

Examination of the KOICA Support Plan for Ukraine through the Lens of Post-war Reconstruction Experience

The ongoing war in Ukraine, initiated by the Russian invasion, has been causing significant human and material damage. The "Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA) report, joint-published by the World Bank, the Government of Ukraine, the European Union, and the United Nations, estimates post-war recovery costs at \$486 billion as of December 2023. The protracted conflict continues to further inflate reconstruction costs, with prospects for peace or negotiations appearing remote. Nevertheless, The Government of Ukraine and the international community have established various platforms for dialogue and coordination and have been continuing discussions on reconstruction since the onset of the war. When the reconstruction of Ukraine begins in earnest, substantial international funding will be directed towards rebuilding projects. It is evident that the Republic of Korea will be a key stakeholder in such initiatives, and Therefore, this paper examines previous post-war reconstruction efforts to identify relevant lessons for the forthcoming task in Ukraine. It also analyzes the support strategies of other donor countries and agencies, and proposes a framework for KOICA's future undertakings regarding support for Ukraine.

Examining previous post-war reconstruction initiatives led to the identification of ten key action areas: strengthening defense and security sectors; Enhancing government operational capacity and accountability; promoting private sector investment in reconstruction; harnessing human capital and restoring the education system; reintegrating refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs); engaging local and civil society in the reconstruction process; increasing the participation of women and girls; implementing integrated approaches and sustainable funding mechanisms; foregrounding multilateral coordination frameworks for decision-making around reconstruction and political issues; ensuring detailed data

collection and monitoring. Additionally, an analysis of the various agency and international support efforts in Ukraine shows that education is seen more as a humanitarian undertaking, than a key reconstruction initiatives. Their pre-war development goals remain largely unaltered, while addressing urgent development needs arising from the conflict. Furthermore, it has become evident that long-term partners, the European Union (EU) and the United States, have had a strong influence on Ukraine's development cooperation.

KOICA, having recently established its Ukraine office and commenced operations, adheres to its Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) and Country Plan (CP) for Ukraine in identifying and implementing projects however, the current situation and circumstances of the war are not yet fully reflected in these frameworks. Therefore, in accordance with the current CP direction and World Bank principles for post-war reconstruction, it is recommended that KOICA supports the strengthening of local government operational capacities in Ukraine, establishes an environment conducive to private sector investment, and aids the restoration of the education system. KOICA, recognizing its limitations as a latecomer, and so it should consider pursuing joint projects with multilateral channels or bilateral agencies. The interdependent nature of reconstruction projects demands well-coordinated initiatives that harmonize political, social, and economic considerations. Appropriate funding strategies should then be formulated accordingly.