



FDI TRAINING: OVER AND OVER AGAIN

On April 26, 2010, the LINC project's first cycle of the foreign direct investment (FDI) training program culminated in a graduation ceremony, adding strength to Ukraine's FDI professional force



The USAID Local Investment and National Competitiveness project (LINC) issued certificates of accreditation of investment promotion specialist to 18 newly-made FDI professionals who had passed the final exams.

Of the 24 trainees that enrolled for the course in October 2009, 20 made it to the final examination, but two failed and will be given one more chance to pass the exam – with the next cycle's trainees.

Opening the ceremony, LINC Chief of Party Howard Ockman congratulated the graduates with their accomplishment. He said he has a feeling that the notion of FDI attraction has been taking root in Ukraine since the beginning of the program. "Although the graduates were as smart then as they are today, I think that the whole level of investment environment here in Ukraine, investment promotion, is a less foreign and alien concept to our new students who come in," he said.



LINC CoP Howard Ockman: "Ukraine has assets. And investors will come here. But you all know now more than you ever knew: if investors are confused about the process, if they are not getting full information about what's available out there, they are going to another country"



USAID Mission Office of Economic Growth Acting Deputy Director Terence Miller: "We all have to work hard. We have to understand that investors have a certain expectation, not just in terms of return on investment: they want access to information; they basically want you to keep your word. Meaning, if you say you will prepare the land, the land has to be prepared; if you promised permit in a day, you get it in a day"

Mr. Ockman also said that localities cannot do everything on their own, and they will need to partner with a national investment promotion agency in a serious, logical, and orderly way.

The USAID Mission Office of Economic Growth acting deputy director, Terence Miller, compared the training program with an investment by the US government in Ukraine's human capital. "I saw some of your final presentations, and many of you care a big deal about your regions, your communities, and your country," said Mr. Miller.

Olena Hantsyak-Kaskiv, Acting Director of the Ukrainian Center for Foreign Investment Promotion

(InvestUkraine) and the invariable chairperson of the training program's Examining Board, thanked the USAID for the existence of the LINC project. Addressing the graduates, she called on them to work together: "Our [InvestUkraine] team in not only those working within the Center but also all our colleagues and partners who have graduated from the LINC project's training program."



InvestUkraine Acting Director Olena Hantsyak-Kaskiv: "It is very important that such FDI experts – graduates of the LINC program – could apply their valuable knowledge and experience by working in the field of investment at all levels in different regions in Ukraine. One of the key success factors of the LINC program is that its target audience comes from local and regional bodies, which work with investors immediately"



LINC Senior Competitiveness and Investment Advisor Dušan Kulka: "This program has only sense if you use the knowledge that was shared with you. I'm very proud with the achievements of your predecessors, and I'm excited about success you will achieve soon and I will hear about that"

According to LINC Senior Competitiveness and Investment Advisor Dušan Kulka, who can be called the godfather of the training program, the main source of Ukraine's competitiveness is its human capital. Like the previous speakers, he also said Ukraine needs a national FDI team, a "team that would beat up competitive teams from Romania, Turkey, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Russia."

The FDI training program, which includes four workshops, a study tour of industrial parks in the Czech Republic, and final examinations, was developed by Ukrainian, Czech, Scottish, and US LED experts, who also acted as lecturers. Use of interactive training techniques brings trainees nearer to the realities of FDI attraction in Ukraine and Central and Eastern European countries, and familiarizes them with conceptual issues of professional investment attraction based on case studies and simulated situations and events that may affect an industrial facility's development and marketing strategy.

Under LINC's predecessor project, USAID LED, the program issued certificates to 112 graduates, who represented 55 cities, 24 oblasts of Ukraine, 13 NGO's, and two central government institutions. These graduates have been involved in conclusion of FDI deals worth \$1.5 billion in total.

Say graduates:



Dmytro Sydorчук, InvestUkraine Information Department Chief Specialist: "I'm incredibly happy that with this certificate I join the community of Ukraine's investment attraction professionals"



Mykhaylo Okruhin, Crimean Economy Ministry Investment Attraction Department Chief Specialist: "I find that dreams come true, and that we achieve what was conceived if we work to that end"



Olena Zhuravlyova, Sevastopol Chamber of Commerce and Industry International Cooperation Department Head: "We have really learned a lot. And we do believe that we'll be able to make a valuable contribution to FDI attraction in Ukraine"



Serhiy Varavin, Scholkin Industrial Park Management Company Director: "Many thanks to the program and the American people who spend their money on us. It's a substantial assistance"