



თავის განვითარების პროგრამის საქმიანობის ანგარიში

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თავის
განვითარება

Community Development Program

CSRDG has been working on community development since 1998. Our main activities include forming and strengthening civic activism in the regions. We believe, that formation of civil society, in its turn, is the best way to better execute the potential and effectively solve problems at the local level.

The program is directed at identification of opportunities, and institutional development of women and youth in the regions. It is important that local population has improved access to available resources, can effectively protect its interests, and is ready to cooperate with the local government and other civil society actors.

Community Development Program offers two types of services to CBOs and groups – information-education, and financial support. These two directions complement each other and make our approach unique.

Information and Education Support

Program operates nation-wide, and more targeted with the Network of community groups and organizations established within various projects in previous years. In both cases the Program proposes different educational opportunities.

CSRDG has been regularly providing numerous necessary information to community groups and organizations, and supporting information and experience sharing between them through Community Development Recourse Center, established by CSRDG in 2011. Community Talks, and annual Community Leaders' Forum can be listed under organization's distinguished events.

As for the work with already functioning CBO network, the education component is far more intensive and is linked to needs and interests of the particular community groups or organization. It covers trainings, seminars, workshop, exchange study visits and the entire cycle of consultations.

During 2020, Program actively worked with 47 community groups and organizations utilizing different approaches. Out of those, the most intensively CSRDG worked with the network comprising of 28 community groups, which operate in the following regions: 18 CBOs in Kakheti, 8 in Samegrelo, 1 in Guria and 1 in Kvemo Kartli.

Trainings and Seminars

During the year, overall, we conducted 30 educational events, seminars, trainings and workshops. Topics of trainings and meeting were derived from the needs and interests of these groups. Therefore, the topics are diverse, such as financial management, writing and managing business projects, communication management and marketing, as well as local community development initiatives, adolescents and emotional intelligence, bullying, stress management. More than 300 individuals attended trainings and seminars during the year.

Community and Environment

As mentioned earlier, we paid special attention to forming and strengthening of youth community groups. Our support considered technical, informational as well as financial support. In recent years, environmental component was added to the Program. It considers cooperation and development of eco-clubs operating in the target regions, as well as promotion of environmental issues.

In 2019-2000 years, in 50 target communities of 11 municipalities of three regions, CSRDG conducted cycles of trainings for eco-clubs' members on waste management, environmental social entrepreneurship, and proposal writing.

Following trainings and educational seminars, CBOs and eco-clubs jointly implemented 17 pilot environmental projects in partnership with local residents and local authorities.

At the same time, a survey on waste management problems in the target regions was performed; conclusions and recommendations were elaborated. We presented the information regarding the existing problems to relevant national and local authorities.

CSRDG facilitated 3 stakeholder dialogues and 6 information meetings with representatives of relevant local authorities regarding waste management and global warming issues. In addition, one educational eco-camp was organized (approx. 60 participants) and [Electronic Textbook on Global Warming](#) was elaborated (information regarding the publication can be found below, or follow the link).

Community talks

In order to improve the cooperation between community groups and organizations, and to coordinate information sharing and various activities, periodically CSRDG hosts workshops to summarize past activities, share information and experience. It also organizes exchange visits between target regions as well as study visits to experienced CBOs in various parts of Georgia. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, these types of events moved online.

It is notably the existing situation that laid the foundation for online meetings regarding the stories of interesting women. Later these online meetings transferred to the regular cycle of **“Community Talks”**. The main goal of the meetings is to enable residents of regions (not only representatives of CBO and initiative groups) to meet with fascinating people, pose interesting questions and receive additional information about various issues.

The regular talks became popular and more and more people express their desire to attend them. CSRDG decided to brand the meeting cycle and restrict the topics and the number of attendees.

The information regarding the events is disseminated through CSRDG's Facebook Community Development Resource Center's close group, as well as mailing list of regional organizations,

community centers and initiative groups that CSRDG possesses, and through local partners. The topic of the meetings is tailored to needs and interests of participants / attendees, for which we conduct mini-polls within the closed group. In 2020, 3 such meetings were held online. Overall, more than 100 individuals from different parts of Georgia attended the meetings.

Community Leaders' Forum 2020

Community Leaders' Forum is one of the most prominent events, which has been organized by CSRDG since 2016 in partnership with and for CBOs, community leaders and initiatives groups.

The topics of the event change from year to year according to the requirements, needs and desires of the community organizations at that moment. This year Community Leaders Forum was held online on November 25-27.

In response to the challenges in the country, at the event we paid special attention to civic activism and the role of solidarity in crisis times, along with presenting outstanding community initiatives and discussing themes attractive for the target groups.

The objective of the Community Leaders' Forum is popularization of CBOs, strengthening bonds between communities, sharing best practices between regions and most importantly, providing information to community leaders and civic activists on topical issues.

At the Community Leaders' Forum, the results of the Community Development Program 2017-200 were summarized. Forum speakers discussed distinguished projects that positively affected particular individuals as well as vulnerable groups. The second day of the Forum was dedicated to the implemented community projects in line with Covid-19. Beyond just the numbers, Forum participants familiarized themselves with human stories, specific facts, and tangible results. And on the third day of the Forum, a presentation of the intermediary results of the first in-depth CBO mapping study in Georgia was held.

During three days, 130 participants attended the Forum. The event was organized by CSRDG, and conducted within EU and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung funded project "Civil Society Sustainability Initiative".

Financial Support

Similar to educational support, Program employs different approaches in providing financial support to CBOs and initiative groups across the country, and within the network of target community groups and organizations.

In addition to closed grant competitions to address local issues, CSRDG also offers small financial support for ongoing activities to the latter. Such an assistance considers intensive

educational events described earlier, which strengthen the groups and support implementation of project activities, as well as aids individual development of community leaders.

The ongoing activities are backed-up with small financial support, which is tailored to community needs and are utilized accordingly. During the year, we prepared action plans for 26 CBOs, conducted 11 workshops, held online consultations. Due to the pandemic, restrictions and quarantine, the elaborated action plans could not be fully implemented. However, community groups managed to amend action plans and spread the activities over the year. During the reporting period, community groups organized 223 events, which were attended by up to 7,000 individuals. Overall, 25 project were financed with the amount totaling GEL 70,029.

One of the main objectives of CBOs and groups is solving local problems. Therefore, at the end of the year each community group presents several most topical issues to the local authorities to reflect relevant funds in the following year's budget. By the end of 2020, out of 111 presented problems, 29 issues / recommendations were considered by LA. The majority of the issues related to rehabilitation of infrastructure, such as internal roads, water supply systems, kindergartens, squares and stadiums, as well as waste management issues.

Closed grant competitions

Program activities related to the Network of target community groups is accompanied by the closed micro-grant program, which is announced once or twice a year for target CBOs and groups, and are aimed at strengthening them.

During the year two closed grant competitions for CBOs were announced. Each competition has a different topic:

1. Grant competition for target community groups and CBOs was announced in January 2020 within BFW-funded program and UNDP-funded project "Women Empowerment for Change". Overall, 12 applications were submitted. Based on the decision made by the Grant Review Committee, 8 projects were funded. The significant part of the competition is engaging local community, local businesses and local authorities in the processes. This stimulates cooperation between community groups, local authorities, civil sector and local businesses. Derived from the approaches of the Program implementation, resource mobilization represents a crucial component. The co-founding agency of this micro-grant competition along with CSRDG is [Constanta Foundation](#).

The total budget of the 8 projects financed within the closed grant competition is GEL 101,379, out of which CSRDG awarded GEL 74,527 in grants, and GEL 24,940 was the contribution from the community, and GEL 1,912 was other contributions raised by the community.

1. Closed grant competition represents the significant element in strengthening the environmental component of the Program. It gives CBOs and eco-clubs the opportunity to plan and implement joint projects. Properly conducted educational activities were followed by the introduction of alternative recycling methods and practices of organic household waste to eliminate release of organic pollutants in the air as a result of open burning. Four projects were funded in Guria, Samegrelo and Kakheti in the grant competition announced within the project:

- Guria, Ozurgeti municipality, Jumati community, eco-club “Ecosanitar” – Project: “Solar energy to save the planet”;
- Guria, Ozurgeti municipality, Meria community, Center “Imedi” – Project: “Supporting development of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency”;
- Samegrelo, Khobi municipality, Village Torsa, Community Center “Toliskuri”, Project: “Warm Hearth”;
- Kakheti, Telavi municipality, Village Kvemo Khodasheni, Women’s initiative group, Project: “New life – from the Sun to the Earth”.

The overall budget of the 4 financed environmental projects is GEL 27,282, out of which CSRDG awarded GEL 18,625, contribution from the community was GEL 1,700, and GEL 3,328 was other contribution raised by the community.

In relation to the Pandemic-induced situation, Community Development Recourse Center announced an open grant competition throughout the country for community initiatives to mitigate Covid-19 related crisis. The objective of the competition was demonstrating civic solidarity and supporting vulnerable groups affected by Covid-19 crisis. **Three projects were funded under this call:**

- Guria Mediators’ Association, project: „Challenges empower us“;
- Community Social-Economic Development Association “Imereti”, project: “You are not alone”;
- Youth Council, project: “Support of the vulnerable groups affected by the Pandemic in the city of Poti”

Within the financed project, 177 individuals representing **8 communities and 1 city (Poti) from three municipalities** received assistance.

All three project paid special attention to the following groups: lonely elderly, PDWs, unemployed individuals due to pandemic, and those affected by the bank policies.

The overall budget of these three projects was GEL 34,378, out of which CSRDG awarded GEL 23,953, and GEL 10,425 was raised by the community groups from other sources.

Covid-19 pandemic and response

In 2020, along with the mobilization of internal resources, the search for significant external resources has become important. The first period of pandemic was extremely difficult, the population was not prepared to it. Regions, especially villages had the worst situation. With suspension of the municipal transport services, the large part of the population was left without access to regional center, medical services, grocery stores, etc. During this period Community Development Program raised additional financial resources and implemented three projects in partnership with existing CBOs and initiative groups. The projects were aimed at reducing the negative impact caused by the pandemic in the regions.

Project Unity and Solidarity against Covid-19 was implemented by CSRDG in two stages. Project was financed by the Open Society Georgia Foundation. The target areas – Kakheti, Shida Kartli, Kvemo Kartli, Samegrelo and Guria.

Within the project, existing CBOs and initiative groups were mobilized and the network of volunteers was established. In the beginning, for safety reasons, a group of more than 70 volunteers was trained and instructed.

Within the project, overall, up to 600 families received primary necessities, food, social assistance package as well as computer equipment necessary for learning. The project targeted vulnerable groups, such as elderly, lonely mothers, large families, etc.

Project Community Initiatives in response to Covid-19. The project was initiated due to the difficult social and economic situation caused by the pandemic, and it was built as a complementary component to CSRDG's ongoing project "Empowering Women for Change". The project covered 27 communities of 11 municipalities in the target regions - Kakheti, Samegrelo and Guria.

In the project target regions, a survey on [Social and Economic Impact of Covid-19](#) was conducted (the information regarding the survey can be found below or follow the link), which

revealed general social problems, as well as areas of small businesses to exist in the community and further develop.

Considering survey results, women-initiated small business projects were financed, and a training cycle was held. The grant amounts awarded within the project, supported development of small family businesses in the regions, which despite the size, represent the significant source of income for these families.

After announcing the competition, 31 business ideas were financed, the overall granted amount was GEL 78,632. 4 family businesses were financed in Guria, 19 in Kakheti and 8 in Samegrelo.

Among the funded projects, there are many bakery and food outlets, beauty salons, sewing workshops, and coffee corners. CSRDG also financed modern agricultural seeding-machine rental services, an open store for fruits and vegetables, a family dry-fruit production, hazelnut chipping service necessary for hazelnut farm, and a resource center of agricultural tools.

Publications elaborated within Community Development Program:

Electronic Textbook on Global Warming

Electronic textbook was elaborated for the CBOs and eco-clubs' members engaged in the project. The textbook provides the information regarding climate change, its causes, framework convention and related international agreements, modern challenges related to the climate change, utilization mechanisms of alternative energy resources, and rapid and effective dissemination of information to the local population.

Feasibility Study for Community Foundation Start-up in Georgia

One of the objectives of the Community Development Program is support to establishing and developing Community Foundation on sites. The purpose of the present study is to identify those opportunities and challenges that affect fundamental development of Community Foundations in Georgia, particularly in two selected locations. The study report comprises of desk research, as well as field or qualitative research results. Since 2020, Community Development Program actively support the popularization of Community Foundation's concept and establishing Community Foundations in the target regions. In this direction, CSRDG is a member of an international network European Community Foundations Initiative (ECFI), which promotes the Community Foundations movement in **Europe**.

Survey of Community Based Organizations operating in Georgia in 2019-2000

The survey covers the description of community groups operating in Georgia in 2019-2000. Profiles of these groups were examined between October 2019 and November 2020, by Ms. Ana Margvelashvili, Researcher of a Community Development Center. The survey was financed by CSRDG and Open Society Georgia Foundation (OSGF).

The main focus of the survey was to study the community groups operating at the village or small settlement levels, examine their organizational structure, work environment and the obstacles that community groups and organizations have to overcome in their daily activities. According to the survey, there are about 120 such groups in Georgia today.

Social and Economic Impact of Covid-19 on target communities of Kakheti, Samegrelo and Guria

The research was held within the project “Community Initiatives in response to Covid-19”, financed by the UNDP. The goals of the project was empowerment of regional population, specifically women’s economic empowerment and support establishment of small family business initiatives.

The objective of the research was primary assessment of Covid-19 social and economic impact in Kakheti, Samegrelo and Guria regions (11 municipalities, 27 communities). The research report was elaborated based on interviews with residents of target communities (1310 respondents/households, 3579 family members) and focus group discussions. The research was performed in June-September, 2020.

Development of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Within its CSO Development Program, CSRDG supports Georgian civil society sector by building its capacity, raising awareness and increasing public perception about it. We started the Program in 1998.

To achieve Program goals, we continuously offer CSOs tailored technical support, which enables them to improve organizational management systems, offer quality services to target audiences, and most importantly, ensure organizations’ financial and institutional sustainability.

Program Activities

Ongoing projects under the Program were focused on the development of local civil society organizations and their capacity building. In order to address four main Georgian civil society sector challenges, since January 2017, a Consortium led by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) in partnership with the Center for Strategic Research and Development (CSRDG) and three Georgian CSOs has been implementing the EU-funded project “Civil Society Sustainability Initiative”. The goal of the project is to strengthen civil society and improve enabling environment in Georgia.

The overall objective of the project is to enhance the sustainability of civil society in Georgia with an improved operational environment, empowered CSOs, increased accountability of CSOs