

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS:

The CBI Experience

Prepared by

Macedonia Confidence Building Initiative

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I. INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared to describe how the Macedonia Confidence Building Initiative (CBI) approached, mobilized and managed community contributions that resulted in an addition of \$8.1 million (69% of the CBI investment of \$11.7 million) to the program funding provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for implementation of the two-year program. This document discusses lessons learned and best practices based on the CBI implementation experience. Recommendations are also provided for program managers considering encouraging or requiring community contributions in post-conflict programming.

CBI was implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in five regions of the Republic of Macedonia from October 2001-October 2003. USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) provided critical technical direction, financial and management support to ensure successful implementation of CBI.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Overview of the Macedonia Confidence Building Initiative

CBI began in October 2001 as part of a larger U.S. Government response to help prevent the Republic of Macedonia from becoming the next Balkan state to erupt into ethnic violence and to support its pursuit of much-needed political reforms.

When the program was designed, it was determined that reducing tensions, including ethnic tensions and averting further violence is best achieved by working on two levels, the national level and the community and/or local government level. Support to address such national level concerns as the need to amend the constitution to ensure fair representation for all Macedonians irrespective of ethnicity, political affiliation, gender, and religion, and the need for legislation to effect decentralization and encourage fiscal reform was provided by a variety of U.S. Government and private agencies, as well as other donors. OTI determined to complement national level reform efforts by investing at the community and local government levels.

OTI believed, based on its in-country assessments of the opportunities and obstacles to post-conflict programming, that many of the most pressing needs in the country existed at the community level, where confidence in the future of a peaceful, democratic, multi-ethnic nation had been ruptured. CBI moved quickly to provide support to moderate local leaders and communities to bolster their efforts to reduce tensions and rebuild confidence between ethnic groups and across political party divides. In its first year, OTI approved 300 small grants, buying time for political reforms to take place and peace to take root. An estimated 500 small grants will have been implemented by the end of the program in October 2003. Support emphasized dialogue, conflict prevention, reconciliation, multi-ethnic cooperation and a return to normalcy of daily life, particularly in the areas directly affected by conflict.

At the time of CBI's launch in October 2001, apprehension was still widespread about whether the fragile cease-fire and peace agreement would hold. Structural underdevelopment, weak institutional capacities, political infighting and high unemployment served to further exacerbate tensions throughout the country.

CBI was established as a community-based conflict mitigation program, with a specific goal: to *lessen tension and mitigate conflict during the implementation of the Framework Agreement*. Four objectives were introduced to measure CBI contributions to achieving the goal:

- Objective 1: Support positive, community-based interaction among diverse groups of people
- Objective 2: Promote citizen participation in community decision-making

Objective 3: Foster transparency, responsiveness, and accountability in the relationship between citizens and local government

Objective 4: Increase citizen access to balanced information and diverse points of view

A program was developed to create quick and widespread impact by addressing community-level issues as they related to the four objectives and the goal. CBI established sub-offices to carry out programming in five regions of the country: Bitola, Kicevo, Kocani, Skopje, and Tetevo. A media office was located in Skopje, the capital, to coordinate nationwide media efforts.

The sub-offices worked by awarding grants to local communities, civil society organizations, local NGOs, local government, and media outlets. Communities and problematic issues were identified, projects were developed with the communities to address their issues, grants were awarded, and activities were implemented within a timeframe intended to provide quick relief to the targeted communities.

CBI has helped to create a supportive environment for the implementation of a peace settlement brokered by the U.S. and the European Union in August 2001. Constitutional changes to ensure equal rights for the diverse ethnic and religious communities, as mandated by the Framework Agreement, have been made. CBI has worked to increase support and capacity to absorb the changes in communities around the country.

B. Purpose and Functions of Contributions for Confidence Building

A community contribution is defined as an activity, service or goods provided by a grantee that has some market (financial) value, i.e., that would normally be paid for. Contributions should comprise an investment of cash or an in-kind donation of labor or materials in sufficient quantity or scope to indicate a grantee's buy-in to the project.

CBI has required community contributions to increase community involvement in and adoption of democratic practices and processes, such as representative and participatory decision-making. It has also required contributions to help develop grantee ownership of a project and to focus community efforts on sustaining project outcomes. The long-term, assumed benefit of requiring such contributions, is the development of community and local government capacities to identify, prioritize and address their needs by mobilizing their own and locally available resources, thus reducing dependence on central government.

There are some contributions that the CBI program does not include in its calculations, because the program has assumed certain responsibilities as the grantee's duties and obligations to ensure successful implementation of project, whether or not other types of contributions are forthcoming. These include: membership in community groups that are convened to coordinate community participation and contributions to a project; monitoring of compliance with agreed upon community contributions; and monitoring of the work of contracted technical experts or firms.

An informal survey of CBI staff and grantees identified the following benefits associated with requiring community contributions:

- Helps ensure that projects selected for support reflect community priorities (communities/grantees are less likely to contribute if the project is not perceived as a priority by them).
- Increases community buy-in and ownership of a project and project outcomes.
- Increases the likelihood that project outcomes, especially infrastructure, will be sustained.
- Promotes interaction among diverse groups of people.
- Promotes broad-based and representative participation in community decision-making.
- Can promote increased interaction and improved relations between communities/grantees and local government bodies.

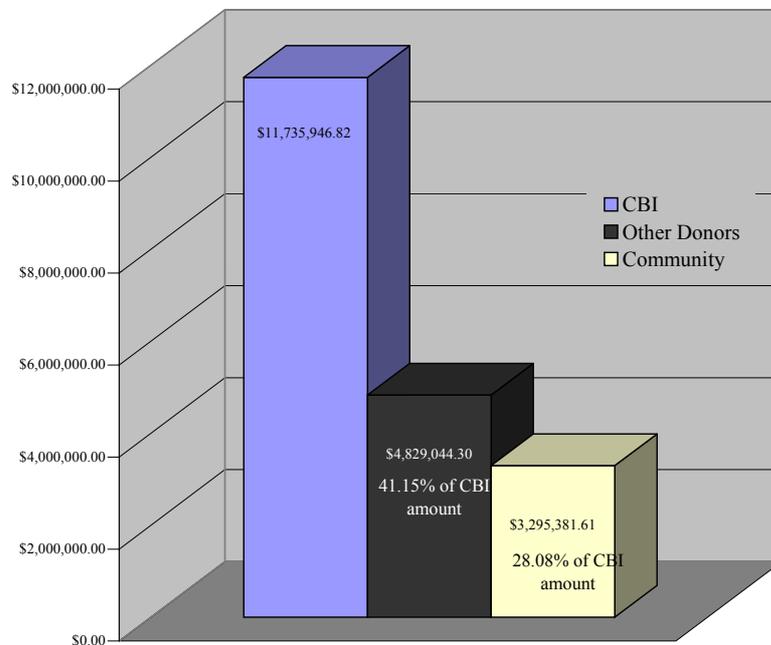
The survey also identified the following challenges associated with requiring community contributions:

- It is management-intensive to mobilize and track delivery of agreed upon contributions.

- The amount of interaction, follow-up and monitoring required to ensure delivery of agreed upon contributions can delay project implementation, including the work of contracted technical experts or firms.
- The quality of work may not meet the specifications of technical feasibility studies, so additional costs may be incurred to ensure compliance with standards.
- Community members/grantees may be suspicious that their volunteer contributions are being requested in order that another member of the community can profit.

The total program funds invested by CBI for the two-year program period amounted to \$11,735,947. An additional \$8,124,426 (69% of the CBI investment) was contributed by grantees (\$3,295,382) and other donors/local governments (\$4,829,044), which enabled CBI to reach out to a much greater number of communities (in over half of the country's municipalities) than would have been possible otherwise.

The Amount of Community and Other Donor Contributions Compared with the Total CBI Investment



C. Factors Affecting Community Contributions

Once a program manager has decided to encourage or require community contributions in a program, there are a number of variables that need to be considered that can affect a community's/grantee's willingness and capacity to provide their contribution. It is recommended that a plan be developed that describes the variables that are specific to the country, and regions within the country where the program is being implemented and the suggested approaches to managing or working to manage the variables to the extent possible.

In the case of CBI, while community contributions were required for all grants, communities/grantees determined what the type and scope of their contributions would be to assist successful project completion. The nature of the contributions and the community's/grantees capacity and willingness to contribute depended on a variety of factors, including:

- The country context;
- The way in which a "community" was defined; and
- Miscellaneous variables.

1) The Country Context

Determining a community's/grantee's capacity to contribute requires understanding the context in which a project will be carried out. Understanding the context enables a program manager to identify the opportunities and challenges involved in obtaining contributions. The following factors were found to affect the nature and scope of a community's/grantee's contributions during implementation of CBI:

- High unemployment (an estimated 40%) meant that contributions were more often provided in-kind than in cash.
- A largely agricultural-based and rural economy meant that a high proportion of contributions were provided as unskilled labor.
- A highly centralized government structure had created dependencies for services, supplies and infrastructure. This meant that CBI staffs had to devote a substantial amount of time to motivating people and convincing them of their rights and responsibilities as citizens in a (newly) democratic society.
- The Republic of Macedonia has a history of volunteerism, but volunteerism, which is not a particularly popular form of contributing to a community's development, is largely associated with the forced volunteerism practiced under communism in the former Yugoslavia.
- The Diaspora is large and provides substantial contributions to their communities; however, contributions of cash are often dictated by political parties/interests and earmarked to further specific political agendas rather than for community development and improvement initiatives.
- The levels of conflict and tension in target communities can affect a program manager's decision whether to require a contribution or not and can also affect the likelihood of a contribution being forthcoming or even possible. In a community experiencing palpable tension, for instance, a program manager's primary objective will be to reduce tensions and avoid open conflict, rather than to build confidence using contributions as a tool.

2) Definitions of Community

The way in which a community is defined can directly affect its capacity and willingness to contribute to a project. CBI experience found that it was easier to mobilize a community contribution from a community that was geographically identifiable than it was with a "community" comprising non-governmental organizations, for instance.

- The type of community/grantee that is being assisted (for instance, a rural community that is easily geographically identifiable) is more likely to contribute both in cash and in-kind to a project because they can see a direct link between themselves and the likely project benefits than a community that may be identified by its interests (media, agriculture, sports) or affiliations (religious, ethnic, political, gender).
- Contributions can be affected by the composition of a "community." For instance, a community that comprises a formal association or non-governmental organization was found to be less willing and able to contribute to a project, because of the need of such organizations to generate operating expenses from projects to support their participation in project implementation. Informal groups, although found to be less experienced with project implementation, were more willing to contribute to projects that were perceived to directly benefit their communities and/or families.
- Community capacity to contribute and the type of contributions that are offered may be determined by the nature of the local economy and availability of skills and requisite experience required to implement the project in the target community.

3) Miscellaneous Variables

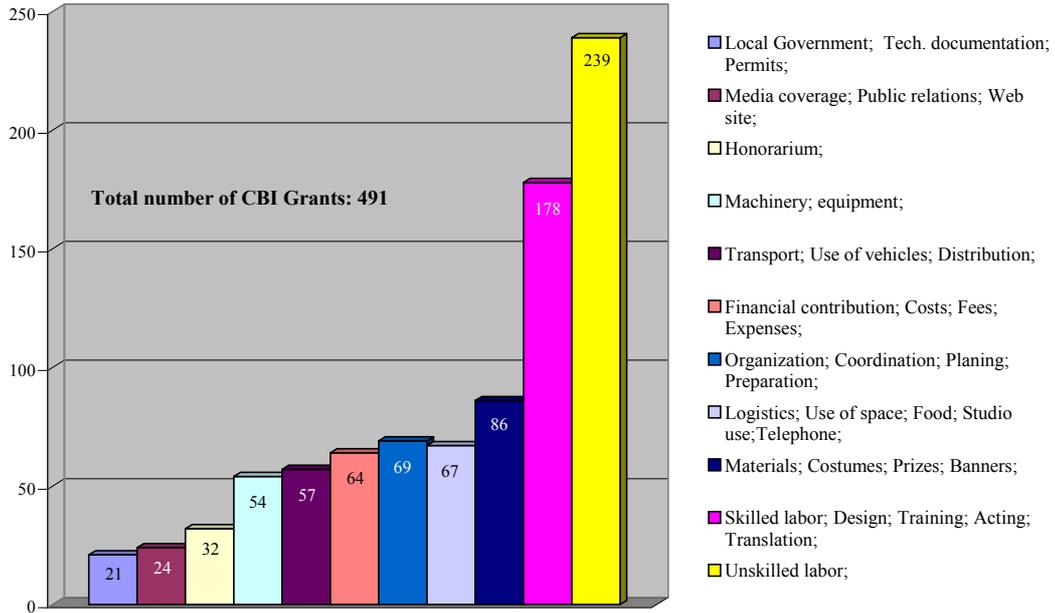
- Interest in a project and willingness to contribute depends upon perceived need by the community for the benefits of the project. There may be more or less interest in a project depending on whether it is intended to support a) a social event or activity (sports event, concert, peace march, etc.), which tend to be perceived as having short-term benefits, or b) to develop infrastructure, which individuals in a community generally perceive to have direct and long-term benefits.
- Whether or not other donors (local or international) are present or have operated in the target communities previously and whether or not they require/have required contributions can affect the willingness and capacity of a community to contribute. For example, if there is another donor operating in a target community that does not require contributions, it may be more difficult to convince the community to invest in a project that comes with an apparent cost to the community.
- If a community has had previous experience providing contributions, it may be easier to mobilize resources.
- Seasonal considerations: winter months can make it impossible to complete infrastructure work, while holiday seasons can mean that no labor is readily available to complete work, etc.

It is recommended that a menu of the possible types of community contributions be generated at the beginning of a program cycle to serve as a guide for introducing discussions about contributions with communities. Often, communities were found by CBI to assume that contributions of cash would be required. Only after introducing Macedonia-specific examples of possible in-kind contributions were many communities motivated to contribute themselves. The following list illustrates the type of contributions most often provided during implementation of CBI:

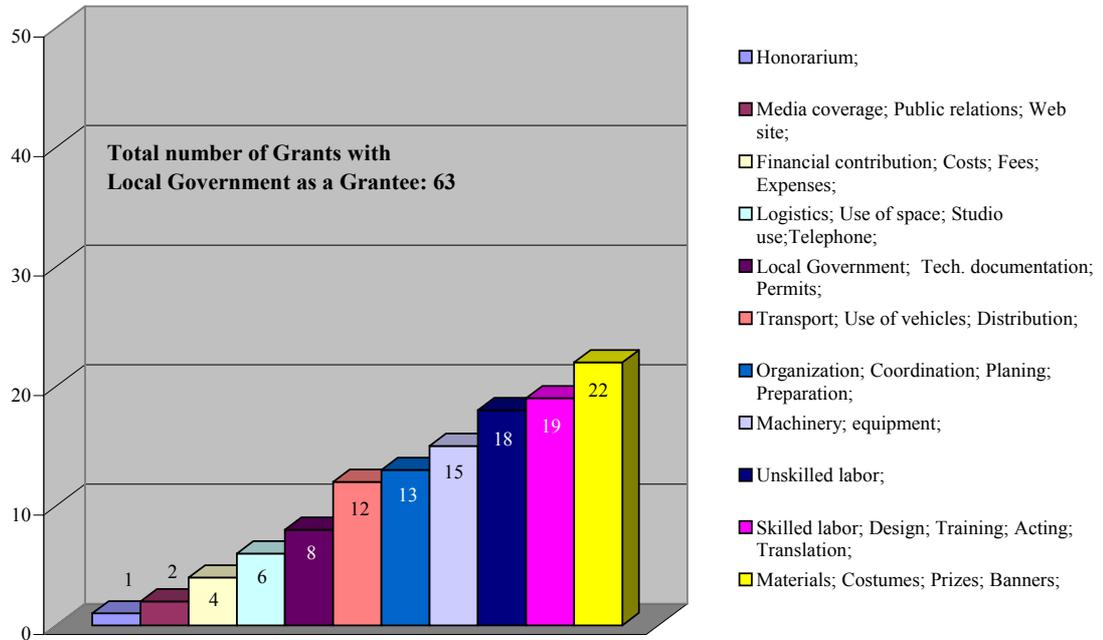
- Technical feasibility studies and designs
- Skilled/unskilled labor
- Media coverage
- Transportation, use of vehicles, distribution of materials/supplies
- Cash
- Donation/rental of machinery and equipment
- Logistical support (use of office/studio space, food, communications)
- Supplies, costumes, prizes, banners
- Organization and management of events
- Salaries/honoraria

The following graphs present the frequency with which the various "communities"/grantees with which CBI worked provided the different types of possible contributions.

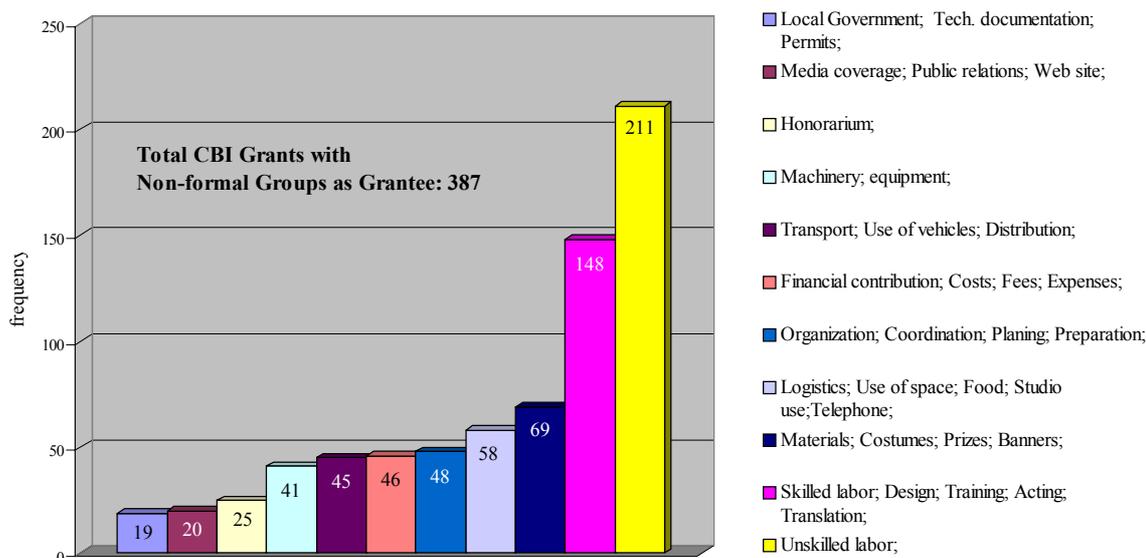
Categories and Frequencies of Community Contributions



Categories and Frequencies of Community Contribution with Local Government as a Grantee



Categories and Frequencies of Community Contribution with Non-formal Group as Grantee



III. MOBILIZING COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS: THE PROCESS

A. The CBI Program Cycle

Understanding the program cycle is an important first step in planning for and mobilizing community contributions. As was demonstrated during the CBI program cycle, program priorities and events throughout the cycle can influence the extent to which contributions are encouraged and mobilized.

A typical OTI post-conflict program cycle is two years and can roughly be divided into four six-month segments. The first six months are largely devoted to start-up, engaging communities and awarding grants to develop relationships and trust with target communities. The second and third six-month periods leverage the relationships established during the first six months and are characterized by full-scale implementation of grants that respond to community-identified priorities. Full-scale implementation relies on personnel, programmatic and administrative systems that were introduced, tested and refined during the first six months. The final six months are focused on continued implementation of grants, identifying program impact, documenting legacy, and handing-over programming wherever possible and appropriate to other donors, government agencies and communities.

Implementation of CBI unfolded according to a typical OTI program cycle.

First Six Months of the Program

October 2001 through January 2002: This phase consisted of office set-up, identification of the five field offices, and the hiring of staff.

January through March 2002: Particular attention was placed during this period on establishing goals and objectives, grant criteria, and a monitoring and evaluation plan. The target for CBI's first year was to implement 250 grants covering the following program areas: civil society organization; media; local governance; and other confidence building measures. The criteria for approving these grants are as follows:

- The extent to which grants address and further the program objectives and goal.
- The extent to which it describes a process in which a broad cross-section of communities has been brought together, able to deliberate upon priorities and decide upon the project.

- The extent to which the community is committing their funds, time, and energy to the project.
- The extent to which apparent risks have been evaluated, calculated, and judged worth taking.
- The extent to which allotted funds are proportional to the impact and the number of people benefited.
- The extent to which sustainability is addressed (not all projects are meant to be sustainable).
- The extent to which the budget is accurate and necessary approvals are received.

Second Six Months of the Program

March through June 2002: By April, CBI was programming at an optimum grant rate. As the sub-offices became more established, different styles and approaches to grant development started to emerge.

June through September 2002: By this time, CBI began to place greater emphasis on more actively engaging communities in identifying, prioritizing and agreeing upon solutions to common problems. Several special initiatives focused on mitigating potential conflict associated with national elections in September and a census in November.

Third Six Months of the Program

October through December 2002: The sub-offices, in conjunction with the management team, developed program and operational strategies for the second year of CBI. These strategies focused on building upon relationships, successes and lessons learned during year one and on investigating how to tackle broader issues such as corruption, transparency, and the transition to greater self-governance.

January-March 2003: During this period, implementation of year-two program strategies was planned to begin, and final grants for infrastructure projects approved.

Fourth Six Months of the Program

April-June 2003: During this quarter, infrastructure projects approved in the previous quarter were implemented, the final set of social grants were developed and approved and implementation was initiated.

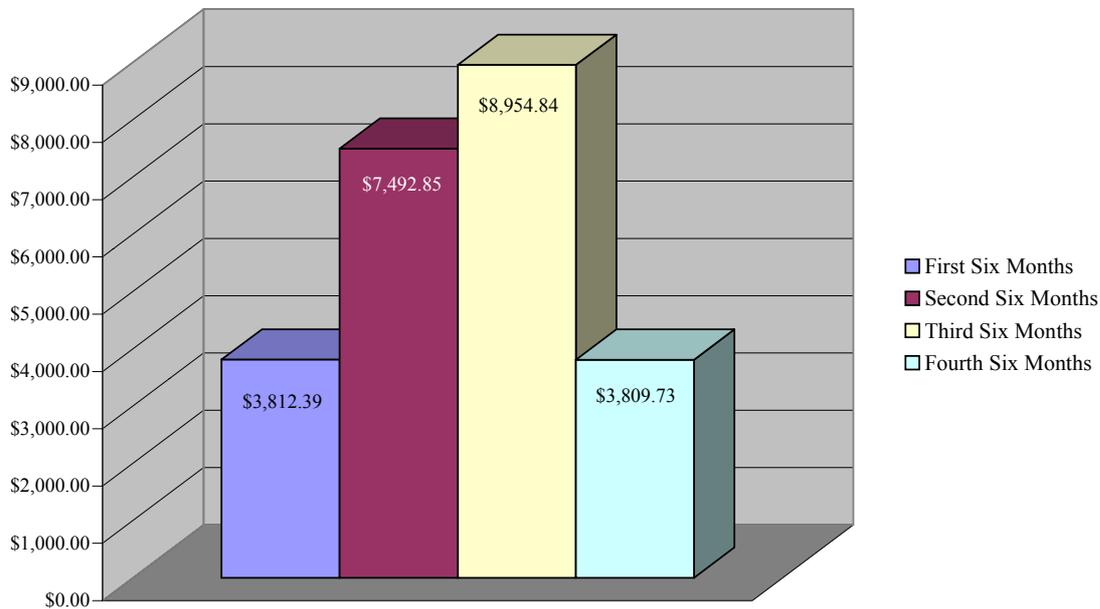
July-September 2003: Grants were completed, evaluation activities were undertaken, including dissemination of best practices and lessons learned, and program and administrative close-out activities were completed.

B. Trends in Community Contributions during the CBI Program Cycle

When deciding when and how to introduce the requirement for community contributions, program managers need to keep in mind what other events are going on in the project cycle and how these events and other program priorities will facilitate or constrain mobilization of contributions. Managers should also ask, "What is the value-added of requiring contributions?" for each stage of the program cycle and weigh the costs and benefits against what may be lost or gained by requiring contributions.

For instance, during the first six months of a program, especially a post-conflict program, it may be more important to focus on establishing relationships and gaining the trust of communities than it is to obtain a contribution. At any time during the program cycle, requiring a contribution may not make sense if the purpose of a grant activity is to present a specific message (through a public service announcement, for instance) or to reduce tensions or stop violence. In the latter case, the emphasis may necessarily be on focusing the community's/grantee's attention on common priorities and dialogue and deflecting attention away from the source(s) of conflict. On the other hand, if the purpose of requiring a contribution is to promote dialogue and adoption of democratic behaviors in communities or to gain buy-in and ensure community/grantee involvement in sustaining project outcomes, then it makes sense to require contributions.

**Average Amount of Community Contribution
for each Six-Month Period of the CBI Program**



The graph reflects, as is to be expected, that the highest amount of community contributions were provided during the one-year period when the program was implementing at maximum capacity, because staff were sufficiently experienced and systems were in place to support implementation. CBI staffs explained the drop in the proportion of contributions to the average total investment from 25% in the third six-month period to 12% in the fourth month period as due to increased pressure to complete grants before the scheduled program close-out. This meant there was less emphasis on identifying and mobilizing community contributions to projects because of the time required to effect the contributions and the potential for delays.

The program cycle can be summarized in the following way. The first and last six months of the program cycle were focused more on delivering products than on process and community/grantee capacity building and so were less focused (less time was devoted to) obtaining community contributions. The one year of full implementation focused more on the participatory process of grant design, development and implementation, which is an environment conducive to identifying, mobilizing and ensuring community contributions that are important for successful project completion.

It is recommended, based on the CBI experience, that a strategy for encouraging or requiring community contributions be developed at the beginning of a program cycle. The following should be considered when developing a strategy:

- The extent to which community contributions will facilitate achievement of program goals and objectives.
- How community contributions will be used (as a tool to promote participation and representative decision-making, as a proxy measure to verify the extent to which the project is a priority for the target community, as a measure of community commitment to a process or outcome, as an indicator of community buy-in or program achievement).
- At which point or points in the program cycle contributions will be emphasized or de-emphasized to allow for a focus on other priorities in the program cycle.
- The circumstances in which there will be exceptions to the requirement for contributions (when working with certain types of communities, in areas experiencing open conflict/high tension,

when contracting individuals and firms to produce and disseminate public service announcements or carry out surveys, when working with media outlets start-ups, etc.).

- The need to establish indicators to track community contributions.
- The type and scope of a survey (national, regional, or target community-specific) to assess willingness and ability to provide contributions.
- The type of strategies, approaches, tools and training/orientation that staffs will need to mobilize, effect, monitor and report on contributions.
- The need for periodic evaluations of the opportunities, obstacles, accomplishments and impact of requiring contributions.

The following section describes the mechanics of mobilizing and effecting contributions in a community-based program.

C. The CBI Grant Development Process: Negotiating and Formalizing Community Contributions

Once a strategy for mobilizing and effecting community contributions has been developed, the next steps are to determine the mechanics of how contributions will be managed. The following table illustrates how CBI approached project development with target communities, the steps involved in the grant development and implementation process, and the steps taken throughout the process to introduce, mobilize, effect, monitor and report on contributions. It was recommended early in the program cycle that a contribution of 20% of the total required CBI contribution be encouraged from communities.

Stages of a Grant	Project Development Process	Steps to Mobilizing Contributions
Community Engagement	CBI approached communities in need to assess interest in CBI transition and confidence building processes; worked with communities to identify, prioritize and begin process of addressing needs; assisted project prioritization process; identified possible community contributions to the project and began negotiating contributions.	Contributions introduced and discussed as part of larger discussion of CBI goal and objectives during first community meeting. At the meeting, there was an introduction to CBI and a discussion of the program and its approaches. During discussions, communities usually asked for the specifics in terms of their role(s) in project implementation vs. the role of CBI. Since funding was always a primary interest, discussion of community contributions was easily introduced.
GRANT DEVELOPMENT	Meetings held and interaction with community at large undertaken with confidence building units (representative community bodies), local government officials, etc. to encourage representative community participation in decision-making and grant development.	The process of identifying and negotiating the specific contributions often took three or four community meetings, with and without CBI present in the meetings. In the initial meetings, a coordinating body comprising community members was identified and managed the process of identifying contributions. CBI often provided examples of other successful projects and examples of the types of contributions that help make projects successful.
	For infrastructure grants, technical feasibility assessments carried out.	Often with CBI infrastructure projects, the feasibility study, which is valued at an average of \$2,000, was a key part of the community's contribution.

	CBI staff and CBUs developed grants/budgets, determined community contributions, agreed on a timeline for implementation, selected community and technical monitors.	Once contributions have been identified, negotiated and agreed upon, CBI monetized the total contribution and wrote the budget into the grant document. Sometimes, a formal memorandum of understanding was attached to the grant document, which detailed the community contributions and established a timeframe for their delivery. The grant was a public document.
Grant Approval	Grant submitted/approved; information, including data on output and outcome indicators, entered into grants database Grant signing/project launched often covered by local and national media.	Once a grant is approved, CBI entered the approved document in the database, which records the projected community contribution.
GRANT IMPLEMENTATION	Periodic CBI staff visits undertaken to promote comprehension and compliance with CBI process CBU monitors track community participation and contributions. Technical monitors oversaw work of contractors for compliance with contract specifications and timelines, as well as for production quality and timeliness for media grants. CBU meetings and larger community meetings held to discuss and report on progress/issues.	Some CBI field offices developed a practice of formalizing community contributions in written documents to obligate communities to precisely defined and agreed upon contributions. CBI supported CBU in using these documents to monitor compliance with agreed upon contributions.
Completion	Project completion events often covered by local and national media; press clippings, audio and visual coverage used to monitor community responsiveness to CBI program and messages. Information, including data on output and outcome indicators entered/ revised in grants database	CBI mobilized community members to organize press coverage, which helped communities take credit for successful projects and enabled them to highlight their contributions. This in turn motivated other potential target communities to seek projects and to offer contributions as an enticement to CBI to support projects in their communities. CBI did not actually enter data in the database post-project that reconciled projected vs. actual contributions, although staff verbally verified their satisfaction that contributions had been generally met.

Several practices and innovations were introduced by various CBI field offices to formalize community contributions. These emerged from practical experience working in communities.

- Introducing the discussion of community contributions at the first large community meeting.
- Introducing community contributions as a requirement, and a pre-condition for project implementation by contracted individuals and firms.
- Empowering community representatives to work with community at large to determine the scope and nature of contributions.
- Introducing volunteer sign-up sheets to move communities beyond verbal commitments of contributions.
- Developing a memorandum of understanding in relevant local languages detailing the agreed upon community contributions.
- Using the memorandum of understanding as a monitoring and verification tool.

D. Monitoring and Reporting on Community Contributions

The process of monitoring connected to community contribution begins even before the official negotiating of community contribution starts.

Collecting information on various aspects of how a target community functions provides the basis for program staff to develop approaches and tools to encourage or require community contributions. For example, knowing that buildings, parks or statues were constructed in the past with the contribution of community members is an indicator that the community has a history of contributing for public works. This can be used during the negotiating process to assist communities identify the ways in which they can contribute to project implementation. Knowledge of the employment rate, educational and professional structures within the community can also help in framing expectations and suggesting possible types and extent of contributions. Information about the community's experience with other donors and the donor's experience with the specific community may help in developing the approach and a particular position during the project development cycle.

Once the community contribution is defined and specified, information about the amount and type of contribution can be documented in memoranda of understanding between the donor and target communities. These documents provide tools for both community representatives and program staffs to monitor delivery of contributions. A description of the agreed upon contributions and their monetized value should be recorded in grant agreements and databases used to track project progress. Calculating the monetized value of the contributions provided by the community can be done using prevailing market rates in the target communities for goods and services.

Once a project is approved and implementation starts, frequent field visits and contacts with community members ensures good insight into the implementation process, including the execution of the activities that were defined as community contributions. It also helps to motivate community members to fulfill their obligations. In order to ensure that communities fulfill their obligations, it is recommended that the contributions be provided prior to initiation of work that is contracted out to individuals and firms.

The need for monitoring by CBI depends on community leadership and its ability to mobilize, motivate and organize community members for activities that are needed to be accomplished. If the specific community has a history of voluntarism, experience in similar activities and competent leadership, they will be able to fulfill their responsibilities with minimal oversight.

Upon project completion, the actual value of contributions provided should be calculated and recorded in reporting documents and in the grants database. An explanation or rationale for any discrepancies should be provided.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following lessons, best practices and recommendations are based on the CBI experience in the Republic of Macedonia. They are presented in a manner intended to be generally applicable to a two-year program cycle and a wide range of community-based programs.

Lessons Learned

- It is important to introduce contributions as a requirement at the beginning of the project, rather than merely suggesting contributions would be welcome.
- It is important to require that contributions be provided prior to project work is undertaken by contracted individuals and firms.
- There is a need to assess the obstacles and opportunities (factors affecting) community contributions prior to program implementation so as to be able to devise strategies to address them. Examples of factors to be considered: seasonal work commitments in agricultural economies, unemployment, rural vs. urban settings, the type of grantee (geographically recognizable communities, NGOs, local governments, groups/associations with religious, ethnic, gender, or political affiliations, etc.), the type of project (social vs. infrastructure).
- The greater the need for the project outcome or the perceived benefit of the project, the greater the interest is on the part of communities to contribute in cash and in kind.
- Communities are more inclined to contribute and in greater amounts to projects with concrete outcomes, such as infrastructure.
- By giving the chance to the community to decide what the most important need is and what will be the project outcome, you can increase the interest and responsibility of the community members on their part of the project realization.
- Community leadership is an important contributing factor to the extent of and enthusiasm by communities to provide contributions. In the case of CBI, three different types of leadership contributed to commitment to and follow-through by communities on their contributions: democratic leadership, modeling of behaviors by recognized leaders, and experienced and skilled leadership.
- The constant presence of CBI staff members and the interest that they demonstrated in community affairs encouraged community members towards greater engagement and contributions during the project cycle.
- A substantial field presence can increase the likelihood that community contributions will be forthcoming and delivered as agreed.
- Maintaining transparency throughout the process of introducing, mobilizing and formalizing community contributions is essential for ensuring that contributions are equitably carried out and to avoid the perception/potential for corruption.

Recommendations

Programming Community Contributions

- Decide to encourage or require community contributions at the beginning/early in the program cycle.
- Survey willingness and ability of target communities to contribute that will inform program approaches.
- Determine a minimum requirement, preferably a percentage of the total donor investment and apply it equally to all grantees (a 20% contribution is recommended).
- Determine circumstances and set parameters for allowing and managing exceptions to the required contribution.
- Develop a basic menu of possible contributions based on other donor/international organization experience in country and carry out a market/price survey to develop a price list that attaches an approximate monetary value to the various types of contributions. This will help to standardize calculations of contributions.

Negotiating and Formalizing Community Contributions

- Introduce the concept at the first/second community meeting and describe contributions as program policy.

- Wherever possible, be ready/prepared with examples and anecdotes from other communities benefiting from the program (or from other donor programs) of community contributions (type, scope, challenges faced by communities, obstacles overcome, benefits).
- Get widespread public agreement to the contributions and use a written check-list/volunteer sign-up sheet that ensures public commitment to the type and scope of contributions and to the community members involved/tasked with ensuring commitments are carried out.

Monitoring and Reporting on Community Contributions

- Use formalized agreements/tools to monitor delivery of contributions.
- Empower community representatives to carry out regular monitoring of the community's compliance with delivery of contributions.
- Record projected contributions and the monetized value of the contributions in the grants database and, upon project completion reconcile projections against actual contributions.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Staff and grantees surveyed in informal interviews and focus group discussion reported that requiring contributions assisted in the following ways:

- Lessened tensions by facilitating community members to engage in dialogue and to work side by side to accomplish agreed upon tasks. This was achieved in communities divided along ethnic, political, religious, and gender lines.
- Supported positive, community-based interaction among diverse groups of people that in many cases would not otherwise have happened.
- Increased citizen participation in community decision-making, because people had a stake in the outcome(s) of their decisions.
- Fostered transparency, responsiveness and accountability in the relationship between citizens and local government, because communities and local governments had to negotiate joint contributions. In many CBI-supported communities, citizens and local government entered into productive dialogue and worked together for the first time to achieve common objectives.
- Increased citizen access to balanced information and diverse points of view. Many grantees reported learning about community needs and being given a voice in addressing community priorities for the first time.