



## GPKT Phase II – Civil Society Capacity Building Report No. 5

### Local NGOs commence work on third round of GPKT Cross-border Micro-grants

In early February 2007 EWI launched the third round of GPKT cross-border micro-grants, a grant programme which aims to further develop and strengthen cross-border cooperation and capacity-building for such co-operation among civil society from across the GPKT micro-region.

The Call for Proposals was advertised in the press, including *Koha Ditore* in Kosovo, *Vranjske Novine* in Serbia, *Dnevnik* and *Fakti* in Macedonia, and also on the GPKT website, inviting all interested civil society organisations to submit applications in the formats provided and in line with EWI's criteria. Key requirements of the criteria were that all project applications should have GPKT communities as target beneficiaries and that applicants had to be partnerships of civil society organisations, with at least one cross-border partner.



Based on feedback from the previous rounds of grants, which included recommendations that EWI provide more specified support for inexperienced civil society groups or young NGOs, in this round of micro-grants, EWI designed and implemented a dual-level programme. While 'Level 1' grants operated in a similar manner to previous rounds, newer and less experienced organisations had the option to apply to 'Level 2', and benefit from a simplified application form and higher chances for funding due to reduced competition from the more experienced NGOs.

Feedback from previous rounds had also included comments on the need for networking tools and resources, and was the basis on which EWI produced the *GPKT NGO & Donor Directory*, launched at a large networking event, the GPKT NGO Fair in December 2006. These two initiatives provided local organisations with the chance to identify and contact potential partners in advance of the Call for Proposals for GPKT micro-grants.

The deadline for the submission of applications was 15 March 2007, and the range of applications submitted included various project profiles, including youth, education, media, ecology, business and other social issues. In total, 25 applications were received, 19 applications for Level 1 funding, and six for Level 2. The selection process was designed to provide an effective and transparent selection of proposals. Applications were reviewed in three stages. Firstly, internally by EWI staff for technical clearance (checking the application met the criteria and included requisite documentation). The second and third stages involved the use of three criteria for which reviewers gave number scores: the quality of the proposed project; the development value of the project; and, the organisational capacity of applicants to implement the proposed activities.



The second review stage was conducted by a mixture of EWI staff from the GPKT team and other projects, who gave the applications their first scores. Based on these scores, a short-list was identified and a review board composed of external, non-EWI representatives from international organisations working in the GPKT micro-region provided the final scores that determined which projects received funding. Staff from the OSCE, UNDP and the German NGO HELP kindly gave their time to assist with the review.

The results of the selection process were announced on 20 April 2007: in total seven applications were selected for funding, five to be funded under Level 1 and two under Level 2 criteria. The selected projects cover various different areas of activity, including youth and cultural exchange activities and performances, local business capacity building on European Union standards, research on school democracy and structures, advocacy and awareness raising on corruption along the borders, and capacity building on proposal development and project management for newly formed NGOs.



Following the completion of administrative and background checks, three days of contract signing were held in the EWI Gjilan/Gnjilane office on 7<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2007. EWI will, as in previous rounds of grants, be providing for external Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) during the implementation of the projects. A core aim of the grant programme is capacity building, and the M&E process is designed to help NGOs learn from the experience of undertaking these projects. For Level 2 projects, there will be a higher level of engagement and 'mentoring' in addition to M&E.

*The projects will be ongoing from May to October 2007 if you are interested in any further information on the initiatives funded, please contact Mr Hyzri Halimi, the Grants Administrator on the GPKT team, [hhalimi@ewi.info](mailto:hhalimi@ewi.info).*