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ACTIVITY BRIEF

The Bulgaria Fund

Clean Slate



In July 2008, the Bulgaria Fund awarded a grant to the Broadcast Training Center ProMedia Foundation (BTCPMF) to continue its popular television program *Na Chisto* (Clean Slate) that deals with corruption in public administration.

BTCPMF has produced 20 shows of *Na Chisto*, capturing a prime time market share of 30% or 1 million viewers. The shows have uncovered cases of corruption in both local and national administration, and have led to disciplinary procedures being launched against a prosecutor at the Sofia's Prosecutor General's Office.

Partners:

USAID, The German Marshall Fund of the United States

Geographic Targets:

Bulgaria

Project Duration:

2007-2010

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Updated: 9/18/2009

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Overview

The Bulgaria Fund is a 3-year, \$3-million grant-making initiative of USAID and the German Marshall Fund (GMF). Created in 2007, the Fund continues the USAID reform agenda in Bulgaria and provides financial assistance to initiatives that aim to accomplish one of the following objectives:

- (1) Advance the rule of law and local/national judicial and government reform;
- (2) Ensure economic opportunities and social integration for vulnerable groups; and
- (3) Generate a more competitive labor force and labor market through practical, technical, and advanced training programs and career development services.

The Bulgaria Fund is managed by GMF's Belgrade-based Balkan Trust for Democracy (BTD) and awards small to medium sized grants (ranging typically from \$15,000 to \$75,000) to organizations implementing programs based in Bulgaria. Only indigenous and Bulgaria-based international organizations are eligible for funding. In addition, the Bulgaria Fund supports programs that have a regional or international focus, creating linkages between Bulgarian government officials, business professionals, as well as organizations and their foreign country counterparts to exchange best-practices, expand local economic opportunities, and help develop sustainable partnerships for future coordination efforts.

Core Interventions

- (1) Giving grants to local and national organizations working to prepare and advocate for continued administrative and judicial reform, monitor government performance, and provide assistance in the fight against corruption and organized crime;
- (2) Supporting integration and tolerance of vulnerable groups through legal advocacy, political capacity-building, public awareness, and networking; and,
- (3) Strengthening the competitiveness of the Bulgarian economy and labor force through practical, technical, and advanced training programs, career development services, and improvement of government business environment.

Background

USAID's program, beginning in 1991 and ending in 2008, helped Bulgaria make significant progress in a number of different areas such as reforming its judicial system, increasing transparency in local and national government, the provision of public services to its citizens, and enhancing economic opportunities as a whole. However, as the USAID assistance program was coming to an end, several key areas of the USAID reform agenda remained incomplete. The Bulgaria Fund was established as a legacy funding mechanism to provide targeted grants to NGOs, civil society organizations, and other groups that continue to work in areas which demonstrate the sustained impact of USAID efforts in the country.

Activity Results

Since 2007, The Bulgaria Fund had invested over \$2.4 million in 48 projects. Priority was given to Good Governance over Vulnerable Groups and Competitiveness projects, since many of the former cover aspects of the latter two. The allocation of funding amounts to various program areas is shown in the chart.

