

Focus Group Training in Ukraine for Journalists Covering the Economic Transition

March 1998



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A Women in Development Technical Assistance Project

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by

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for the WIDTECH Project

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DESCRIPTION OF THE OCTOBER 1997 WORKSHOP

The Women in Development Officer and the Project Manager at the USAID Mission in Ukraine asked the Women in Development Office of USAID to help improve attention to women in the Ukrainian Market Reform Education Project (UMREP).¹ When it was enlisted to provide technical assistance, WIDTECH recommended women's focus group training as a means of building capacity to integrate women into media coverage. The purpose of the focus group training was to:

1. Raise awareness of the informational needs and interests of Ukrainian women.
2. Introduce journalists, and through them the Ukrainian public, to the diversity of roles women play in the economy.
3. Identify success stories or positive role models featuring women contributing to the Ukrainian economy.
4. Enhance journalists' capacity to develop stories about and featuring women.
5. Incorporate such stories into the UMREP television, radio, or print media.

The focus group training was planned and overseen by WIDTECH Democracy and Governance Specialist, Marcia Greenberg. The training took place in Lviv, Ukraine, on October 20-24, 1997. The training was conducted by Dr. Leslie Snyder, Associate Professor of Communication Sciences at the University of Connecticut, who has conducted many prior workshops teaching focus group techniques to international professionals. A seasoned journalist based in Warsaw, Peggy Simpson, co-taught the sessions, emphasizing her real-world experience in covering economic news and women in Eastern Europe.²

The participants were 14 women and 2 men from newspapers, radio, and television outlets in Kyiv, Donetsk, Poltava, Lviv, and Chernovtsy.³ (See Annex A.) Each journalist had from 2 to 20 years of professional experience. Six work directly for UMREP.

The workshop began with two classroom days to learn interviewing and focus group techniques. Despite their experience conducting daily interviews in their work, participants revealed in practice interviews that they needed to learn some basic interviewing skills and develop alternate styles. Classroom instruction emphasized skills such as listening, asking non-leading questions, remaining objective, and paying attention to the contribution of each person in a focus group. Participants also learned how to write focus group interview guides (lists of questions). The guides they developed became the basis of their interviews. Question topics included sources of household income, expenditures, and decision making within families.

¹ USAID Mission initiative and support came from the Project Officer for UMREP, Victoria Marchenko; the Women in Development Officer, Linda Bernstein; and Mission staff member Tatiana Timoshenko. Cate Johnson, from USAID's Women in Development Office in Washington, D.C., provided ongoing guidance and support.

² WIDTECH also enjoyed UMREP support from Joanna Catalano, Olena Panchenko, and Marta Bazuk.

³ An additional participant left after the second day because of demands at work.

For the next two days, the journalists conducted eight real focus groups. The groups and their locations were:

- 2 Lviv, urban, women ages 20-40
- 1 Lviv, urban, women age 40+
- 1 Turka, rural district seat, women ages 20-40
- 1 Turka, rural district seat, women age 40+
- 1 Ilenik, rural village, women age 40+
- 1 Lviv, urban, men
- 1 Ilenik, rural village, men

The journalists also conducted individual interviews in the rural area with women in markets and other places, during the time they were not themselves conducting focus groups. With 8 to 12 participants in each focus group, plus the individual interviews, the workshop participants spoke with more than 60 women and 20 men during these two days.⁴

The final day consisted of sharing by and among the participants —of their written reports about the research findings, of their story ideas, and of the difficulties that arose in conducting the groups. One session focused on a variety of story formats that incorporate interview data and are a means of utilizing information about real people in journalistic products.

OUTCOMES

At least five stories about women's economic contributions to the new Ukrainian market economy have been published or broadcast as a direct result of the focus group workshop. Ludmilla Nesterenko, the senior journalist in the training, did a radio piece immediately following the workshop on older women's proactive attitudes and business initiatives. Irena Vyshnersika of Chernovitsi wrote a success story about a woman executive for the UMREP publication *Privatization Courier*, which is sent to more than 725 Ukrainian newspapers for possible reprinting. Olga Shostak of Lviv did a story on the workshop, and is writing another one about a female lawyer from Lviv who opened the first private notary public office. Tatiana Bol from Vikna TV in Kyiv did a televised piece on the workshop. Lubomyr Pokotylo, independent of his job at Gavin Anderson, did a story about a woman director of a sugar refinery joint venture for the television program "Agro World." Ludmila Chichkanyova of Donetsk told Gavin Anderson that she is working on a story. Two journalists from Poltava submitted a joint story for the program publication, and they are working with the editor on another one.

The workshops themselves were covered as news. On their own initiative, two journalists, one TV reporter from Kyiv and a radio reporter from Lviv, created pieces about the workshop and its emphasis on women's economic contributions and issues. These stories could influence other journalists to reconsider the content of their economic reporting.

The workshop was valuable for the journalists —especially for participants in smaller cities —as an opportunity to network. On the final day, they requested a list of participants with full

⁴ Simpson and Snyder conducted additional interviews — 3 with successful businesswomen, 1 with the head of privatization in Turka, and 5 with market woman — while trainees were conducting the focus groups and after the workshop was completed.

names and addresses, and many exchanged business cards. Some participants even suggested starting an association of women journalists.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT TEACHING IN UKRAINE ABOUT FOCUS GROUPS

Training Curriculum

The technique of teaching focus group interviewing skills and having journalists conduct their own groups worked even better than expected. By the end of the sessions, the journalists moved from being skeptical about learning anything new to being enthusiastic proponents of interviewing real people. For example, right after the first focus group interviews, one radio and print journalist of at least 10 years gushed that she was amazed at how much she had learned from the focus group participants, and said her head was full of new story ideas. It was originally expected that the workshop group would develop a minimum of three story ideas together. However, the experience of the interviews was so stimulating that each journalist was able to generate her or his own list of potential story ideas to follow up on, and each outlined one story. (Their ideas are listed in Annex B.)

One of the first topics was the stylistic issue of how to ask questions. Although the journalists thought of themselves as experts on one-on-one interviews because they conduct interviews daily, we taught question techniques as part of the focus group methodology. At first, the trainees tended to use a belligerent style when conducting interviews—a style that can be appropriate for certain situations, such as dealing with some public officials or people who have been caught in a lie, but one that can intimidate many ordinary people and result in limited sharing of information. By the time they conducted their own focus groups, the journalists had developed a more empathetic yet objective style that is better suited to most one-on-one interviews and to all focus groups with ordinary people.

The training was designed to expose the journalists to groups in both urban and rural areas. For the youngest, this was their first experience in the rural areas, and the interviews helped to break down some of their stereotypes. The rural interviews also helped to put rural priorities on the story agenda, and clarified the role of agricultural production in the economic transition.

After the focus groups, the workshop curriculum addressed ways to craft stories. Through those discussions, differences emerged in the way people define business news. There was much debate about the appropriateness of using quotes from people in business in which the name of their company is given. Many reporters felt that stories mentioning specific businesses amounted to promotions for those companies. In the ensuing discussion, some participants reported that in some cases media outlets in effect required coverage of a business to be accompanied by advertisements. Outlets apparently justified this by saying that their newspapers were desperate for money and that this was one source of financing. Obviously, this practice poses a potentially serious problem for the future of business news in Ukraine. It leaves a vacuum in serious coverage of business, which readers badly need to understand. This situation could mean coverage of business would be only for the favored few, and then would consist only of "puff" pieces, with no hard-news reporting about companies and their products and practices. There also was some indication that some media were tied to political groups (not, at least so far, controlled by warring industrial groups, as in Russia.)

In future workshops, it would be helpful to have multiple examples of hard news stories that use names of businesses and quotes from business owners. It may also be critical to invite editors and news managers to participate in at least part of the training, such as one day of focus groups and a day on story and series ideas and journalistic formats for economic news.

Another issue for future workshops is how to incorporate economic statistics and business data into stories. When data are available, they should be shared with the public. Unfortunately, survey data about the economy from the public education project was not broken out by gender; otherwise, it would have made an excellent case study of how to write up stories based on hard data.

Training Delivery

An early step in the training preparation was to establish criteria for selecting trainees. Because the focus group training was intended as a mechanism for generating success stories that could be published or broadcast by UMREP, it was important to include people who had the experience, opportunity, and interest in covering women's contributions to the economy. In collaborations with the USAID Project Manager and with UMREP, WIDTECH and the trainers discussed the professional criteria for selection. In fact, UMREP selected an appropriate group of trainees who were able to learn from the workshop and incorporate it into their work. For the future, however, training organizers should address the apparent biases against business news discussed above. To ensure that editors are willing to use good pieces, future workshops should consider bringing in the journalists' editors for one or two days to work on story ideas and journalistic formats. Otherwise, the journalists may be blocked from using quotes or writing about people in business.

It was also important, in arranging the workshop focus groups, to keep in mind that the composition of and method of dealing with focus groups serve as an example for the trainees. Good technique requires at least two focus groups with each "target" group —that is, two women's groups of each age classification in Lviv and two in each of the other venues. The danger of holding only one focus group with a particular category is that it is difficult to determine whether the focus group is biased in its composition and responses. Also, there are sometimes aberrations from unusual dynamics or strong personalities. Although the logistics for this workshop resulted in one group of women over age 40, such single groups should typically be avoided.

Another important feature of focus groups is recording the discussions. For maximum benefit and use of material, appropriate, well-functioning equipment should be ensured. In this case, many of the small tape recorders used by the journalists, locally referred to as "dictaphones," could not pick up the voices in the focus groups. In the future, high-quality tape recorders should be used in all focus groups.

To keep the workshop moving and keep busy professionals engaged during the seminar portion of the workshop, it is necessary to use simultaneous translation. In Lviv, it was difficult to identify interpreters who were accustomed to using simultaneous translation equipment. Future organizers should make persistent efforts to ensure good simultaneous translation capability.

As conceived, the training was to result in stories for UMREP. To accomplish this objective, the trainers followed up on the participants a week later; this additional contact strongly contributed to the production of the first wave of stories. Follow-up feedback was also provided to workshop planners and USAID about the high immediate value of the workshop.

Recommendations

- Teaching journalists to conduct focus groups showed journalists that ordinary people do have opinions and advice for one another, that they are willing to share their views when politely asked, and that journalists can generate a multitude of story ideas by talking to people. This is an important step in the democratization of the news media. This technique should be used in the future.
- Despite the increased difficulty in logistics, focus groups should be conducted in rural as well as urban areas.
- Additional points to cover in future workshops should include how to conduct follow-up interviews, how to write stories based on interviews, where to draw the line between business journalism and promotion, and how to use statistics and business data in stories.
- It would be helpful to invite teams composed of one editor and one or more journalists from each media outlet to future workshops. This would improve the likelihood that journalists will be able to apply the techniques learned at the workshop on the job.
- Training should include follow-up after the seminar to encourage journalists to write stories.
- High-quality tape recorders should be used in all focus groups.
- Translators skilled in using simultaneous translation equipment should be employed to translate during the seminar portion of the workshop.

The trainers recommend conducting additional workshops to share the lessons more widely. A follow-up two- to three-day workshop for the trainees and their editors would also be valuable. In addition, it is important to begin a dialogue with journalism schools on how to reform their curriculum, so that future journalists will be appropriately trained.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC TRANSITION ON UKRAINIAN WOMEN

Information Flows

Getting information about career opportunities from the media is difficult. "Only between people. Nothing from the papers whatever," said one young urban woman. In both Lviv and Turka there is a common perception that one can find a job only through friends. This seems to refer both to getting information that there is a job opening and connections to get the job.

In at least two focus groups, business women networked with one another and were very candid in offering specific advice to other women on how to begin new businesses, including how much it would cost for rent, equipment, and registration of a new business. This openness to sharing suggests a need for organizations of businesswomen.

Older women reported a reliance on radio and television news. Newspapers are too costly for people on a pension, they said.

How Money Is and Is Not Spent

Currently, money is spent on housing, taxes, food, soap and washing powders, school fees (including kindergarten and crèches) and uniforms (in some places), medicine, and transportation. Money for clothing often comes from savings.

Young urban businesswomen and teachers say they cannot afford vacations and travel, children's recreation (including music, ballet, and sports), clothes, or repairing their flats (fixing up their apartments). Romana said, "My son is going to get married, but there is no money to arrange this wedding." Another said, "I can't pay my house fees." Oksana, in Turka, said, "Doctors have recommended that my husband go to the seaside on holiday, but we can't afford it." In Kyiv, the owner of a small business making a nice profit said she's been putting her earnings into fixing up her flat. The buildings have suffered from years of neglect, so fixing up an apartment should not be seen as a luxury. It can involve purchasing modern appliances, such as washers, large refrigerators, and freezers, for the first time.

Older women mentioned that some husbands are alcoholics; these women often resort to hiding money from their husbands so it won't be spent on drinking. "Spiritual values are disappearing, people began to drink much. It can't be worse," said one unemployed woman in Turka. (At the same time, some women report an increase in spiritualism.)

Medicine costs can be quite a burden. "My mother and mother-in-law depend on me," said one young woman. "Mother . . . needs to be operated on. All money is spent on medical things." Older women, too, report high medical costs to look after their elderly parents.

Household Income Sources and Management

People are creative about supporting themselves. They work abroad, give private lessons, and find part-time jobs to supplement their income or cope with not receiving salaries for jobs they are doing (teachers, for example, frequently go unpaid). Money for starting up a new business often comes from family and friends.

However, this comes with dangers of debt. Linda said, "My husband wanted to run his own business, but failed. Now I have to pay the debt (with) money from the family budget." People don't have a sense of how to evaluate good versus bad risks, or how difficult is the danger of large debt. "My husband gets salary once in a few months. We've run into huge debts, and now all the salary goes into repaying the debts. So he doesn't bring salary home," said another young woman in a different group.

Women report gender discrimination in hiring. One woman in Turka mimicked, "If there are no men for this vacancy, I'll take you." A teacher in Turka was told that men are preferred as teachers, because a man does not take sick leave when his child has fallen ill. (It was unclear whether only women workers were eligible for paid leave from work to take care of sick children, or whether both women and men were eligible but by tradition only women took that type of leave.)

Extended family members sometimes live together to pool their resources. The elderly, on meager pensions, often find themselves supporting their grown unemployed children and their families. "Grandma is 90 years old, and we are concerned about it because when she dies, we will not have the money to pay house fees."

In the rural village, most women sold their privatization certificates. A few women invested them in private industry but had no knowledge of the differences between their choices.

In the rural areas, people garden to grow food for their own tables. Selling the surplus, however, is difficult. Getting crops, animals, and animal products to market is expensive; pork, for example, cannot be sold for the price of its feed. Some people from towns and cities visit relatives in rural areas for food. Whereas women used to go east for agricultural jobs, "today they are not requested." In Lviv, many younger women reported living off of vegetable gardens.

Some pensioners said that even if there was a job that interested them, they would not accept a salaried position because it could mean a loss of benefits they currently enjoy. "If you have a salary you'll have no subsidies," explained one older woman. Some women work "under the table," doing jobs such as sewing for neighbors. Others look after grandchildren while their children work.

Relationships and Decision Making within the Household

In Lviv, sometimes wage earners tend to make decisions, and because the wage earners are more often than not women, they have decision-making power. Sometimes decisions are joint. At other times, women make decisions as part of managing the household. "I'm the only one who can divide all the money and solve what to buy and for whom and in what consequence," explained Rehina, 40 years old.

We rarely heard from women that they do not have a say in household financial management; however, some men report that, if they earn the money, they make the decisions. Older urban women report that they make decisions with their husbands.

In the rural village, older women said they control the family budget, but consult their husbands before making large expenditures. Husbands, as a rule, give their money to their wives, retaining only a small amount for cigarettes and alcohol.

ANNEX A

NAMES AND AFFILIATIONS OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Natalia Bashkirova	Poltava	Business Center
Olga Shostak	Lviv	“Galyts’ki Kotraktu” newspaper
Olena Panchenko	Kyiv	UMREP
Ludmila Nesterenko	Kyiv	National radio
Galyna Pavliiva	Kyiv	UMREP
Iryna Skorbun	Kyiv	UMREP
Maryna Kozur	Poltava	“Moloda Gromada” newspaper
Anna Goncharyk	Kyiv	Radio “Svoboda”
Ludmila Chichkaniova	Donets’k	BBC Ukrainian Service, “Vseukrainskiye vedomosti”
Irina Vishnevskaya	Chernivtsi	“Nova Bukovins’ka Gazeta”
Viktor Miniajlo	Kyiv	Radio “Svoboda”
Tatiana Bol	Kyiv	“Vikna” TV Company
Galyna Plachynda	Kyiv	“Intelnews” Information Agency
Lubomir Pokotylo	Kyiv	UMREP

ANNEX B

PROPOSED TOPICS FOR JOURNALISTIC STORIES

On the final morning journalists shared their story ideas with the group. Listed below are their ideas, along with a few generated by interviews conducted by Simpson and Snyder.

1. How to start a business from very little: A businesswoman in one group of young urban women told a manicurist who was complaining about her job to start her own shop. She said it would take only about 240 grivny for the licenses and rent. Borrow the money from relatives or acquaintances, she advised.

2. How to build a small business into a larger one: One woman who had a successful tourist trinket stand in Kyiv said she was "too tired" to expand her business. However, she clearly had hit upon a winning combination of goods to sell. It appeared that she did not know how to use the profits of her business to expand it. (On the other hand, her decision to stay in a one-person tourist stand would be quite rational if she thinks she makes more money in a small stand with part of the income not reported to tax authorities.) In Turka, some female market vendors were working for other women who had expanded their businesses.

3. Pensioners want to work, and need very few inputs: They live by themselves, many of them widows. One woman said she needs 1000 grivny for her business idea, others said only 100 per month. Many said they would like to do something with cooking, legally, in a group business. One woman said she would like to go to the country, buy a tractor, and work on her own land and rent the tractor to neighbors.

4. Dealing with the Mafia: One older woman in Lviv, who has a diploma from the medical institute, wanted to sell sunflower seeds and local soft drinks, but after one day the Mafia forced her to leave her location. One tailor sells her clothes to her friends, which means she avoids the Mafia. A pharmacist married to a policeman gave her husband's business card to the representative who came to shake down her shop, and the Mafia did not return.

5. Double and triple burdens: As in other countries, women have the burden of running the household and taking care of aging parents, even if they are breadwinners. In some instances, husbands do not have jobs, and still women have to do all the housework. In other cases, however, men are beginning to help with housework. Another story angle relating to women's burdens is the decision about part-time work vs. full-time work. This issue is also significant because it may offer the sort of flexibility some women seek by running their own businesses.

6. The implications in marriages when women earn more than men: Among happy marriages, the men welcome the additional income. In unhappy households, the husbands are jealous and threatened. How can couples learn to be happy with this reversal of earning power? In Turka, the businesswomen said that their husbands were supportive. In Lviv, many successful women are divorced. How does one explain the difference?

7. Needs for Community-Based Support for Women: In the rural areas, there are organizations for orphans and for elderly without care. The women in the focus groups were interested in organizations for women.

8. Political leanings in the rural areas: People in the rural areas are politically aware. They were knowledgeable about yesterday's news. [The fact that levels of rural knowledge was newsworthy to the journalists suggests strong stereotypes about rural populations.] They support economic reforms, and do not want to go back to "former times" despite present difficulties. They

compare their economic situation to that in other countries and are surprised that the Ukrainian government can not implement reforms like in Poland or the Czech Republic.

9. What women look for in political candidates: Women say they would vote for women, if strong women ran, but none have thus far. They want a chance to choose candidate who work hard and make concrete proposals to promote economic growth. In the village, for example, they want local authorities or businessmen to foster tourism. It is noteworthy that they want authorities to do it, rather than try to do it themselves. In another example, the local mineral water could be bottled, and people are frustrated that the regional administration has not taken the initiative.

10. Regional Comparisons: There are opportunities to inform women in one region about initiatives and coping strategies in others, e.g. between Donetsk and Turka. There are also possible stories about opportunities for economic cooperation between regions, such as trade of coal (Donetsk) for wood or wood product (Turka).

11. Border Policies and Trade: The closed border interferes with free trade. Turka is 30 km. from the border of Poland and Slovakia. People have been told to expect "free passage" but the border is not open yet. In Turka, they believe free passage would increase jobs. It was also noted that the Mafia attack and rob people who shuttle between the countries with trade goods ("shuttle businesses") or come home from salaried jobs in Poland.

12. People are not passive: Women have found ways to cope, and believe there is no free lunch. Quite a number seem to think that the economic situation will improve in 2-5 years. They blame the central government. They agree that everyone needs to work hard. In the village, they believe their life is easier than in cities, because they can "live off cattle and vegetable plots." Many people are pensioners, but even they need to work. Barter is important -- they sell timber from their village, and get sugar and flour.

13. The gap between government and citizens: There are misunderstandings between the government and the people. For example, in Turka, people have the opportunity to start businesses. Raw materials are cheap. However, there is a need for an appropriate taxation policy. In Turka, one woman said that the main difference since Soviet rule is "freedom. Now we have it. If only they changed taxes!"

14. Employment Discrimination: Many people talked of gender and age discrimination in hiring. In part, this may be because employers are obligated to continue to offer a rich mix of benefits to women (but not men) workers, which makes women more expensive to hire. There could be interview about these costs with employers, as well as with women who are looking for work. Women we interviewed spoke of open discrimination against women, in part because of generous mandated benefits. In addition, many employers appear to prefer to hire young people and train them on the job, rather than re-train people with skills from the past that may not be appropriate today. This creates major employment barriers for women over the age of 35.

15. The economics of breast cancer: Few are thinking about the costs of breast cancer to families and workplaces --and potential savings from early detection. Breast cancer is a major cause of death in Eastern Europe. There only now is beginning to be an awareness of this and to consider news ways of educating doctors --and women -- about the importance of self-examination and early detection. Modern mammogram equipment is rare in this part of the world, and medical schools rarely have oncology specialties.

16. The economics of alcoholism: How do budgets for families with drinking husbands compare with those without this spending? What kinds of problems are in the workplace from alcoholism? And who is responsible for drinking or abstinence? How are families coping with alcoholics?

17. Information sources for Job-seeking: Using word-of-mouth contacts with friends and acquaintances to find out about job openings. While it is currently seen as accidental, incidental, or somehow illegitimate means to learn of job openings, it can be a every effective way of getting leads for work. Studies in the U.S. have shown that the most important source of information about jobs is from friends of friends. In communication and sociology, this is called the "strength of weak ties," meaning that while you already probably know what your close friends and family (strong ties) know, you may not know what their friends (weak ties) know. Acquaintances should be valued and explored as sources of job information. Word-of-mouth is all the more valuable in an era in Ukraine when formal employment offices are new and possibly not that effective, and many jobs may not be formally listed or advertised in newspapers.

ANNEX C

RADIO PROGRAM TRANSCRIPT FOR “MARKET A TO Z”

“MARKET A TO Z”

Host Ludmilla Nesterenko

November 6, 1997

Program of the Ukraine Market Reform Education Program

(Tape-recorder)

(MUSIC)

HOST: Hello, dear listeners “Market A to Z” is on the air, and our host, journalist Ludmila Nesterenko, welcome you.

HOST: We’ll start with a short announcement. Recently in Lviv, as part of the technical project “Women in Development” - a seminar took place where “subjects for success” for active women were discussed. Maybe it will provide a recipe for our listeners currently in difficult situations.

PASTUKH: We have a big apple orchard. I sold apples, pears, plums. Success! And I started to trade. We opened our own enterprise. We started to stock cattle, to deliver it to meatpacking plants and to a farm in Sambir.

(Music)

HOST: You will hear in this program about the positive experience of privatization.

PARKHOMENKO: We are displaying our products at the Kontractovy fair in order to show Kyivites what kind of products we are producing, and how good our quality is.

(Music)

HOST: As usual –answers to your questions are waiting for you. Volodymyr Lanoviy, acting Head of State Property Fund of Ukraine, explains where and how one could buy shares of privatized enterprises. And what awaits us in the future.

(Music) (“Market A to Z”)

HOST: Today, if you stroll in any town of Ukraine, it reminds you of a huge market, with more sellers than buyers. From an economic point of view, it is a normal phenomenon. If, during Soviet times, the ratio of hard industry business to service industry, everyday repairs and other services and trade was 5:1, now it has to switch absolutely the other way round. The state does not deal with these questions specifically. In market conditions people themselves must be active. The role of the state has to be to create favorable conditions for everyone who wants to create a working space for themselves. Additionally it’s more difficult to produce or to give services today, especially for people in such professions as doctors, teachers, scientists. There is a need in production areas, expensive equipment, corresponding specialists and so. That is why the so-called shuttle business is flourishing.

Statistics testify that mainly women have gone to work in markets. They, deprived of their main work and salary, rushed to save their family flame. Perhaps it is natural, since a woman is first to

react to confusions. Lviv and Lviv oblast are not exceptions in this respect. Talking to women from this region during the seminar, I was convinced that the majority of them have not lost courage, they support reforms, they do not want to return to the Union, and showed not only entrepreneurial abilities, but also true courage. You will also be convinced from the fragments of recordings that I made during our focus groups. Let's listen and feel the enthusiasm with which they begin their work.

(music)

HOST: We're in the town of Turka.

PASTUKH: Mariya Ivanivna Pastukh, I worked in consumer's cooperative societies and my husband was fired from our regional administration. He was unemployed for half a year. I am from Starosambir region. We have a big apple orchard, I sold apples, I sold pears, plums. Success! Then I thought, teachers, doctors, are trading here. I have experience. And I started to trade. We opened our own enterprise, started to stock cattle, to deliver it to meat-packing plants and to farm in Sambir. They started to give us preliminary payment, we were successful.

The cattle [and] pigs were taken from people, the money was paid to them, they delivered cattle to meat-packing plants, it was profitable. We have bought equipment from money received from trade. We opened the shop at the premises of the enterprise. In this shop people buy food products, and if they deliver cattle, they can barter it for goods which they need. If not we give them money. And we live off of this. My son studies at the institute, I earn money. My husband is a director, I am a saleswoman. My salary is 140 hryvnias. It's enough for food, and I wear, mainly, my old clothes. I pay for electricity and don't pay for heating because it is always out of order. My husband, myself and accountant. We have hired workers, but they work on contract.

(music intro clip)

HOST: After a talk with a focus group I recorded an interview with Maria Ivanivna.

COR: What helped you to start a business? What urged you to do it?

PASTUKH: It's my personal disposition! I thought 'Can't I do it myself? And I should if I am going to have something to live on.' I began selling apples got interested in money and I thought if I have earned something with apples, I should go to Poland and there I earned more, which made me think more seriously about my business. I had some connections, working in the retail trade, I had some friends who helped me and provided me with goods without advance payment. That was the way I survived.

COR: What could you recommend or wish to other people?

PASTUKH: I am often astonished when my neighbors say they cannot afford to buy bread or whatever. I tell my neighbor, a pensioner 'Bring some carrots to Sambir or Turka and sell it there. You will earn something, at least a hryvna a day. Or 30 hryvnas a month. Which makes an additional pension.' And I also tell my relatives to do anything, not to be idle. Though my mother is rather old, she is always busy with something. She keeps a cow and sells milk and says she is better off because she has something in addition to her pension. And she always instructed us to do the same. So I can recommend to anybody to do what one can. If one can do something, it is very nice, and there is some future in it.

COR: I don't think everybody has entrepreneurial skills. However, if one is not a handicapped person one cannot afford to be idle.

PASTUKH: Exactly. One should do something. If one is capable, one should support oneself. And more than that, I think everybody is able to. Simply, there are lazy, unreliable people, who are accustomed to the idea that somebody else would take care of them. One should realize one's opportunities.

(music)

COR: It's seems, whatever forecasts about elections may be, women of Ukraine, expressing their will and activity, will not allow the future president to make errors. During the survey of one of the focus groups in Lviv, women proposed quite seriously a change, that is, to swap their places at markets for deputies seats in the Verkhovna Rada. Women understand better the current problems and are willing to solve them as soon as possible. After such a proposal the number of women in Parliament will definitely increase.

(introclip)

LUZHANSKA: We need a person to organize everything.

(introclip)

HOST: Ruslana is a teacher in Ilnyk village, Turka rayon, which is the remotest village in Lviv oblast. However, the first entrepreneurs have already appeared even there. They are women. Probably there are sponsors that can support these people. Before the revolution, this region was well know for its tourist facilities. There were recreation places, catering services, hospitals, soft drinks factories, swimming pools, and ski-jumps. Some villages provided services for 2,500 tourists every season. During the Soviet years, tourist facilities were destroyed. Is it possible that there are no people willing to restore and revive the place? People here are ready to support initiatives, as they want jobs. It is a very picturesque place with air like a healing beverage. There is also a song about Turka.

(music)

HOST: As for the role of women in our society, Lviv resident, president of JSC "Vesna", which together with the German firm "Shtalman" makes suits and dresses for women, Maria Zbihailo tries to specify.

MARIA: The role of a business woman during the last century considerably increased. If we are going to take civilized and highly developed countries as an example, their women won the right and exercise the right to choose their own way in life. This is not limited with any bias. Now women take top positions in many areas of activities, such as culture, art, industry, engineering and science... They also occupy leading positions in government.

The role of business women in the future of Ukraine will be crucial because women are not inferior to men. They are industrious, reliable, and also they are mothers. And they love. Woman's life is inseparable from love. Women create, not destroy. God created women to build not to destroy. If it is so, there is a future. If we speak about women's role in the society of Ukraine, it will be very complicated in our times, in our times, in our circumstances with the present difficulties in the

economy. However, being equal members of society, women can overcome any obstacles. And a very good example is the appointment of a woman the Minister of Justice. It's a real achievement. Perhaps, some other woman will become President.

(introclip)

HOST: One more meeting, which took place in the village of Ilnyk in Turka rayon.

VOICE: Ruslana Luzhinska

COR: You've started your own business, how have you managed to do it?

LUZHINSKA: I saw that there was one shop in the village was situated not far from my place, and it was state-owned. And there were almost no goods on sale. Sometimes people wanted to buy bread, essential commodities, and had to travel to town. I used to say to the saleswoman: Why don't you privatize it? So I asked my husband to find some money. First we had no money, so we leased it. And little by little we supplied goods. Now we have more goods at the shop.

COR: Do people come and buy here?

LUZHINSKA: I think they are satisfied. Especially old people, who cannot travel to the town they are very grateful.

COR: Besides, you cherish a plan to process cheap local meat, which isn't being now

LUZHINSKA: That's true. There were several buildings left after the collective. What we had to do was to install necessary equipment and start some kind of business. Cheap cattle, cheap labor, people. But we needed some resources.

COR: What if you were to use the common resources from every person, to take the risk and start a joint stock company?

HOST: Isn't the approach of the teacher from the Turka boarding school, who participated in our conversation, economically reasonable?

VOICE: Look, there are no plants in Turka rayon. And there was a time when they made bricks here. My granny told me about it. We have many mineral water springs, however nobody is interested in it. This is an altogether forgotten region. But what a beautiful place it is around. Sometimes I take my children and go out -of-doors and everything is so beautiful around. There are people who go to relax in Hawaii and I wish they would come here to breathe fresh air, which then they would remember throughout their whole lives.

Why are there no plants? Why don't our lawmakers look at some other countries? Not even those countries, where democracy and the market are more than 100 years old –we them given that their mentalities are different. It was easier to live earlier. They hid the facts from us. We didn't travel to the West. It seemed to us that we lived communism. We got used to the idea that somebody had to take care of us, they had to give us. And now the situation is the market and we'll have to take care for everything ourselves. You can't imagine how difficult it was for me to start. I am a teacher. My father was the chairman of the village people's deputies council for 8 years, he

worked in trade. I wanted to follow suit, but he didn't allow me, so I decided to be a teacher. Now I say to him. "You see, Father, that you were wrong, don't you?" So one way or another I also took up trade, although I am not young. I had to. My son finished high specialized school and there was no work for him. He found some work in a neighboring village, but the buses stopped running, and a deep depression began. He had to sleep there in a cold room, then he revolted and said, that was not the way out. He wanted to start something of his own, but there was no money in the family. I divorced my husband at that time and had two children. I didn't know what to do, where to go. I didn't want to steal, life didn't teach me that. So I said to my son. "Let's go and trade." My son didn't understand: "Are you out of your mind? You've worked as teacher for so many years, the
Bad financial straits. I worked under contract as a saleswoman at my son's business. I was burning with shame. And my more successful relations looked down at me. When I remember those days, I want to cry. That was the level of our mentality. It is the law the world over, go and make money! But one should earn it in an honest way. My son didn't join a gang, he didn't steal. I gave him the job! Now he wants to be enrolled at the Institute of commerce he says. It's true I've found my place in life. I am much the better for it now.

(music)

HOST: It wouldn't harm our deputies to pay attention to these words. The most important problem facing us today is not to lose our young generation. And a woman, a mother, understands it clearly. This is really information to think about when making a decision whom to support during the coming elections.

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ANNEX D

ARTICLE IN *PRIVATIZATION COURIER*, DECEMBER 15, 1997

Publication of the Ukraine Market Reform Education Program, with a circulation of 3,200, sent twice monthly to more than 725 newspapers across Ukraine, encouraging them to reprint information. In addition, it is sent to local government officials, civic organizations, and deputies in Parliament.

A Born Manager

by Iryna Vyshnevska

"Rossy Bukovyny" is one of the only enterprises in Chernivtsi oblast turning a profit. Today, it is difficult to stay afloat and sometimes almost impossible. However, for Valentyna Hrinchenko, the president of the JSC "Rossy Bukovyny," there is no room for the word "impossible" where there is desire, faith and a talented collective of people who share her outlook.

Ms. Hrinchenko is a graduate of Kyiv Technological Institute. She has always worked in the food production industry, first as a production engineer, then as a foreman of a wine bottling workshop, chief engineer of a wine-making plant, and Chairperson of the Regional Food Industry Department.

After cutbacks in the department, Valentyna Hrinchenko and some colleagues decided to found a joint stock company. That was in 1992 when a factory was being built to produce non-alcoholic drinks that would address the lack of quality soft drinks in the region. First shares were issued for one division, and later for the whole plant. Two German bottling production lines were bought and Ms. Hrinchenko decided to establish cooperation with the well known Pepsi Company. In addition, they bought Czech and German equipment for syrup production to satisfy Pepsi's demanding standards. Now, "Rossy Bukovyny" produces their own and Pepsi's tasty original drinks. The problem of soft drinks in the city of Chernivtsi region and western Ukraine has been resolved.

Pepsi cooperates with other Ukrainian factories as well, but it is "Rossy Bukovyny" that received Pepsi's recognition for quality control. "Rosy Bukovyny" has a quality rating of 100 percent, the best result in Ukraine.

Valentyna Hrinchenko is the sole woman general director in this category of companies in this country. She manages to hold such a responsible and difficult position because she is energetic and charming, able to be kind and demanding at the same time, possesses a woman's intuition. She is a born a manager. And it isn't so easy to manage an enterprise with 210 employees, where 76 percent are men.

The company's capacity is quite large. Each hour, 12,000 0.33 liter bottles come off the conveyer, and the same number of 0.5 liter bottles. Recently, they began to bottle soft drinks into 1l and 1.5 liter plastic bottles at a rate of 4,800 bottles per hour.

The company runs 15 stores in the city and oblast. They have no problem with wage arrears. It seems they could rest on their laurels. But not the president of "Rossy Bukovyny." The company's management was interested in acquiring a brewery, which has hardly been in operation recently. The two firms will soon begin to produce together high quality products. Valentyna Hrinchenko plans to start up a new beer keg assembly line before the New Year. 600 fifty liter kegs are ready to be filled and beer masters are training in Germany.

Obtaining a loan from EBRD was one of the most important steps, according to Valentyna Hrinchenko. The "Brewery"- "Rossy Bukovyny" joint venture is one of four enterprises in Ukraine

which received an European loan. Even though the guarantor of the loan is the government of Ukraine, almost every day there are problems at customs with materials, equipment and raw materials. The lack of clear and sensible laws is the cause of many problems which take up an inordinate amount of time to settle. The project has great importance for Chernivtsi oblast. Because of it, 130 people will go back to work. It is calculated that annual budget revenues will total 3.4 ml hryvnias, Value Added Tax -- 1.1 ml hryvnias, and charge on payroll -- 860 thousand hryvnias.

In general Valentyna Hrinchenko has many plans, and they will all be implemented, that she is convinced of. So, in spite of imperfect laws and governmental tax policy, as well as general economic chaos in the country, wise and people with a talent for management do achieve success.