



Advocacy in Practice Grants 2007/2008 Awarded Grants - Fact Sheet

Center for the Development of Nonprofit Sector, Belgrade

The goal of the project is to promote a transparent mechanism for allocation of state budget funds to CSOs that will contribute to the development of a state-level institution to promote and finance CSO activities. As part of EU Ascension requirements, it is recommended that Serbia tackles the problem of corruption in government and lack of transparency in budgeting. This initiative known as Line 481 is directed at clarifying the allocation of state funds for civil society activities which in 2006 were estimated at \$60 million euro. Moreover, other countries in the region such as Croatia have developed a National Foundation for Civil Society Development, and the province of Vojvodina in northern Serbia also has a similar Foundation. The process of opening up discussion on how funds from Line 481 are used is aimed at creating a mechanism such as a Fund to distribute resources in a competitive and transparent manner. Project activities will tackle this issue in a variety of ways – from establishing a team of professionals to research the legal provisions related to Line 481, to direct contact with the parliamentarians on the issue of concrete proposals and initiatives related to disbursement of funding to CSOs from the state budget. The project will cover the entire territory of the Republic of Serbia with a special focus on the municipalities of Belgrade, Novi Sad, Pirot, Knjaževac, Prokuplje, Majdanpek, Užice, Loznica and Kraljevo.

Red Cross of Serbia for HumanaS, Belgrade

The goal of this project is to ensure effective implementation of the National Strategy for Ageing at the local level. The project implemented by a consortium of organizations forming the HumanaS network¹, is designed to monitor implementation of the Strategy, as adopted by the Council for the Elderly of the Government of Serbia. As part of future integration into the EU, Serbia must comply with international standards in the provision of services to elderly persons, as well as preparation of a Social Inclusion Memorandum once Serbia becomes an EU member. As part of future compliance with EU standards, this initiative helps raise the bar for the provision of quality social services for the elderly. It also links to current Government of Serbia efforts in the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy. The project activities will work towards clarifying the legal provisions related to the roles of the stakeholders in the implementation process (central government, local self-governments, social services centers), while maintaining constant contact with local communities to raise awareness of discrimination, maltreatment and abuse of the elderly and to create plans of action accordingly. The project will look to ensure that funding for elderly services is appropriately allocated at the national and local. The project will cover the entire territory of Serbia and will benefit the representatives of

¹ HumanaS is a leading network of 14 Serbian organization working on social policy related to ageing. They form part of Help Age International.

local self governments, Social Services Centers, representatives of the civil sector and persons over the age of 65.

Protecta, Nis

The goal of this project is to develop a reform agenda for pursuing strong regional development in Serbia, as part of the country's need to become more economically competitive at the local level. The project is led by Protecta from Nis who coordinates the National Coalition for Decentralization (NCD). Some 5 priority activity areas have been identified as the first steps in this long-term initiative, which also aim to encourage citizen participation in the decentralization process. Project activities include **research** to establish the most appropriate model of decentralization, education of stakeholders (local authorities, CSOs), **advocacy** initiatives on decentralization which target state and local level decision-makers, **actions** to engage the citizens as allies and the creation of local and regional decentralization partnerships. The NCD is composed of regional centers in Nis, Uzice, Novi Pazar, Vranje and Negotin. The project will therefore have a nation-wide coverage.

Center for Democracy Foundation, Belgrade

The project aims to strengthen civil society capacity to monitor the protection of workers rights in compliance with the International Labor Organization standards and U.N. Treaty on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as defined by the EU-adopted standard ISO 18001-OHSAS. The problem of workers rights in Serbia is a real one since, according to the 2006 statistics, 54 persons died at their workplace, while some 26,000 sustained major or minor injuries. As Serbia continues its privatization efforts and push towards EU Ascension, more pressure mounts for quick growth and expansion. During these transition periods, it is important to ensure that workers rights are equally safeguarded. Project activities are geared towards advocating for changes of policy and legislation with regards to workers and lobbying businesses to make protection of workers rights a standard practice . The project ultimately aims to establish a CSO network which will become the advocacy proponent for workers. The project will be implemented in the cities of Belgrade, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Paracin, Krusevac, Uzice, Nis, Novi Sad, Zrenjanin, and Subotica.

Belgrade Open School, Belgrade

This project aims to propose and harmonize relevant legislation in the area of vocational education and training. The project seeks to ensure greater participation of CSOs and other stakeholders in the process of vocational education and training reform in Serbia through institutional development. Through an advocacy initiative to establish the National Council for Vocational Education as a permanent and active institution of social dialogue for relevant stakeholders in the spheres of vocational education, training, and employment, the project will ultimately establish a process to design an appropriate educational curriculum and develop mobile human capital adjustable to the changing circumstances in Serbian society in the forthcoming EU integration process. The result of this initiative will be the creation of a flexible system of basic and continuing vocational education. The project will have a nationwide impact.

Center for Liberal Democratic Studies, Belgrade

The focus of this project is to encourage decentralization of the social welfare system in Serbia as provided by the Social System Reform Strategy developed by the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Policy of the Republic of Serbia, which is another reform initiative towards the harmonization of Serbia's legislation with EU standards. The project addresses the need to encourage and assist local governments in providing public services to vulnerable groups (elderly, disabled, children and the homeless). The project further seeks to include CSOs in the process of provision of such services thus, together with effective local government providers, increasing their quality and efficiency. The ultimate output of the project is to assist the local governments in Serbia in designing of a homecare system for the elderly and disabled, daycare center services, and shelters for the homeless. The project has nationwide coverage and will involve advocacy for and replication of an appropriate model of care, which will help local governments to fulfill their mandate, CSOs to become quality service providers and the beneficiaries to receive services they are entitled to.

Felicitas, Belgrade

The aim of this project is to build a network of first-generation organizations that deal with the problem of workplace harassment known also as *mobbing* in Serbia. The long-term goal of the project is to change the Labor Law articles to ensure protection from all forms of workplace harassment. The short term goal of the project is to build capacities and support for first-generation local CSOs to advocate for victims of mobbing in Serbia in the course of 2008 through public education, and training of relevant stakeholders with an emphasis on education and involvement of the mobbing victims themselves. Project activities will be conducted in the cities and towns of Belgrade, Uzice, Bor, Ada, Krusevac, Pirot and Lebane. Direct beneficiaries of the project are 120 representatives of local CSOs, workers, Trade Unions, local institutions, media and the business sector.

People's Parliament, Leskovac

The goal of this project is to develop a model Law on Classification of Information, amend the existing model Law on Protection of Personal Information and propose an improved model Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance. A major petition drive will be held on the International Right to Know Day to collect the necessary 90 thousand signatures to get these model Laws on the Parliament agenda. As such, the project will further launch an advocacy initiative in the Serbian Parliament for these laws to be adopted and enforced. The issue of free access to information is complex and progress has been made in improving responses to request thanks in large measure to the work of the Public Commissioner on Free Access to Information. Efforts will be coordinated with ABA/CEELI's recent FOIA assessment. The project has nationwide coverage with five regional project sites in Belgrade, Kraljevo, Negotin, Pozega and Leskovac. The project is implemented in close co-operation with the Commissioner for Public Information, a consortium of local organizations who form a part of the Coalition for Free Access to Information, and a regional organization Youth Initiative for Human Rights.

Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia, Belgrade

The project aims to promote legal and regulatory reform of the media sector in Serbia and facilitate more constructive and open information exchanges between CSOs and media. The project brings together as a consortium three of the major media institutions in Serbia – IJAS, ANEM and Local Press. They have come together to define an advocacy strategy for media reform and serve as a pressure group for amendments to the Advertising Act to allow for preferential treatment of promotion of CSO not-for-profit activities via the commercial broadcast media and further restrict commercial advertising on the public service broadcasters.

Through the networks of NUNS-IJAS trustees and partner organizations, the project will have nationwide coverage. It is estimated that some 8000 journalists working in Serbia, other media organizations, CSOs, and government institutions will benefit from the project.

Center for Development of Civil Society, Zrenjanin

This project focuses on reducing the scope of religious discrimination and supporting a higher degree of inter-religious tolerance through an amendment to the national Law on Churches and Religious Communities. The project will result in an improved legislative framework for the protection of small religious communities, increased capacities of relevant state and regional administrative bodies and a broadened social awareness of religious and cultural diversity. The project will benefit members of small religious communities nationwide, as well as the administration and the judiciary of the Republic of Serbia, which will ultimately set the conditions for an equal treatment of all religious communities in Serbia in line with the EU standards.

Center for Civil-Military Relations, Belgrade

This project will increase the participation of CSOs and citizens in the policymaking process on the national and local security in Serbia while raising awareness of the importance of the security sector reform and Serbia's integration into the Euro-Atlantic security community. This is particularly important as Serbia has been admitted into the NATO Partnership for Peace. The project will also facilitate communication and partnerships between civil society on the one hand and decision makers, professionals and experts from relevant institutions (government and military bodies), on the other hand. Project activities will identify challenges, initiate public debate, and create an organized network of national and local CSOs as well as individual experts specialized in security issues to act as a pressure and advocacy group for oversight of the security sector reform as well as to educate the stakeholders in the process. The project will be implemented country-wide, with 10 municipalities representing 10 different regions of Serbia.

Autonomous Women's Center, Belgrade

This project aims to increase the impact of women's CSOs on the public policy in the field of violence against women and domestic violence, which is still an issue in Serbia despite the ongoing democratic reform. The project objective is to further advocate for harmonization of domestic policies with EU and international legislation, introduction of participatory principles

of planning, implementation of policies on violence against women, and increasing public awareness of women's rights. Key project activities are campaigning on the national level, policy analysis and research, lobbying with government agencies, sensitizing the media on the issue, and building internal advocacy capacity of the AWC. The project will have nationwide coverage.

Center for Regionalism, Novi Sad

This project will advocate for establishment of the Decentralization Initiative of Cities and CSOs in Serbia and propose a plan for joint activities focused on citizens and the central government, to propose amending of the Serbian Constitution and relevant laws pertaining to decentralization. An expert team will compare the relevant decentralization provisions of the present Constitution with earlier draft Constitution proposals, platforms of political parties and pre-election proposals for decentralization, as well as with the European standards, while focusing on the economic aspects of decentralization from the perspective of Serbia's accession to the EU. Expert analysis will also produce a concrete set of recommendations and proposals to the relevant institutions on the municipal and national level for changes to certain constitutional and legislative solutions. The effort will culminate in a proposal for constitutional and legislative amendments, which will be submitted to the Serbian Parliament. The project will have nationwide coverage.

ProConcept, Belgrade

This project will publicly promote citizen self-organizing and citizen initiatives as an effective way to improve the quality of citizens' lives. The project output is a documentary television series titled "Will it succeed?" The TV program will take viewers through the process of citizen organizing and group struggles to resolve concrete issues that citizens face in their everyday lives. The plot of the documentary will show citizens gathering around and working towards a common goal while facing the challenges of self-organizing and advocating for a cause. This project is designed to tackle the issue of the negative perception of CSOs in the eyes of the Serbian citizens, and motivate them to support and participate in CSO activities. Six episodes will be broadcast over a three-month period and will focus on five citizen initiatives in five Serbian towns. The TV series will be aired prime time on a major national TV station as well as through a network of local TV outlets, and will as such have a nationwide coverage.