.

Recommendation: The programme should start preparing an exit plan as soon as possible.

List of abbreviations

CEI	Education Initiatives Centre (Lviv)
CoE	Council of Europe
CMO	Context-Mechanism-Outcome
EWC	European Wergeland Centre
ISAR	The Initiative Centre to Support Social Action "Ednannia" (Kyiv)
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway)
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science (Ukraine)
MOOC	Massive Open Online Courses
SfD	Schools for Democracy programme
SSEQ	State Service of Education Quality (Ukraine)
ToC	Theory of Change
TTI	Teacher Training Institute

1 Introduction

1.1 Aim of the evaluation

This report takes stock mid-term of the Schools for Democracy Programme (2017-2021) implemented by the European Wergeland Centre (EWC).

The three basic evaluation questions, as outlined in the Terms of Reference, address the programme's relevance, implementation and results:

1. Relevance: Is the programme relevant in the implementing context, including for the recipient country's reform agenda and donor priorities?
2. Effectiveness: To what extent has implementation process been complete and appropriate to date? To which degree is the programme achieving the expected objectives and results so far?
3. Results: How many people and what parts of the country have been affected to date?

In addition, the report identifies needs for operational adjustments in order to reach the programme's objectives. It suggests recommendations for improvements to the ongoing programme, as well as contributes to general institutional learning at the EWC. Moreover, the recommendations are tailored to be of use for further programming if EWC decides to apply for a new programme.

The Terms of Reference asked for an assessment of the relevance for Ukraine's and donors' reform agenda. We suggested that the question on relevance is asked for the implementation process as well, more precisely the relevance of programme outputs in the current Ukrainian context. Put differently, do the immediate project activities (outputs) strike a chord in the local context to the extent that they lead target groups to more democratic practices in education?

1.2 Analytical and methodological approach

This mid-term evaluation makes use of a combination of analytical approaches and data.

1.2.1 Theory of Change

The evaluation follows an analytical and methodological design based on *Theory of Change (ToC)*. ToC has structured the evaluation's interview guides, analysis, final report and not least its participative process. The fact that the programme has been strictly designed according to ToC was of great help for the evaluators. The Sfd programme bases its design on ToC and applies it in applications and reports. We have taken the Goal Hierarchy as a point of departure to systematically measure to what extent the programme components are on their way to reach their goals.

The stages in a stylised ToC are:

input (the «intervention», the initial activities) → **output** (the immediate results, «deliveries») → **outcome** (what the deliveries lead to, make project participants and target groups do as a result of the activities) → **impact** (on society).

The evaluation makes use of ToC to go in detail on outputs and outcomes in the four programme components and to discuss potential impacts.

1.2.2 Context-Mechanism-Outcome

In addition to ToC, we have applied the Context-Mechanism-Outcome (CMO) approach developed by the Realist School of Evaluation. This, so-called “trio of explanatory components” helps combining a focus on the programme as such with a focus on the pre-existing context of action, in other words balancing between the programme and the context in which it operates. This helps identify how the programme activates structural, agential and relational mechanisms to produce the planned outcomes. This was of use to develop recommendations on how to adjust programme activities to be more conducive to applicable insights and skills for the programme target groups. The training of trainers is one of the pivotal elements in this regard. Put differently, this is about helping outputs lead to outcomes by identifying contextual obstacles.

For instance, in SfD’s Tool for Democratic School Development is designed to monitor programme effects and provide information of “mechanisms in their context”. This was of use for the CMO analysis. Other tools are applied for other programme components and the evaluation will assess how they account for contextual factors.

1.2.3 Participatory approach

In line with the T-o-R, EWC and the programme’s local implementing partners have been involved during the evaluation process. Two stakeholder’s skype meetings were arenas for feedback and discussion.

The participatory approach serves two main purposes. Firstly, it is conducive to making the evaluation relevant and applicable for all programme participants from the EWC core team to the teachers and students in schools. Secondly, the participatory approach helped the evaluators avoid misunderstandings due to their unfamiliarity with all the tacit knowledge – unexpressed and uncodified knowledge - that necessarily will exist within a large-scale programme, like SfD.

1.2.4 Data sources

The evaluation is based on two main categories of sources. The first category of sources is plans, reports and other documents of relevance. These have been provided by EWC.

The second category of sources is individual and group interviews with the core project team in Oslo, the core team in Ukraine, policy makers, partners and donors, teacher trainers and beneficiaries (see List of Interviewees below).

Given the programme’s tight budget constraints interviews were planned to primarily to be made on Teams or other application for telecommunication. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic face-to-face interviews have been restricted to a minimum.

1.2.5 Management of sensitive issues

The project has paid careful attention to the ethical issues as outlined by the ethical guidelines of the Norwegian National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. The two team members have extensive experience from interviewing a variety of stakeholders, and have ensured that the research was undertaken with careful consideration of ethics, including an overarching principle of ‘do no harm’. Interviews and survey took place only with informed consent. The data collected is being carefully maintained and secured by the involved research institutions in adherence with internal OsloMet policies on protection and security of data.

Both team members have long experience from doing research on controversial issues in conflictual settings and have stuck to a strictly neutral position if controversial issues or opinions are brought forward by interviewees.

2 The Schools for Democracy programme The programme's aims

The Programme is designed to support ongoing democratic reforms in school education in Ukraine by promoting democratic culture and democratic citizenship in policy and practice.

“Schools for Democracy” is a national programme to support democratization and decentralization processes in the education system based on common European values. The programme's goals for 2017-2021 are to:

- Facilitate implementation of four key priorities of the New Ukrainian School reform:
 - a new national curriculum aimed at development of competences for living in democracy (by 2022)
 - decentralization of school governance, strengthening school autonomy and democratization of teaching and learning processes
 - access to new teaching and learning materials for all, including practitioners and students in occupied areas of Ukraine
 - in-service training of teachers and school heads in line with democratic teaching and learning approach
- Strengthen the capacity of regional teacher training institutes and NGOs to offer professional development for teachers in line with the new reform
- Facilitate dialogue and cooperation between educators in different regions of Ukraine
- Contribute to policy development, dissemination of good practices and regional cooperation in education for democracy and human rights between Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova

The programme reaches out to the entire educational sector through carefully selected target groups of policy makers, curriculum developers, teachers, students, parents, and local community representatives.

2.2 Funding

The Schools for Democracy programme is funded through the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' “Grants to other ODA-eligible OSCE countries Eurasia” managed by MFA's Section for Eastern Europe, Central-Asia and regional organisations.

The programme's total budget for 2017-2021 amounts to 24 198 700 NOK. The programme is being carried out according to the Grant agreement UKR-17/0010 dated 5.12.2017 and the approved Implementation plan plans approved by the MFA each year in February. Deviations to the plan are mainly with regard to the change of dates of some activities.

2.3 Involved institutions

2.3.1 European Wergeland Centre

EWC is a European resource centre on education for human rights, democratic citizenship and intercultural understanding. EWC was established in 2008 by Norway and the Council of Europe

(CoE) with a mission to support CoE member states to implement CoE policies in practice. EWC is governed by a board composed of representatives of the Council of Europe and Norway. The offices are located in Oslo, Norway.

EWC offers a wide range of capacity building activities, support for research and development, and communication services for education professionals, policy makers, representatives of civil society, researchers and others from all over Europe. EWC is based in Oslo.

EWC's core funding is provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. Several activities and projects are financed by Norwegian or foreign donors based on grant applications.

EWC is involved in 26 countries and the SfD programme in Ukraine is EWC's biggest programme. EWC is responsible for overall programme management and reporting, financial control and quality assurance, as well as for the Experience Exchange and Regional Cooperation programme component directly, including international dissemination of good practices and expertise.

Four staff members at EWC work on the SfD, two of them in part time positions (20 and 40 pct of full time) position.

2.3.2 The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MoES) is EWC's main partner in Ukraine. The ministry provides expert advice and political support to the SfD programme. EWC has worked in partnership with MoES since 2012 within the frames of the first phase of the Schools for Democracy Programme (UKR-14/0039). EWC and MoES carried out a Youth Forum for Democracy and Human Rights (2013) and the Democracy and Human Rights at School project (2014-2015).

2.3.3 Agencies

EWC is cooperating closely with relevant governmental agencies, in particular the:

1. Ukrainian Institute of Education Development (recently established and being responsible for curricula and implementation of educational reforms)
2. Institute for Modernization of Content of Education (piloting the new approaches)
3. State Agency for Quality of Education

2.3.4 Implementing partners

The programme has two local implementing partners in Ukraine. Lviv-based Education Initiatives Centre (CEI) is involved in the programme components for Decentralization and Democratization of Schools Development, and Piloting. CEI took over the responsibility for the operational Implementation of the Piloting component, in order to reduce the number of activities managed by the EWC directly. Kyiv-based ISAR Ednannia is responsible for the Online Learning Resources Component. Recently, an additional implementing partner has been identified. Kyiv-based and well established Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation is implementing a series of activities in support of pre-school education reform.

The programme's local core team (staff at CEI and ISAR) has four members and is assisted by staff working on finance reporting, logistics and other.

Since 2020 the Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation was added as implementing partner for the Supporting the Pre-School Education Reform activities, and Reform Support Team, working as an advisory body for the MoES.

2.3.5 Cooperating partners

The programme has a broad network of trainers covering various regions of Ukraine. In addition to training as such, the trainers are involved in developing the training materials (made accessible to all schools, not only those directly involved in the programme) and contribute to policy development. Trainers convene for regular trainer coordination meetings. Trainers also follow a comprehensive training programme: online course each year, two face-to-face trainings per year, exchange of experience on Facebook and webinars with international experts. The network of trainers is in contact with trainers working in the same field in Moldova and Georgia for exchange of experiences.

Ukraine has 25 regional Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs). EWC did trainings for representatives of all TTIs in 2018, and established cooperation with some of them. As part of Ukraine's educational reform the field of teacher training has been opened up to other institutions in addition to the already existing regional institutes, an in line with the reform's aim of increasing the autonomy of individual schools, schools now may choose among a variety of providers of teacher training. After these changes were introduced in 2019, SfD has chosen the strategy to strengthen cooperation with local NGOs and affiliated teacher trainers to provide teacher training.

The liberalization of the teacher training system has led to a number of high quality teacher training initiatives on the side of the Ukrainian civil society organizations. Among these are (Prometheus, EdEra, Pro.Svit, and Step by Step Foundation). The SfD has chosen to partner with local NGOs and strengthen their capacity to carry out quality teacher training, along with cooperation with TTIs.

Also, other institutions and organisations cooperate with EWC in the various programme components. Schools involved in the programme are encouraged to enter into cooperation with local civil society groups.

The programme has entered into cooperation with Cooperation with the INN University (Lillehammer, Norway) to reinforce expert support for the Programme's Online component. The cooperation lasted one year (2019) and consisted of one training for experts and support for evaluation design of online courses.

3 Findings and discussion

3.1 Relevance

At the outset of the New Ukrainian School reform and the SfD programme, schools concentrated on natural sciences and factual knowledge. Less emphasis was put on civic education and “softer”, social skills and understanding. The problem was acknowledged but there were few ideas on how to describe them. Teachers reportedly lacked words to express their worries and many were unaccustomed to the idea to give more freedom to students.

The New Ukrainian School is one of the biggest reforms in Ukraine for a long time. It was initiated during Liliia Hrynevych’s time as a minister (2016-19). Much happened in that period: Competence-based curriculum for the first time in Ukraine, increased school autonomy, including financial autonomy, more academic freedom for teachers, focus on learning environment (anti-bullying).

The various components of the Schools for Democracy programme backs up core elements of the ongoing reform of the Ukrainian school system, based on the New Ukrainian School reform concept. Among other, this concept states that: “the whole life of the New Ukrainian school will be organized according to the model of respect for human rights, democracy, and support to good ideas”.

Moreover, SfD is in line with recommendations from the international community. The 2017 OECD Reviews of Integrity in Education report for Ukraine serves as a reference point for the reforms. OECD pointed at a wide range of flaws in the Ukrainian school system. Corruption, nepotism and widespread and unregulated fee-based private supplementary tutoring by teachers made access to education unequally distributed. Moreover, OECD identified a need to achieve a balance between professional autonomy and accountability and increased opportunities to monitor and contest decisions.

The activities within SfD rely on the Whole School approach (promoted by UNESCO, Council of Europe, Amnesty International) implying that in order to foster democratic citizenship at school, all areas of school life – including curricula, teaching and learning methods, extracurricular activities, school policies, governance and ethos – are to be rooted in respect for human rights, participation and inclusion. Building a holistic learning environment at school is key for students to learn both from theory and practice how to become active citizens and sustain democratic developments in the society.

SfD's four programme components correspond with the key elements of the New Ukrainian School reform:

Programme component	Reform element
1. Decentralization and Democratization of Schools	New structure of the school education system (2017-2025)
2. Piloting New National Curriculum	New competence-based Curriculum (2016-2022 secondary school, by 2027 upper secondary)
3. Online Resources for Learning Democracy	New learning materials and methods for a democratic learning environment (2017 –)
4. Experience Exchange and Regional Cooperation ¹	Quality Assurance (2017-2022)
All components	Retraining and independent certification of teachers(ongoing)

Operationally, the SfD programme is intertwined with the ongoing educational reform. Since 2017, the programme has cooperated closely with the Working Groups preparing the New National Curriculum for primary and secondary education, Concept and Strategy of Civic Education, and new Education Quality Standards for Schools by providing expert and operational support to integrate these principles in the Ukrainian policy framework.

As the reforms of Ukraine's educational system evolve, new sectors are being addressed. Through its sequencing of activities the SfD programme responds to these developments in cooperation with the educational authorities. Thus, the programme has started work on pre-schools education. The next step will be to engage in vocational education. Both steps can be seen as a reflexion of the programme's relevance as a partner in underpinning ongoing reforms.

In 2022, a new curriculum for 5-9th forms will be launched, and the work on higher secondary education reform (10-12 forms) will be launched in 2023 and will last until 2029.

A key to SfD's relevance is found in its flexibility, which again is rendered possible due to the Norwegian MFA's flexibility as a funder. As compared to many other foreign-funded programmes, SfD has the leeway to adapt activities to new needs on a relatively short notice. As one interviewee said: "Ukraine is 'under construction' politically, economically, as to centre-region relations, and geopolitically. A clear view of what one is going to do on beforehand is, therefore, less important than knowing how to manoeuvre and adapt". Flexibility enhances client- and partner-friendliness.

Examples of this, is the MoES's request that SfD produce materials for civic education as well as for curriculum development. In the latter case, one of the bigger programmes withdrew from Ukraine and SfD was able to step in. Another example of flexibility is the fact that EWC could respond positively to the invitation by the Ministry to contribute to the reform of the pre-school system.

SfD's relevance is further enhanced through its piloting activities. The new Curriculum for 5-9 forms was endorsed in October 2020 which means that scaling up the piloting activities could take place in 2021-2022.

For a while the programme's emphasis on digital tools and modes of working was met with a certain reserve. With the Covid-19 pandemic this changed for obvious reasons and the programme proved to be well-prepared for the new situation, and all the preparatory work made

¹ Until 2019 this component was called Policy Outreach and Quality Assurance. The change was based on SfD having experienced that the development of new quality guidelines for schools was closer to the working areas of developing new curricula than earlier expected. The fourth programme component also covers Quality Assurance and New Competence-based Curriculum – but on the policy-makers level (e.g. study trips to Norway).

for digital training, teaching and training turned out to be highly relevant when everybody suddenly had to switch to digital platforms. Already in March and April 2020, the programme was able to arrange hundreds of workshops online.

The programme has been coordinating with the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine and Joint Council of Europe and EU Eastern Partnership Programme on Education for Democracy and Human Rights (finished in 2018): Furthermore, cooperation has been established with the Finnish-EU project “Learning Together”, with the “Engage” project, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development – USAID and with Amnesty International.

3.2 Effectiveness

3.2.1 Local agents

The programme is facilitated through local experts. More than 70 trainers have been trained. All of them are practitioners. A large number of teachers have been trained by them. So far, more than 800 workshops have been arranged. Networks with schools make it possible carry out pilots. Trainers are organized into regional hubs, covering three regions each. The hub is institutionally connected to a local NGO and representatives of regional teacher training institutions are represented in most hubs to strengthen the sustainability of the programme efforts.

3.2.2 Monitoring

The EWC operates with detailed monitoring and evaluation routines. In 2019, revisions were made resulting in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. New, improved indicators to measure outputs and outcomes were introduced. Precise goals are set, in quantitative terms. The result chain is detailed. Outputs are mainly identified in terms of teachers trained and material produced. Monitoring the process from output to outcome, however, is a more difficult task. EWC has identified a challenge in identifying the link between what is going on in the trainings and what is going on in the schools (outcomes), the link between facilitation and implementation. The programme carries out routine feedback from participants at trainings and analyses of respondents’ experiences is of help in making learning outcomes from trainings practicable.

3.2.3 Risk management

Risks to relevance

A major potential risk for undertakings like the SfD programme is that the programme activities fail to be of relevance in the actual reform context. As noted above, the programme components are in line with the core reform elements. There is, however, always a risk reforms remain declarations of intentions. Lack of impetus on the part of the authorities and key groups in the educational sectors are potential factors that lead to reform stillstand. To counter this, SfD is working closely with the educational authorities to fill gaps in practical reform implementation and it targets a wide variety of groups in the educational sector, not least school heads. A challenge is posed by the people in high positions within the educational sector who have been there for a long time long and still bear the imprint of earlier, more authoritarian systems. Combined with strong hierarchical practices, this causes potential obstacles to programme implementation. The programme started out with the most willing individuals among the target groups, those most inclined to support the programme’s core ideas.

Relevance is also about the programme being in mesh with the government’s reform implementation operationally. For the programme implementation, much hinges on personnel stability among its immediate counterparts. To this end, EWC keeps a close dialogue with the

MoES, including regular meetings with the State Secretary (non-political position) as well as the International and Secondary Education Departments.

A key challenge here, as acknowledged by EWC, are the frequent policy and personnel changes in Ukraine, both on top level in the MoES and in the coordination teams. On short notice, EWC has had to adapt the programme to these changes. After personnel changes at the top, the ministerial machine slows down for a period resulting in protracted negotiations and new operational compromises to be reached. There is also an element of uncertainty as to when ministerial working groups are going to meet.

On the positive side for continuity, however, it should be noted that the reform policies follow the concept and the plan approved back in 2016 with the New Ukrainian School.

Coordination

Moreover, various donors support the educational reform and there is a risk that poor coordination and harmonisation lead to suboptimal use of joint resources. At times, coordination initiatives from individual programme holders are received with suspicion from peers, who see it as an attempt to gain positions in a competitive race. The EWC has taken initiatives to coordinate and “sector” tasks between programmes and projects. The need for coordination was at its most urgent at the programme’s outset in the aftermath of the Euromaidan regime change when there were many actors around.

In the Summer of 2020, a multi-level architecture for donor coordination and strengthening the programmes with Ukraine’s public administration was set up by the government. Within this system annual meeting at top level, including ministers and ambassadors are held. 2-3 times a year, meetings between sector ministries and relevant programmes are held, and more frequently sector groups meet to discuss more operative issues. One of these groups is on education.

Measures against financial irregularities

In order to minimize risk of financial irregularities, the contracts with the key partners (see 2.3.4) were composed based on the requirements of Grant Agreement UKR-17/0010, and with the professional consultancy of Deloitte AS and cover audit, procurement policy, financial reporting and control.

3.3 Results

In assessing the programme’s results so far, this chapter goes in detail on outputs and outcomes. This way the programme’s logic and how it is concretized in activities is brought to the fore. Moreover, the chapter presents the results from year to year in quantitative terms both for outputs and outcomes. To this end, EWC’s progress reports including their attachments (Goal Hierarchy with preliminary results) have been of great help. In these documents, outcomes and the outputs underpinning them are presented in a readily understood and logical way. Mid-term it is too soon to pinpoint impact but rather a time to discuss the likelihood, given the experiences gained, of impacts. This will be done below.

So far, 96 874 teachers, students and parents have been involved in programme activities. More than 300 schools have been involved and 72 trainers have been actively engaged.

The presentation of results will be done by programme component for the sake of clarity, but it should be borne in mind that the components are designed to work together to create interaction effects. The review starts out with a numerical account of results in detail and is followed up by a qualitative analysis of findings through interviews with representatives of target groups involved, relevant observers from outside and EWC staff.

3.3.1 Programme component: New National Curriculum

The planned impact of this programme component is formulated as a “New National Curriculum for 5-9 forms and new policies in education quality foster democratic competences and are ready for introduction in all schools in Ukraine”. Two major outcomes are envisaged as leading toward this goal. These are:

- a) Inclusion of education for democracy as an integral part of the National Curriculum and other supporting policy documents.
- b) Strengthened expertise of education experts and the capacity of Teacher Training Institutes and school staff in the fields of democratic citizenship and human rights

Outcome: Inclusion of education for democracy as an integral part of the National Curriculum and other supporting policy documents

This outcome is measured in number of policy papers and other supporting documents that include principles of human rights and democracy developed with contributions from the programme team. By 2020 the programme takes part in three processes of educational policy development. All three are central to the core aims of the programme. Firstly, the programme is involved in the development of the curriculum on civic education and history. Secondly, it takes part in the development of formative evaluation (i.e. more emphasis on process of learning in assessments). Thirdly it is involved in the basic component of pre-school education. In 2018 and 2019, the programme provided consultancy for the new curriculum for 1-4 forms.

Four outputs are delivered to bring forth these outcomes. These are:

- a) Policy advice in education for democratic citizenship and human rights provided.
- b) Piloting study on developing transversal civic competences within the new Curriculum conducted, and recommendations drafted
- c) New school education quality standards are piloted in partnership with the SSEQ and recommendations are drafted
- d) Materials on transversal development of civic competences are developed and piloted

The programme operates with six indicators to measure attainment of these four outputs, among them SfD participation as a member of the Public Council for the State Service for the Quality of Education, submission of the report on a trial study of ten schools on transversal education to the MoeES and the Institute for Modernization of Education Content and support, consultation and monitoring of 12 schools participating in a pilot on quality of education for the SSEQ. The programme’s reports show that the planned outputs for each year have been delivered.

Outcome: Strengthened expertise of education experts and the capacity of Teacher Training Institutes and school staff in the fields of democratic citizenship and human rights

The outcome is measured in number of policy working groups supported by the Programme team. In 2020 training was held for 27 participants in the New Ukrainian School Working Group. In both 2018 and 2019, two trainings were held for this working group.

Three outputs have been selected by the programme to underpin the objective:

- a) Trainings and workshops for the policy working groups organized
- b) Experts in regional teacher training institutes trained in education for democratic citizenship and human rights
- c) Teachers and school principals trained to be prepared for implementing the new Curriculum

All three outputs have been delivered in numbers in line with what was planned, in some cases far exceeding the plan. By May 2019, 199 teachers had been actively involved in the piloting. Ten programme trainers are employed at seven regional TTIs. In all, 59 experts from TTIs have been

trained since 2018. No less than 388 teachers and school heads have been trained in implementing the new curriculum reaching around 16 500 students in 5-9 forms.

3.3.2 Programme component: Democratization of schools

The planned impact of this programme component is to have introduced and made functioning sustainable and systemic democratic changes in schools.

The programme aims to produce five outcomes to this end. These are:

- a) stronger autonomy of schools and a strengthened capacity of schools to apply decentralized and transparent governance
- b) more democratic teaching and learning processes at school
- c) school and local community increased awareness of democratic practices
- d) national teacher trainer capacity to apply democratic methods strengthened
- e) dialogue and cooperation across regions strengthened

Whereas the planned outcomes have been the same since 2017, planned outputs have undergone a dynamic development following the progression of the programme.

Outcome: Stronger autonomy of schools and a strengthened capacity of schools to apply decentralized and transparent governance

The core tool to reach the outcome is the Tool for Democratic School Development, based on the whole school concept. Tool for Democratic School Development is a 15-page document with a detailed questionnaire that aims at raising the consciousness about the schools' internal democracy, the values taught and the school's relation to the local community.

Firstly, the outcome is measured in number of schools having reached a higher level of democratic standards. Secondly, the outcome is measured by the degree to which school staff and students are involved in programme activities.

As for the first outcome, the measuring is based on self-reporting with the help of the questionnaire included in the Tool for Democratic School Development. The objective is reached if at least 85 percent of the schools experience a higher level of democratic standards. Secondly, achievement is measured in number of school staff and students involved in project activities. At least 25 per cent should be involved.

Throughout the years, the programme by and large has reached this objective (2018 - 95 per cent 95; 2019 – 71 per cent). So far in 2020, 74 per cent report to have reached the objective (percentage based Goal Hierarchy document for 2020, covering January-August).

As for this indicator, the self-reporting shows an interesting feature, highlighted in the annual Goal Hierarchy documents. Some respondents report lower levels in standards after one year of intense learning programme as compared to their initial self-assessment. One plausible reason for this, given the fact that Ukrainian schools most likely have not undergone a shift towards less democracy, is that raised consciousness leads to less satisfaction with the state of affairs. This calls for careful analysis of survey findings and a caveat against using user target group satisfaction as mechanical measure of success.

The, second outcome is reached if 25 per cent of school staff and students in the participating schools are involved in programme activities. The score was 28 per cent in 2018, 27 per cent in 2019 and 31 per cent as early as the end of August 2020.

The scores for both indicators are, of course, satisfactory not least because the thresholds were set ambitiously high. They do not, however, tell much about the outcomes in terms of what they may lead to in order to reach the programme's overall goals of democratizing schools. Reporting

change immediately after a project intervention is commonplace, and the number of participants taking parts come closer to an output than an outcome.

The output to be reached by 2021 is 200 school projects successfully completed. By the end of August 2020, 150 school projects had been completed.

Outcome: Teaching and learning process at school has become more democratic

Also, here the main tool to ascertain outcome achievement is provided by the Tool for Democratic School Development. The goal is reached when 80 per cent of project participants report more democratic teaching and higher participation. The scores were 92 per cent (2018), 73 per cent (2019) and 74 per cent (by end of August 2019).

Outputs to each this outcome are 2000 school heads, teachers, parents as well as representatives of NGOs and municipal administrations having been trained directly and school activities having reached out to at least 12 000 people in the above-mentioned categories. In total, since 2017 the programme has trained 1873 individuals on democratization of schools and reached out to a total of 1272 schools and 22 425 individuals have been reached through activities in schools. In addition, the programme makes use of an output to make sure trainings cover a wide variety of topics. In 2018 and 2019 the number of topics was set a five, but reached seven and 12 respectively. In early 2020, the pandemic prevented training to be arranged but nonetheless eight trainings - two more than planned - were held in October and November 2020 in order to cater to the new online format and accommodate for the demand. It should also be noted that the number of outputs for 2018 was higher than in the subsequent years, and included the preparation of teaching materials.

Outcome: School and local community increased awareness of democratic practices

This outcome is measured in number of teachers, students, parents and community representatives reached through programme activities. By the end of August 2020, in all 60 233 have been reached. Outputs are identified as inclusion of the rights-balanced governance principle in the Tools for Democratic School Development and six manuals to all participating schools and trainers. Both outputs have been produced, and eight, not six manuals have been distributed.

Outcome: National teacher trainer capacity to apply democratic methods strengthened

To reach this outcome the programme aims at having at least 75 per cent of trainers complete the online and face-to-face learning programme and 85 per cent of the members of the National Network of Trainers self-reporting improved trainer skills. In addition, for 2018, at least one out of two trainers were to contribute to building capacity of their organizations in learning for democracy and human rights.

In 2018, 62 trainers (96 per cent) took part in the face-to-face training. In 2019, all 72 trainers in the programme completed the online course. Also in 2020, all trainers have completed training. As for the self-reported improvement of skills, 76 per cent reported positively in 2018. This year, also 70 per cent self-reported that they contribute to building democratic capacities in their schools and institutions.

The output as a basis to reach the outcome of a more democratic teaching and learning process at school is to have established a network of 70 experts in education for democracy and human rights. Already in 2018, 65 trainers took actively part in the trainer network and the number rose to 72 in 2019. For 2020, the number is 67.

Outcome: Dialogue and cooperation across Ukraine's regions

This outcome is measured in numbers of regions represented in joint trainings (24) for school teams and number of regional partnerships (6) set up. In 2019 and 2020, all 24 regions, except Crimea, were covered and for both year eight regional partnerships were set up.

In line with this, the output goals are at least ten alumni school projects carried out per year and at least 200 schools forming part of a Network of Alumni schools. The number of alumni school projects have been slightly below ten but the number of schools actively partaking in the network was at 274 by the end of August 2020. An additional output consists in the dissemination of good practices through an actively updated programme website, facebook and newsletter. The quantitative goals for this output have been overfulfilled.

In summer 2020, a series of Communication Training workshops took place, and a strategy was developed for dissemination and promotion of the Programme's online tools. After a study carried out prior to the workshops, a more practical approach was adopted to correspond better with the main changes and challenges teachers encounter in implementing the New Ukrainian School reforms.

3.3.3 Programme component: Online learning for democracy

The wished impact for this programme component is that students and teachers all over Ukraine, including the territories outside national authorities' control, have access to online resources for learning democracy.

Two outcomes:

- a) Online resources in learning democracy and human rights are in place and used
- b) National expertise in online learning in education for democracy and human rights strengthened

Outcome: Online resources in learning democracy and human rights are in place and used

Achievement of this outcome is measured through digital teaching and learning resources that are made ready for online use by all teachers. A digital learning platform is available at the programme website. In 2018, the development of two online tools and three online courses. By the end of 2019, the platform included a toolbox, a school development tool, webinars and online learning courses and had registered 381 users. By the end of August, the number of used had risen to 386 and 77 trainers had completed the online course. The number of downloads of the online resources were 3678 in 2019 and 1568 by the end of August 2020.

Several outputs to produce the outcome have been delivered. These are e.g. webinars, manuals translated, MOOC courses, and also an agreement with TTI on shared production and administration of online courses. The numerical goals for these outputs have been reached. For instance, two digital learning materials and seven webinars have been developed since 2017. The only repository – or toolbox – of instruments in the field of democracy and human rights education has 1533 registered users as of 2020. The profile of the users are as follows: 270 school directors, 126 deputy directors, 826 teachers, 99 experts, 79 students, 89 parents, and 44 other users from the local community.

Outcome: National expertise in online learning in education for democracy and human rights strengthened

The quantification of goal achievement here is set at 60 per cent of participating experts from different regions of Ukraine report professional growth to develop online resources in education for democracy and human rights. In all, 93 per cent reported that they had gained skills and knowledge on the development of online materials and no less than 69 per cent report that they are confident in producing learning videos. The output behind this outcome consist in training a planned 15 experts a year. For 2019 and 2020, a total of 39 experts have been trained.

3.3.4 Programme component: Experience exchange and regional cooperation

The impact sought is to have educational policies in Ukraine draw on lessons learned from policymakers in Norway, Georgia and Moldova.

The planned outcomes are:

- a) Experience exchange in education policy between Ukraine and Norway facilitated
- b) Regional cooperation and dissemination of best practices in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova strengthened

Outcome: Experience exchange in education policy between Ukraine and Norway facilitated

The indicator for the first out of these two outcomes is to have nine Ukrainian policymakers and education experts participate in exchange visits. By 2020, in all 40 people had participated, including a former and a current minister of education. In 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic the exchange took place online.

Outputs were meetings and policy recommendations provided in connection with the study visits. The latter output consisted in a presentation of Norway's renewed school curriculum and framework plan for pre-school education. Among others the Students Survey (Elevundersøkelsen) has been translated into Norwegian.

Outcome: Regional cooperation and dissemination of best practices in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova strengthened

This outcome is measured in numbers of education experts, policymakers and practitioners from Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine involved in experience exchange and dissemination activities. The total number of participants since 2017 is 102. Meetings have been held in Tbilisi and Kyiv. Georgia's efforts to introduce competence-based assessment is one of the relevant issues addressed in these meetings.

3.3.5 Regional profile

The two NGO's involved are based in Kyiv and Lviv but the programme reaches out to all of Ukraine. Schools from 24 out of Ukraine's 25 regions are taking part, Crimea being the exception due to the 2014 annexation by Russia. One might expect that Eastern and Southern regional regions would be harder to target, but reportedly the receptivity to the programme has been even larger in these regions, and applications to join have been more numerous. This may be connected to the fact that these regions hitherto have been less involved in foreign-funded projects. In one of the interviews it was reported that educational material from the government seems to have reached schools close to the conflict line in the East. If this is the case, it may explain the higher urge to participate in the programme from these areas.

3.4 Qualitative analysis

The following findings are based on the programme's reports referred to above as well as programme documents but first of all on the qualitative interviews made with representatives of target groups involved, relevant observers from outside and EWC staff.

Relevance

The overarching objective to promote a culture of democracy in an around Ukraine's educational institutions is shared by those interviewed. Some of the reasons for this is to be found in the programme's conscious choice to start working with the most positively inclined people and gradually expand with them as agents of change. Another reason, mentioned by several

interviewees, is that there is a widespread understanding in the educational sector that there is a need for more democratic practices. “We can, we want but we do not know how”, as one interviewed teacher put it.

Interviewees also tend to share the view on the obstacles that stand in the way to overcome to reach the goal. Among these obstacles is the low level of autonomy of the schools but several interviewees also mention the absence of co-management of the educational process due to autocratic practices of school heads.

There is a fear against including parents as partners with the schools. Parents are merely accepted as partners to the degree they can contribute as sponsors and helpers with organizational matters. It was also mentioned that parents are reluctant to confront school heads and teachers for fear of negative consequences for their children. The schools communicate to a very small degree with the surrounding local community. Local administrations are generally seen as quite conservative and unwilling to yield control but on the other hand local administrations point at schools not being ready to communicate.

It was also mentioned that the curricula are overloaded and that there is a lack of interactive components in the teaching. Teaching methods are not conducive to active participation of students in interactive and cooperative processes of learning. Teachers have been re-translators of knowledge rather than teachers of competences and skills. Rules of conduct are made without the participation of pupils and students and most consist in “do-not do this or that”. Many interviewees referred to “a Soviet legacy” to explain the authoritarian tendencies.

These obstacles have been combined with a lack of methods to do something about the problem. One teacher told: “We changed a lot, and wanted to change, therefore, we sought to take part in the programme, and the programme gave us instruments, very comprehensive methodological materials”.

Effectiveness

The potential success of the of the programme consists in its effectivity in equipping target groups with tools to overcome the obstacles to more democratic practices, in other words to respond to the complaint referred to above on knowing that something should be done but not exactly how.

The interviewees commend the flexibility of the programme, which makes it possible to adapt the programme activities to needs as they appear.

One expert praised the programme for being “very systemic, whereby each new part is the continuation of the previous one. Thus, it responds to Ukraine’s current needs. Furthermore, it is based on the whole-school approach, i.e. promoting cooperation and joint decision-making.”

It was also noticed that the programme targets a variety of groups, teachers, school heads, students, administration and parents. One expert claimed that this was the first time a programme in Ukraine brought together all stakeholders in the educational sector. The programme also covers all of Ukraine geographically. The programme has been successful in widening the scope of people targeted. From having been what one of the interviewees characterized as “a small ‘boutique’ for fans of democracy in schools” the programme soon included a much larger group of people. Moreover, through its inclusion of new people the programme brought in new and fresh experience directly from schools which was of particular value since most of those working on the issue until then had not been working in schools for a while. The programme’s emphasis on including school heads, reportedly tending to be less open for the SfD core ideas than rank-and-file teachers, is conducive to SfD’s ends.

Several interviewees mention the professionalism of the EWC’s staff, including the local implementing NGO’s. As one interviewee who is external to the SfD programme argued: “If you want impact, you must go through the policy level. Training comes in nice little packages one

must work on all levels at the same time. It is a ping-pong between the various levels. Trainers and implementers from NGOs are often talented but they need to know how to sit in meetings too”.

The tools used are considered being to the point. The toolbox accessible through the programme website was called attention to as being particularly useful for sharing experiences and networking between participants as well as with civil society organizations. It came out particularly helpful due to the Covid-19 quarantine.

Several interviewees brought up the manuals provided through the programme, for instance “Alphabet for a director” and “80 exercises to develop civic competences” that are used at schools in different subjects. The latter manual was translated into Romanian in the Chernivtsy region to reach out to the linguistic minority population there.

The approach applied by the programme in showing how teaching democratic competences can be done cross-cutting different subjects was mentioned as another effective element. This way one has avoided making democratization “artificial” for the students and “burdensome” for the teachers as it would if democracy was made a separate subject to be taught separately. The programme has shown how all subjects can be used to develop civic competence, one teacher told.

It was mentioned that circulation of trainers worked fine because “new trainers were always able to see interesting moments”, as one teacher told.

To the extent the programme encounters resistance to its core ideas, it is based on target groups’ unwillingness to admit they were wrong in adhering to more authoritarian models of education, that bullying exists in their schools or that the teachers’ council in their school is passive. Teachers in the 5-9 forms are the most sceptical but then again 80 per cent of teachers are positive. Sceptical attitudes manifest themselves more as tacit reluctance than in overt resistance. As one interviewee told: “The worst thing is people who do not say anything but who silently do things the old way only with a few small, formal changes. It is easier to work with people who are outspokenly against the programme. They are easier to convince.”. The programme does not encounter people who are fundamentally against the idea of strengthening democratic features as such.

Results

Sustainability of the programme’s results depends on the participants willingness and capacities to follow up, as well as the contextual preconditions. One expert interviewed considered that schools that took part in the programme are “infected” with the “correct virus” of new approaches. In other words, having practiced democratic approaches, they are likely to continue using them. Then again, even if the number of schools reached by the programme is high, far from all schools have been involved.

Also, the need to be patient was emphasised by experts interviewed. One of them estimated the time needed to finalize even the first round of the New Ukrainian School, now being implemented in all Ukrainian schools, will take ten years. Another expert pointed at the time it takes to implement new curricula in other European countries, and said that five years is a minimum.

The establishment of a corps of flexible trainers was mentioned as a particularly valuable result.

Schools who participated in the first round of the programme still consider them to be part of a democratic School community.

It was mentioned that real results hinged on the initial motivation of schools to take part. Some joined at least to a certain degree mainly for the prestige and benefits from being a part of a programme and less because of an urge to democratize. Clarification of expectation is, therefore, important at the outset.

On a less optimistic note, one interviewee referred to contextual factors that go contrary to the sustainability of the preliminary results. Although many people within the educational sector push for more democratic practices, the context may be a hindrance. Corruption, nepotism, clientelism, traditionalism and a certain acceptance of radically nationalist concepts are prevalent phenomena in the Ukrainian society, and very different from the European democratic ideals the project refers to. Schools risk ending up as “islands of democracy” de-coupled from external realities.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation has shown that the Schools for Democracy programme run by the European Wergeland Centre is on the right track towards reaching the objectives of the current programme period (2017-2021). The SfD programme has been designed to be relevant in the Ukrainian context. It is well linked up with the country's educational reforms and donor priorities. It contributes substantially to the stated goals of the Ukrainian government to promote democratic culture and democratic citizenship through the educational institutions. In addition, it responds to a demand from segments within and around the educational sector for more democratic practices by providing practicable tools.

SfD has been able to keep up its close relationship with the MoES notwithstanding the personnel shifts. The programme being intertwined with ongoing reforms of Ukraine's educational sector enables an impact on systemic level and helps avoid the pitfalls of merely carrying out sporadic and stand-alone activities with individuals as target groups with anchoring it in an overall reform. This, however, requires dialogue between the programme and the educational authorities. The dialogue has suffered from the frequent personnel changes at ministerial level in Ukraine, including the Ministry of Education and Science. This has been identified by the SfD as being a major obstacle to steady project implementation. Ministerial priorities regarding the educational reform, however, have remained relatively unaffected by the personnel changes at top level. The obstacles to programme implementation, therefore, have consisted more in loss of time and energy than in policy obstacles.

This stability in operational contacts, combined with flexibility, has made sequencing of the programme possible. As a result, SfD has been invited to be involved in the further steps of Ukraine's reforms of its educational sector (pre-school and vocational education). This speaks to the relevance of its activities.

The programme's contribution is primarily to provide the tools needed to reach the goals set in the reforms. In doing this SfD links up to four key priorities of the Ukrainian News Schools reform. Thus, it supports the development of a new curriculum, the endeavours to make schools more autonomous, the development and dissemination of teaching and learning materials as well as in-service training of teachers and school heads. Moreover SfD helps strengthen the capacities of teacher training institutions and NGOs and it facilitates dialogue and cooperation between teachers across the regional divides of Ukraine. In fact, SfD officials report that they do not experience regional tensions among target groups. The programme also facilitates European cooperation on policy development and dissemination of good practices with Moldova, Georgia and Norway.

Three out of the four pillars in the Ukrainian educational reform are reflected in Norway's educational reforms. Therefore, linking up with Norwegian experiences has proven to be of value and has been appreciated by the Ukrainian participants involved. Since one of the core activities in the SfD programme is to contribute to policy, among others through piloting, the link to Norwegian expertise has been useful. The facilitating roles of INN University and the Norwegian Ministry of Education have been important in this respect. Professional contacts have been established.

The programme has been carried out in a flexible way, which has made it possible to fill gaps and needs as they appear. This has made EWC a trusted partner for the MoES. The Norwegian MFA in its capacity as the programme's funding agency, has allowed this flexibility.

The central role played by the two Ukrainian NGOs - the Initiative Centre to Support Social Action "Ednannia" (Kyiv) and Education Initiatives Centre (Lviv) – has proved to be conducive to the achievement of results. They combine insight in Ukrainian realities and experience in project work which helps representing the SfD and presenting its core objectives in ways that resonate well in a Ukrainian context.

The detailed review in Chapter 3 of what results the programme seeks to produce shows that not only the four programme components but also their concrete outputs and outcomes are logically intertwined to create interaction effects. The meticulous reporting of results on output and outcome level in quantitative terms is helpful in making sure the programme is being implemented in all its many nooks and crannies. Mid-term the reports show that this is clearly the case. For the remainder of the programme, however, the emphasis on counting outputs and outcomes should be complemented with more in-depth analysis of the likelihood they lead to the wished impacts (more on this in recommendations below).

The wide variety of relevant target groups involved bodes well for the potential impact of the programme. The composition of target groups involved includes not only teachers, school heads and students but also teacher trainers and people in key positions within the MoES and local community representatives. These people constitute a network of “agents of change”. The large number of people involved make this network a key sustainability factor.

One particularly promising result has come out of the programme activities to strengthen school autonomy. Here, the programme has taught democratic school *governance*. The principle has been concretized in a self-assessment tool called *Demokratychna Shkola* and in materials from the Step-by-step Association. The idea of self-assessment has spread. Schools involved in the programme have to do self-evaluation three times a year, and many schools who have got acquainted with it through the programme continue using it. The new State Agency of Quality Assurance has made it obligatory.

The programme has a strong emphasis on curricula development. In the Ukrainian context curricula are particularly important since they regulate more of the teaching in detail than in many other European countries, where more is up to the discretion of the teachers. Once approved, a curriculum in Ukraine will survive ministerial changes of staff and also stick with the teachers who have been trained in it.

One of the results of the programme activities is that EWC has gained a reputation of being knowledgeable. At times, the programme staff is asked by the ministry to take a look at documents on issues like formative assessment, pre-school issues, and civic education because they are understaffed. The programme has been asked for inputs to the pre-school reform and is recognized by the regional TTIs and has been asked for advice on how to facilitate interaction between civic education in schools and organized leisure activities.

The programme targets school heads, teachers, students and others who are positively inclined to the core, democratic idea of the programme in the first place. This way the project works with the educational sector’s democratic “sourdough” instead of trying to create it from scratch through “consciousness-raising” or the like. These latter activities have proven to be of modest success as a programme activity worldwide, anyway. Given the fact that the target groups by and large are among the most positively inclined to the programme’s overall objectives among their peers it is logical that the programme concentrates most of its efforts on strengthening target groups’ skills and access to teaching and learning tools. Many members of the target groups, therefore, may be more in need of new skills and tools than new attitudes. Talking about the teachers, one interviewee external to the programme summed up this point by saying that “they know what they want, which is more democratic teaching. But they do not always know how to do it. Therefore, skills and tools are welcomed.”

The evaluation is based on the study of individuals and institutions targeted by the programme interventions. The possibility that individual and institutions not targeted have gone through a similarly positive development of introducing democratic practices, therefore, cannot be excluded.

Through qualitative approaches towards identification of potential impacts

The programme implementation is thoroughly documented through its reporting procedures. The review of outputs and outcomes in chapter 3 above is based on the programme's detailed reports. The meticulous counting and compilation of outputs and outcomes in quantitative terms is helpful in assuring that the programme machinery is in operation. It works as a check that all programme activities are being carried out and that immediate results are delivered. For the first half of the programme period, the approach emphasizing outputs and outcome in figures works well.

Quantitative indicators are, however, less relevant for measuring/ascertaining outcomes and even less for impacts. The "proof of the pudding", after all, lies in the programme's success towards its end and after it is over, i.e. its impacts. Programmes come and go. Mid-term, therefore, it is time to pay more attention to qualitative analysis of outcomes and to what extent they point towards impacts. Impacts, if ever, mainly come to fruition after programmes are over. They take time and are contingent upon a wide variety of factors, the programme being only one. It is therefore recommendable to start analysing the likelihood that target groups make use of the observed outcomes in ways that impact on the democratic contents of Ukraine's schools. Is it likely that the outcomes – in our case new skills, attitudes and tools acquired by the immediate target groups – lead to changes? Do they link up with ongoing dynamics? Control questions in this regard are to what extent the right people are targeted, whether they are being given the right tools and whether it is possible to make use of them in the given context. This exercise requires a qualitative approach e.g. through in-depth talks or interviews with individuals who took part in the various programme components in 2018-2019. Although a bit early, it still would make sense to take stock of to what extent and how they have been able to make use of the insights and skills acquired through the programme in their everyday activities.

Recommendation: For the remainder of the programme period, for analytical purposes, it is recommendable to scrutinize what lies behind all the positive cores on the indicators and go in detail on what the improvements consist in in concrete terms and to what extent they are likely to strike roots to the extent that they will survive the programme. One way of doing this, would be to seek out participants in the programme component who took part in 2018 and do in-depth interviews with them about what use they have had of the insights, tools and skills from the programme in their everyday activities in the aftermath.

More and better dissemination

Although reaching out to a large number of targeted individuals, these latter only constitute a small percentage of the total. In cooperation with relevant educational authorities and institutions SfD has developed a large number of tools and materials that is ready to be used. In order to create further interest for this in the educational sector, more dissemination of results would be conducive to create a demand among e.g. teachers and school heads. In doing this, it might be worth considering the discursive framing. Being a value in its own right, democratic contents and practices in schools also have other positive effects. Whereas hierarchy and authoritarian teaching practices may be conducive to making students learn large parts of a curriculum by heart, this is hardly what is needed in the contemporary world. A population equipped with transversal skills (strengthened in SfD's programme component on the New National Curriculum), adaptivity and critical thinking is what a nation needs to be competitive today. Ukraine, like other countries, needs to be in the innovative loop. In a fragile democracy like Ukraine struggling to enter the mainstream European community on equal terms, this line of argumentation should make an impact.

Recommendation: As soon as possible the SfD should develop a dissemination strategy where pragmatic arguments complement the already established normative arguments underlying the programme.

Pre-service initial teacher training services

A recent law opened in-service training of teachers to the market. As a result, the regional TTI's stand at risk of losing power and influence. It is unclear what will be the quality of future in-service training as long as efficient certification procedures and systems are not in place.

Recommendation: The programme should consider the possibility of strengthening the cooperation with institutions for pre-service teacher training. This, however, should be done taking into consideration that many students in these institutions do not end up as teachers. Therefore, careful selection of students targeted is recommended. A possible output in this regard could be semester modules on democracy in schools and the democratic role of schools. Well-prepared semester modules are likely to outlive the programme.

Planning for the programme's afterlife

Mid-term it is time to start planning the programme's exit. The fact that the programme is so carefully interwoven with Ukrainian policies and actors is an enabling factor in this regard. Among the issues to be addressed is the future role of the well-trained and experienced corps of trainers and the subsequent use and maintenance of the materials and tools produced. There may be good reasons the programme gets funding for another programme period but a transfer to the ordinary, everyday Ukrainian educational sector of what has been developed in the current period is nonetheless relevant.

Recommendation: The programme should start preparing an exit plan as soon as possible.

Data sources

Programme documents consulted

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- Schools for Democracy: Supporting educational Reform in Ukraine, Project Report 2017-2019 Programme report for 2017 – 2019, 2020
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- Goal Hierarchy with preliminary results (based on the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan included in the application dated November 14, 2017), period 12/2017 – 6/2018
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- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, 2019, approved May 2020
- Interim Programme Report - Summary of results for 2017-2019, September 2019
- Tool for Democratic School Development
- Study of efficiency and user-friendly design of the online learning resources, Sociology Research Agency, 2020 (powerpoint presentation)
- Study of "Efficiency and userfriendly design of online learning resources", 2020
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- Top-Lines of the Expert Interviews with School Principals, Study of "Efficiency and user friendly design of online learning resources", February-March 2020
- Baseline Study (July, 2016)
- Schools for Democracy brochure (2015)
- Supporting school reform in Ukraine. Intermediary report 2017
- Recommendations on Developing Competences for Democratic Citizenship in the New Ukrainian School (Round table in Kyiv, 2016)

Other documents

OECD Reviews of Integrity in Education: Ukraine 2017

"New Ukrainian School" concept, 2016

List of Interviewees

Name	Organization/programme component/place
1. Iryna Sabor, senior advisor EWC Ana Perona-Fjeldstad, Executive director, EWC Khrystyna Chusak, EWC Ukraine Andriy Donets, programme coordinator EWC Ukraine Marina Dyshlovska, EWC Marta Melnykevych-Chorna, EWC Olena Shynarovska, programme coordinator EWC Ukraine	EWC Team Norway and Ukraine
2. Anna Novosad	former minister of education
3. Tetiana Meleschenko	teacher-trainer
4. Oksana Kovalenko	Ministry of Education
5. Petter Bauck	Norwegian MFA, former Deputy Head of the Mission Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kyiv
6. Oksana Ovcharuk,	Representative of the Joint CoE and EU Eastern Partnership Programme on Education for Democracy and Human Rights CoE in Ukraine
7. Svitlana Merkulova, Oksana Datsko and Svitlana Bratoshevskva	teachers
8. Natalia Anisimova, Vira Shopiak, Svitlana Chupika	teachers
9. Natalia Kidalova	Teacher-trainer (Kyiv) Melitopol
10. Local council member	Chernigiv
11. Local council member + parent,	Melitopol
12. Local council representative	Cherkasy
13. Parent	Melitopol
14. Parent	Kyiv
15. Parent	Kyiv
16. Parent	Kharkiv region
17. Student	Glukhiv, Chernigiv region
18. Students (group interview)	Ternopil and Mykolaiv plus one on zoom from Kyiv