

**SAMARA REGIONAL PUBLIC ORGANIZATION HISTORICAL-ECOLOGICAL
CULTURAL ASSOCIATION “POVOLZJE”**

Strengthening Grant-Making Capacity in Samara Oblast

**Regional And Local Dialogues: Expert Support Of Citizens' Participation In Local Self-
Governance In 2007-2010**

Contract No 118-A-00-04-00024

FINAL REPORT

10/02/2004 – 30/06/2011

USAID's Strategic Objective (SO):
SO 2.11: More Open Participatory Society

Intermediate Results (IR):

IR 1 "Sources of Non-State Information That Are Accessible to the Public Increased and Improved",

IR2 "Civil Society and Advocacy Institutions Strengthened", and

IR3 "Democratic Culture for Citizen Participation Strengthened".

Seven years, during which the program was implemented, presented a dynamic period of Russian society, containing both positive and negative changes in attitudes of authorities to the domestic civil society organizations. In those years, the most important for the development of civil society reforms began - of local government, of the budget process, the administrative reform; and in the same years, "spy mania" attacks have occurred and inadequate evaluation of organizations that raise funds from international donors. During this period, there were changes in the distribution of powers and sources of the budget of the municipal, state regional and federal levels of government. During this period, the most important for the development of social activism and charitable work concepts and laws were adopted, the state monitoring of the NGOs activities was stricter or more liberal, the new federal and regional civil society institutions were formed – the public chambers and community consultative structures at all levels and branches of government... All these external factors affected the implementation of the program. If the first part of the program in 2004 - 2006 focused on the development of a favorable external environment for the development of philanthropy, enhancing the effectiveness of NGOs and the formation of stable sources of funding of public initiatives, in 2007 – 2010 emphasis of the program shifted to the development of dialogue between citizens and government on critical issues of social and socio-economic development, especially at local self-government level, to formulating and implementing mechanisms for public examination and public monitoring of government activities and involvement of citizens in the adoption and evaluation of the effectiveness of management decisions for the development of territories.

During the transition period of 2006 – 2007, pilot program objectives were formulated, which would later have undergone some changes in formulations. Ultimately, the program of 2004 - 2010 was aimed at achieving the five external and two internal tasks related to increasing the competence of the executive – e.g., "Povolzje" Association.

The goals of the program are:

Increased civic activism and citizen involvement in solving community problems through focused grant making;

Reinforced culture for social responsibility through giving, philanthropy, and social contracting – citizenry, business and local government.

Implement and disseminate effective mechanisms of citizens' engagement, including broad public participation in local self-government and electoral processes;

Raise the level of transparency in interaction among NGOs and authorities;

Transfer knowledge and skills of effective community/local government interaction to other NGOs in regions outside of Samara Oblast, promoting networking and information exchange among NGOs focusing on citizen engagement at the local level. Develop and disseminate information resources documenting project results, lessons learned, and tested models;

Development of the Povolzje's proficiency as a regional grant-making institution supporting civil society development. Povolzhje's professional level makes it a leading public organization in the VFD increasing the amount of public participation in the local self-government.

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT INDICATORS OF PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

25 regional and municipal competitions of NGOs social projects and actions were organized. More than 400 applications from all 10 urban districts and 16 rural districts of Samara Oblast were registered; supported 135 projects. More than 6,000 volunteers were involved in those projects, more than 30 thousand inhabitants of Samara Oblast became beneficiaries.

More than 1500 professionals of NGOs, state and municipal social institutions, the regional executive bodies and local authorities enhanced their skills in project activities, contests, project management and trust funds management.

More than 850 representative of NGOs and municipal institutions in the region enhanced their skills in work with business environment, development of public relations for NGOs and the use of free computer software; in the organization of the auditor's work; in the staff and volunteers' motivation etc.

About 700 representatives of 7 cities and 11 municipalities of the Samara Oblast enhanced their skills and acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to work effectively for the development of local self-government.

In the 7 municipal formations and 3 ministries (Education and Science, Health and Social Welfare, Youth and Culture) we fully introduced the technology of contests of social projects and a clear objective allocation of resources in line with international standards.

More than 20 proposals to improve the local regulations were designed and made in 3 cities and 4 municipalities (14 were accepted).

We developed training courses on the "School of the Contest Organizers", the "School of Appraisers of Programs and Projects", the "School of Fundraisers".

We developed counseling and education program on the involvement and participation of citizens in local self-government (full-time, part-time, distance).

We developed a model and hold an annual International Competition of educational development projects, charitable events scenarios and school and student researches and the single "Lesson of Charity" in the educational institutions of the Samara Oblast together with the regional Ministry of Education and Science and the Polish Foundation for Education for Democracy. We developed a model and hold an annual regional event for the public recognition of charity "ThankYou" ("BlagoDarit").

We developed a technology and organized the "Best settlement of Samara Oblast in the reform of local self-government" and the "Best Community Board for local self-government bodies in municipal formations in the Samara Oblast" contests.

We developed and implemented the technology of public dialogue between the authorities and citizens on budget issues at the regional and municipal levels (including settlements).

We arranged a regional charitable fund "Samara Province".

Together with the IPF SCISC (Novosibirsk) and the Sluzhehje Association (Nizhny Novgorod) we formed the coalition "Regions", bringing together the leading NGOs in 17 regions of Russia.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND/OR FAILINGS THE METHODS OF WORK USED AND THE PROS AND CONS OF THESE METHODS

Increased civic activism and citizen involvement in solving community problems through focused grant making

The task realization was aimed at implementation of the open competitive allocation of budgetary resources technology to address the acute problems of the region and local communities among NGOs, state and local social institutions and the increase in funds for regional and local budgets provided for the financing of NGOs social projects.

The joint practical organization of competitions of social projects of different scales: the municipal contests of social volunteer events with a consolidated budget, the regional contests of social projects in various areas of social sphere with a consolidated budget (education), the regional competitions of NGOs social projects at the program expense for the demonstration of competitive technologies in the municipal formations that were not included in the project as partners was elected as the main method of moving towards the stated objectives with the local authorities and various bodies of public authorities.

Organization by "Povolzje" the contests of NGOs social projects on request of the individual power structures can be considered as a variant of this method.

Another form of the implementation of high-quality competitive funds distribution technologies was the participation of "Povolzje" experts in competitions organized by state and local governments, nonprofit organizations and business structures as consultants at the stage of concept and procedures development in the organization of competitions and as experts - members of expert advisory boards at the application assessment stage and winners selection stage.

As a result of all these methods the following events took place in 2004 - 2010:

- three regional competitions of NGOs social projects (including one with the consolidated budget at the expense of the Ministry of Education and Science of Samara Oblast);
- 10 municipal contests for social projects in four cities and three rural areas of the region (all having the consolidated budget at the expense of municipal formations).

"Povolzje" experts provided consulting and methodological and expert support for the organization of competitions to:

Department of Social Welfare (Togliatti),

Department of Social Welfare (Syzran),

Committee on Youth (Togliatti),

Committee on Youth (Samara),

Committee on Youth (Zhigulevsk),

Committee on Family, Motherhood and Childhood (Novokuybyshevsk Administration),

the Chief Federal Inspector Office in Samara Oblast (President Office competition, 2005),

Regional branch of United Russia ("Social Forum", "Our Town" and "Our Parents" All-Russian competitions of social projects),

"S.O.K." Charitable Fund (Samara Oblast),

"Favorite City" Charity Fund (Zhigulevsk),

"Nadezhda" Charitable Fund (Oktyabrsk),

NGOs and business structures (Samara Youth, Togliatti Youth Bank, Samara Youth Union; ZAO SMARTS, ZAO FIA-BANK, etc.).

What was organized at the expense of public contracts:

- two competitions of NGOs projects aimed to fight corruption (funded by the Government Office of the Samara Oblast);
- two Provincial prizes and grants competitions of culture and art (funded by the Ministry of Culture and Youth Policy of the Samara Oblast);
- expert and advisory support in organizing the three competitions of youth projects and monitoring of ongoing projects for the State culture institution "Agency of social and cultural technologies";

- development of a package of documents of the competition of NGOs social projects to address the problems of the disabled, for the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs of the Samara Oblast. Specialists of all the above mentioned ministries and agencies and local governments, organizing competitions, were invited to participate in expert councils of the competitions organized by the “Povolzje” Association.

This practical work was supplemented by a consulting and educational program which provided the opportunity to examine various aspects of the organization of competitions and to plan the monitoring events and events related to the evaluation of the projects being implemented to the representatives of state and local authorities, professionals and non-profit organizations involved in a project. In the course of consulting and educational program we developed and approved the following training courses:

- organization of an effective advisory council,
- “School of the competitions organizers”,
- "School of programs and projects appraisers”.

More than 400 applications from all 10 urban districts and 16 rural districts of Samara Oblast (70% of all municipal formations in the region) were registered for the competition of social projects and social volunteer events organized at the program expense.

USAID funded 105 projects totaling about \$160000. The projects were aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle and improving human settlements, the involvement of youth in social projects and development of volunteerism, support of families and addressing disabilities, prevention of youth extremism, development of school funds, inclusive education, the implementation of innovative methods of civic education etc. More than 6,000 volunteers were involved in those projects, and more than 30 thousand inhabitants of Samara Oblast became beneficiaries.

NGOs and public institutions of major cities of Samara Oblast has always been active participants in various competitions, as opposed to organizations in rural areas. Grant program of the “Povolzje” association enhanced the activity and growth of project culture of organizations in small towns and rural areas, the share of which among participants in the competitions during the program grew; in 2004 it was 56%, in 2005 - 60%, in 2006 - 64%. The quality of applications and the quality of reports on ongoing projects increased as well. In 2006, all the winner organizations have handed the reports on time and did not make any significant errors in their activity.

Through the consolidated competitive budgets for the NGOs, state and local social institutions social projects funding we additionally attracted \$66,088; plus 1000000 rubles (about \$38000) of budget funds were allocated by “Povolzje” association on behalf of the Government Office of the Samara Oblast for NGOs social projects implementation.

As part of consulting and educational program for the organizers and participants of the competitions as well as for the winners we helped them to advance in project activities, contests organization, project and trust funds management; the program activities involved more than 1,500 professionals from NGOs, state and municipal social institutions, the regional executive bodies and local authorities bodies.

Thus, the technology of organization of social projects competitions and a clear objective allocation of resources (primarily the budget ones), corresponding to international standards have been implemented in full in seven municipal formations of the region (including the major cities - Samara, Novokujbyshevsk) and among the subjects of budget planning that are most collaborating with NGOs - in education, social welfare, youth policy and culture.

Specialists of partner state and local governments and non-profit organizations that have received the knowledge, skills and experience organizing competitions, continued use of the above mentioned technologies independently within the framework of their official duties - at the organization of regional competitions of NGOs social projects at the regional budget expense and the allocation of subsidies to NGOs to implement activities to promote civil society institutions

(Office of the Government of Samara Oblast), for distribution of the subsidies among NGOs for the provision of social services (Department of Social Welfare, Togliatti), for the provision of annual arts and culture grants (Ministry of Culture, Samara Oblast), etc.

Today, three years after the completion of the joint grant programs with the municipal formations of Samara Oblast, the developed technology of competitive distribution of budgetary funds is used in quantities allowed by local budgets.

The methods we've selected for solving the problem were adequate and effective. Changes in the budget legislation of Russia did not allow municipalities, ministries and departments of the Samara Oblast to fully put into practice the contests of NGOs social projects through the budget, but the specialists prepared in the framework of the program were able to adapt the developed technology and competitive procedures for subsidizing the non-profit organizations and the distribution of budget for works to meet municipal needs.

Representatives of all involved municipal administrations have stated that participation in the program not only brought additional funds into the territory, but also helped to increase the activity of public and nonprofit sector, gave impetus to the development of volunteering, improved the quality of proposals and applications for government funding.

Reinforced culture for social responsibility through giving, philanthropy, and social contracting –citizenry, business and local government.

To achieve this goal, activities were carried out in three main areas using the following methods:

- creating an enabling legal environment for philanthropy through research and publication of the level of development of philanthropy in the region, monitoring the implementation and improvement of the regional law “On charitable activities in Samara Oblast”, promoting it among NGOs and businesses; supporting the charitable initiatives of business structures;
- skills development of NGOs specialists and local social institutions in the implementation of fundraising, identifying and disseminating the most effective technologies for the Samara Oblast to attract donations from businesses and individuals through the practice-oriented teaching course “Fundraisers School” and competitions of the NGOs fundraising projects;
- the development of positive attitudes towards charitable activities through the organization of benefactors’ public recognition events and the implementation of the charity theme in the educational process in educational institutions of different types.

Of all the existing methods in the Samara Oblast the non-profit non-governmental organizations have been successfully utilizing only the technology of promotion of legislative initiatives before implementation of the program - the regional law on charitable activities was developed and promoted to the adoption by the NGOs. All other methods and forms of support and development of a culture of social responsibility through charity, philanthropy and social partnership have been developed or adapted and applied in the region for the first time. The program was innovative in this part.

A systematic assessment of the level of charity development based on the open sources analysis (websites of business structures and the monitoring of publications in newspapers) and the results of the sociological research “Development of the charitable activities of commercial structures and public and charitable funds in the Samara Oblast” (2004 and 2006) has become the basis for the development of activities and choice of methods. The study identified the characteristics of the stages in the development of philanthropy of commercial structures and tools that allow you to monitor and evaluate the changing situation in this area. Results of the study, released at public events and published in a number of articles in sociological books and regional magazines submitted to the deputies of the Samara Regional Duma and the structures of the Government of Samara Oblast along with the results of monitoring of implementation of the regional law implemented by the “Povolzje” association maintained close attention to the law “On Charitable Activity in the Samara Oblast”. As a result, the permanent working group of deputies,

representatives of NGOs and businesses formed in 2004 in Samara Regional Duma launched a fundamentally important changes in the law to reduce the volume of donations giving the right to benefits to commercial firms, the inclusion of representatives of business community in the Regional Welfare Council, streamlining and simplifying the procedures for NGOs to obtain the “Charity Passport in the Samara Oblast” etc., which were adopted in 2005 and 2011. Because of this purposeful activity of the “Povolzje” association in partnership with other NGOs the law operates, is constantly being improved and currently remains the only regional law in Russia providing real benefits (income tax exemptions) for the business legally donating significant sums for charity. The “Povolzje” Association manual on the use of the law is regularly propagated by various organizations for distribution to businesses. Amounts of the regional budget falling incomes due to the benefits commercial firms have under this law is constantly growing (by 2009 they accounted for more than 30 million rubles), that objectively indicates an increase in the amount of money invested by business in charity.

Recovering the philanthropy culture lost during the Soviet era and its development under present conditions is impossible without the proper qualification of NGOs specialists and individual and business donors. The program developed and tested a practically-oriented training course “The Fundraisers School” in combination with a unique NGOs fundraising events contest – a new technology for effective development of a culture of philanthropy. Within 7 days in the School students not only acquire the necessary fundraiser skills as a result of a balanced use of theoretical studies, psychological and practical training, planning and organizing a “street action” to collect private donations, but really gather a particular amount for a specific charitable purpose regardless of the season and the territory of the campaign – “rich” or “poor” city district, the countryside (not less than 5,000 rubles in 2005 - 2007, and roughly the same amount of donations in kind). In subsequent years, the “School” in its separate components has successfully replicated the “Rainbow” Teachers Club in Volgograd, Irkutsk, Kazan, Krasnoyarsk, Saratov, Stavropol, Tambov, Chelyabinsk, and even Moscow.

Two competitions of the fundraising actions were not aimed at financing the socially important activity of NGOs, but at the implementation of technologies that enhance the sustainability of the organizations, and they let the “Povolzje” association and NGOs of the Samara Oblast experience new activities. 50% of supported projects had total success - the grantees have collected much more money and donations of goods and services than the costs of organizing events were. The total coefficient of efficiency makes 2.8 for the contests (i.e., all grant recipients collected donations in an amount of 2.8 times more than the amount of funding for all projects). Each NGO has collected donations in an average of 4 legal entities, 2 private entrepreneurs, and about 50 citizens who got their experience in participating in charitable activities as donors. During the events, almost all known ways of collecting donations were practiced: letters to large, medium and small businesses; charity events (concert, selling exhibition, fair, and auction); piggy banks at different institutions; the racks of blank money orders in savings banks; etc. In subsequent years, the fundraising actions contests never recurred, but the results can be observed so far: for example, in 2008 Novokuibyshevsk students' of the Fundraisers School and the local charitable fund raised approx. 2 million rubles for the reconstruction of the local club; during 2010, “Ostap” shopping network in Samara organized donations for the Samara regional public organization for helping children with onco-hematologic malignancies, “Victoria”, etc.

Three-year monitoring of publications devoted to charity showed that the media cannot be the only channel and is not an effective channel for the formation of social positive attitudes towards charity, despite the fact that many of them have special columns and their own welfare programs. The people see the obvious reasons for the sharp increase in the amount of such publications during election campaigns, stove-piping, etc. In addition, it is the media willing to replicate the instances of the charity as a cover for a variety of scams and fraud. As part of the program, the

“Povolzje” association managed to work out other successful technologies of forming a positive attitude to philanthropy in the general population.

For the competitions of public charity recognition events NGOs and municipal social institutions invented and tested various ways of public expression of gratitude to the donors in the events of a separate organization or a municipal and regional scale: the calendars given to the inhabitants containing information about the charities, “city maps” with addresses and names of donor organizations marked on them, the establishment and delivery of special signs to the donors, registration of the benefactors' honorary book “Rekript” and placing it at the City Museum (the “On the annual commemoration of benefactors and patrons of the arts” resolution was adopted by the Head of city district to develop this project further; now the book is being updated annually and is very popular among residents of the city); a single municipal and a single regional day to express the gratitude to the donors and honor them with the nominal standard form letters, etc. More than a thousand individuals, businesses and funds got public recognition during the seven events in 2005; more than 1,100 donors took part in two events only in 2006.

Nowadays, the “Rainbow” Teaching Club holds a regional benefactors' public recognition event in the Samara Oblast annually, presenting an average of about 500 letters of appreciation a year. The successful experience of the action is implemented in the Tambov region and transferred to the Penza Fund “Civil Union”. The action is carried out in a single day and becomes a notable event in the company of a person or organization to whom recognition is expressed, as well as among the members and beneficiaries of an organization that grants recognition - that is, in the local community, forming a positive attitude towards charity at this level.

The technology for forming a positive attitude to philanthropy in the community - a competition of educational development projects and school and student researches “The lesson of charity” which was developed within the framework of the program and implemented in 2007, was called a “Charity Grafting” in the community. The contest ideas met such a demand in society, that it became an international one in the first year of its existence - the applications were received from 21 regions of Russia and the Republic of Uzbekistan; the contest experts were from the different cities of Russia, Ukraine and Poland. The effect of competition in the Samara Oblast is amplified by the fact that the winners' materials are being used during the “Lessons of Charity” held in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Samara Oblast in educational institutions. В первый год состоялось более 5 тысяч уроков. Over the next four years, when the “Rainbow” Teaching Club took the baton to the competition and lessons in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science of Samara Oblast and the Polish Foundation for Education for Democracy, the “Lessons of Charity” were attended by more than 200,000 pupils and students of Samara Oblast using materials of more than 320 participants in the competitions.

Among the traditional forms that contributed to achieving the relevant purpose of the program, the organization of the first Regional Conference on Philanthropy in the Samara Oblast and the establishment of a regional charitable fund “Samara Province” should be noted as program achievements.

Following the adoption of a regional law on charitable activities in 1999, there was no extensive public debate on philanthropy in the Samara Oblast. Discussions moved to the municipal level within the Togliatti “charitable seasons”, citizen assemblies in Kinel'-Cherkassky district, the annual inter-municipal conferences of the “Povolzje” association for partner cities and districts ... The First Regional Conference on Philanthropy in the Samara Oblast initiated by the “Povolzje” association in January 2007, brought together the representatives of NGOs, government bodies and local authorities, charities and commercial companies, the media. The results of sociological surveys on the development of charity presented at the conference, the exhibition “Three centuries of charity”, the results of monitoring the implementation of the regional law and publications on the conference theme in the media created a stage for public debate and development of the joint

recommendations of all groups of participants on the development of favorable conditions and practices of charitable activities. The conference has been so effective for all participants that since 2008 is held annually at the expense of public order as one of the most important events among the “Measures for the development of civil society institutions in the Samara Oblast in 2008-2010”, approved by the Government of Samara Oblast. Much of the recommendations of the first conference are made today by the public and authorities together mainly through the budget concerning the improvement in the regional law on charity and procedures for its implementation, the regular research of charity development level, the regional “Philanthropist of the Year” events, etc.

The most difficult task in the framework of our goals was to create a regional charity fund, which was supposed to be a constant source of support for socially useful activities of NGOs, methodological and operational center for the further development of the «Strengthening Grant-Making Capacity in Samara Oblast» program's results. In the end, this problem has also been solved by joint efforts of the “Povolzje” association, Charitable Foundation Fund of Togliatti and “Liko” commercial company. Today, a regional charitable fund “Samara Province” is the only independent foundation working for the whole territory of the Samara Oblast, using the best of modern charity development, fundraising, and collaboration technologies among participants in charitable activities (<http://www.fondsg.org>). Despite all the difficulties of recent times, including the financial crisis, which had a negative impact on charitable activities of business structures and levels of corporate and private donations, the Foundation develops its activities and, in particular, organizes the processes to reach results that could not be reached within program of the “Povolzje” association.

The main failure in this area of activity lies in the fact that it was impossible to unite regional and local donors and foundations around the Charitable Council of Samara Oblast, to develop an enabling environment through the joint efforts, to build regional and local charitable programs and system to provide financial resources to support socially significant NGOs activities. This happened for two reasons: errors in the preliminary assessment of the philanthropy development level in the region and the change of the region authorities. In 2004, 52% of commercial firms engaged in charitable work spontaneously and only 4% reached the level of social investment, when a concrete result is planned and the funds are invested in the development of promising trends and elements of social infrastructure. Most donors have not yet emerged a need for joint efforts to improve the charity environment, to pool resources to achieve qualitative changes in society considering critically high level of distrust to charities. In these circumstances it was necessary to get some external influence and political will of regional authorities to encourage charity and coordinate major donors at least on behalf of the region development. With the change of the regional authorities and the reorganization of regional government in 2005 – 2006, issues of supporting the charitable activities were overshadowed, and the return of interest in them in power bodies occurred only in 2007, which was demonstrated during the first regional conference “Philanthropy in the Samara Oblast”. At this point, philanthropy and culture of business firms also increased - 34% were at the level of corporate philanthropy and social investment (only 16% in 2004). “Povolzje” association has made a definite contribution to the recorded improvement, working with commercial firms and contributing to the formation of charitable programs of the “Electroschit” plant, “Sagalov & C⁰⁰” publishing house, “Visit” real estate company, “Optitelecom” service provider and others, engaging improvement of regional legislation on charities of such major donors as “Samaratransgaz”. In the new environment, RCF “Samara Province” adopted from the “Povolzje” association the task of consolidation of donors at the regional level.

Implement and disseminate effective mechanisms of citizens' engagement, including broad public participation in local self-government and electoral processes;

To achieve this goal, activities were carried out at two levels:

- at the municipal level, we implemented an extensive program of civic education, the practical implementation of forms of direct citizen participation in local self-government, including the improvement of local legal and regulatory framework, and held special events aimed at promoting the dialogue and joint actions involving citizens and local self-governments;
- at regional level we developed technologies and practices of citizen engagement in the budgetary process and participation in the legislative process and management in the social field through public consultative structures in the government.

The consulting and educational program on the involvement and participation of citizens in local self-government, first developed in the program, up to 174 teaching hours and 114 workshop hours tested in different ways (full-time, part-time, remote IT-based), is summarized in training manuals “Engaging citizens in the implementation of the reform of local self-government” and “Mobilizing resources to address the settlement issues”, which became winners of the 10th Russian competition of educational programs and methodological support for training, retraining and advanced training in the field of municipal management, organized by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and the Federal State Scientific Institution “Russian Research Center of Public Administration”.

As part of the program in 2006 - 2010, about 700 participants from 7 cities and 11 municipal districts of the Samara Oblast (49% of municipal formations in the region without settlements) improved their skills and acquired the knowledge and skills necessary for the effective activity on local self-government development. Two-thirds of them were professionals of local self-government bodies (LSGBs), others were leaders of NGOs and active citizens (in rural areas mainly the staff of municipal social institutions). Up to 65% of students used in their work gained knowledge and skills.

Each issue of consulting and educational program ended with the development of practical materials that improve the quality of LSGBs activities and empower citizens to participate in local self-governance: proposals to improve the local laws and regulations; plans for the preparation and carrying out actions to implement specific forms of citizen participation (public hearings, meetings of citizens, legislative creation initiative, etc.); local programs of LSGBs informational transparency development, development of social and municipal partnerships, etc. The post-training consulting support for the listeners was aimed to implement the proposals developed. As a result, students of the program developed and made more than 20 proposals to improve the local regulations and 3 cities and 4 municipalities improved 14 local laws and regulations.

The involvement of citizens in partner municipal formations in the implementation of the most widely used forms, such as public hearings on the budgets of municipal formations, has increased many times: from 0-3 people in the rural areas to 45-85 or more people...

The effectiveness of selected approach to achieve the relevant purpose of the program is supported by the fact that since 2009 the issue of citizen engagement in local self-government has become a constant topic in the “Day of the municipal formation deputies in the Samara Regional Duma”, and once a month it is considered with representatives of LSGBs and active citizens of a specific municipal district or urban district (for 9 municipalities annually). The urban districts, municipal districts and individual settlements annually send several requests to organize one-day seminars on counseling and educational program topics for the active members of municipal formations (LSGBs do not have money for longer courses) and / or assist in organizing a dialogue between authorities and citizens at citizen meetings, “round tables” and similar special events devoted to discussing and finding ways to solve local problems with the active participation of residents. Among the special events aimed at promoting dialogue and joint activities of citizens and LSGBs, the technology development and carrying of competitions for the best settlement of the Samara Oblast in the reform of local self-government can be considered as undoubted success of the program. The system of activity indicators designed for the competition of the LSGBs of the settlements (this system included the indicators for the quality of citizen involvement in local self-

government), and indicators of the level of settlement activity stimulated the heads of the settlements and active settlement citizens to improve the regulatory framework of settlements: for example, according to the head of Hovorostyanka rural settlement, during the preparation of the application to participate in the contest in 2008 there were developed and adopted more than ten “statutes” and “orders” that regulate life in the settlement. LSGBs of the settlements taking part in the competition for the first time together with the citizens developed social projects aimed at addressing the local community issues; the subjects of the projects were determined by citizens' assemblies. The winner settlements got their first experience of developed social projects implementation. Direct benefit from the participation of settlements in the competition and social projects implementation have received approx. 30,000 residents of 11 rural settlements – now they have landscaped playgrounds, refurbished plumbing lines with water columns, sections of street lighting, landscaped rural stadium, etc.

The following facts confirm the effectiveness of the technology: in 2010 the Council of municipal formations of Samara Oblast has organized a similar competition at their own expense, using the documents developed by “Povolzje” Association. The regional government has included a similar contest for the best rural (urban) settlement of Samara Oblast in the Action plan for state support of local self-government development in the Samara Oblast in 2008 - 2010 (cash fund of the competition is 4 mln. rubles annually).

The subject of citizens' involvement in the implementation of local self-government has never been a priority for government bodies and local self-government of the Samara Oblast in the analysis of the local self-government reform before the “Povolzje” association began to systematically make it to the public discussion board at Samara Regional Duma. Targeted information on the implementation of the program “Regional and Local Dialogues...”; representation of legislative analysis, the best practices of municipalities, the problems in the development of interactions between LSGBs and citizens to the deputies and the specialists. Fall of 2009 the association initiated the organization of the first Regional Conference on “Experiences and problems of participation of citizens in local self-government”, whose results were presented at VI Regional Assembly of the Samara Regional Duma deputies, deputies of representative organs of municipal formations in the Samara Oblast and members of the Public Council of the Samara Regional Duma in December 2009 in the presence of the governor and members of the Regional Government. November 2010 a public debate on citizen participation in local self-government was extended by the “Povolzje” association initiative to carry the inter-regional round table discussion on “Issues and problems of involving capacities and technologies of civil society organizations for the development of local self-government”, which was attended by more than 100 members of the public, local governments and public authorities of 13 regions of Russia. For 2011 the Samara Regional Duma thought plans seminar carrying out “About participation of citizens and public organizations in activity of local governments. Issues” and the scientific-practical conference on “Federal Law “On General Principles of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation”: the participation of citizens in the socio-economic development of municipal formations”. Thus, the theme of citizen participation in local self-governance has been the subject of regular public debates; we consider that as one of the most significant outcomes of the program. Public dialogue of the authorities and citizens on the most pressing issues of social and socio-economic development, the achievement of which was the program's goal, gives a significant positive result - a real impact of the citizens to the state management - only if it becomes permanent and is carried for a long time. This allows the parties to develop a common language and reach an understanding, to develop and legislate the procedures and rules to ensure the continuation of dialogue, regardless of political and other conditions. It is important for the dialogue topical area to be relevant at all levels of government and public life.

As a subject of public dialogue, throughout the program “Povolzje” Association was using the theme of citizen engagement in the budgetary process and the organization of public control over the formation and execution of the administrative formation budget (for the Oblast, the urban and municipal districts and settlements) through public hearings. Today we can say that it was the

right choice and one of the most significant achievements of the program to develop the technologies of public dialogue between the authorities and citizens on the budget together with the Ministry of the financial management of the Samara Oblast and the partner municipal formations, which are distributed across the region with the assistance of the Samara Regional Duma.

At the regional level, the technology of public hearings on the regional budget are set out in the “Order of public hearings on the draft law of the Samara Oblast on the regional budget for the next fiscal year and the planned period and the annual report on the performance of the regional budget for the last financial year”, approved by the Government of Samara Oblast in 2009. Currently the additions to the regional law on the budget and budgetary system are being considered, which will consolidate existing practice at a higher level.

At the level of city districts and municipalities the proper “Regulations on the organization and conduct of public hearings ...” have been enhanced already or are being improved currently.

At the level of settlements we developed and tested an educational program for the heads of the settlements and active citizens on issues of participation in the budgetary process; operational and regulatory assignment of this program will be secured in the current and subsequent years. The following fact also stimulates public dialogue on budget issues at the municipal level: the fact that since 2010 the rates of publicity of the budget process implementation in terms of the formation and execution of the budget are taken into account when ranking the quality of management of municipal finances, according to which cities, municipal districts and settlements are provided with additional grants from the regional budget. Indicators are included in the “Procedure for calculating and granting...” subsidy proposed by the “Povolzje” association. In 2010, subsidies amounted to 50 million rubles.

Public dialogue on the formation and execution of the budget is the multi-functional process. To ensure it there was created and is constantly updated the group of public experts (and, therefore, there were developed technologies of expert training, preparation and presentation of expert opinions, etc.); the methods for evaluating the effectiveness of budgetary funds usage by specific ministries and departments are being improved annually - each year there are not less than 40 direct dialogues at the specific ministries’ sites, which involve more than one hundred of the most active NGOs. For the same purpose the following procedures are being developed: the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality and amount of state and municipal public services; the procedures to control the account of public expert suggestions on budget adjustments; the mechanisms practiced include citizens' proposals on the use of budget funds in the spending obligations of the regional budget (such practice already exists at the municipal level, especially in the settlements).

Among the achievements of the program, we should name the organization and results of public social dialogue at the regional level on the development of civil society institutions such as community consultative structures under local self-government bodies - public councils, NGO boards, youth parliaments, etc. (hereinafter - the community councils).

While Russia does not have the economic conditions that stimulate an increase in the number of registered NGOs in small towns and rural areas, the social base of the local dialogue of citizens and the government remains extremely limited and dispersed; it is difficult to effectively implement programs of civic education for the population and almost impossible to shape the practice of public participation in decision-making process of local self-government bodies. The only stable enough points of citizen concentration – those citizens who are in some degree enlightened in matters of local self-government, have a certain experience in dealing with officials and are ready for active public life – are the public consultative structures for local self-government bodies. Having this fact established, the “Povolzje” association together with the Samara Regional Duma specifically studied the experience of public boards throughout the program, promoted their best practices among the public, improved the qualifications of the members of public councils through workshops and consultations, and encouraged greater

efficiency of their operations. Community councils are not legal entities, their members do not receive remuneration for their work, so the possible motivations of these structures to improve the quality of work is limited and includes only two stimuli - the public recognition of members of the board and competition with other similar structures.

Regional contest “The Best Community Council for local self-government bodies of municipal formations in the Samara Oblast in 2009” was another new and effective technology for the development of conditions and opportunities for social and municipal dialogue. Organizing it, we developed a system of criteria and indicators for assessing the effectiveness of community councils, improved regional model provision on public council for a representative body of local self-government; guidance on planning activities and public accountability of public advisory bodies. Community initiatives implemented by the winners with financial support from the “Povolzje” association expanded the capabilities of community councils in informing the public about its activities, educating citizens on issues of participation in local self-government and organization of different social events with broad public participation.

Today the community councils are established in all cities and districts and in a number of settlements in the Samara Oblast. Most of them are acting in the representative bodies of local self-government and promote citizen involvement in legislative activities, the budget process and evaluation of the effectiveness of municipal management. The next contest “Best Community Board for local municipal self-government bodies in the Samara Oblast” will be held after the end of 2011, as the most councils have been updated after the municipal elections in 2010.

Currently, the systematic seminars on issues of public boards’ organization are being carried at the Samara Regional Duma.

In the near future, all the developed technologies and methods will be used to improve the effectiveness of the deliberative public bodies together with the public authority bodies of Samara Oblast.

The measures aimed at ensuring mass public participation in electoral processes and increasing electoral culture in rural areas might be considered a relative failure in the implementation of the program. “Povolzje” association could not raise the experimental experience of initiating and organizing the public discussion of deputy candidates and activities of the Club of Educated Voters to technology level which gives consistent results, due to external circumstances reported in the quarterly reports.

For the same reasons the schedule of consulting and educational program “Points of growth of a rural area” was really time stretched, which not allowed us to get major practical results that were planned within the project. The developed draft documents were not passed on to the local self-government bodies before the municipal elections (“Regulation on the development and implementation of municipal targeted budget programs” and the “Program of usage of historical and cultural potential of the district to its socio-economic development”). The results of local self-government district elections in October 2010 fully updated the composition of the body, and further implementation of documents developed and public initiatives became impossible till the very end of the program.

To raise the efficiency of CSOs, increase responsibility and transparency of partnerships between CSOs, government and businesses for effective solution of vital community problems.

Since the program was aimed at achieving the strategic goal of USAID “More open and active society”, all activities and events of the “Povolzje” association, one way or another, have been oriented towards achieving the above mentioned goal, as it has been already stated in the text of the report.

As additional and specific methods, we used training of NGOs representatives in organizational development and management, the formation of the practice of interaction between civil society organizations, government and business to solve social issues of local communities and the

practice of implementation of tasks of local government reform, the budget process and administrative reform, concerning transparency of the authorities and NGOs; organization of public examination and public monitoring of state and municipal government.

More than 850 representatives of NGOs and municipal social institutions of the region enhanced their skills in motivating staff and volunteers and building teams in the organization, in development and implementation of ethical standards and codes in the organization, the development of public relations, in bookkeeping, organization of the auditor's work and the issues of interaction with the tax inspection; in usage of the free computer software and in planning and imputing value of services to the public. Without special sociological research, it is impossible to assess whether stability of the relationship of these organizations with the authorities and population has increased, but indirect evidence for the effectiveness of training may be the fact that, considering the reduction of available sources of funding for NGOs and financial crises of 2008 – 2009, only two NGOs have stopped their activities from more than two hundred NGOs involved in the program.

The working groups formed in 2004 - 2006 in the partner municipalities to implement the program, collaborative planning and implementation of municipal charity development programs, to support the socially useful activities of NGOs, to introduce the competitive procedures of budget allocation, etc., uniting these three sectors' representatives, have become prototypes for the public consultative structures at local self-government bodies, which have developed in 2007 - 2010 years.

Skills of public dialogue on selected topics like creating an enabling environment for interaction between NGOs, governments and business or assessing the impact of joint activities at the inter-regional conferences and round tables, have been developed during implementation of such forms of direct citizen participation in local self-government as public hearings, meetings and citizen conferences, population surveys to determine their level of satisfaction with the activities of government.

Consulting and educational courses “LSGBs information openness”, “Office software for LSGBs” and “Internet from the ground up for LSGBs professionals” allowed us to develop conceptual “Plans to ensure transparency of local self-government bodies”, which are easily adapted to the needs and technical capabilities of a particular city or region, and to ensure the implementation of these plans with the increased skills of municipal employees. Participation of representatives of the “Povolzje” association in the activities of the expert group of a permanent competition of the websites of representative bodies of local self-government, organized by the Samara Regional Duma, allowed them to cooperate with the partner municipal formations to improve their information resources. Despite the fact that deficit budgets of municipal formations did not allow the “Plans to ensure transparency...” to be approved for targeted financing, 95% of trainees improved the process and format for submitting the information to the public in varying degrees within their territories.

As one of the promising achievements of the program we can name the project technology aimed to enhance transparency in the allocation and use of regional budget funds provided to support the activities and social programs and projects of NGOs of Samara Oblast – the Showcase of programs, projects and activities of NGOs of Samara Oblast implemented by regional budget. In 2009, more than 300 million rubles were scheduled for distribution in the budget of the Samara Oblast only on “Providing subsidies to nonprofit organizations which are non-budgetary and autonomous institutions, with the exception of subsidies granted in accordance with the agreements (contracts) for the provision of public services by such organizations to individuals and (or) legal entities” budget item; in 2010 - more than 500 million rubles. At the same time there is no publicly available information on the amount, purpose and results of the use of these funds. Organization of the exhibition has helped to establish procedures for the collection and

compilation of objective information on the amount and purpose of government support and to develop a form of public reports of NGOs on the results of the use of budgetary funds. The following exhibitions will be confined to the public hearing on the performance report of the Samara Oblast budget for the next year, and efficient use of budgetary resources of recipient NGOs will be a subject to public examination in the same way as it occurs today in relation to the ministries and departments - the main managers of budget funds of the Samara Oblast.

Transfer knowledge and skills of effective community/local government interaction to other NGOs in regions outside of Samara Oblast, promoting networking and information exchange among NGOs focusing on citizen engagement at the local level. Develop and disseminate information resources documenting project results, lessons learned, and tested models.

To achieve the goals we used all available means:

- informing the state authorities and local self-government bodies, NGOs and citizens groups of Samara Oblast and other Russian regions, as well as federal agencies, about the content, methods of implementation and program results through reports and presentations at regional, interregional and international conferences, roundtables, seminars, etc.;
- organization of training of municipal formations representatives from the regions of Siberia in the Samara Oblast; ensuring the participation of representatives of the Samara Oblast in the program-related activities in other regions of Russia;
- organization of regional and interregional conferences on the topics of the program;
- formation and support of a regional coalition of NGOs - the section on citizen participation in local self-government under the Public Council at the Samara Regional Duma;
- formation of and participation in inter-regional coalition of NGOs "Regions"; the development and implementation of program-related joint projects with members of the coalition;
- dissemination of information through websites, published digests, booklets and program-related collections, providing materials for publishing to the partners.

Among the achievements of the program one should mention the training of 20 representatives of LSGBs and the public of 17 municipal formations of the 9 regions of Siberia in the Samara region (Republic of Buryatia, Altai and Krasnoyarsk Krai, Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Tomsk, Tyumen and Chita Oblasts). Trainees visited 4 cities and 4 rural areas of the Samara Oblast, shared experience of local self-government development in the living communion and the involvement of citizens in it; were able to assess and compare the results of programs implemented by the "Povolzje" association and the Inter-regional Public Foundation Siberian Civic Initiatives Support Center (IPF SCISC); presented the results of training in their municipal formations. "Povolzje" Association worked out the technology of the organization of group training. All training participants, from Siberia as well as from the Samara Oblast, said that they first had the opportunity of such a detailed and vivid sharing of experience.

The formation of a regional coalition of NGOs aimed at involving citizens in local self-government can be considered as the program achievement. The coalition has gained experience of joint actions to improve the legislation and education of LSGBs' and local communities' representatives at the local level in the municipal formations. Its representatives take part on a permanent basis in the Day of a Municipal Formation Deputy in the Samara Regional Duma, present at meetings of the Duma committee on local self-government, the Duma hearings on local government, and they are the members of public committees and working groups under the Committee. The coalition is stable now, and undoubtedly will continue to work after the end of the program, developing its achievements further.

Interregional coalition "Regions", which was issued as a result of joint concerted efforts of the "Povolzje" association and IPF SCISC that unites the leading NGOs from 17 regions of Russia. Constant exchange of information and concerted action on any socially significant issues; joint

lobbying of Russian regions on the federal level; commitment to participate in each other's activities; sharing resources (primarily technological and human) of individual organizations for all members of the coalition relative to the whole first year of the coalition suggest that this association has all the chances to become sustainable, and to acquire a significant authority at the federal level in two or three years.

Today, unfortunately, as one of the program failures we should mention the fact that all attempts to organize a serious and productive dialogue on issues of citizen participation in local self-government at the federal level were unsuccessful during the program.

Today, in the Samara Oblast a fairly large budget is distributed among NGOs - the regional budget includes 547.9 million rubles only for grants to support activities, works and services to the population in 2011. The volume of state support will increase in the coming years due to the adoption of the Federal Law on the socially-oriented NGOs. The question "Where to get money to support the activities of NGOs?" was replaced with the new questions: how to get money for NGOs from the budget, how to ensure equal rights for all NGOs to state support, how to organize public control over the allocation of budgetary funds to NGOs and how NGOs themselves should keep independence of public position at a time when financial support from the state far exceeds the volume of business charity? Development of mechanisms for public monitoring and public examination of the budget allocation and efficiency of spending of these funds by the NGOs - that's the problem for the next few years, not only in our region, but throughout Russia.

At the local level in municipal formations of Samara Oblast the technologies of involvement and participation of citizens in improving the regulatory framework, the mechanisms of interaction between NGOs, initiative groups of citizens and local authorities in addressing urgent social problems of local communities through the implementation of social projects and the development of volunteering and philanthropy are worked out and are being applied successfully. The first mission on the agenda is to develop and implement technologies of the citizen influence on important LSGBs decisions on area development and use of budgetary funds in such a way that recommendatory (by law) decisions of public hearings and public experts opinions were actually performed.

Technologies developed and tested through practice during the implementation of the program provide a good basis for citizens' associations to move in the above mentioned directions.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN YEARS 2004 - 2010

The following activities were undertaken as part of **To organize competitions of CSOs' social projects involving regional and local budget funds** task:

2 regional competitions of NGOs' social projects - we supported 26 projects out of 119 applications totaling \$102,054. 12,054 residents of Samara Oblast became beneficiaries, 1,308 volunteers took part in projects, and 64 informational materials about the projects were published.

1 regional competition of social projects in the education system (together with the Ministry of Education and Science of Samara Oblast) – we supported 11 projects out of 105 applications totaling 1.4 million rubles (approx. \$54,000), including 420,000 rubles (approx. \$16,000) at the expense of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Samara Oblast.

9 contests of social and voluntary actions in 7 municipal formations in the Samara Oblast – we supported 66 projects out of 134 applications totaling \$110,000, including 1,324,301 rubles (approx. \$51,000) at the expense of municipal budgets. 5,582 residents of Samara Oblast became beneficiaries, 3,644 volunteers took part in projects, and 138 messages on project activities were published.

2 competitions of fundraising campaigns – we supported 11 applications out of 34 totaling \$10,318. As a result of NGO projects we have attracted services, goods and funds totaling \$26,225 (including goods and services worth \$8,999, funds totaling \$17,226) from 46 commercial companies and not less than 340 individuals.

2 competitions of campaigns of public recognition “BlagoDarit” (ThankYou) - we supported 10 applications out of 19 totaling \$6,500. More than 1000 individuals, foundations, NGOs, commercial companies, firms were thanked by the grateful beneficiaries in various forms (mostly small and medium businesses and individuals).

1 competition of youth actions projects on 420th anniversary of Samara independent city (together with the Department of Youth of Samara independent city) - we supported 9 applications out of 16, including 4 projects funded, totaling \$....

The fair of social projects of Samara NGOs – we supported 4 projects out of 20 applications from the initiative groups of citizens of Leninsky district and NGOs of Samara independent city aimed at supporting the social activities of residents totaling \$9,500 (284,214 rubles). We tested a new technology of social partnership development for the city (implementation of Angarsk experience); more than 30 veterans of the Great Patriotic War have received targeted assistance from commercial firms (repairs in apartments, personal care, etc.).

36 workshops on social engineering and project management - 697 participants from NGOs and local social institutions, specialists of the local self-government of the Samara Oblast have mastered the skills of social engineering and project management, management of grants and budgetary subsidies.

Monitoring of the winning projects: 90% of social projects implemented by NGOs and local government agencies after the competitions were subjected to monitoring. 120 organizations received advice on record keeping, personnel policies and financial management with the use of trust funds contributions in their activities.

The study “Evaluating the effectiveness of the Program Strengthening the capacity of grant support for social initiatives in the Samara Oblast (2004-2007) in the Neftegorsky district and Novokuibyshevsk”.

The following activities were taken as part of **To raise the efficiency of CSOs, increase responsibility and transparency of partnerships between CSOs, government and businesses for effective solution of vital community problems** task:

Development and conduction of consultation and educational training courses for government officials, local government and NGO representatives training in the organization of competitive distribution of funds to support the social activities of NGOs ("School of the contest organizers"). 38 representatives of administrations of five municipal formations, four social ministries and departments in the region, "grantmaking" regional NGOs have acquired skills in the organization of contests and improved their packages of necessary documentation (provisions on competition and the application form, assessment, monitoring and evaluation of projects, etc.) in the course of three training courses.

Implementation of consulting and educational training Program for the NGOs' personnel in Samara Oblast: More than 450 representative of NGOs and municipal institutions in the region during the 20 workshops lasting 1 – 3 days enhances their skills in social planning, collecting private donations and work with business environment, development of public relations for NGOs and the use of free computer software; in the organization of the auditor's work; in the staff and volunteers' motivation and building teams in an organization; in the bookkeeping and legal aspects of charitable activities; in developing and implementing the ethical standards and codes in the organizations.

Within 3 Fundraisers School courses we perfected practice-oriented specialists training technology on resource mobilization in NGOs: representatives from 5 municipal formations in the region attracted resources in kind and in cash from the business and citizens during the workshops in each course (from 7,000 rubles to 38,000 rubles).

Presentation / exhibition of programs, projects and activities of NGOs in Samara Oblast, implemented by the federal and regional budgets: the technology of public reporting of NGOs on the use of funds received from the federal budget in the form of presidential grants and from the regional budget in the form of grants (in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance Management and Government Office of the Oblast). More than 200 representatives of NGOs and regional authorities have seen the records of 59 organizations.

Local authorities of 6 towns and 5 rural areas and 4 ministries were receiving regular consultative support for the organization of competitions of social projects and grants to NGOs.

The following activities were taken as part of **To develop local charity and shape positive societal attitudes towards charitable activities** and **To create permanent local sources of funding for social activities of CSOs and civic initiatives aimed at the development of civil society** tasks:

Study Development of charitable activities of commercial structures and public and charitable funds in the Samara Oblast (2004 and 2006) allowed us to obtain systematic picture of the nature and level of development of philanthropy in the region for the first time, to propose the technique of monitoring, to monitor and evaluate changes in charitable activities for three-year period. The results of the study were presented to the general public in the region and published in Russian. Performance monitoring and improvement of the regional law "On charitable activities in Samara Oblast" - on the results of monitoring and participating in a working group of the Samara Provincial Duma the law was twice amended (2005 and 2010) and remained the only functioning regional law that provides tax benefits to donors.

Monitoring of publications about philanthropy in the regional media - the monitoring results presented to the general public, journalists and editors of the media encouraged media interest in the topic, as well as the emergence of several regular columns on topics of philanthropy.

Development of models and implementation of annual regional campaign of public recognition of charity "BlagoDarit" (ThankYou) - during the campaign, the organization of which (after working out the model in 2005 - 2006) undertook Teachers Club "Rainbow", each year about 100 NGOs express their gratitude, presenting the special Diplomas, up to 1000 donors - individuals and legal entities.

Regional Conference on Philanthropy in the Samara Oblast - a conference which for the first time during the project gathered together representatives of NGOs, business structures, regional and

municipal authorities, and media representatives to discuss issues and the development of charity; it has become an annual regional event which is funded from the regional budget, as well as regional negotiating platform.

The “BlagoDarit” (ThankYou) dedicated website devoted to charity in the Samara Oblast was created, posted on the Internet and then supported.

Development of the model and the organization of the International Competition "Lessons of Charity": after the first two competitions it is annually realized by Teachers Club "Rainbow" together with Polish partners. During 2006 - 2010, Competition in the following categories (research, methodological development of the lesson, charity campaign script) was attended by 320 people from Uzbekistan, Ukraine, and 51 regions of Russia, more than 60 experts from four countries (Russia, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine); more than 200,000 pupils and students were involved in the annual regional single "Lesson of charity". Model is adopted and being developed in the Republic of Tatarstan, replicated in the regions of Siberia.

The Samara Province Regional Charitable Foundation, established in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce of Samara Oblast, Charitable Foundation Togliatti and commercial firm Liko LLC successfully develops its activities.

Charity foundation officers' probations from Oktyabrsk, Zhigulevsk and Samara in the Community Foundation of Rubtsovsk (Altai Territory), in the Community Foundations' Partnership in Svetlogorsk (Sverdlovsk Region) and in the Moscow office of the World Wildlife Fund have contributed to the introduction of new forms of philanthropy and sustainability of local funds' activity.

The following initiatives were introduced in order to implement the **Implement and disseminate effective mechanisms of cooperation of citizens including broad involvement of public in the local government and election processes** task:

Testing of technologies to involve citizens in the budgetary process and the organization of public hearings on the budget as a form of regional dialogue of citizens and authorities: we initiated the creation and support of the activities of a public expert advisory board under the Ministry of Finance Management of Samara Oblast, together with the Ministry of Finance Management and Staff of the Government of Samara Oblast, and worked out the technology of public examination of the draft regional budgets and performance reports by organizing public hearings and fixed it by the act of the regional Government; ensured public participation of the experts in 8 meetings of the public assembly of Samara Oblast on “Public hearings on the regional budget”.

We implemented a comprehensive counseling and educational program Engaging citizens in the implementation of local self-government reform, including the following thematic units: “The legal and organizational framework of local self-government in the Russian Federation” (1 time), “Forms of direct participation of citizens in local self-government” (4 times), “Information transparency of local government and NGOs” (2 times), computer courses “Office Software for LSGBs” and “Internet from scratch” (1 time), “The interaction of citizens and LSGBs” (1 time), “Mobilizing resources to address the settlement’s problems” (2 times). As part of the program, 398 representatives of local government, NGOs and local government social services in 14 municipal formations of the Samara Oblast have gained the legal knowledge, working skills with the regulations on citizens' participation in local self-government and the practical experience of implementing regulations mentioned in Chapter 5 of FL-131 “On general principles of organization of local self-government in the Russian Federation”.

We developed and tested the consulting and educational program “Participation of citizens in the budgetary process of a municipal formation (settlement)”

Headmen and active citizens in 12 settlements and administrative specialists of the agricultural municipal district gained the knowledge and practical skills in budget planning for the settlement with the participation of citizens as well as in public hearings on the budget of the settlement, made suggestions to improve settlement and district regulations that affect the participation of citizens in the budget process.

We developed and implemented standards of teaching materials for the consulting and education programs of NGOs. Educational and methodical complexes - the manuals “The involvement of citizens in the implementation of the reform of local self-government” and “Mobilizing resources to address the settlement's problems” were represented at 10th Russian competition of educational programs and methodological support for training, retraining and advanced training in the field of municipal administration organized annually by the Federal State scientific institution Russian Research Center of Public Administration under the aegis of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation.

Improving electoral culture of citizens: we tested technologies and acquired experience in legal education of citizens on participation in election campaigns outside the context of political debate through seminars and meetings of the Club of Educated Voters to implement such a form of direct citizen participation in local self-government as “municipal elections”.

By suggestions of project participants, we improved 14 regulations in 14 municipal formations that ensure citizens' participation in local self-government, and introduced for consideration 11 lawmaking proposals; improved 2 regional model rules (on territorial self-government and community council for a representative body of local self-government) and 2 regional rules for citizen participation in the budgetary process.

During the two competitions for the best settlement of the Samara Oblast in the reform of local self-government we have developed an assessment technology of advancement of the settlement in the reform of local self-government and citizen involvement in local self-government; we assessed 34 settlements. Government of 15 settlements have received skills of social planning and citizen involvement in social projects. We funded 11 social projects in 11 settlements in five rural areas for a total of \$ 51,000.

In the course of the organization and conduct of the Contest “The Best Community Board for LSGBs 2009”, we developed an assessment technology of performance of public consultative structures at local self-government, evaluated 17 public councils of the 15 municipal formations of the Samara Oblast. 11 public boards have gained skills of planning and implementing community initiatives funded a total of \$ 8,000. As a result of competition, we have developed and implemented a consulting and educational program to improve the performance of 120 public advisory bodies as the local negotiating areas in the dialogue of citizens and local self-governments.

In order to create and implement the best practices of citizen engagement in local self-government we organized several events in 7 municipal formations, in collaboration with local authorities: seminars / forums of active citizens, “round tables”, the municipal campaigns like the regional competition “Family Album Photos”.

We formed the operating regional negotiating platform for citizen participation in local self-government: a section on citizen participation in local self-government of the Public Council at the Samara Regional Duma held working meetings / workshops with activists of 5 rural municipal formations of the region on the “Local self-government and citizens” theme, initiated and participated in two meetings of the Public Council of the Samara Regional Duma on “Experience and problems of citizen participation in local self-government”, “On the role of public participation in the examination of legislation and law enforcement”.

We conducted the following events in order to implement the **Develop and disseminate informational resources documenting the project results, gained experience and tested models and Transfer knowledge and skills of effective interaction between community and authorities to other CSOs in the regions outside Samara Oblast, assist interaction between non-governmental organizations dealing with public involvement on the local level** tasks: 4 internships of representatives of Siberian MFs in the Samara Oblast: 20 representatives of NGOs and LSGBs from 17 municipal formations of the 9 regions of Siberia (Altai and Krasnoyarsk Krai, the Republic of Buryatia and Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Tomsk, Tyumen and Chita Oblast) acquainted with the experience in support and development of local self-government in the

Samara Oblast on the regional level; the participation of citizens in local self-government in 4 rural and 4 urban districts in the region.

Participation of representatives of MF of the Samara Oblast and the project staff in interregional activities of NGOs – our partners in the regions of Siberia using the experience of the Samara Oblast (conference on “Participation of citizens in local self-government. Problems and Prospects”, Altai Republic, Gorno-Altai; conference on “Local Self-Government and citizens: The effective interaction in modern conditions”, Tomsk; conference on “Best Practices for interaction of population and the authorities in solving local problems: The experience of Russian cities”, Novosibirsk; conference on “From the best practices of municipal management to the strategic development of municipal formations”, Irkutsk - Baikalsk; 4th International Workshop “Assessment of projects and programs”, Novosibirsk).

We organized interregional activities to discuss experiences and techniques used by the NGOs for community development and citizen engagement in local self-government, the problems hindering the effective development of these processes and to make recommendations to overcome them: 2 expert and methodical conferences on “Participation of citizens in local self-government. Resources for Development” (60 participants from 19 regions); the “round table” on “Issues and problems of involving capacities and technologies of civil society organizations for the development of local self-government” (118 participants from 13 regions of Russia); seminar on “Regional Experience in public examination and involvement of citizens in the budget process by the example of the Samara Oblast” for the representatives of the Siberian network of NGOs. Participation in activities at the federal level with the presentation and promotion of individual project results (9 events):

5th All-Russian conference on “Social Partnership and the development of civil society. The experience of regions and municipalities” (Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Russian Federation);

“Round tables” and parliamentary hearings organized by the Committee for the Development of Civil Society Institutions of Russia's Federation Council on the topics “Problems of Legislative Support of development of civil society”, “On the interaction of the institutions of civil society and the All-Russian Congress of Municipal formations on the formation of Councils of municipal formations in the Russian Federation”, “Interaction between institutions of civil society and the media with public authorities when implementing citizens' rights to obtain reliable information”;

“Round tables”, meetings and public hearings in the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation on the following topic: discussion of the 1st Report of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation on Civil Society status; State and Development of the activity of public chambers in the Russian regions, “Ecosystem of instruction of the third sector in the context of support for socially-oriented Russian NGOs”;

Conference on “Development of municipal formations in Crisis” by the Fund “Promoting sustainable development of territories and local communities” (SDF) and FSSI Russian Scientific Center of State and municipal Management

Together with the IPF SCISC (Novosibirsk) and the Association “Sluzheniye” (Nizhny Novgorod) we formed the “Regions” coalition bringing together leading NGOs from 17 Russian regions

We prepared and printed / published:

booklet “The Law “On charity activity in the Samara Oblast. Instructions for use”;

Collection of materials which were the winners of the V contest “Lessons of charity” (2007, 2010).

training manuals “Engaging citizens in the implementation of the reform of local self-government” and “Mobilization of resources to address settlement issues”;

collection of articles “Technology of Civil Society Organizations for the Development of Municipal Formations”;

booklet “Regional dialogues. Samara experience of citizen participation in the budgetary process”. Together with Samara Regional Duma we prepared and funded (at the SRD expense) the publication of booklets based on the regional conference “Experience and problems of citizen participation in the implementation of Local Self-Government” and Competition “Best Public Council under the Local Self-Government of Samara Oblast in 2009”.