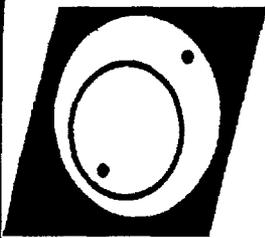


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ZAGREB
Delphi International

Strategies, Training and Advocacy for Reconciliation Project (STAR)

Final Report
October 6, 1994-December 31, 1998

Croatia
Grant No. 160-0032-G-SS-7108-00

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FINAL REPORT
Strategies, Training and Advocacy for Reconciliation
The STAR Project of Delphi International

October 6, 1994-December 31, 1998

Croatia Grant No 160-0032-G-SS-7108-00
(Formerly Cooperative Agreement, No EUR-0016-A-00-4070-00)

This report will serve as a final overview of the accomplishments and lessons learned from the STAR Project of Delphi International in Croatia over four years. It will focus on the accomplishments of the fourth and final year, but will view these in the context of earlier goals, activities, achievements and challenges.

STAR PROJECT
STATISTICAL SUMMARY
CROATIA 1994-98

32 Croatian NGOs assisted overall

Subgrants

USAID funds 33 subgrants made to 25 NGOs (and NGO network), total amount \$ 385,000
Private funds 7 grants to 7 groups totaling \$105,000
Grand total in subgrants \$490,000
All subgrantees matched grants with 25-50% cost-share

Training

11 trainers trained, 5 in organizational development
6 in public policy advocacy

3 workbooks published (Advocacy, Funding Guide, Email)

Total number of trainings conducted 82

Total number of people trained 400

Advocacy 23 NGOs trained

Media 18 NGOs trained

Organizational development/leadership 22 NGOs trained

Evaluation/reporting 13 NGOs trained

Conflict resolution 11 NGOs trained

Email 11 computers donated, 16 NGOs trained

NGO self-financing 9 NGOs trained

Microenterprise 150 women entrepreneurs trained by Profosa

Fundraising 18 NGOs trained

Linkages

STAR regional conferences 2 (200 participants)

Croatia advisory board 17 women NGO leaders took part

Exchanges 10 Croatian women visited individual NGOs in YSS,

40 Croatian women participated in 5 conferences in YSS

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE STAR PROJECT

The most important accomplishments of STAR were the overall strengthening of women's NGOs in Croatia. Towards this end, the STAR Project

- Assisted Croatian women's NGOs to make the transition from war-related mission and program (refugee support, trauma counseling, interethnic reconciliation) to post-war mission and goals (service and advocacy on behalf of women in the local community)
- Strengthened the Croatian women's NGO network
- Developed sustainable local Training Teams in Organizational Development and Advocacy
- Published the Public Policy Advocacy workbook, International Funding Guide, and Email workbook
- Supported increased capacity and sustainability of individual NGOs, especially those outside of Zagreb, by providing training, technical assistance and grants
- Increased emphasis on and capacity for citizen advocacy in the post-war period, including use of the media to reach the public and improve the image of NGOs
- Strengthened regional links among women's NGOs in the Yugoslav Successor States
- Provided NGO leaders the experience of serving on a consultative advisory board

Areas that need further attention by NGO development programs include

- Fostering links between NGOs, local government and local businesses
- Improving the legal environment for NGOs in Croatia, which will also facilitate tax-exempt donations and thereby decrease dependency of local NGOs on international donors
- Improving links and coalitions among NGOs from various sectors

BACKGROUND

The STAR Project was originally funded in 1994 as part of Project 16 on Humanitarian and Trauma Assistance. STAR was conceived as a mechanism during wartime to assist local women's NGOs to sustain themselves and prepare themselves for a post-war social change mission. From the beginning, STAR was unusual in a number of ways

- The project was created and led by women's NGO advocates from the U.S. rather than by PVO development professionals. Thus a level of understanding and common purpose as part of a global women's movement was built in from the start
- Prior relationships existed between the Delphi Regional Director and local partner NGOs. Again, this gave the project a programmatic "jumpstart". In addition, the regional co-director's language fluency and knowledge of the region facilitated effective selection criteria for local partner NGOs and subgrantees ("non-nationalistic, advocacy-oriented women's NGOs and women leaders")

WHY WOMEN?

The STAR Project focused on women's NGOs and women leaders because it felt that women were most ready to cross ethnic and national borders to make peace, reconciliation and social change. This was not due to women possessing an essentially more gentle nature, but due to women's relative exclusion from power whether military, political, economic or social.

In 1999 in Croatia, there is a sense that women's NGOs are among the strongest in the sector. The STAR Project contributed by strengthening women's NGOs and to building a Croatian women's NGO network. Other reasons Croatian women's NGOs are strong include

- the need to work within the third sector because access to government and business power is limited

- increasing socio-economic inequality in Croatia, which makes women especially impoverished and underemployed
- Croatian government and church policies that promote demographic and reproductive policies unfavorable to women

Methodology Partnership and Participation

The STAR Project used a needs-driven approach to programming. Programs were planned based on recommendations from STAR's Croatian advisory board, coupled with ongoing needs assessments and evaluations of programs by NGO participants. Rather than "create" new NGOs, the STAR Project supported the development of existing organizations. By providing technical assistance and grant funding for a wide variety of projects, STAR's assistance to women's NGOs did not direct the local partners' activities nor load on additional projects that were "ours," but rather tried to strengthen the NGO as a whole according to its own needs and the needs of the community in which it worked. All of the above led to a high degree of participant satisfaction with STAR activities.

Exit Strategy and Legacy

The STAR Project's exit strategy was to strengthen capacity of existing women's NGOs to support one another and to work jointly to advocate for women's rights and social justice in Croatia and the YSS. This was successfully accomplished by investing in smaller NGOs outside of Zagreb, by assisting in the development of a well-organized and democratically coordinated Croatian women's NGO network, and by training resource women/training teams in advocacy and organizational development.

No single NGO was a "successor" to STAR, nor was that the intent of the project.

EVOLUTION OF STAR PROJECT STRATEGY

The project's mission and goals (intermediate results) were reformulated during its third year due to a reassessment of STAR Project direction in light of the post-war situation in Croatia. Previous mission and goals focused more on inter-ethnic reconciliation in the YSS, conflict resolution, work with refugees. As the Washington, Dayton and Erdut accords gradually moved Croatia to a post-war situation, the mission of the STAR Project shifted, as did the missions of its local partner NGOs. Post-war activity focused externally on public work in communities to advance women's rights, social justice and civil society. Internally, activities focused on long-term organizational and financial survival strategies for NGOs.

In addition, the STAR Project's original emphasis in Croatia on supporting income-generating projects as a means to NGO sustainability was replaced with a focus on training and technical assistance on resource mobilization through proposal development, strategic planning, and fundraising from local business and government sponsors. Lack of success with income-generation project development in years 2 and 3 was due to the legal environment limiting the ability of NGOs to generate income, but even more to the lack of NGO capacity to engage in income-generating activities.

The STAR Project in Croatia succeeded over time to increase the transparency of its program processes. The publication of the International Funding Resource Guide opened up access to funders, whose contact information had previously been treated by local NGOs as top-secret. The last round of STAR grantmaking used an open, competitive process with more specific criteria, supporting public policy advocacy projects. In addition, distribution of subgrant lists, STAR Tracks quarterly newsletters, and the third-year evaluation report increased local partner knowledge of STAR activities and priorities. These actions also modeled behavior for local NGOs, encouraging them to increase transparency of their operations.

TIMELINE OF STAR PROJECT KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Training and Technical Assistance

- 1995 Training by U S trainers in organizational development, electronic mail and conflict resolution
- 1996 Increased use of Croatian trainers, whose efforts were supported by STAR subgrants
Profosa (Center for Professionally Independent Women) provided on-site technical assistance for NGO income-generation
Mah Korak (Small Step) provided training workshops in conflict resolution
Organizational Development TA for new women's NGOs provided by Center for Women War Victims
- 1997 U S trainer Stephanie Clohesy mentors Croatian trainer Vesna Terselic in participatory leadership and organizational development trainings for Croatian women's groups
Graduates of International Policy Advocacy training (with mentoring by U S trainer Kathleen Sheekey) conduct first advocacy workshops in Croatia
STAR staff provides technical assistance on financial management, fundraising/resource mobilization, and on reshaping NGO missions to post-war community needs
- 1998 Focus on training trainers and resource people to carry on after STAR closes
Advocacy training by Croatian Advocacy Team and media training by Croatian journalists
Terselic and Clohesy co-lead the Mentoring of Resource (MOR) Women regional training for trainers in Organizational Development Croatian OD Team of 3 women emerges from MOR and conducts extensive trainings in Croatia and the YSS

Linkages

- 1995 Struga, Macedonia, STAR regional conference is the first gathering of YSS women to be held in the region since the war Conference focuses on functional cooperation and reconciliation
- 1996 STAR advisory board created, and it in turn convenes the Croatian Women's NGO Network in Sept 1996, which continues to meet twice a year to coordinate women's activism efforts in Croatia and exchange issue-oriented information and knowledge
- 1997 Hvar, Croatia, STAR regional conference on public policy advocacy
- 1998 STAR refocuses strategy to support local women's networking initiatives, including regional gatherings (War Resisters International in Croatia, Suada's Bridge in Bosnia, Feminist Summer School and Women in Black in FRY) and STAR regional exchange program

Grants Complete list of Croatia subgrants 1995-98 attached

STAR Project Mission, Goals, Activities and Results

In its fourth year, the STAR Project focused its mission "to foster women's participation in the development of civil society in the Yugoslav Successor States (YSS) through encouragement, technical assistance, and financial support to non-nationalistic, advocacy-oriented women's NGOs and women leaders Delphi/STAR pursued this mission by supporting long-term sustainability through building capacity in public policy advocacy, democratic leadership and developing linkages

In year four, the STAR Project fell under USAID STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 "Increased, better informed citizens' participation in political process"

USAID I R 3 1 "More effective advocacy by NGOs, trade unions"

STAR established the following Intermediate Results to support USAID SO 3

1 Increased lobbying and advocacy skills by NGOs leading to increased popular involvement of NGOs at local government level

2 Improved leadership participation problem solving accountability and management of NGOs

3 NGOs become more financially and organizationally sustainable

4 Increased collaboration and communication between NGOs, to spread effective strategies for citizen participation and to find regional solutions for regional problems

STAR IR 1 *Increased lobbying and advocacy skills by NGOs leading to increased popular involvement of NGOs at local government level*

Promoting public policy advocacy was the primary goal of the STAR Project in its final year. Not only were advocacy skills and resources significantly increased in 1998, but also advocacy activities of women's NGOs increased. Public policy advocacy activities made NGOs more engaged with the public, both directly via community education and organizing and indirectly by increased visibility in the media. In addition, advocacy campaigns increased interaction between NGOs and local (and, to a lesser extent, national) government.

Advocacy team The creation of the Croatian Advocacy Team was part of STAR's exit strategy, and this team provides a locally-sustainable resource for future citizen participation efforts in Croatia. In 1998, five Croatian graduates of the International Policy Advocacy (IPA) training in the U.S. and follow-on training in the region formed the Croatian Advocacy Team (CAT), which was in the process of registering as a local NGO. The CAT provided training and technical assistance for NGOs from the Croatian women's network through a STAR subgrant, and worked on contract for America's Development Foundation to provide advocacy training for human rights NGOs in Croatia. CAT members (joined by a Bosnian colleague) also conducted a well-received advanced advocacy workshop for STAR partner NGOs in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The CAT held a strategic planning session with mentor Kathleen Sheekey of the Advocacy Institute and STAR co-director Jill Benderly. A two-year plan to provide advocacy training and technical assistance was developed, with an emphasis on providing knowledge not only to NGOs but also to local government. The team also made specific plans for fundraising and further training of the CAT members to advance their expertise.

Advocacy workbook The eighteen IPA graduates from the region, with guidance from STAR staff, created the workbook on "Public Policy Advocacy: Women for Social Change in the Yugoslav Successor States." The workbook takes a unique, localized approach to advocacy campaigning, and presents local case studies from Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Four thousand copies of the workbook were published in Croatian, which have been widely distributed and publicly promoted in the region, including on Croatian national television. CAT trainers use the workbook as a training tool. The book has been adopted as a text at the University of Zagreb School of Social Work. Other USAID projects including OTI, ADF and NDI have also been using the workbook for their programs and grantees.

Media training In 1998, STAR Croatia organized a two-part series of workshops on effective use of the media by NGOs. STAR convened a group of respected professional women journalists from radio, television and print media who developed the training program for the two workshops, in consultation with Croatian women's NGO members who responded to a series of needs assessments. Results of the workshop series include:

Improved NGO skills in message development and presentation for radio, TV, press and internet, leading to improved public image of NGOs and improved public awareness of women's issues.

Sensitization of Croatian professional journalists to women's NGOs and women's issues, resulting in improved coverage, for example daily coverage on "Good Morning Croatia" of the "Sixteen Days of Action Against Domestic Violence."

Publication of a "Media Checklist" and Media contact list for Croatian women's NGOs.

Willingness of the Croatian journalists to provide on-site technical assistance for women's NGOs upon request.

Advocacy campaigns of Croatian NGOs The STAR 1998 subgrants program funded 16 advocacy campaigns. Highlights and results of these campaigns include:

The Club of Women Suffering from Breast Cancer (Split) launched a campaign to amend the Croatian health law to provide free preventive breast exams. The group drafted legislation to be introduced into parliament. To support the campaign to change the law, the Club conducted extensive public education via the media and direct public forums and brochures, organized 1500 preventive examinations for women in Split-Dalmatia county, and lobbied public officials including the health inspector and town and county officials.

Desa (Dubrovnik) held a seminar for young women in Dubrovnik county entitled "My Place in the Local Community," which recruited 35 young women to "Young Desa" to tackle the problems of unemployment, alienation, lack of quality recreation, education, information and social services.

A series of public policy advocacy workshops were organized by local women's NGOs in Split, Osijek, Porec, Losinj, and Daruvar with programming provided by the Croatian Advocacy Team. Outcomes included interest of local government and local media in supporting and promoting local NGO advocacy activities (Osijek), plans to start a Istria County Commission on Gender Equality (Porec), first steps for a Rijeka County Commission on Gender Equality including effective cooperation between women in NGOs and local government, and effective coalition work among five women's NGOs in Split to promote increased volunteerism, social services, and democratization.

Tara Women's Group Pula launched a public campaign to raise awareness about and prevent domestic violence. In addition, the Tara group opened a local Center for Policy Advocacy in the city of Pula.

The Center for Women's Studies (Zagreb) conducted in-depth interdisciplinary research on "Women in Civil Initiatives" to encourage women from "alternative politics" and "official politics" to participate more actively in social change. The action research led to the Center beginning a program to train women from political parties in articulating women's issues in effective public presentations.

The Committee for Human Rights, Karlovac, opened an SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence. Using media and direct public education, this troubled community that suffered on the frontline of the war became increasingly aware of the ways violence has permeated social behavior in the post-war period.

Public information campaigns were conducted by the STOP Violence Against Women coalition (tram advertisements, t-shirts, postcards, TV public service announcements), Women's Infoteka published its 10th journal edition, a special, widely-distributed issue on "Twenty Years of Feminism in Croatia." Women's Club Pakrac conducted public forums on teen sex education, women's cancer prevention, and tuberculosis.

prevention In addition, the Pakrac Club initiated a coordination of local and international agencies working on social and humanitarian issues in Western Slavonia

The Association for Peace and Human Rights Baranja continued its community service and education project on healthy food production via a STAR subgrant In addition to improving living standards in this most depressed area of Croatia, the programs promoted ecology consciousness, economic independence, interethnic cooperation and reconciliation

The Center for Education and Counseling of Women (Zagreb) organized courses in basic literacy and in computer education for Roma women and teens in the Kozari Bok neighborhood of Zagreb In addition to these courses, workshops were held on hygiene, women's health, prevention of contagious diseases, and how to achieve one's basic rights

Legacy Thus the legacy of the Delphi/STAR Project advocacy program is increased capacity of women NGOs to plan and carry out advocacy issue campaigns STAR programs also increased collaboration between NGOs and local government, as well as increased media coverage and improved public image of women's NGOs and their issues Finally, the STAR Project leaves behind an effective Croatian Advocacy Team and a popular advocacy workbook to spread knowledge and skills more widely in the future

Follow up USAID should support further progress of the Croatian Advocacy Team, further distribution of the Advocacy workbook, and future advocacy campaigns of women's NGOs, especially as related to the crucial 1999 Croatian elections USAID should continue to use the TRANSIT program to send Croatian participants to the International Policy Advocacy training program in the U S at the School for International Training

STAR I R 2 Improved leadership participation problem solving accountability and management of NGOs

STAR made significant contributions to building the organizational capacity of Croatian women's NGOs and women leaders These included effective OD and leadership workshops, on-site technical assistance in topics ranging from strategic planning to improving an NGO's structure, hands-on experience with subgrant financial management, monitoring and evaluation, and most of all the mentoring of the Croatian Organizational Development (OD) team

Organizational development and participatory leadership training STAR workshops on conflict resolution, organizational development, participatory leadership, resource mobilization, and monitoring/evaluation provided targeted training to Croatian women's NGOs These trainings were only one subset of many internationally-organized NGO development efforts in Croatia It was up to the NGOs to compare and contrast the information and techniques offered and to use what was most relevant for them

The technical assistance STAR provided to its subgrantees in proposal development, budgeting, project and financial management and reporting gave women's NGOs experiential learning that will help them with future projects and other donors

The most useful contribution of STAR to NGO development in Croatia was the training and mentoring of the Croatian **Organizational Development Team** This team of five women from some of the strongest Croatian NGOs combines deep NGO experience, good teaching methods and thorough content knowledge of NGO development STAR supported OD team member Snjezana Matejcic's further education at OLIVE, the Durban, South Africa, NGO training center,, Marina Skrabalo's on-the-job training as assistant evaluator of the STAR Project in 1997,, Vesna Terselic's ongoing mentoring by internationally-renowned

NGO development specialist Stephanie Clohesy, and Zvijezdana Schulz's STAR staff experience Schulz has now joined the Academy for Educational Development's Training of Trainers program

The Croatian OD Team focused its interventions on on-site, in-depth consultations for client NGOs The main outcome of two such consultations, with the Association for Peace and Human Rights Baranja and the Center for Civil Initiatives, Porec, was restructuring of member roles and responsibilities in line with the development of a strategic plan of action for the NGO

The OD Team has been hired by America's Development Foundation to assist human rights NGOs in their further organizational development Team members also assisted the National Democratic Institute's Local Government Project by facilitating civic dialogues in Pula and Osijek The Team has developed its own five-year plan to gradually increase consulting work and eventually form a consulting agency

Follow-up USAID and its implementers should accredit, hire and fund the Croatian Organizational Development Team, as it is quite advanced compared to other trainers currently being trained

STAR I R 3 NGOs become more financially and organizationally sustainable

Funding guide The publication of STAR's International Funding Guide provided a lasting resource for NGOs a carefully selected and annotated list of international funders for women's projects in the YSS, and clear guidelines for identifying appropriate foreign donors and guidelines for writing proposals and budgets

Cost-sharing on subgrants Another STAR contribution to increased sustainability of NGOs was the cost-share requirement of 25-50% in cash, in-kind donations or quantified volunteer effort While NGOs found this matching requirement new and often confusing, in the end all grantees came to understand it and meet the requirements Many became aware of "everything else we do for ourselves besides money," as one grant manager commented A few subgrantees succeeded in raising funds from their local government and/or local businesses

However, financial sustainability is still very far away for the majority of Croatian NGOs Unless and until changes occur in the legal framework for tax-deductible contributions and the public image of NGOs as opponents or enemies of the government is nullified, NGOs will remain dependent on foreign assistance

STAR I R 4 Increased collaboration and communication between NGOs to spread effective strategies for citizen participation and to find regional solutions for regional problems

The linkages activities of the STAR Project were sometimes considered the least tangible by USAID, but in the final analysis, this type of networking helped grow Croatian women's NGOs from a few brave voices in 1994 to a critical mass acting in concert to advocate for positive social change in 1998

Advisory board STAR's depth of partnership with local NGOs was well documented by the STAR 1997 three-year evaluation As one Croatian activist told the evaluators, "They are the best international NGO because they listen, have a unique advisory board, and delegate responsibility"

STAR's empowerment approach to NGO development was one in which program design, implementation and evaluation are the joint responsibility of the foreign and local partners This collaborative, consultative process was extremely successful in Croatia In addition, the advisory board built up lasting communication and information exchange among its members, who represented 13 NGOs that were geographically diverse The Zagreb women's NGOs which have well-deserved reputations for interorganizational rivalries The STAR Advisory Board helped to ameliorate that problem by providing a constructive, task-oriented environment

Croatian women's NGO network STAR's role in facilitating the launch of the Croatian Women's NGO Network will probably be the most notable, attributable result of the project. The network has met six times since its founding in 1996, and the semiannual gatherings have proven effective for joint planning of actions on the national level such as the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights or the Sixteen Days of Action Against Domestic Violence. The meetings and the intervening communication have also fostered outreach to newer groups in Croatia. The network will play an important coordinating role in the 1999 Croatian election campaign. Follow-up funding from foreign donors will be important for its survival.

Regional exchanges program The STAR Project provided a regional program in addition to each of the country programs. A regional exchanges program was launched in the fourth year of the project. The purpose of the regional exchanges program was to strengthen the Yugoslav Successor States' indigenous community of advocacy-oriented NGOs by supporting the establishment of cooperative program links among the region's women's NGOs. Twenty-three exchanges took place involving Croatian women. In addition, six Croatian NGOs hosted exchange visits from the other Yugoslav Successor States. As most of the exchanges occurred in the second half of 1998, it is too early to assess the results of these cross-border collaborations. Some program highlights include:

Increased coordination of work on refugee return, resettlement and rights (Committee for Human Rights, Karlovac, Croatia - United Women Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina)

Inspiration and knowledge to start a Center for Girls in Croatia (Association for Creative Social Work, Zagreb, Croatia - Center for Girls Belgrade, FRY)

Detailed information on the challenges of running a battered women's shelter, for an organization planning to start one (Mirna, Split, Croatia - Autonomous Women's House, Zagreb, Croatia)

Single mothers from Women's Group Split, Croatia visit single mothers group in Stip, Macedonia. The Croatians shared their positive experiences of NGO coalition building in Split and the Macedonians share their experience with income generating projects and with acquiring space donated by local government.