



Increasing the capacity of Russian government officials: In-service and university-based public policy programs

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Who we are

- **The Institute for Urban Economics**
 - **NGO providing analysis and assistance to cities and regions in social and economic development. Areas of expertise include public finance, economic development, housing and social assistance reform.**
- **The Urban Institute**
 - **Private non profit research institute. The Institute addresses a wide array of national, regional and municipal policy issues: Health Policy, Human Resources Policy, Public Finance and Housing, and Non profits and Philanthropy.**

Institute for Urban Economics

A non-governmental and non-profit organization, established in 1995 in Moscow
120 staff, 70 researchers

The Institute for Urban Economics was created to identify, analyze and promote solutions to social and economic problems of urban areas. The main goals of the institute are: developing new approaches to housing problems; financing housing and urban infrastructure; municipal management; urban land use; social protection; and other social and economic problems of cities.

Urban Institute

Private non-profit research institute, founded 1968

9 policy centers (300 staff, 200 researchers)

\$50 million annual budget (Federal contracts/grants, Foundation grants)

The Urban Institute is widely recognized as one of the premier public policy organizations in the United States and the world. The Institute addresses a wide array of national, regional and municipal policy issues: Health Policy, Human Resources Policy, Public Finance and Housing, and Non profits and Philanthropy.

Assessment of education/training of civil servants in Russia

- **University and in-service training programs offer public administration programs**
- **Training in public policy lacking**

Although there are several programs (university based and in-service training programs) that provide a basic public administration curriculum to current and aspiring civil servants – few, if any, programs provide public policy training.

In addition to basic management skills, our government officials need to enhance their analytical and decision-making skills. Many officials now face demands that they were never trained for and many need to strengthen their analytical skills. Officials at the top levels of government clearly demonstrate the required policy competence, however, below that level are professionals that need additional training to assume these new tasks. The situation has improved modestly, mostly through a learning-by-doing process. Yet, many government officials still lack public policy skills. The result is that the quality of decision-making is impaired compared to its potential.

Additional detail:

For example, Moscow State University has a collaboration with Syracuse University and offers a masters degree in Public Administration.

Federal budget includes funding for in-service training. Individual ministries decide how to spend their money. Many institutions fight over these funds. Quality of programs appears to be uneven and there is no real system of assessing quality/impact.

To the best of our knowledge there are no public policy programs and few courses that are specifically designed to develop policy skills.

IUE Training programs

- **Policy Fellows Program – municipal and federal public policy course (with Urban Institute)**
- **Social assistance courses for mid level civil servants- - Moscow State Social University**
- **Urban economics courses-- Moscow State University, Higher School of Economics**
- **Certified Mortgage Lender course**
- **IUE University – developing a masters program in urban economics/policy, seeking Russian and American university partners**
- **Seminars/workshops on municipal finance, housing, social assistance reform**

After many years of working with government officials, IUE has developed a number of university and in-service based training programs. These projects range from urban economics courses to special seminars and workshops designed for professionals in housing, social assistance, education, and finance departments.

My colleague will describe the Policy Fellows Project in greater detail.

Additional information (if questioned):

Urban Economics program. The main goal of the training course is to teach specialists, who will be able to comprehend and develop market-oriented mechanisms in the urban environment and ultimately form a professional community that will actively influence the reform process in Russian municipalities. The program will include 7-9 specialty courses. Main blocks of the training program and specialty courses were tested in several educational facilities in Moscow, including Economic Department of Moscow State University, Russian Academy of Civil Service, and Financial Academy.

Certified mortgage lender course – Secondary market lenders require bankers to have taken this course.



The Policy Fellows Program

- **Three year project funded by USAID (2002-2004)**
- **Public policy courses developed for local and federal officials**
- **Municipal course offered to 3 cities/year**
 - **To date: 100 participants from 5 cities**
- **Federal course sponsored by Ministry of Economy**
 - **To date: First course completed 2/03.**

Guiding principles

- ❖ **Maximize use of problems and case studies in learning process**
- ❖ **Decide at the outset the main analytic skills and policy principles to be conveyed and build course around these**
- ❖ **Ultimate objective: critical thinking**
- ❖ **Rigorous scoring of homework and tests; minimum aggregate score to receive certificate**

Problems & case studies: Adult students will not sit still for prolonged lectures; they are looking for practical applications. After each short presentation there is an exercise that enables participants to apply the new concepts to solving case studies. The cases are based on problems and programs from other Russian cities.

Main analytic skills and policy topics: The course focuses on building analytical decision-making skills to help develop, implement, and evaluate public policy and programs.

Critical thinking: Standard practice is descriptive, even in academic social sciences. Every exchange in course aims at forcing analysis.

Course requirements: Real standards and testing are exceptional in adult learning currently in Russia. In order to successfully complete the course and receive the certificate participants are required to attain a minimum of 40 out of 65 points. Tests (worth up to 10 points) and homework (7 points) are assigned each workshop.

Students did not initially understand the time commitment or take the homework assignments seriously, but as the municipal course proceeded expectations were made clear. Response was positive and the quality of work improved.

Municipal course

❖ Four two- or three-day workshops

❖ Main Topics

- **Critical thinking about public programs and subsidies**
- **Efficient delivery of public services**
- **Program monitoring and evaluation**
- **Preparing policy recommendations**

Critical Thinking about Public Programs and Subsidies

- Types of policy actions – focusing primarily on targeting assistance and different types of subsidies
- Stakeholder analysis – evaluating the interests/influence of different parties
- Policy Analysis Model – a 6 step process for analytical decision-making

Efficient Public Programs

- The roles and responsibilities of different levels of government– highlighting recent changes in intergovernmental responsibilities and resources, and the increased demands on local government
- Models for carrying out government functions: direct provision, contracting out, and divestiture/privatization
- Designing and implementing a competition for contracting out public services

Program Monitoring and Evaluation

- Program monitoring – what to track, why, how?
- Program evaluation – assessing the implementation process and/or outcomes
- Using data effectively

Preparing Policy Recommendations

- Writing and presenting policy recommendations

Municipal course: Results to date

- ❖ **79 graduates from 5 cities**
- ❖ **Evaluation forms completed during course and follow on study indicate positive impact:**
 - ❖ **Participants rated presentations, materials, exercises, and overall organization of the course 4.5+ (5=excellent)**
 - ❖ **96% reported that they would refer a colleague to the course**
 - ❖ **The vast majority rated all topics relevant to their current or future work**
 - ❖ **96% reported that they had used skills/ideas from the course in their work**

79 participants have graduated from the policy fellows course (out of a total of approximately 100 participants). Not all participants meet the rigorous course requirements required to receive a graduation certificate. This is evidence of the high expectations set by the course. Unusual -- most trainings participants merely show up and are not expected to work outside class or demonstrate competency.

Evaluation forms are completed after each workshop. Conducted follow on study 6 months after program completion. Participants are asked to rate the overall course and specific topics, including whether the topics covered were new for them and whether the topics covered are those that they can use in their current job, in the future, or not at all.

- Approximately half of the graduates said they had applied materials/skills from course in competitive procurement and implementing monitoring programs.
- Many participants credited the course with helping them to systemize their understanding or approach to policy issues.
- Sixty-four percent said that they had shared information or materials from the course with others.
- When asked if they performed any aspects of their jobs differently as a result of taking the course 28% reported that they were more likely to work with others.