

CASE STUDY 18: ENGAGING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

In 2007 the EBRD approved financing for a 750 kilovolt high-voltage power line from Rivne nuclear power plant in western Ukraine to Kiev following an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process that included public disclosure and consultation in line with the Bank's Environmental Policy and EU requirements. Following the development of a Public Consultation and Disclosure Plan in 2006, initial consultation meetings were held in the affected regions.

A number of civil society stakeholders raised the need for additional meetings to be held in Kiev for both better understanding of the project and an opportunity to raise concerns. In order to facilitate this process, the client, Ukrenergo, a state-owned company responsible for high-voltage electricity transmission in Ukraine, organised an additional meeting in Kiev on 3 April 2007. This enabled stakeholders to review the plans and to provide practical input about possible environmental and social issues associated with constructing this greenfield transmission line.

The pragmatic approach adopted by civil society stakeholders and Ukrenergo's staff proved to be highly successful and a good working relationship was established between stakeholders and the ESIA team. This resulted, among other things, in the re-routing of the line in certain locations to avoid locally sensitive habitats or cultural heritage areas, as well as explaining in detail the planned compensation plan. The ESIA document was subsequently disclosed and a public consultation was conducted in late July 2007.

The ESIA and public consultation process was viewed as highly successful by civil society groups. It was one of the first to be undertaken on such a level in Ukraine and it has set a precedent for stakeholder engagement and undertaking meaningful public consultation in future projects.