

PROGRESS REPORT
ON THE RUSSIAN-DANISH PROJECT OF DEVELOPMENT OF
LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE PILOT REGION – VOLOGDA
OBLAST

The Russian-Danish pilot project of development of local self-government in Vologda Oblast (Kirillov Municipal District) is being realized within the Danish Neighborhood Co-operation Programme and aims to support exchange of experience between local decision-makers of Denmark and Russia.

The project of development of local self-government in the pilot region - Vologda Oblast (Kirillov Municipal District) is aimed at the implementation of the following main goals:

- to create conditions for better performance of local government authority and better quality of public services;
- to assist local self-government in social and economic development.

These goals had been planned to be achieved through the realisation of the following two project objectives:

1. To carry out functional analysis of performance of Kirillov Municipal District Administration
2. To assist Kirillov Municipal District Administration in the elaboration of a long-term strategic development plan for Kirillov District

Objective 1.

According to objective 1 – “To carry out functional analysis of performance of Kirillov Municipal District Administration” an analysis of questionnaires filled by the administration officials of Kirillov had proceeded throughout September 2008. Final results of the functional analysis were expected to be produced by mid-October and presented at the regional working group meeting for discussion. Unfortunately, due to the restructurisation of the Vologda Oblast Administration, replacement of project curators from the administration and revision of the project priorities, operational activities under the first project objective were terminated in mid-October.

Objective 2.

To assist Kirillov Municipal District Administration in the elaboration of a long-term strategic development plan for Kirillov District

Project activities under Objective 2 proceeded in accordance with the project working plan and the agreed organisational technology for strategic planning. The

project was implemented according to all the planned stages. As a result of the **organisational stage**, there has been created a strategic planning group and a Coordination Council represented by government officials, businessmen and local community members.

Within the **analytical stage**, local residents were polled and socio-economic situation in Kirillov was analysed. The participants of 22 panel discussions made a SWOT-analysis and developed recommendations on the strategic development of Kirillov. An essay contest on the topic “My vision of the Kirillov District in 2020” was organised in local schools.

At the **target-setting stage** the members of the Coordination Council defined the mission, the main strategic development target and 5 priority development directions. Working groups were established to pursue each of development priorities.

At the **programming and planning stage** the working groups proceeded in sorting out and primary study of the priority municipal programmes and key projects. The materials gathered by the working groups and the Coordination Council at the **stage of public discussion** were colligated in a leaflet and disseminated among the citizens in order to get references and proposals from the local community.

As of June, 1, the strategic plan has been improved and applied for approval in the soviet of deputies of Kirillov district. Alongside with this, a strategic plan was sent for coordination to the administrative facilities of Vologda oblast.

Within the Russian-Danish pilot project of development of local self-government according to the project realization action plan and the agreement between COWIconsult International ltd (Great Britain) and a Russian expert Kulikov Alexander Leonidovich, the following activities were made:

I. Five training seminars were prepared and carried out; two conferences and a youth panel discussions on the topic “**Greater youth involvement in social and economic development process in Kirillov District**” were organised in cooperation with Danish experts. In total, over 320 people have participated in the seminars and conferences. The seminar programmes and the conference agenda, as well as handouts, are presented in Appendices 1-5.

II. Denmark was visited in the framework of 2 study tours.

During the first visit, Danish experts provided the members of Russian delegation with an insight into performance improvement experience of the municipality of Bornholm and innovative tools developed by local self-government authorities. Discussions were held on a wide range of issues of local self-government development. The Bornholm experience in “Single Point of Entry” to public service delivery was explored, along with best practice of public service delivery by local self-government.

During the second visit, the experience of tourism development in Bornholm municipality has been analysed, as well as the mechanisms and tools used to support local entrepreneurship. Discussions were held on the possibility to sign a bilateral agreement between Kirillov district and municipality of Bornholm.

III. Advice and assistance have been provided to the working groups established to pursue each of development priorities and to the strategic planning group. Assessment has been made of the project progress. Key target programmes and projects have been identified as strategic plan goals.

IV. Consultations on establishing region-district relationships were carried out with the leaders of Vologda Oblast Administration. Series of consultations were performed with the leaders of the neighbouring districts (Belosersk and Vashki Districts) to discuss prospects of co-operation and intermunicipal partnership.

Summary

1. A “Strategic plan of social and economic development of Kirillov District till the year 2020” has been developed for the approval by the representational body.
2. Training has been provided to officers of Kirillov District administration and administrations of settlements within the district.
3. The strategic plan implementation team has been built up.
4. Social partnership involving authorities, business and local community is being developed. A co-operation contract has been signed and intermunicipal co-operation is evolving between Kirillov District, Belosersk District and Vashki District of Vologda Oblast. A mechanism for region-district co-operation is being put in place.

Recommendations on the further activity in Kirillov District

As prior steps in Kirillov District, the mechanisms of the realisation of Strategic Plan should be developed and put in practice, and requisite conditions should be provided for the realisation of the strategy.

Local decision-makers and the developers of the strategy are recommended the following:

1. To entrench the strategic planning process in the Regulations of the District and legal documents.
2. To establish a Development Agency and other organisation structures (Council of the performance of the Strategic Plan, Programmes Directorate etc.)
3. To adjust the Administration structures to the objectives of the Strategic Plan.
4. To develop Regulations for the informational support of the Agency and provide it with a corresponding authority.

Recommended tasks and functions for the projected Agency:

- to set goals for the programmes directors and project managers and to control their maintenance, to prepare decision projects for the district Council of the strategic planning (*the functions are: coordination, goal-setting, monitoring, task effectiveness assessment*);
- to collect proposals and develop projects for their realisation (*the function of the project office*);
- to gather, actualise and keep up to date a data base of Kirillov District investment potential (unoccupied municipal land, idle industrial and stock premises of different kinds of enterprises, investment projects, projects connected with the search of a co-operation partner etc), (*the function of an information bureau*);
- to find potential investors and co-operation partners upon the request of local and non-resident businessmen (*the function of a investment and co-operation bureau*);
- to prepare land allocations and permits for priority investment projects (*the function of the “Single Point of Entry”*);
- to establish industrial sites and areas (*the function of a developer*);
- to raise extra-budgetary funds for the realisation of the Strategic Plan, to organise a local fund for socio-economic development of Kirillov District (*the function of fundraising – mortgage, leasing, donor activity, work with the customers of regional and federal earmarks programmes*);
- to organise competitions on investment projects, small grants, purchase of goods, on works or services for municipal needs (*the function of a competition committee*).

Russian expert

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