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*Bulba Volodymyr - doctor of Science in Public Administration, Professor, Professor of the Department of Law, National Security and European Integration, Educational and Scientific Institute "Institute of Public Administration" V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University*

*ORCID: 0000-0002-5352-0574*

*Orobei Viktor - postgraduate student of the Department of Law, National Security and European Integration, Educational and Scientific Institute "Institute of Public Administration" V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University*

*ORCID: 0009-0001-9152-0188*

## **SWOT ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL AREAS OF UKRAINE BY SECTORS**

*The article is dedicated to presenting the results of SWOT analysis of the development of social infrastructure by sectors as one of the functional components of rural social infrastructure in Ukraine. The components of rural social infrastructure by sectors include education, culture, physical culture and sports, healthcare, tourism and recreation, and ecology. The SWOT analysis method in the article is presented as an effective tool for public administration and a necessary factor for the formation of an anti-crisis management program for rural social infrastructure.*

*The results of the analysis include the following:*

*Strengths: General description of the state of existing social infrastructure objects by sectors, forming an understanding of their level of provision with highly qualified personnel, the functioning of development programs, etc.*

*Weaknesses: General description of trends and problems hindering the development of social infrastructure objects by sectors.*

*Opportunities: External aspects that representatives of rural communities could use to support the state, restoration, and development of social infrastructure objects by sectors.*

*Threats: Any processes or phenomena, external limitations that obstruct the development of social infrastructure objects by sectors in rural areas.*

*Through the use of SWOT analysis, not only strengths and weaknesses inherent in the development of rural social infrastructure by sectors were identified, but also areas requiring the most attention and efforts from local authorities of territorial communities. This method allowed for identifying the most probable opportunities and risks that require the concentration of efforts by local authorities and outlining prospective directions for further development of the main components of social infrastructure by sectors in rural areas.*

**Keywords:** *public administration, strategic management, anti-crisis management, SWOT analysis method, social sphere, social infrastructure of rural areas, social infrastructure by sectors, education, culture, physical culture and sports, healthcare, tourism and recreation, ecology.*

Problem setting. In both science and practical public administration, the SWOT analysis method is increasingly being used. This method is most commonly applied in the process of strategic planning to formulate long-term goals and strategies based on an assessment of available resources and an evaluation of the opportunities and development prospects of the subject under management. The SWOT analysis method has stood the test of time and is widely used today in virtually all areas of societal activity. It is especially effective in the development of crisis management programs, which is an extremely relevant issue for modern Ukraine, as the country's infrastructure has suffered significant damage and destruction during the Russian aggression.

Crisis management in this context should serve as an ongoing targeted management

approach to identify signs of a crisis state in social infrastructure objects, respond promptly to ensure their recovery, and support and improve the quality of life of the population, including those in rural areas.

Recent research and publications analysis. Theoretical and practical aspects of the development of social infrastructure in Ukraine by social and cultural sectors are the subject of research by a significant number of Ukrainian scholars, among whom authors such as S. Bondar [1], V. Bulba [2; 3], T. Gogol [4], O. Hrynko [5], I. Kostyuk [6], O. Postupna [7-10], O. Serohina-Berestovska [11], O. Stepanko [9], M. Torpan [10], V. Tretyak [12], L. Chernenko [13], and others can be noted. The need of the hour is to conduct a comprehensive SWOT analysis of the development of social infrastructure by sectors as one of the functional components of rural social infrastructure in Ukraine to determine strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the formation of crisis management for rural development.

Paper objective is to conduct a SWOT analysis of the development of social infrastructure by sectors as an effective tool of public administration and a necessary factor for shaping a crisis management program for rural social infrastructure.

Paper main body. Social infrastructure by sectors is one of the functional components of rural social infrastructure that ensures the socio-cultural development of rural residents. The components of this block include education, culture, physical culture and sports, healthcare, tourism and recreation, and ecology. The results of the SWOT analysis of the development of rural social infrastructure by sectors include the following:

**Strengths:** A comprehensive description of the state of existing social infrastructure objects by sectors, forming an understanding of their level of provision with highly qualified personnel, the functioning of development programs, and more.

**Weaknesses:** A comprehensive description of trends and problems that hinder the development of social infrastructure objects by sectors.

**Opportunities:** External aspects that could be used by representatives of rural communities to support, restore, and develop social infrastructure objects by sectors.

**Threats:** Any processes or phenomena, external limitations that obstruct the

development of social infrastructure objects by sectors in rural areas.

Regarding the first sector of the functional block, which is education, it should be noted that this sector undergoes constant transformations initiated by the state. It is worth noting that the presence of educational institutions in a village serves as a certain deterrent to the existence of that village. However, due to the absence of state subsidies for the maintenance of educational institutions of various levels in rural settlements, a significant number of rural educational institutions have been closed over the last 10 years. This is because they are underfunded, and territorial communities lack the financial resources to maintain them.

Based on the analysis of the state of rural education, the strengths of this sector have been identified, including the presence of infrastructure for preschool and general secondary education (although not in all settlements, some have been completely or partially destroyed as a result of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, especially in border areas); the availability of teaching staff (although some teachers teach subjects outside their specialization); the operation of inclusive education groups; the operation of reference schools; work with talented youth; the organization of transportation for children to educational institutions; and the implementation of measures at the state level for residents from temporarily occupied territories who wish to receive education in Ukrainian institutions.

Weaknesses in rural education include: a decrease in the number of children in rural areas due to a demographic crisis; a low density of rural educational institutions (in some rural areas, there are no preschool institutions, and in others, there are no institutions for general secondary education); the absence of vocational education institutions in most communities (only available in some rural areas); rural areas bordering Russia are unsafe for education (constantly under fire) and have practically lost educational infrastructure facilities (a significant number of educational institutions lack shelters or are unsuitable for use); a low enrollment rate of children in rural preschool institutions; a low student-to-teacher ratio in general secondary education institutions; a low level of preparedness of graduates of general secondary education institutions; forced internal and external

migration of teaching staff, a shortage of qualified teaching personnel; not all educational institutions have central heating or their own boiler rooms, water supply, dining facilities (cafeterias) with hot meals, sports halls, etc.; not all educational institutions are connected to the Internet (making it impossible to conduct distance learning); a low level of provision of children with extracurricular education institutions; children spend a lot of time commuting to educational institutions in the absence of such institutions in their settlements; the lack of integration between businesses and vocational education; a problematic issue is access to education for individuals from temporarily occupied territories.

Possible opportunities to improve the situation in rural education may include: optimizing educational institutions to save community funds for more important projects; cooperation between educational institutions, the community, local businesses, and authorities to attract funds for the development of the material and technical base of institutions; conducting the educational process in various formats: in-person, distance, or blended, depending on the security situation and the conditions in educational institutions; conducting an information and awareness campaign for residents from temporarily occupied territories regarding the options and specifics of obtaining education in Ukrainian institutions; providing up-to-date information about the admission campaign for vocational education institutions.

At the same time, threats to the development of rural education may include phenomena and processes such as: increasing emigration - the failure of young people to return to their hometown, the outflow of young skilled professionals; the migration of graduates from Ukrainian secondary schools to foreign universities; indifference to the material and technical problems of rural educational institutions; an increase in the number of legal violations, drug addiction, and alcoholism among young people, and so on.

In the field of culture, physical education, and sports, the strengths of rural social infrastructure development can be described as follows: the presence of cultural and sports facilities (not in all settlements, some are outdated, completely or partially ruined); the

functioning of art and sports schools; the availability of professional staff; organizing exhibitions by museums, sports competitions among students; organizing and hosting concerts, theatrical performances, film screenings; the presence of creative groups that promote the community in Ukraine; support for sports development, the presence of sports teams in team sports.

At the same time, the weaknesses of culture, physical education, and sports development in the village include: a low level of meeting the cultural and recreational needs of rural residents; low provision of a network of rural cultural institutions; not all cultural institutions have central heating or their own boiler room; inadequate material and technical base of cultural and sports institutions (most require major repairs); unpopularity of cultural and sports professions, low wages, lack of a system to attract relevant personnel to the village; almost all rural libraries are not connected to the Internet and lack necessary equipment; insufficient quantity (absence) of sports grounds, publicly accessible sports facilities; insufficient quantity (absence) of clubs, youth development centers; limited opportunities for meaningful leisure and development for rural residents.

By utilizing the existing creative and sports potential of rural residents, the community can improve the situation in the field of culture and sports by organizing and conducting various festivals within the community; developing youth creative centers; creating venues with stages; establishing modern interactive museums; implementing new forms and modern technologies in library work; constructing and equipping playgrounds, sports halls, and so on. However, threats to this sector may include political instability, a lack of knowledge in promoting strengths in digital directions, and the outflow of qualified personnel to cities.

One of the important sectors in the functional block of social infrastructure in rural areas is healthcare. Its strengths can be identified in just a few aspects: the presence of outpatient clinics and paramedic-midwife stations (not in all settlements); potential for expanding the provision of medical services; positive feedback from patients and healthcare providers' knowledge of patient needs. However, when it comes to weaknesses, the list is quite extensive and includes the following: natural population decline, untimely

provision of medical services to rural residents, a high level of morbidity and injuries; lack of a system for disease prevention and early diagnosis in the population; limited access to quality healthcare services, absence of hospitals and polyclinics within the community; low availability of medical personnel (active migration of qualified professionals to cities, low doctor-to-patient ratios, most of whom are pre-retirement or retirement age); limited equipment in medical facilities; patient migration to regional centers for better quality healthcare services; absence of emergency medical services near settlements; informal patient payments; low availability (or absence) of pharmacies in rural areas; shortage of medical vehicles; varying degrees of damage to medical facilities during times of military conflict; departure of healthcare workers to safer regions of the country; absence of health centers in some settlements, and more.

Significant issues in rural healthcare provide ample opportunities for improvement, including: organizing mobile medical teams (regular visits) to settlements located far from stationary medical facilities; development of health insurance; promoting a healthy lifestyle; implementing programs to attract medical professionals to rural areas; advancing telemedicine; receiving community support in kind for medical institutions (charity); developing alternative medical services and treatments; equipping rural areas with mobile dental clinics; expanding the pharmacy network and kiosks, increasing the assortment of medical products, and more.

At the same time, there are several threats to the development of rural healthcare. These include worsening demographic conditions, declining population numbers, a rapidly aging population, increasing morbidity rates, the imbalance of healthcare reform, reductions in medical staff, intensified competition among rural (district) medical institutions for patients and personnel, heightened requirements from government authorities for medical institutions, leading to decreased funding, reduced patient income, and more. Additionally, it should be noted that medical institutions in Ukraine are essentially targets for Russian military forces and are subject to constant attacks, resulting in complete or partial destruction of these facilities. Therefore, at the state level, provisions should be made for the possibility of reconstruction/rebuilding or construction

of new, more modern medical facilities for rural residents, ideally within a reasonable distance from multiple settlements.

Lastly, but we believe it is the most promising for the development of rural areas in Ukraine, drawing from European experience, is the field of tourism, recreation, and ecology. It is essential to note that Ukraine possesses significant advantages, including favorable climatic conditions and a rich natural landscape, the absence of environmentally polluting industries and industrial facilities nearby, predominantly clean and safe environments, beautiful landscapes, rich flora and fauna, the presence of recreational and nature reserve areas and objects, museums, historical and architectural landmarks, and cultural heritage sites, affordable accommodation and dining options, the hospitality of the population, and preserved rural traditions. Consequently, there are numerous opportunities for the development of these sectors and rural areas: establishing and developing recreational-tourist zones, expanding the network of leisure establishments, fostering agrotourism, rural green tourism, ecotourism, increasing their popularity among Ukrainian citizens and abroad, devising and implementing tourist routes for dark tourism in de-occupied territories, reviving and developing authentic crafts (blacksmithing, carving, embroidery, weaving, leather and wool product manufacturing, etc.), creating a territorial brand and promotional system to enhance community competitiveness, elevating demand for tourism services in rural areas in external and internal markets, enhancing rural employment through tourism development, heightening environmental awareness among villagers and involving them in ecological initiatives (renewing forest belts, creating green zones, waste sorting, designing and executing eco-projects).

Certainly, within the field of tourism, recreation, and ecology in rural areas, as well as in Ukraine as a whole, there exist numerous problems, including inadequate maintenance and insufficient funding for the majority of historical, architectural, and cultural heritage sites, underdeveloped tourism infrastructure, lack of tourism offerings at the community level, a limited number of operational facilities within the tourism and recreational sector in rural areas, inadequate innovation in the development of tourism products, a high degree of environmental pollution due to low environmental awareness



among residents, subpar quality of accommodation facilities, practically nonexistent information about the tourism value of the community's territory, villagers' lack of foreign language proficiency, the absence of a reservation/booking system, a low level of signage for tourist attractions and routes, among other challenges. Additionally, certain threats need to be acknowledged, such as the potential decrease in service quality with the introduction of accommodation facility categorization, the absence of coordination among organizations engaged in promoting rural tourism hindering the implementation of unified strategic development goals for rural tourism, elevated rural unemployment, which provides a basis for increased crime rates, political and economic instability, and the absence of a legal framework for rural tourism development impeding rural leisure organization. Moreover, the excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides negatively impacts the environment and the well-being of the population, while community pollution (plastic waste, trash burning, etc.) poses concerns.

Nonetheless, despite the aforementioned weaknesses and threats, we still consider tourism and recreation as a prospective direction for the development of rural areas in Ukraine. Even in the midst of conflict, it is possible to develop dark tourism in de-occupied territories provided the safety of tourists is guaranteed. Such an experience is already possessed by Balkan countries, thus making it adaptable to Ukrainian practice.

Conclusions. Summarizing the points mentioned above, it should be noted that SWOT analysis enables the identification of not only the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the development of one of the functional blocks of rural social infrastructure – social infrastructure by sectors, which require the most attention and effort from the local government of territorial communities. This method also helps identify the most likely opportunities and risks that require the concentration of efforts by the local authorities and outline prospective directions for the further development of the main components of rural social infrastructure by sectors, including education, culture, physical education and sports, healthcare, tourism and recreation, and ecology.

Furthermore, the results of the SWOT analysis can serve as a shaping factor for the development of an anti-crisis management program for the preservation, restoration, and

development of social infrastructure in rural areas during the declared state of war and following the conclusion of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

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