

**REVIEW OF THE FIRST YEAR OF
THE BLACK SEA TRUST FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION
-a project of the German Marshall Fund -**

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Mariana Milosheva and David Krushe

CREDA consulting (Creative Development Alternatives)

Sofia, Bulgaria

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INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this assessment is to review the outcomes of the first year of the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation of the GMF. It had two main objectives: to assess the procedures and mechanisms put in place and employed by BST in its grantmaking; and to get input from various stakeholders on local and regional needs and BST's role and performance. The assessment focused on four broad issue areas:

- *Effectiveness of grantmaking and operational processes*: outreach and visibility, selection of projects, pro-active/reactive approach; monitoring and learning from grants
- *Outcomes from grantmaking so far*: what has been funded, the potential outcomes of supported projects and the extent to which they respond to BST strategy
- *Resources*: what can BST realistically do with current level of resources, what more is needed in order to meet its strategy objectives
- *BST response to local needs and opportunities*: is BST funding projects that are relevant for its mission and vision and does BST have a mechanism to include local input into its strategy
- *Link between BST grantmaking and broader GMF policy work in the region*: how to optimize the resource that BST is a project of the GMF

As it is too early for an in-depth evaluation, this review is more future oriented. It overviews results and challenges in the first year in order to assist strategy and learning processes of the BST.

The assessment was done in the time between 1 October 2008 and 30 January, 2009 and involved documentation research (key program and strategy documents of the BST, funded projects)and direct or phone interviews with GMF and the BST, members of the Grants review Committee, the Advisory Board and some of its key donors; interviews with strategic thinkers and practitioners, some of the grantees of the BST, and with some other donors and development agencies active in the areas of the BST.

Direct observations and interviews were done through attending the Advisory Board meeting in Istanbul October, 2008, Field trip to Romania beginning November: observing the Black Sea NGO Forum *Time to Meet* and interviews with selected participants (BST grantees and other stakeholders),as well as in-depth interviews with BST team; field trips to two of the BST countries Azerbaijan and Ukraine in November-December 2008. In both countries in-depth interviews were done with some of the BST grantees, other stakeholders – NGOs, think tanks, donors active in the area of the BST. Additional phone interviews with various stakeholders were done in December 2008 and January 2009.

This review involved 63 interviews, list of respondents is in attachment 1.

The review was done by experts of CREDA consulting, Bulgaria: Mariana Milosheva, based on her expertise in numerous assessments of grantmaking programs and especially the similar assessment done for the Balkan Trust for Democracy, and is a member of its Advisory Board; in team with David Krushe, who also has extensive experience in assessments in CEE and the Balkans, as well as specialization on policy/advocacy work of civil society, including his work as Senior Manager and Advocacy Advisor in the USAID Civil Society Project.

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

1. The GMF Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation (BST) had a very successful start-up year, especially in view of its challenging task of follow up of the GMF Balkan Trust for Democracy (BTD) model in the very different setting of the Wider Black Sea Region. Officially launched in October 2007, the BST succeeded very quickly to become an effectively operational grantmaking program with sound mechanisms and process of selection of applications on rolling basis and based on careful review and consultations on project ideas and applicants. It has evolving visibility in the region, an expanding staff with strong commitment and energy to make the BST a success, an Advisory Board of very resourceful and recognized experts and practitioners from all the countries in the region which meets on annual basis to provide input to strategy, and a Grantmaking Committee consisting of GMF offices in Europe and BST donors as observers, which had 6 sessions in the first year.
2. In the period October 2007- October 2008 the BST has reviewed 92 applications coming from 9 countries and has provided 59 grants supporting regional and in-country initiatives in total of \$1,552,847. Looking at the overall mosaic of grants in the first year the BST was successful in selecting good projects of various nature, level of intervention, type of actors and level of interaction among them, issues and target groups and potential for bringing for change in the immediate setting of the different local and regional contexts. In almost 40% of the grants BST funding is leveraged support (co-funding of different ratio, and with variety of donors). Though it is still early to see the outcomes from supported projects, as just a few have been finished, the credibility and expertise of organizations involved, and some of the planned outcomes/effects on the ground are very promising.
3. There are already emerging clusters of projects that provide interesting approaches at different levels: a variety of initiatives addressing issues of conflict zones (policy/management of crises, establishing interactive groups or debates, bridging groups or actors together, or opening channels of communication among various stakeholders); a number of very meaningful advocacy, watchdog initiatives to monitor governance performance and make governments more inclusive at different levels; policy debates, analyses and publications contributing to increased awareness of both policy makers and the public at large on critical issues for the relevant country or the region, in some initiatives there is increasing involvement of media in the initiatives not only as a recipient but as a partner. Some of the regional projects are resulting in interactive civil society or policy institutes groups, others are contributing to regional networks, or platforms.
4. All of provided grants respond to the objectives of the Trust and relate to local needs. However, the BST objectives are so broad and the needs for support in the region are so many that they can accommodate a broad range of initiatives at local, in-country or regional levels. Most of the respondents recommend to watch out not to spread too thin and identify a more focused strategy and approach. *The major challenge of the BST grantmaking is how to be strategic with little funding in vast territories with variety of contexts, numerous needs and rapidly changing environments and regional dynamics.*
5. From the outside, most respondents see the value added and strategic potential of the BST in its regional dimension and scope as a donor that can support innovative ideas and growing regional thinking, assist cross-border interaction and creating *some positive*

cooperative spaces on issues of importance to the region, or in searching bridges between parties of conflicts. It can play the role of an interpreter and a regional convener providing for hearing different perspectives including civil society and policy community, and shaping a more diverse vision (rather than just of governments). Being part of the net of GMF offices in different locations and capable staff the BST can optimize issue-based feedback from the region and its integration into policy debates. As many noted, the regional nature of the BST is clearly stated in its name – it is a *Trust for Regional Cooperation*. Even though regional level is much more challenging, for many this is one more reason to strengthen regional scope as cross-border and regional initiatives and increasing regional meaning of in-country funding.

Recommendations:

1. The first year was an open space to test the ground. A priority in the second year should be a systematic effort to clarify strategy and make some choices. The starting point is to have a focused discussion within GMF and with the other donors involved on expectations from the BST as potential legacy, leading objectives and role, value added from the perspective of each donor. It will be good to clarify the vision on the nature of anticipated grantmaking (increasing democracy grants on in-country level with some regional cooperation grants like the BTM, or increasing regional programming both as cross-border interaction and as regional meaning of in-country support).
2. Setting up some clearer medium term goals can help keeping a strategic orientation while implementing grantmaking or non-grantmaking activities. Based on this, it will be easier to prioritize what will make the BST small grants a strategic investment at the right time in the right actors, processes and places. It will also help set some clear benchmarks, which will assist internal monitoring, annual reporting and strategy update.
3. The complexity of the task of the BST requires a more creative and developmental grantmaking rather than just responsive disbursement of funds. Adopting a more dynamic strategic framework will help focusing the broad objectives by combining priority setting by objectives, set of countries and regionally with priority setting of approach (proactive, or reactive, in partnership or alone, through grants only or by combining with policy work) with putting timeframe on open issues and concrete program development goals over time - which areas (regional objectives, or objectives per country) will be of priority for grantmaking and why, and which will be left open to explore with clear development objective, in what time frame and how.
4. Developmental strategy approach can help organize open questions related to country strategies: for example in the first two years less but more strategic grants in Russia, Turkey and Ukraine – due to vast territories and limited financing and clear set of program development objectives with clear timeframe of identifying scope of strategy, including partnerships and fundraising and support with policy related work; more intensive democracy grants in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia (post-conflict and/or democracy at risk environments) and increased proactiveness with having staff on the ground, Moldova: optimizing resources by considering dividing tasks among BTM and BST and a clear set of who is funding what.
5. Regional programs need careful rethinking and optimization, especially if the mid-term developmental goal is increased regional programming and if the core strategic potential and legacy of the BST is in its regional dimension. This will involve reviewing the capacity building aspects (all type of experience exchange among all type of participants or targeted bridging in focused areas among key actors that will contribute practically to key processes; demand driven or supply driven, etc.). The same applies to the cross-border/regional initiatives. It will be important to look at the type of initiatives that are

more meaningful and those that are be less effective or too distant in regard to the mission of the BST. This will help set some limits of what to fund more and what not to fund.

6. The East-East exchange component needs redesign, based on a more focused discussion on its meaning within the BST strategic framework, including linkage with the other programs. It may require a more proactive, rather than reactive approach including intensive mapping of needs and resources in both “recipient” and “expertise” countries, and matching good groups from different regions. It will be important to involve in rethinking the east-east the CEE Trust for Civil society, as well as other offices of the GMF, especially in Bratislava and in Belgrade - BTD. Bridging with expertise from the Balkans can bring in some valuable learning and support to groups in this region in the area of work on resolving conflicts or on effective democracy work in challenging environments.
7. Expanding resources will be critical for the success of the BST in the long-term. The biggest challenge for the first year of the BST has been the enormous workload to do a lot and well with limited staff. Though the GMF “model” of branch offices is light institutional presence of small and effective running staff, the challenging task of the BST requires a deeper review of what are the right resources needed to achieve its goal. Expanding resources as staff, capacities, time and funding needs to be a part of a consistent strategy linked with both grantmaking (as strategy, grants and monitoring) and non-grantmaking objectives(as policy work, fundraising).
8. At least one more program officer will be needed in the Bucharest office to assist either grantmaking , or some of the non-grantmaking objectives. In addition to growth as number of program people it will be helpful to review and optimize some functional systems related to division of responsibilities, delegation and supervision, communication and systems of learning.
9. The BST may consider announcing on its website a longer time for processing of grants (12-16 weeks like the BTD) and keeping the meetings of the grantmaking review committee no more than 4-6 times per year. This will provide enough space for more in-depth review of applications in view of the larger territory that the BST covers, as well as a bigger pool of ideas to select from. This will also free some space for the strategy exploration needed in some countries, and the pro-active approach in some areas.
10. Fundraising is still at a very initial conceptualizing stage. A more structured fundraising strategy is anticipated in the spring of this year. The fundraising for the BST will be much more challenging than the BTD, due to complexity of issues, vast territories, but also a more fragmented donors interest. This will require much longer exploration phase and a more team effort in the framework of GMF. Linking the fundraising strategy with the overall strategy clarification process will make promotion and fundraising more focused in matching strategic needs of the BST with identifying opportunities for raising support from variety of potential donors.
11. Respondents more familiar with GMF consider that there is need to renew the intensive policy work on regional level (similar to discussions, debates and publications done at the re-start-phase of the BST). This is seen as a collective effort together with the other offices of the GMF and through support to strategic groups/teams from the region (pro-active initiatives). In addition some of the BST grants especially those related to policy debates or forums are also a contribution to above policy work need, as well as cases and analyses developed by some of the think-tank grantees. A recent example is the new grant made for mapping issues and policy solutions for the region.

I. SETTING UP THE TRUST

1. *Evolving vision and model*

The idea for establishing the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation emerged in 2003 in discussions of the GMF and representatives of Romanian government about the need for addressing the issues of the wider Black Sea region and the potential of developing a similar to the Balkan Trust for Democracy regional program. The following three years involved various discussions, diplomatic meetings and gradually raising support for establishing trust in the strategic importance of the initiative. Especially important for developing the vision for this new initiative was the GMF intensive policy work related to the wider Black sea region. The series of meetings, round tables, summits and debates organized by GMF (especially the Brussels and Bratislava offices) opened a new type of interaction. Bringing in think tanks, practitioners and politicians from outside and inside the region to discuss issues and approaches, resulted in new regional thinking and publications shaping vision and potential strategies. As pointed out in some of the interviews, some 10 years ago the term Black Sea region did not exist as a term. The GMF policy work is considered as one of the factors that contributed to a more strategic introduction of a new Euro Atlantic understanding of the Black Sea as a region.

The BST was envisaged as a multilayer approach combining direct support to the South Caucasus, Moldova and Ukraine, Russia as a recipient country and part of the region (but with an open door to explore how), and Turkey (as a recipient country but also with potential of bringing expertise). Bulgaria and Romania were envisaged as part of the regional programs and not recipients of in-country program support. They have already been receiving support from the other two GMF Trusts (the BTM and CEE Trust). Due to clear EU membership prospects together with countries of CEE they were also seen as a potential for bringing expertise in the framework of the east-east exchange.

Institutionally, the BST is part of the strategic expansion of the GMF European offices - first from Bratislava to Belgrade, then from Belgrade to Romania, thus bringing work inside the regions and voicing issues from the regions to the broader Euro Atlantic communities. The BST was modeled based on the practice of the Balkan Trust for Democracy. What is the model?

The BTM was designed as a grant making program for support to civic initiatives in the different countries in the Balkans and some regional part to build bridges and collaborative practices. It was seen from USAID and others as “grassroots grant making”– reaching out to localities out of the capital, even to areas and issues not covered by other donors with an “open door/organic” grant making approach providing for flexibility and quick and adequate response to local needs and issues. Together with grantmaking, a part of the model became its leadership - high policy capacity, and playing the role of a convener and facilitator of further strategic and policy initiatives for the region and its integration in Europe. Other aspects of the model involve well set-up mechanisms for grantmaking, growing staff diverse as expertise and country of origin, and successfully raising considerable financial resources for expanding the work of the Trust.

According to interviews strategic adoption of the Balkan Trust model and practice is worth it but challenging, especially looking at the differences between the contexts of the two regions. The Balkans is clearly a region – geographically, historically, geopolitically, with EU membership perspective as a driving force forward. The BTM had no problem with its legitimacy as a project and strategic framework to advocate for. As said at its 5th year anniversary its main strategic role has been in “*setting the agenda for the Balkans and moving it forward*”.

The Wider Black Sea region it is quite different. It is still not well defined or defined differently depending on criteria. It is of much higher uncertainty than the Balkans. It involves a much wider area, not so interconnected as the Balkans. It is very diverse as type of countries – as size, politically, as level of democracy, in regard to integration to the West, as regional roles and history and dynamics of interaction. The main difference with the Balkans is the missing the full strength of the EU “soft power”. In the case of the Black sea region, the EU neighborhood policy is to provide the EU “promise” but weaker and with little actual potential for membership.

Among this Black Sea variety of contexts and regions within the “region”, frozen or re-activated conflicts and shifting regional dynamics the promotion of regional cooperation is a much bigger challenge than in the Balkans. The BST has many more challenges at the starting point. Before setting the agenda it needs *to find the agenda, and based on that building its legitimacy as a project*. From this perspective it needs much more “searching” space at the start up for mapping issues, for promotion, for testing and learning and identifying its role.

2. Establishing the Trust – successes and challenges.

The Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation was created in 2006 as a 30 million \$ grantmaking initiative that supports democracy, good governance, and regional cooperation in the Wider Black Sea region. It is a public-private partnership of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Ministry of Defense of Latvia, the Government of Romania, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was officially launched in October 2007 at an international conference on the regional challenges of the Black Sea Region in Bucharest. The event was opened by Traian Basescu, the President of Romania, and attended by high level decision makers, strategists, activists and journalists. A parallel launch was organized in Washington, DC and attended by diplomats, key personnel from USAID and the U.S. Department of State, and international organizations interested and active in the BS region.

It combines grantmaking operating from GMF’s Bucharest office - providing grants in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine, and policy work - to promote issues of interest in the region and to foster a transatlantic dialogue about further developments, done together with the GMF’s offices in Washington, D.C. and in Europe.

For the short time of its existence the BST has achieved a lot, especially in view of the challenging task of being a follow up of the BTM model in a very different setting and time. Among the major lines of achievements outlined in the interviews, as well as in the BST Annual report are:

- Created good relationships with Romanian government resulted in long-term commitment for in-kind contribution (office and utilities), thus joining as a donor partner of the Trust; also with some promise of future participation with funding too.
- It has leader/ executive director and expanding staff with strong commitment and energy to make the BST a success.
- BST has formed an Advisory Board of very resourceful and recognized experts and practitioners from all the countries in the region, donors and representatives of GMF from Washington, DC, Belgrade and Ankara offices. Based on their input the BST has developed a strategic framework to guide its grantmaking. The Advisory Board has already met twice – in October 2007 and in early October 2008.
- The BST succeeded to quickly become operational developing needed grantmaking mechanisms and structure. The Grantmaking Committee consisting of GMF offices in Europe and BST donors as observers has been contributing to its success with commitment, time and

expertise. For the first year it has had 6 meetings.

- In the period October 2007- October 2008 the BST has reviewed 92 applications coming from 9 countries and has provided 59 grants supporting regional and in-country initiatives in total of \$1,552,847.
- As part of the overall work of the GMF for raising awareness on the region and bringing stakeholders from Europe and US to directly learn from NGOs, politicians, media and analysts from the different countries the BST has organized 6 study tours at various times during the first year to different countries or regional (two tours to Georgia and one fact-finding mission, tours to Ukraine, Turkey; Moldova (including Transnistria; and a regional tour to Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey. Three of these tours occurred after the August war in Georgia, providing a tremendous learning opportunity to the participants and drawing much needed attention to the region during this crucial period.
- BST staff has attended as speakers and moderators, conferences and events on the Black Sea in Kiev, Madrid, Berlin, Chisinau, Bucharest, and elsewhere. At the 2008 Brussels Forum a major transatlantic annual conference organized by GMF the BST staff helped to plan and participated in panels focused on democracy promotion, the Balkans, Turkey, Ukraine, the Caucasus, NATO enlargement, and Russia. The BST Executive Director, Alina Inayeh was invited to join the *ICBSS Task Force on the Black Sea* – The International Center for Black Sea Studies, the think tank arm of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) providing an opportunity to make the Trust and its work known to scholars and policy makers in the region while furthering the integration of the Black Sea Trust with regional institutions.

Some of the challenges in setting up the Trust during the first year included:

- *Organizing the office space and registration took much longer than anticipated.* The BST was initially placed at the office of another organization. The BST registration took one year due to missing provisions for registration of representative offices of foreign organizations. It has been legally registered in March 2008. Prior to that it had to function as a non-registered branch of the GMF with variety of challenges of complying with different financial systems/accounting requirements; currently it is in a process for VAT registration, quite slow – and still not finished.
- *Turnover of staff while expanding staff* – local coordinator for the South Caucasus based in Georgia started January 2008 and left beginning of June. From June to November the BST had to operate with only two program people (director included). Since November 2008 there are two new staff members – one full time local consultant based in Tbilisi (for Georgia and Armenia) and one part-time -in Baku, Azerbaijan.
- *Pressure to start performing immediately, and very limited time and space* for consultation, deeper needs assessments and mapping what is there.

3. The BST strategy: a brief overview

The BST was established to encourage and strengthen regional cooperation and democratic foundations in the wider Black Sea region with four broad objectives: *to rebuild trust in public institutions; affirm the value of citizen participation in the democratic process; strengthen a critical set of institutions that lie at the nexus of state and society, and foster regional, cross-border ties in the public, private and non-profit sectors.* It is based on the belief that regional collaboration and forming strong cross-border bonds; deepening democratic reforms, citizen

engagement and interaction between civil society and local and national governments practices are component parts of promoting regional democracy, stability, and growth.

The BST is to help provide a forum for civil society activists and governments to discuss issues of relevance to their countries and to the region, encourage the creation of networks within and between countries in the region on various issues – media, citizen participation, environment etc; encourage organizations to pursue innovative and creative forms of public outreach, cross-border and regional exchanges, and inter-community dialogue. The BST will also serve to better explain the challenges and realities of the region to the Euro-Atlantic community.

The strategy is structured in three primary program areas: *Civic Participation, Cross-Border Initiatives, and East-East Cooperation*. Civic Participation provides grants for in-country projects in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Turkey and Russia (only in the oblasts of *Rostov and Krasnodar*). All above countries and Bulgaria and Romania are eligible for the regional and east-east exchange grants. In the first year, 60% of the funding will go into civic participation programmes, 25% into cross-border initiatives and 15% into east-east cooperation. Over the following years, the percentage of funds for cross-border cooperation will progressively increase, reaching 40% in the fourth year of operation.

Based on the Strategy of the BST¹ the broad strategic framework of grantmaking per program is briefly outlined in *Table 1* below. Objectives and focus areas especially in the Civic participation program are valid for all (or most) countries, but their concrete dimensions and meaning vary depending on country context. The role and methods that the BST will be employing in the first year for all programs and all countries combine *pro-activeness* (identifying, stimulating contacts and ideas, direct solicitation of proposals) and responsive approach – responding to what comes from the open call for proposals.

Again, due to diversity of country contexts and regional dynamics the strategy for both regional and in-country funding is to remain flexible, adjusting priorities over time to respond to changing needs. Adjustments are to be primarily identified through the Advisory Board, while the BST staff and management will be charged with ensuring that the Black Sea Trust responds to change but continues to operate within a coherent overall strategic vision. The staff and Advisory Board members will play crucial roles in the ongoing reassessment of its programs and priorities.

TABLE 1: BST Strategic Framework per program

Program/ long term objectives and searched outcomes	BST Role
<p>Cross-Border <i>Dialogues and discussions among governments and civil society groups</i> <i>Increased awareness on regional issues</i> <i>Expanded regional frame of work of governments and CSO</i> <i>Increased capacities of existing regional networks</i> <i>Exchange of experience of civil society groups in the region</i> <i>Promoted solutions of regional issues (frozen conflicts)</i></p>	<p>Especially in the first years – proactive role, facilitating contacts and ideas among groups in the region (including soliciting proposals from relevant regional networks; NGOs and local governments to develop proposals across borders); and reactive role – responding to proposals based on outreach. Complement, not duplicate, and coordinate with other donors</p>
<p>East-East cooperation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>established links between groups from CEE and BSregion</i> • <i>expanded expertise and resources in the BS countries in the area of good governance, economic reform</i> 	<p>BST will work closely with GMF offices in CEE and its partners in the Baltics to identify groups to be involved; BST will act as intermediary between the two regions</p>

¹ As provided for the meeting of the Advisory Board , October,2008 in Istanbul. We got two versions a longer one with context analyses, grantmaking objectives and role of BST regionally and per country; and a briefer one with consolidated objectives for some of the countries)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>facilitated mechanisms for information exchange</i> 	
<p>Civic Participation Program (in-country funding)</p> <p>Five objectives are seen as priority for most of the countries, however in different scope and intensity, depending on country context:</p> <p><u>1. Transparency and inclusiveness of governance (policy making and implementation) at national and local levels</u> (promote advocacy and watchdog activities; enhance the role of think tanks and policy organizations in policy making</p> <p><u>2. Initiated dialogue and public debates on issues of importance to society and enhancing the role of the NGOs and the media</u> (better presentation of Euro-Atlantic values to society; and raising public understanding on democratic mechanisms and citizen role in democracy</p> <p><u>3. Media freedom and professionalism; investigative journalism</u></p> <p><u>4. Conflict resolution/prevention</u> (confidence building measures among parties in conflicts – different stakeholders and people to people contacts, support for media and investigative journalism in conflict areas, development of civil society in vulnerable areas and increased linkages; promote partnerships between EU NGOs and NGOs in the conflict areas</p> <p><u>5. Increased citizen engagement and interaction with government at different levels</u>(Capacity building for NGO’s for mobilizing citizens, for advocacy and watchdog activities and for effective interaction with government</p> <p>For the first year consolidation of democracy and stability; free and fair elections in Georgia will be a priority; For Turkey among the priorities is also Promote/strengthen philanthropic culture and behavior and share philanthropic practice with other countries; encouraged local resource mobilization in support of active civic participation; and enhance promotion of minority rights</p>	<p>In the Caucuses: Proactive identification of valuable projects; direct soliciting of proposals from trustworthy groups; Coordination with other donors and GMF offices; Employed local staff for direct input into grantmaking efforts; Established procedures to respond to rapid changes.</p> <p>More concretely methods per country:</p> <p>Georgia: pro-actively encourage projects from NGOs in S Ossetia, through the assistance of Georgian NGOs; target think tanks, democracy promotion organizations and media, and their projects.</p> <p>Armenia: solicit proposals from organizations that focus on advocacy and watchdog activities, journalist organizations. BST will encourage projects implemented in partnership with local government.</p> <p>Azerbaijan: solicit proposals from organizations active in advocacy/watchdog activities and in bringing issues into the public debate; target media and organizations active in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to promote valuable projects.</p> <p>Ukraine: focused outreach on advocacy and watchdog organizations, think tanks, civic education organizations, and media; encourage projects implemented in partnership by NGOs and local governments, or by NGOs and media; look for opportunities to support strategic regrantsing programs.</p> <p>Moldova : seek projects from NGOs in Transdnistria with the assistance of Moldovan NGO and encourage partnership projects among them. Proactive solicitation will be employed. At the same time, BST will encourage Moldovan organizations to identify and develop projects that support BST priorities.</p> <p>Russia: work closely with NGO resource centers in Krasnodar and Rostov on the capacity building component. Re-granting will be considered. Projects developed by partner NGOs from Krasnodar/Rostov and N Caucasus republics will be encouraged and directly solicited.</p> <p>Turkey: target existing resource centres, advocacy and watchdog NGOs, minority organizations, media to generate valuable projects; proactive solicitation will be used to identify projects and organizations, in addition to the open call. BST will also identify projects of or involving local and regional governments.</p>

II. The BST GRANTMAKING PROCESS: How did it work?

1. Promotion and Outreach

Throughout the first year the BST has employed a variety of ways in making its existence visible in the region. An open request for proposals with information on the BST priorities and application process has been posted on its website (www.gmfus.org/blacksea). In addition, the BST has placed announcements on the websites, newsletters of regional NGO centers or disseminated information via other organizations and donors working regionally. Direct meetings with various stakeholders – NGOs, think tanks and policy institutes, governments, international organizations and donors working in the different countries or regionally was another channel of both promotion and learning on priority issues in the different countries and the region. In the course of the first year the BST staff has traveled extensively and has visited most of the countries, with the exception of Armenia at least once (and in some more than once). This involved either site visits related to grantmaking, or study tours organized in the framework of the GMF policy work and participation in regional conferences and events.

All above efforts have resulted in emerging visibility of the BST. A number of grantees that were interviewed have learned about the Trust from internet, others from colleagues familiar with GMF work or already grantees of the BST. Presentations of the BST at large scale regional events like the NGO conference “Time to meet” are contributing to its promotion. At the same time, as a new initiative it is natural that many still know little or nothing about the Trust. Staff considers as priority needs to focus on more promotion in Russia, Turkey and in Armenia, and across the region to reach out to local governments and the media. Members of staff, outline the need of expanding outreach and spreading the word to broader audiences including local governments. The level of promotion will be increasing in the countries with direct presence of staff on the ground

Lack of any visibility in Armenia has been already approached with the recent first BST visit there done by the new local consultant. In Azerbaijan, the new local consultant has started traveling to the regions to expand outreach to locally based organizations. In Turkey, outreach efforts are also to expand by cooperation with the GMF Ankara office. In Ukraine, previous visits as well as recent study tour and meeting with organizations in Crimea have contributed to increased promotion and visibility..

Some suggestions from respondents for expanding promotion and visibility of the BST include to organize outreach events, or make more presentations in ongoing issue-based meetings/conferences, etc.) the different countries, to write articles in credible issue-based magazines or newsletters (including some published by grantees). For some these suggestions were mostly in the scope of promoting the BST as a grantmaking opportunity. For others, they were beyond the technical information of what there is money for. They relate to expanding promotion as part of growing the idea for regional cooperation and the sense of a Black sea region, thus contributing to the legitimacy of the GMF/BST as a regional player and convener of strategic debates on issues of importance.

2. Grantmaking procedures and mechanisms put in place

The BST succeeded to quickly put in place a sound system of announcing and processing the grants from the region. It has announced on its website the open request for proposals describing the parameters of its grantmaking – overall objectives and type of activities that can be considered under each program, as well as the related technical application and reporting forms. An advantage for the BST was the opportunity to use the experience of the Balkan Trust for Democracy, as well

as concretely its grantmaking instruments and mechanisms. Some slight adaptations were made responding to the specifics of the BST.

Assessment is based on two guiding frameworks. The first is a set of uniform selection criteria, which basically are related with two key areas – quality of proposal (relevance to context and needs, feasibility and clear plan of action) and quality of the applicant (institutional capacity to implement the initiative and to lead to impact). The second is the strategy framework of the BST. This involves the general objectives applying throughout the region, while accommodating the diversity and dynamics of the region. Other factors taken into consideration are the different phase in its democratic development and/or emerging challenges/issues that requires increased attention. There are no allocated fixed proportions of the available resources per country, though BST is trying to balance its spending geographically – among countries, and as ratio of national/local levels.

The proposal review is done as a two or three stages process:

The first stage is assessment of proposal done by the BST program officer or locally based consultant (in the case of the S Caucuses) overseeing the relevant country. This involves – reviewing the application based on the general set of selection criteria, consultation on the credibility of the organization and its capacity to implement the initiative with contacts in the country – members of the advisory board, donors – USAID country offices, or other donors active in the country to also avoid overlap of funding and/or other experts in the countries.

Interviews provided very positive feedback on this consultative practice in some of the countries – like Ukraine, where both the USAID office and other donors, and the AB member have been involved in feedback on both project ideas and applicants. AB member from Moldova has been involved in feedback, while the AB members from Bulgaria feel less involved (individual request(s) for feedback on applying organization. There had been intensified consultation on the ground in Georgia and increasingly in Azerbaijan, especially with hiring the locally-based in Tbilisi consultant overseeing the three countries in the South Caucuses. There had been on-going intensive interaction with the BTM Program officer on projects for Moldova, and on project ideas from Bulgaria. Applicants from Romania have been consulted with the program director of the Trust for Civil Society in CEE (she is sharing office with the BST), which is not the case with the program director for Bulgaria or the Sofia office.

The program person overseeing the country where the application comes from makes a brief resume, varying from half a page to 2-3 pages on the projects suggested for approval, and list of proposals for rejection with 1-2 sentence of justification for that. During this first stage of screening proposals – there have been informal individual discussions among program people on finalizing the pre-selection process and list of projects suggested for approval and for rejection. At the moment, with the involvement of new team members outsourced in the field this discussion is already becoming more structured at the team level by planned conference calls prior to the Grants Review Committee. .

The second stage is the formal presentation and decision on grants by the BST Grants Review Committee. The committee includes representatives from different GMF offices in Europe, and from the DC office, as well as the other BST donors as observers (including representatives of USAID offices in the BST countries). Usually, the committee after discussion accepts the proposals suggested for approval by the project officers – there have been only a few cases when these were rejected or postponed for further information on applicant capacity, or need for improving segments of the proposal.

The third stage is formal presentation and review by GMF Board. This relates only to proposals exceeding \$25,000 budget.

Following the model of the BTM the BST proposal reviews take place on a rolling basis. It envisages 8-10 meetings (conference call) of the Grants Review Committee. In the first year the

committee has had 6 sessions, starting from January 2008.² As shared by BST staff it is critical to remain faithful to the promise of quick processing of grants – 6-8 weeks.

As shared in some of the interviews the issue of timing has sometimes been a challenge. It is important to have time to go deeper in reviewing the project feasibility and the applicant's capacity. In the first year, due to travel of staff and other non-grantmaking obligations, there were cases when space for reviewing has been narrowed to much less than 6 weeks and proposals review had to be rushed to meet the deadline of the coming session of the Grant Review Committee. Currently, there is improvement of managing the applications. They are forwarded immediately after arriving at the web portal to the relevant program persons.

However, with growth of visibility of the BST as a funder and growth of number of applications the time factor will remain a challenge. As shared by the BTM with the years they had many cases of expanding the estimated 6 weeks for processing grants to keep the principle of responsible and in-depth reviewing. This practice is already announced on the website of the Balkan Trust "*Final decisions are typically announced within 12 - 16 weeks of application*"³. The announced time for final decisions of the BST is within 10 weeks of application.

Another issue shared in interviews with participants in the Grants Review Committee the uneven application from different countries. From countries with fewer proposals coming, there is actually nothing to select from. Grants can be made "to have something funded there too". There is also need for some better linking the presentation of suggested proposals with the strategy of the BST.

III. GRANTMAKING IN THE FIRST YEAR: MAPPING OUTCOMES

During the first year of operation the BST has provided 59 grants to NGOs from the region in total \$ \$1,552,847. Of the funds awarded, USAID contributed \$980,212; the C.S. Mott Foundation contributed \$488,615; and the Government of Latvia contributed \$84,020. As distribution per program in the first year, 59,2% of the funding was into civic participation programmes, 17,5% into cross-border initiatives and 25% into east-east cooperation.⁴

Among the tasks of this review was to look at the outcomes of grantmaking in the first year and the extent to which they respond to the BST strategy and mission. As it is too early to look at effect or produced change by the supported project initiatives⁵, the outcomes of BST grantmaking can be outlined only as number and type of grants provided and some estimation of potential effect of these grants on the ground based on stated objectives and results by grantees, if initiatives are successfully implemented.

We found very challenging to use some of the data presentation and interpretation in the First Annual Report of the BST for several reasons. First, there are either some technical mistakes or at least difficult to read from outside data. One example is the Regional vs. National outputs chart and its interpretation – chart showing 37% Regional vs. 63% national, and interpretation stating that "Almost two-thirds of the outputs of funded projects have a regional dimension, covering more than one country. This is very important as BST's end goal is to promote comprehensive regional cooperation"⁶.

The second reason is more functional:

² January, February, April, May, July and September 2008.

³ http://www.gmfus.org/template/page.cfm?page_id=191

⁴ Annual report p.

⁵ By the end of October 2008 12 of the projects have been finished; 17 more finishing by the end of 2008, 21 were half way or 2/3 of their implementation and 9 just starting.

⁶ Annual Report, p.16

Provided grants are grouped around strategic priorities different from the way they are presented in the strategy documents. The BST strategy documents (as provided) focus on functional aspects of desired change as objectives and priority type of initiatives in each of the programs. The Annual report states 10 objectives/ areas of focus for grantmaking: *conflict resolution, NGO sector development, local development (including governance), environmental protection, media freedom and professionalism, migration, development of independent policy institutes, transparency and accountability of government, women's issues, and youth development*. Some of these are objectives as key areas of change (for ex, transparency and accountability of governments, conflict resolution) ; others by target groups (youth development and women's issues), more others as thematic issues addressed (environment, migration) or institutional (development of independent policy institutes or of the NGO Sector).

While all of those can be legitimate objectives for any program, the question is to what extent this type of overview of spending and outcomes provides a comprehensive picture of grants and their potential outcomes in the meaning of the BST strategy. Just some examples – there are several initiatives where crossborder interaction and cooperative practice is around issues of environment, and in others on migration. Does this mean that the strategy of the BST will focus on environment protection and migration, or the leading objective is stimulating interaction, cross-border civic mechanisms to monitor, or suggest policies on concrete issues of importance to country involved or regionally? Is youth development and women's' issues the objective or it is a cross-cutting priority for type of groups to be involved in building bridges for conflict resolution, or activating, mobilizing civic participation, or increased awareness for democracy and advocacy skills to make governments more accountable to citizens? The same is with independent policy institutes – they have been among the key actors in initiating regional analyses/policies/debates in various issues – migration, new borders, security, suggesting new mechanisms for conflict management or confidence building measures, or monitoring governments. The way grants are listed under each of the 10 objectives in the report, provides mixed answer to above questions.

And the third reason, annual report does not provide profile of grants as potential outcomes per program and how they respond to strategy of each program.

To get better clarity on what was funded and how it relates to the BST strategy we tried to systemize data from the resumes of the approved 59 projects, as presented at the Grants Review Committee. In addition, we have also reviewed the few already received reports from grantees, and by interviews with a small sample of grantees we could visit. We tried to outline the profile of what was funded by looking at the following categories: *Geographic coverage/scope; type of leading organization; type of initiative (activities /outputs); potential outcomes of projects and link with BST objectives (in each of the programs) ; duration and financial aspects (size of support, and level of co-funding)*. And based on that to search for some patterns (if any) and take out some learning that can serve to better inform the strategy process.

Attachment 2 is a table with brief outline of projects (leading organization, funding, duration, activities, anticipated outcomes, and some attributive aspects related to BST funding). It was done based on resumes of projects, as provided.

Down below is an attempt for mapping of grants done by the BST in the first year

1. Regional and East-East exchange funding

1.1. The Cross-Border Program had 11 grants. They distribute as follows:

- *By geographic coverage:* more than 50% (6 projects) are bilateral (involving activities in 2 countries), two are with activities in 3-5 countries and 3 are regional.
- *By type of leading organization:* all are well established and with good record in the area of the type of initiative supported. Most of them are think-tanks or policy/research type of

institutes or NGOs (6), 1 is a specialized regional network, and the other 4 are NGOs of various type of issue-based activist NGOs or broader membership association specialized in different areas (youth, environment and sustainable development, community development/assistance, monitoring of elections) . By country of origin, the leading organizations distribute as follows: a bigger group are Romanian NGOs (4), Turkey and Ukraine – 2 each, and Azerbaijan, Armenia and Moldova – 1 each.

- *By type of core activities/outputs:* 4 are a conference, a symposium or a seminar; 3 projects are organized around policy research and recommendations (some mainly on expert level, while others involve different levels with a lot of interactive forms and consultations); and 3 projects involve mostly study tours, training or transfer of skills/products and one is direct assistance (monitoring of elections)
- *Duration:* Out of 11, 7 projects are in the range of 6 weeks to 6 months, and 4 projects are in the range of 8-12 months. However, when looking at activities only two of the longer initiatives are involving more process and interaction, the other two are centered on organizing a conference or symposium.
- *Financing:* more than 2/3 of projects (7) are co-funding of different nature (some are a contribution to a large initiative funded by multiple donors, others are complementing funding to a core project of the applicant provided by other donor , more others are funding mostly by the BST complemented by additional funding for part of the activity by other donor). By size of grants, most (8) are in the range between \$20,000 – \$24,000, two are less than \$15,000, and only one is a larger initiative of almost \$70,000

By objectives/outcomes of the initiatives and linkage to the strategic areas (objectives) of the BST supported projects in the first year can be grouped as follows:

Six of the funded projects can be grouped under the BST objective **increased awareness on regional issues**. They are of diverse nature as issue, targeted groups and level of action. Some are debates on regional cooperation or on issues like democracy, security⁷, provide analyses for developing national agendas and regional policy on migration⁸ ; others are stimulating cross-border and regional networking mechanisms to monitoring governments on implementation of policies or action plans related to the environment and sustainable development⁹

In the area of **Conflict resolution/prevention** there is one project for confidence building measures among Turkey and Armenia through opening dialogue channels between civil society, academia and journalists. Two projects are clearly under the objective *for exchange of experience among NGOs and civil society*¹⁰. There are also two projects related to elections – Prodemocracy monitoring the elections in Azerbaijan, and the Median Research Center’s project.

1.2. The East-East Program provided 11 grants. They distribute as follows:

⁷ Black Sea University Foundation 2008 International Symposium; Ari Movement Turkish Youth Forum on BS region. Analytical center for Globalization and Regional cooperation, Armenia - Conference EU and S Caucasus – a security partnership?

⁸ International Center for Policy studies, Kiev

⁹ NGO Resource and Analyses Society. “Assessing implementation of the ENP Action Plans in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine; Eco-Tiras International Environmental association of River Keepers/ Saving lower Dniester biodiversity

¹⁰ study tour of young activists from Azerbaijan to Turkey, or the Civitas Foundation “Local Development in the Black Sea region”

By geographic coverage/scope: 4 projects are bilateral (involving two countries), 5 projects involve 3-5 countries and 2 projects are regional (all countries from the region).

By leading organization: all are well-established and experienced organizations. More than 60% are Romanian organizations (7) the other 4 come from Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia (1 each). The biggest group (7) are NGOs of different specialization varying from NGO sector or young political leadership development, community development to issue-based work (women/gender, monitoring of elections), the rest 4 are think-tank and policy institute type of organization.

By type of core activities/outputs: the biggest group of 5 projects involve policy related activities on regional or several country level (3 of them provide comparative analyses and/or country studies and policy recommendations, 1 is a series of conferences and summer/winter schools and one is a documentary with policy related discussions); the next group of 4 projects are more training type of activity (workshops, programs, youth camp, study tour/exchange); one project is NGO assessment and conference, one project is a large conference of NGOs from all the Black Sea Region.

Duration: most of the projects (6) are in the range of 4-7 months duration (most of the training type of outputs, conference or NGO assessment), and the other five are between 8-12 months (mostly the policy related initiatives and one of the exchange/capacity initiative)

Financing aspects: in four projects BST is co-funder (in 3 as contribution to a larger initiative funded by one or multiple donors, and in one as matching contribution to one donor). Most of the grants are in the range between \$15,000 and \$25,000, and three are larger grants.

By objectives/outcomes of the initiatives and linkage to the strategic areas (objectives) of the BST:

A priority BST objective of the East-East programming is *established links between groups from CEE and Black Sea region*. Only 4 out of 11 supported projects involve countries from CEE and/or Baltic states, and this is of different nature. For example, in the initiative of the Center for International and Regional Policy (Russia) this involvement is at a more strategic level. This project is aimed at expanded capacities in regional thinking, shaping Baltic-Black sea regional perspective and policy options and increased regional awareness on Euro Atlantic/security issues among young researchers, students and activists. The other projects are either more exchange/study tour/training type (for ex. Moldovan women activist acquire skills from partner organization in Estonia), or some participants from CEE and Baltic countries in an event – (for ex. in the large Black Sea NGO conference *Time to meet* in Bucharest , or in a youth camp organized in Ukraine).

The biggest group of projects can generally fit under the BST broad objectives “*expanded expertise and resources in the Black Sea countries and facilitated mechanisms for information exchange*”. Here, it seems like Romania and Bulgaria are the countries with experience to be shared and/or transferred to other countries in the Black sea region.

Part of the projects are more capacity building oriented, but very diverse as level, approach and type of participants. Some provide expertise at a sector level (for example, the project of CENTRAS and FCSD Romania provide assistance to Georgian NGO sector by doing assessment and a follow up workshop in Georgia for presenting case studies and practice from civil society in Romania). Others bring together a few participants from local level NGOs from other countries to get training or learn from practice of the leading organization (for example the Open Society Sliven, Bulgaria project). In the case of the Regional school for Young Leaders and Civic Activists initiated by Foundation for Pluralism the capacity building program involves trainees from local political parties and community NGO from both Romania and Moldova.

Others are a more shared product of partners from different countries contributing to expanded regional thinking, learning and policy making on important issues for the countries in the region. Some examples here are the Crises Management-Trilateral approach project addressing the issue of managing conflicts and involving partners from Romania and Moldova and Ukraine for analyses of how governments operate in time of crises and conflicts and suggestions for improvement; the

initiative of the Institute for Public Policy Romania in partnership with well established think tanks in Bulgaria, Moldova and Georgia provides for shared practice of monitoring of parliaments in the region, and can lead to more informed advocacy for improvement during electoral campaigns or with newly elected Parliaments in the relevant countries. The NGO conference *Time to meet*, provided for contacts and exchange among NGOs from all countries in the Black Sea region, panels and discussions have contributed to search for common ground and shared understanding on regional issues, and formed discussion groups are anticipated to continue online and develop common initiatives/projects. At the same time many of the above examples can actually fit better under the objectives of the Cross-border program like regional awareness and platforms, conflict resolution/prevention, etc.

A very interesting initiative is the *Where Europe Ends* project of the Romanian Academic Society. It is developing a documentary film on new European border regions that will be presented in Brussels and Bucharest and to broader audience in participating countries. The anticipated outcome is increasing awareness and policy discussions at both European and countries in the region on issues of new European borders, visa and freedom of movement. This project can provide learning for another potential of the East-east program beyond the traditional transfer of exchange/skills scope - *to promote discussions on issues of the Black sea region at European level* (which for now is not stated as an objective). This has potential for linkage with GMF policy work; and for increased strategic visibility of BST

1. The Civic Participation Program: In-country Funding

The Civic Participation program provided 37 grants to organizations in 7 countries from the region eligible for in-country funding. Geographically, the largest number of grants is in three countries – Azerbaijan (9), Georgia (8) and Moldova (7), followed by Ukraine (7) and Turkey (4), and the least in Russia (2) and Armenia (1).

By level of action – 22 projects (about 2/3) in the different countries are involving only or mostly action at the local level varying From 1 municipality to several districts in the relevant country. The other 15 projects involve action mostly at the national level, while the Kiev Security Forum is of regional nature. Countries with more than 50% of supported local level initiatives are Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Russia¹¹ Armenia¹². Projects in Turkey are 50% local/national, and in Azerbaijan slightly less (4 local, 5 national).

By type of organization: The majority of approved applicants are well established organizations with a good record of work in the area of the suggested initiative. Out of them 25 (or 67%) are NGOs mostly issue based (women's issues, youth, human rights, election monitoring, transparency, etc.) and several working broader on a sector level (NGO development, resource centers, or public servants reform). The next group of 10 organizations are think tanks or policy/research type of institutes, they distribute 1-2 per country, with the biggest share in Azerbaijan (5 out of 9 approved applicants). Two of the leading organizations are in-country grantmakers – one is applicant (operational project for women activation/linkage in conflict affected areas), while the other is both initiator and co-funder of a large initiative (Kiev Security Forum) where BST provides contribution.

By core type of activities/outputs: it is extremely difficult to classify the projects around activities/outputs due to diversity among countries and projects, in response to the variety of types of supported initiatives. Only about 6 projects are organized around one core activity (just a publication, or conference, or a one time training, or event – camp). The majority of projects combine a variety of forms and products building upon each other. This responds to the more process oriented type of initiatives, as well as the complexity of areas/objectives they work for.

¹¹ (as grantmaking is only at the level of two oblast),

¹² (there is only one project which is in one district of Yerevan)

By duration: Only 3 of the in-country projects are of duration less than 6 months, the rest 34 projects are in the range between 7- 12 months (19 projects between 7-9 months and 15 projects 10-12 months)

By funding (size and co-funding). More than 70% of the grants are in the range between \$18,000 to \$25,000; only 5 grants are below \$15,000¹³; 4 grants are above \$25,000¹⁴; the BST funding is leveraged by funding of other donors in 11 projects (again different – in cases BST is contributing to a large initiative¹⁵, or is providing the core of the budget for the initiative and the grantee has found a leverage support .

By objectives/outcomes of the initiatives and linkage to the strategic areas (objectives) of the BST:

- Biggest group 13 projects can be viewed in the broad area *citizen engagement/participation in decision making*. These involve a variety of civic education and mobilization initiatives, capacity development of NGOs to activate citizens and interact with governments, to be more effective in advocacy and policy work, and/or develop a new generation of leaders at different levels; some provide training to local administration, others to women political candidates.
- The next big group of 9 projects is in various aspects and levels of *transparency and accountability of governments at the national and local levels*. These involve different watchdog and government performance monitoring initiatives at different levels (some in one municipality; others in several towns or regions; more others – at the national level). All of them are extremely meaningful initiatives stimulating more responsible governance and citizen control and monitoring over spending of public money, or advocacy for improvement of policy implementation.
 - The third bigger group of projects (6) is in *the area of conflict resolution/prevention*. Some will bring for confidence building and linkage among women on both sides of conflict zones or defending the human rights of victims of the war (Georgia), others bring young people together (Relationship between teenagers project in Transnistria). Others like the IPP Moldova Council of Experts for Conflict Resolution project creates a structured platform for interaction between governmental actors, international organizations and civil society exerts
- Five projects are initiatives stimulating *public debates on issues of importance to society*. These involve supported initiatives like Gains and Pains for Nato membership for Moldova, informational campaign on Euro Atlantic issues organized by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation in Ukraine, or the Ari Movement 10th International Security Conference bringing for broader international debate among experts and policy makers on regional and functional issues centered on Turkey.
- Only one project is directly working in the *area of independent media and professionalism*. This is the project *Strengthening Capacity of Georgian Provincial Press to Foster the Norms of Democratic Citizenship*, organized by the Strategic Research Institute and in partnership with the Georgian Regional Media Association. The majority of the country projects have some interaction with the local/national media for announcing/outreach of their initiatives. However, in about 16 projects in the different areas stated above there is some higher level of interaction/involvement of media – journalists are part of the groups trained in the variety of monitoring/watchdog/advocacy initiatives, or in cases are partners in organizing debates/radio and TV discussions; in these cases – *media work can be seen as a crosscutting/partnership component of the initiatives*. It is interesting that this approach is present (to a different

¹³ 3 in Moldova, and 1 in Georgia and in Ukraine each)

¹⁵ for ex. the Kiev Security Forum

extent) in 6 out of 9 projects in Azerbaijan, and in 4 out of 6 projects in Ukraine. Individual projects in Armenia, Moldova and Georgia have journalists as participants in their activities.

2. Some Conclusions and Issues that can inform the strategy process

Looking at the overall mosaic of funding provided in the first year the BST was successful in selecting good projects of various nature, level of intervention, type of actors and level of interaction among them, issues and target groups and potential for bringing for change in the immediate setting of the different local and regional settings. Though it is still early to see the outcomes from supported projects, the credibility and expertise of organizations involved, as well as some of the planned results and outcomes/effects on the ground are very promising.

The majority of the projects (60% of all) in the first year were initiatives coming from think tanks and policy/research institutes as the leading organization, and 40% (24) by a variety of NGOs – issue based or working broader on democracy and NGOs development, scope of work – local, country wide or cross-border/regional, foundations or associations (with more or less membership). Some projects are developed as a shared partnership among several organizations, including several cases of involving media agencies as partner in implementation.

Ratio of local/national activity level as in Annual report is 46% - 54%, where data is including both regional (cross-border and east-east exchange) and country programs. On country level more than 2/3 of the civic participation projects involve activities at the local level (in most cases initiated and organized by a leading organization based in the capital of the relevant country; but also there are grantees that are based in the district and or locality of action).

In almost 40% of the grants BST funding is leveraged support (co-funding of different ratio, and with variety of donors). The majority of initiatives are of duration between 7-12 months, while about 27 % are less than 6 months. While projects in regional programming tend to be shorter, the majority of the civic participation projects is from 7 months to a year, and in many cases involves more process and less one-time activities.

Some of the recommendations to the BST that were coming from the interviews are already emerging as a grantmaking practice – for example providing support to something that was successful and needs continuation, or matching new start-up, or co-funding with local or available in-country resources, or sending the message of the importance of a regional initiative by contributing to its funding.

All of provided grants respond to the objectives of the Trust and relate to local needs. However, as noted in many interviews the BST objectives are so broad and the needs for support in the region are so many that they can accommodate broad range of initiatives. Most of the respondents (especially from the Advisory Board group, and a number of the non-grantees interviewed) were recommending in one way or another to watch out not to spread too thin and identify a more focused strategy and approach.

Leaving open space in the first year with a challenging initiative like the Trust is a good approach and in a way mapping of what will come as response. But as many said, it will be critical to take time to see – what comes out from “testing” the ground and integrate this into update of strategy and approach. Combining the above general overview/map of grants in the first year with some views shared in the interviews there are several learning points that the BST might consider reflecting upon:

- The group of initiatives addressing issues of conflict zones have interesting approaches at different levels – policy/management of crises, establishing interactive groups or debates, bridging groups or actors together, or opening channels of communication among various

stakeholders). Learning with these initiatives can help BST continue and expand funding in the area of conflict resolution/prevention.

- The advocacy, watchdog initiatives to monitor governance performance and make governments more inclusive at different levels is another group of projects which are of priority to continue. Developing some case studies of good initiatives can help both shared resource on good civic practice in the region, and for increasing the understanding what the trust is about.
- Some of the policy debates, analyses and publications can contribute to increased awareness of both policy makers and the public at large on critical issues for the relevant country or the region. It can also inform the policy work done by GMF in raising understanding on the wider Black sea region.
- involvement of media in the initiatives not only as a recipient but as a partner brings for increased outreach of initiatives; BST may consider searching initiatives with more involvement of media and stimulating partnership media civil society (where possible).
- The Cross-Border program is much clearer and provoked a number of initiatives that are very meaningful in regard to the BST objectives. This is not the case with the East-East program. In a way the type of grants there are a mirror of the extent of clarity of what this program is about. The current picture of grants is a mixture of regional/cross border projects which can be easily funded in the Cross-border component, or involve transfer/exchange type of initiatives which may be named more “traditional” – training, skills transfer, or type of capacity building activity. Some of these can be very valuable and will bring for expanded resources in different issue areas in the region. The question is that this type of training/exchange needs a lot of funds in order to have a cumulative effect of impact on the ground. As shared in some of the interviews this “traditional” approach will not be best value for money – especially having in mind the little financial resources for that.
- An issue that came at the AB meeting as well as in several interviews is that 50% of the 22 grantees under the cross-border or east-east funding are Romanian NGOs (4 in the cross-border, and 7 in the East-East components). This is interpreted differently - the office is based in Bucharest and closer to Romanian organizations, Romanian government is a partner, etc.) From programmatic view, we consider that this is due to the dual geography and role of Bulgaria and Romania as countries covered by the BST. They are both part of the region, but also seen as “the countries with experience” to be transferred through the east-east exchange bringing learning from CEE countries. This, together with the vague objectives of the East-East exchange, little or no promotion in Bulgaria or in other countries of CEE, has contributed to the above misbalance.

IV. EXPANDING BST STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE

1. *Strategy: Process and Clarity*

Despite of the extreme workload in the first year, the BST has invested in a genuine search for a strategy. The process of getting local input on needs and priorities to consider involves several mechanisms: meetings of the advisory board on an annual basis, meetings with a variety of stakeholders during site visits related to the BST grantmaking or during the GMF study tours in the different countries, as well as attending other regional events or conferences. Based on direct observations the meetings of the advisory board are well structured and facilitated and very informative. During our field trips we received positive feedback from both grantees and donors on

attempt of BST to learn and be responsive to local needs. With expanding relations on the country and regional level the BST is also expanding the net of contacts and channels to keep in pace with the dynamics of the region. Several members of the advisory board suggested if needed they and their colleagues can provide some summary on key developments in their countries on quarterly basis.

The major challenge to the strategy process is how this input is integrated into the strategy. For example, the meeting of the advisory board in Istanbul (October 2008) came out with a long list of suggestions, options and recommendations. While those are summarized in a write up of the meeting, there is no clarity on their practical implications, for example what from the recommendations and list of suggestions will be guiding in the next year and what will be more medium-term objectives.

Most of the respondents see the strategy of the BST too broad and still not well defined. While for all openness and flexibility as an advantage especially in the first year, most consider that there is a need of more focus and priority setting. Areas that need more clarification can be grouped as follows:

- *Country level strategies:* BST objectives are so broad that issues in each country can be relevant and legitimate for funding. At the same time the local needs in the funding areas as defined by the BST are far beyond the level of funds it has. Also, diversity of contexts among countries and shifting dynamics region wide, require both country specific and proactive adaptation to be in pace with quickly changing realities.
- *Growing democracy risks in some of the countries:* Here comments on strategy relate to the need to identify what will be effective support in countries like Azerbaijan, where negative tendencies are increasing and there is a threat of closing completely the limited democratic space for independent voices and participation, or Georgia, the situation has been changing drastically after August 2008.
- *“Open geography” issues:* As noted before, the BST has been designed with an “open to see how” space in several countries. In Russia, for now, the strategy is to provide small grants support to local initiatives in the oblasts on the Black sea shores, but most of the interviewed consider that there is a need to define better what the BST can do in Russia, where it can make a difference and how. The other country that needs clarification on strategy is Turkey – how to better use the expertise of Turkish organizations, what to fund with limited resources. Ukraine – it is vast territory with intensive in-country donor programs and how the BST as a small grants facility with no presence in the country can make a difference?
- *Overlap with other GMF trusts:* for example both BST and BTD are providing funding in Moldova. There is good coordination among them not to duplicate funding. However, both Trusts as strategy are funding the same type of initiatives. The only difference is the regional perspective – one is linking Moldova in regional initiatives and access to shared expertise with the Balkans, the other – within the wider Black sea region.
- *Overlap within BST programs:* in some cases the projects funded within Cross-border and East-East programs are quite the same; both programs need clarification of priorities, including the role of Bulgaria and Romania as both “countries of expertise” (east-east) and part of the region (cross-border).
- *Reactive/proactive approach and how the two can be accommodated together:* Strategy documents and recommendations from advisors outline the need of proactive approach in almost all programs and areas. Grantmaking practice in the first year is considered by the majority of the interviewed to be mostly reactive – responsive to what comes from the on-

going call for proposals. There is a need to identify clearly where and how the BST can be proactive, also in mind of its capacity to do so – as people, time and funding.

2. BST Role and Potential as seen by stakeholders

Those who were more familiar with the BST viewed it as a positive and useful initiative that can contribute to shaping up the region. It is seen as a partner to team up with by the Romanian MFA. Most of the respondents see the main value added of the BST in the fact that it is a *regional* grant making program. BST as a small donor can hardly make a visible difference in addressing all democracy deficits at in-country levels, especially in view of the larger and various donors programs in the different countries. Broad and scattered democracy promotion with limited funding will not be so effective.

The BST strategic potential is more in its regional dimension - by stimulating innovative ideas, cross-border interaction and growing regional thinking, through support to strategic initiatives and regional cross-fertilization. The BST can assist in building and promoting *some positive cooperative spaces* on issues of importance to the region, or in searching bridges between parties of conflicts. It can play the role of an interpreter and a regional convener that can help understand this region as a framework – of how Europe and Russia compete or cooperate. It can help identify in what ways think-tanks, independent intellectuals and NGOs can enter into this debate/conversation for the future of this interaction – this way providing for hearing different perspectives, and shaping a more diverse vision (rather than just of governments). Creating capacities to think and act regional is very much needed.

As many noted, the regional nature of the BST is clearly stated in its name – it is a *Trust for Regional Cooperation*. Though this name came out of the need to have something more neutral than a trust for democracy (like the BTD), more or less it is already seen as a statement for its leading objective. Even though regional level is much more challenging, for many this is one more reason to strengthen regional scope as cross-border and regional initiatives. For some the in-country funding needs to have increasingly regional aspects.

Being part of the GMF the BST is strategically positioned for greater integration and linkage of policy work and grantmaking. Being part of the net of GMF offices in different locations and capable staff the BST can optimize issue-based feedback from the region and its integration into policy debates.

Another potential niche and value added the BST can have is to assist regionalize lessons learned from sectoral programs in different countries – access information; media sector; policy issues etc. It is seen as a potential strategic partner to in-country donors programs¹⁶

3. Making Choices – Recommendations to Strategy

The first year was an open space to test the ground. . However, if left for too long it will result in many scattered projects. A strong feedback from a number of respondents is the need for a more strategic grantmaking. This is required by the limitations of funding and the ambitiousness of the task in the challenges of the Wider Black Sea Region.

¹⁶ (Especially in Ukraine in the interviews with PACT and Internews Network– both seeing the value of partnership with the BST in its regional dimension; there is a lot of potential for developing concrete partnerships).

Based on interviews we could provide another long list of needs related to democracy deficiencies at different levels or vulnerability of the region. This was going to repeat more or less what is already known or already outlined in meetings of advisory board or field work of the BST itself. Instead, based on interviews and documents review down below we systemized suggestions on how to approach strategy dilemmas as part of the strategy itself.

1. *A priority in the second year should be clarifying strategy and making some choices.* This needs to be a planned and systematic effort with relevant time and resources. Expectations that this will happen somehow on the run might be unrealistic, especially in view of the workload of both BST and GMF.

2. The starting point is to *discuss and have shared understanding within GMF and with the other donors involved on vision and expectations from the BST:* What is its potential legacy? What are the leading objectives? What will be the value added of the BST from the perspective of each donor involved? How each donor sees the nature of the BST – more grassroots local initiatives support or more policy interaction and change support, or both and how these complement each other? Is it a traditional regional facility for disbursement of grants, or it requires more creative grantmaking, including proactive approaches. A special donors meeting (or conference call discussion) on the above issues will be very helpful. This was the practice of the Balkan Trust after the first year and helped clarify some of the strategy issues.

2. *Set up some clearer medium term goals.*

As of now the BST has a broad set of goals targeting a deep sea of numerous needs in fragile democracy contexts and uncertainty of environment. It is quite challenging to be clear at the starting point of what the legacy of the BST will be in 10 years and more. If strategy process in-between is left only on an operational level a potential threat is to become project driven and try justify strategy based on what has already been funded. *Some mid-term objectives can help bridge this gap and provide for keeping a strategic orientation while implementing grantmaking or non-grantmaking activities.* Based on these mid-term objectives it will be easier to prioritize – what is really important and what is less important; where to be more proactive/initiating, where to do it alone and where with others. It will also help set some clear benchmarks as suggested by some of the advisory board members at the last meeting, which will help better inform the strategy update, but also evaluation and learning.

Just for illustration: In early documents of the BST is stated to increase of regional programs funding to 40% by the forth year of operation. If this is a mid-term funding objective it will be good to discuss, what will be the implications on in-country programs and approach? Does it mean less funding for in-country projects, or increase in-country projects with regional dimension (for example more work in vulnerable and conflict areas, or stimulated in-country debates on regionally important issues, or activated cross-fertilization or bridging practice to support in-country processes, etc.)? If in three years time in-country funding will be reducing and regional dimension expanding, how to approach country strategies – where to go deeper, and where not to fund initiatives despite the obvious needs? How this relates to fundraising strategy? Where will East-East situate in this 40% target? Etc.

3. *Organize strategy not only based on needs, but also on opportunities.* Regional, east-east and in-country programming can adopt a principle of matching needs assessment with opportunity assessment. This will involve mapping potentials within the numerous democracy work needs – for example potential for partnerships, already existing capacity in the country or in the region, potential for leverage funding, or potential for raising BST strategic visibility or BST fundraising etc. This can also help in making choices on priorities, or approach – where to build upon existing initiatives, and where to support start-ups, where to work with solid groups/established actors, and where with new organizations, etc.

4. *Set limits.* As several respondents suggested – *it is important to decide what the BST is not supporting at all, or not supporting now, or will not support more.* Such limits can involve criteria, based on clearer mid-term objectives and benchmarks.

5. *Put timeframe on open issues and concrete program development goals*– which areas (regional objectives, or objectives per country) will be left open and why, what will be explored, in what time frame and how. These developmental goals will involve both grantmaking and non-grantmaking objectives.

6. *Adopt a more developmental approach to strategy design.*

Complexity of the BST strategic task requires *a more dynamic framework* to look at the strategy to try focusing the broad objectives by answering the following set of questions: *what more and what less, in what developmental area (change objectives), in which places (countries, cross-border zones or cross regions), how (proactive, or reactive, in partnership or alone, through grants only or by combining with policy work), and when (during the financial year, mid-term or in the overall timeframe of the BST)*

Introducing such a dynamic strategic framework this can help accommodate flexibility and openness to respond to shifts in the local contexts and regional set of relations with the need of *strategic investment of funds – little money invested at the right time in the right actors, processes and places.* This will also provide for a more creative grantmaking – more developmental rather than just responsive to what comes. It will also help more structured update of the broad strategic framework, without making it rigid and with space for exploring, learning and increasing impact.

7. Civic Participation Program

Interviews validate the five broad BST grantmaking objectives/change areas: 1/*Transparency and inclusiveness of governance (policy making and implementation); 2/Citizen engagement and interaction with government at different levels ; 3/ Dialogue and public debates on issues of importance to society; 4/Media freedom and professionalism/investigative journalism; 5/ Conflicts (prevention, resolution, dealing with consequences.* They apply to all countries, but have different aspects depending on contexts, feasibility of work, capacities, level of emergency etc.

A more dynamic framework for Civic Participation program will involve both grantmaking priorities (all above objectives or more focus on some) and program development (non-grantmaking) objectives for the different countries both guided by above principles and mainly by the leading objective and meaning of the Trust. It can help organize open questions related to country strategies. Down below are some aspects of how this can look per country, through it is just a schematic example.

7.1. *Russia, Turkey and Ukraine* – due to vast territories and limited financing – in the first 2 years less grants but more strategic and clear set of program development objectives with clear timeframe:

- *Russia: (grantmaking objective)* provide only a few grants through resource centers in the two oblasts, and stimulate regional involvement of independent thinkers, journalists or actors in strategic initiatives. *(non-grantmaking objectives)* Work more intensively in identifying scope of strategy in Russia through activating policy related work of GMF, support to feasibility work (for example the Center for Liberal Strategy has strategic work in Russia), developing partnerships with other donors and fundraising, etc.
- *Turkey:* several grants to support independent think tanks, institutes etc, that can bring for public debates; and/or regional thinking, and/or awareness on EuroAtlantic issues/integration. Increase participation in regional programs (as part of interactive initiatives, confidence building measures, cross border fertilization/capacity exchange also

looking at expertise potential of Turkish organizations. *Developmental objectives*: intensify cooperation with Ankara GMF office, together explore possibilities for raising additional support for locally based or district initiatives, and other democracy projects; complement efforts with relevant policy work of GMF

- *Ukraine: (grant making)* – continue strategic grants with key policy making groups, including expanded regional thinking and getting out of the self-centeredness; look for coalition projects bringing civic actors together to discuss the civil society agenda, priority to public debates and awareness, stimulated partnership projects of NGOs and media; locally – focus mostly in Crimea. Increase participation in regional programs; stimulate focused exchange/linkage with CEE. (*Program development goals*): explore intensively partnership approach with other providers/donors and programs. Search for joint fundraising including potential of partnership with private foundations. Support with GMF policy work

7.2. *Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia* (post-conflict and/or democracy at risk environments)– continue more intensive democracy grants (civic engagement, monitoring and watchdog initiatives for transparency of government, public debates and outreach, as well as conflict zones, etc.). Through the opportunity of having local staff on the ground, intensify efforts for matching efforts with other donors, for more developmental work with grantees and potential applicants; proactive facilitation of more coalition initiatives among several organizations and with the media. Assist by more focused and interactive linkage with groups and civic actors that can assist effectiveness of work in “democracy at risk” environment (from CEE – for example Slovakia, from the region (for example Ukraine civic activism networks) or why not from the Balkans (for example Serbia). Stimulate cross-border initiatives that can open new channels of communication on concrete issues; also in initiatives that involve more than two countries. Support with GMF policy work.

7.3. *Moldova*: have a strategy meeting with the BTM. Consider dividing tasks and a clear set of who is funding what. For example – the BTM will fund democracy projects related to civic education, interaction citizens/government; the BST will focus more on Transnistria, both Trusts will provide linkage and partnership through their regional programming. Program development goals (policy work; advocacy and partnership with other donors for more focused civil society support in Transnistria, etc.)

8. Regional programs need careful rethinking and optimization, especially if the mid-term developmental goal is increased regional programming and if the core strategic potential and legacy of the BST is in its regional dimension. Some aspects to consider include:

8.1. *Review the capacity building aspects that are present in both programs.* A more in-depth look at provided cross-border or exchange capacity building grants in the first year will help identify what works more and what is better to fund less. Basic questions to the effectiveness of capacity exchange/training in the framework of a program like the BST are: 1/ all type of experience exchange among all type of participants or targeted bridging in focused areas among key actors that will contribute practically to key processes; 2/ is it based on demand from the countries of priority, or it is more supply driven from the countries of “expertise”; 3/ is it contributing to cross-fertilization of ideas and expanding civic vision or it is just one more training on the road

8.2. In the first year both programs have funded cross-border and regional initiatives. It will be important to look at *the type of cross-border initiatives that are more meaningful than others* – for example building positive space of interaction among different stakeholders or new mechanisms for approaching conflicts, issue-based initiatives bringing for an increased role of civil society in discussing concrete issues affecting countries; emerging regional wide initiatives and civic/policy thinkers infrastructure etc. There are some good examples from the first year, and BST might

consider looking at individual projects or clusters to develop cases for further promotion. There are also others that might be less effective or too distant in regard to the mission of the BST.

9. **Rethink East-East exchange component both as name and as content.**

- The GMF will be changing the name East-East within the BST program, due to legal request of the OSI¹⁷. Before the new name, there will be a need for a more focused discussion on what is this *east-east* about. For some of the interviewed direct transfer of CEE experience into this region is a very wrong programming assumption – contextually, this “transfer approach” may collapse. There is a need of rethinking, rather than exporting experience. It is more a two-way process and cross-fertilization. It requires intensive mapping not only of needs but also of opportunities and resources in both “recipient” and “expertise” countries. It relates to matching good groups from different regions with targeted sharing of ideas, approaches and focused learning to be integrated into practice.
 - It will be important to involve in rethinking the east-east the CEE Trust for Civil society, as well as other offices of the GMF, especially in Bratislava and in Belgrade - BTD. It is to discuss both content of what can make this exchange more meaningful, as well as help mapping of potential resources in the different regions. This year the CEE Trust is organizing a *Civic Forum 20 years after* to discuss lessons from civil society and avenues forward. This can provide a lot of learning both for BST, but also for the Black sea region.
 - Bridging with expertise from the Balkans can bring in some valuable learning and support to groups in this region in the area of work on resolving conflicts or dealing with consequences like IDPs, dealing with the past etc.; or on effective democracy work in challenging environments. Like already mentioned, one of the BST projects on citizen activation around elections in Azerbaijan have provided youth activists from the country to go and learn together with Civic Initiatives Serbia.
 - A question to decide is whether this program will be effective only as an open call and response to grants, or will be better focused if it is more proactive. The reactive response to grants may lead to more traditional “boxed-in-projects” training, not always most effective or to linkages that are valuable but a bit distant from eventual core priority of what the BST is about. Proactive approach may provide for more targeted linkage of needs with resources, but requires good knowledge of both and more time for facilitation and bridging work.
10. *Clarify the role of Bulgaria and Romania.* They do belong to the region and have a role to play as part of interaction initiatives (especially policy ones, or debates on regional issues, issue-based regional networks or cross border initiatives). This way, naturally good cross-border or regional projects that now are under the east-east exchange will be in the cross-border/regional programming. In regard to east-east exchange it will be better to the two countries out of the “exclusive” position of being the “expertise delivering side”. They can be part of this part of BST programming but on a very competitive basis if the leading idea is to match best expertise with needs for expanded resources in the Black Sea region and if better expertise can be provided by others. Again, this relates to above choices – only reactive or *proactive bridges of civic thinking and acting*.

VI. Expanding Resources : some observations and recommendations

1. Some findings and observations:

- The biggest challenge for the first year of the BST has been the enormous workload and pressure to start perform quickly and efficiently. The work at BST is very demanding from both aspects – as a starting grantmaking program in a much more challenging environment and requiring a lot of presence on the ground; and as an office of GMF the intensive non-

¹⁷ The East-East has been an OSI trademark for 20 years all over the region. Some of the findings in our interviews confirm some confusion around the name among NGOs perceiving the BST east-east as linked with the OSI's one

grantmaking policy related work (study tours, feedback on country and regional situation, presentations etc.)

- Most of the time in the first year the BST has been working with limited program staff, currently expanding with local consultants. The BST has started using interns (non paid, students last year political studies); currently they have two interns working part time – 4 hours. First they go through training to use the interaction database of the office. A challenge is to keep them longer as internships are not paid. One of the interns has grown into program assistant position and increasingly overseeing the work in Moldova.
- The extensive list of activities done in the first year (both related to grantmaking or policy lines) is really impressive, and a few organizations can make it. This is due to the commitment and energy of BST people. However, our experience and brief observations during this review provide for some questions of potential threats to a more strategic performance with this level of resources. Time and space for discussions on strategy is very limited, if any. This relates also to a still evolving organizational structure, division of responsibilities, level of delegation, etc.
- Fundraising is still at a very initial conceptualizing stage. And this is normal in view of the other workload and priority tasks of the start-up. There has been some communication and review of potential fundraising target groups to be approached. A more structured fundraising strategy is anticipated in the spring of this year.

2. Some recommendations

- Though the GMF “model” of branch offices is light institutional presence of small and effective running staff, the challenging task of the BST requires a deeper overview of what are the right resources needed to achieve its goal. Expanding resources as staff, time and funding needs to be part of a consistent strategy linked with both grantmaking (as strategy, grants and monitoring) and non-grantmaking objectives(as policy work, fundraising)
- At least one more program officer will be needed in the Bucharest office to assist either grantmaking , or some of the non-grantmaking objectives. In addition to growth as number of program people it will be helpful to review and optimize some functional systems related to division of responsibilities, delegation and supervision, communication and systems of learning within the Bucharest office, but also as efficiency of back up and communication with DC (for example on administrative issues like contracting outside people).
- The BST may consider announcing on its website a longer time for processing of grants (12-16 weeks like the BTD) and keeping the meetings of the grantmaking review committee no more than 4-6 times per year rather than trying to make it monthly (with some break in the summer). This will provide enough space for more in-depth review of applications needed in view of the larger territory that the BST covers, as well as a bigger pool of ideas to select from. This will also free some space for the strategy exploration needed in some countries, and the pro-active approach in some areas.
- As the BTD is the model, including its success in fundraising it is good to explore how this worked, but also what will be feasible or more challenging in this different region. Success of BTD is due to the effective communication, strategic visibility and presence, but also clear agenda – EU integration of the Balkans and needed investment from donors into sustaining democracy in the region. Another factor for the success is the location of the office in Belgrade. All who are interested in the Balkans– pass through, or have office there or refer to this location as part of the region. The Balkans are a more compact as a region and Belgrade is a meeting point.

- The fundraising for the BST will be much more challenging, due to complexity of issues, vast territories, but also a more fragmented donors interest – some support a set of countries, others sub-regions and still a few provide funding for the region of the Black sea. This will require much longer exploration phase and a more team effort in the framework of GMF offices, including communicating the trademark or “selling point” of the BST.
- Linking the fundraising strategy with the overall strategy clarification process will make fundraising more focused in matching strategic needs of the BST with identifying opportunities for raising support from variety of potential donors.
- Combining policy and grantmaking is a unique asset of the GMF. It is able to mobilize different actors, structures in different regions, access to policy levels in Europe , US and in the regions. This part of GMF work is considered as extremely important. Respondents more familiar with GMF consider that there is need to renew the intensive policy work on regional level (similar to discussions, debates and publications done at the re-start-phase of the BST). This is seen as a collective effort together with the other offices of the GMF and through support to strategic groups/teams from the region (pro-active initiatives). In addition some of the BST grants especially those related to policy debates or forums are also a contribution to above policy work need, as well as cases and analyses developed by some of the think-tank grantees. A recent example is the new grant made for mapping issues and policy solutions for the region.

Attachment 1 : LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

BST Staff

Alina Inayeh, Director, Black Sea Trust
Mark Cunningham, Program Officer, Black Sea Trust
Anemari-Helen Neculescu, Office Manager
Ana Aelenei, Program Assistant
Mehriban Rahimli, local consultant of BST, Baku, (for Azerbaijan)
Nino Liluashvili, Local consultant of BST, Tbilisi, (for Georgia and Armenia)
Tico Nunia, former local consultant of BST, Tbilisi (for Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan)

GMF

Peter Van Praag, Senior Director, Wider Europe, GMF Washington
Ozgur Unluhisarcikli, Director, GMF Ankara Turkey (member AB of the BST)
Pavol DEMES, Director, GMF Bratislava , member of Grants Review Committee
Ivan Vejvoda – Director, Balkan Trust for Democracy; member AB of the BST
Pavlina Filipova, Program Officer, Balkan Trust (works on Bulgaria and Moldova)
Phillip Henderson, former Vice President GMF, (currently President, Surdna Foundation)

Donors of the BST

Walter VEIRS, Regional Director, Central/Eastern Europe and Russia, C. S. Mott Foundation
Peter Wiebler, (KIEV/ODG) USAID
Dr. Stefan Alexandru Tinca, Political Director, Directorate general for Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Romania

Advisory Board

Orysia Lutsevych –Executive Director, Open Ukraine Foundation, AB of the BST
Assya Kavrakova, Program Director, Open Society Institute – Sofia, Bulgaria.
Ognyan Minchev – External Expert
Igor Munteanu – Moldova, IDSI Viitorul
Ara Tadevosyan – Armenia (written interview)

Grantees

Violeta Alexandru, Director, IPP Romania (grantee)
Dr. Stepan Grigoryan, Chariman of the Board, Analytical Center on Globalization and regional cooperation, Armenia (grantee)
Nino Gvedashvili, Development Officer, Human Rights Center (HRIDC), Tbilisi, Georgia
Ion Manole, Chairman, Promo-Lex, Resource and Development Center for Transnistria, Moldova
Natalia Lynnyk. Committee of Voters of Ukraine.
Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze; Program Director, Open Ukraine,
Victor Chumak. International Center for Policy Studies. (grantee)
Ilko Kucheriv **Executive Director** Democratic initiatives Foundation.
Annar Mammadli, Executive Director. Election Monitoring Center. Azerbaijan
Bashir Suleymanli, Field Director, Election Monitoring Center, Azerbaijan
Vahid Gazi, Director, Inam Center for Pluralism, Azerbaijan
Elchin Mammad, President, Social Union of Legal Education of Sumgait Youth, Sumgait, Azerbaijan
Sabit Bagirov, President, FAR Centre -Center for economic and political research
Zohrab Ismaylov, Chair, Public Association for assistance of free economy
I.Ahmadov, Director. Public Finance Monitoring Center;
Mirali Huseynov, Chairman, Democracy Learning Public Association, Azerbaijan
Svetlana Lomeva, Director, Bulgarian School of Politics (recent grantee)

Non-grantees

Ivan Krustev, Director, Center for Liberal Strategies. Bulgaria
Andriy Hevko, OPORA civic network ;
Ozgur Ozdamar, University of Economics and Technology, Ankara, Turkey
Ayca Bulut, Civil Society Development Center, Ankara Turkey
Orcun Ulusoy, Director, Multeci-Der, Association for Solidarity with Refugees

Sevgi Ozcerlik, Project Coordinator, Helsinki Citizens Assembly
Kakha Bakhatadze, CENN Caucasus Environmental NGO Network, Tbilisi, Georgia
Kai Brand-Jacobsen, Director, Peace, Action & Training and Research Institute of Romania,
Valeriy Chaly, Deputy Director General, International Programs Director, Razumkhov Center
Suhrah Ismaylov, Chairman, Public Association for Assistance to Free Economy, Azerbaijan
Azer Allahveranov, Executive Director, Forum of Azerbaijan NGOs on Migration Issues

Other donors or international programs

Rayna Gavrilova, Director, Trust for Civil Society in CEE
Dolores Nagoe, Program Director for Romania, Trust for Civil Society in CEE
Mary Frances Lindstrom, Director, East-East: Partnership Beyond Borders Program, OSF, London
Mark Goldenbaum, Program Officer, Europe and Eurasia Programs, Internews Network, Washington, DC
Susan W. Folger, Chief of Party (together with her Deputy Chief of Party). Internews network. Ukraine
Balazs Jarabik, Country Representative PACT, Ukraine
Helga Pender, Sector Manager, Civil Society Development, Freedom of the Media and Election Assistance European Commission::Ukraine
Timothy Pylate, Regional Development Director, Eurasia
Victor Liakh, Executive Director East Europe Foundation
Lyubov Palyvoda, CCC Kiev; currently at MCC/ advocacy program; did Mott assessment in Ukraine
Marina Ayyvazyan, Senior Program Officer, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Armenia
Michael Kunz, Chief of Party, Ilgar Assanov, Deputy Chief of Party, and Anar Aslanov, Advocacy Officer, Civil Society Project, Counterpart, Azerbaijan

ATTACHEMENT 2 : MAPPING GRANTS.

Based on Data from Resumes of Approved projects

Program area: Cross border Cooperation 11

#	Grantee/project/size/duration	Countries/level of action/type organizations	Activities/outputs	Potential Outcomes in regard to BST objectives	Attributive aspects (of BST support, and of project approach)
1	ProDemocracy association Correctness of Georgian election process. \$17,566. 1,5 months	Romania -Georgia Well established and recognized NGO	Election monitoring	Fair elections, civic participation/democracy	Support for independent outside election monitoring
2	Ari Movement Turkish Youth Forum on BS region. \$23,130. 5 months	Turkey + Armenia Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine Think tank	Youth Forum on democracy, with participation of Turkish Youth organizations; speakers from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine.	Increased awareness of regional issues Developing new generation of leaders	Brings regional perspective in a national forum of young leaders
3	Black Sea University foundation; 2008 International symposium The wider BS Area in Perspective \$24,725 , 8 months	Romania – regional Regional network	4 –day symposium for young professionals and partner countries focusing specifically on issues related to regional cooperation in the BS area.	strengthening of existing regional network increased awareness on regional issues and cooperation; created forum for dialogue in a form of multi-annual program	Co-funding - Contribution to a \$ 232,000 multiple donors supported regional initiative
4	Civitas Foundation for Civil society. “Local Development in the BS Region”. \$19,970, 7months	Romania , Bulgaria and Turkey; Well established NGO with expertise in the area of community development	3-day seminar for 55 practitioners of community development; follow up on-line discussion group; CD guide of methods and best practice distributed to NGOs and Local governments in the 3 countries	exchange of experience; Increased capacities for community development; shared and disseminated good practices	Anticipated to trigger future joint projects. It can easily be also under east-east.
5	International Center for Policy studies, Kiev; \$10,000. 6months	Ukraine +Romania and Moldova Leading organization well established think tank with high expertise	Simultaneous research in the three countries based on common methodology; working seminars in each country with decision makers and NGOs and international organizations; formulation of migration policy priorities, publication of study in the three country languages and in English; presentations and dissemination on country and EU levels	Increased awareness on regional issues (migration) Informed debate, policy formulation developing national agendas and regional policy coordination	Co-funding OSI East-East partnership Cross-border issue based cooperation of think tanks/policy institutes

6	Median Research Center. “What do citizens want? Promoting substantive representation in Romania and Moldova”. \$24,900 6 months	Romania+ Moldova Well established research organization	Create a webpage and software on the basis of Vote Advice Application (VAA); comparative information different political parties, and online questionnaire to test match of different parties to individual preferences	Exchange of experience Voter education. Anticipated interest of youth in Moldova as it is more likely to use internet	Application of the Smart Vote project (applied in various EU countries) in Moldova. Is there in-country partner?
7	Social Union of Legal Education of Sumgait Youth (SULESY) \$14,025 12 months	Azerbaijan - Turkey Good activist NGO working with youth	A 5 day study tour in Ankara, Turkey of 10 CSO leaders from 8 azeri cities to meet with Turkish NGOs and media; Translation, publish and distributing "Reclaiming Democracy"	Exchange of experience Building next generation of local civil society leaders; activating civic participation in three regions in Azerbaijan	Contribution for study tour complementing a larger core activities NGO development project supported by NED .
8	NGO Resource and analyses society. “Assessing implementation of the ENP Action Plans in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine \$ 69,890	Ukraine +Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova Leading organization, recognized NGO; good partner NGOs in the countries	Close work with one counterpart in each country develops common systematic methodology; independent assessment of the European Neighborhood Policy Action Plan,; country reports;	Created regional network of NGOs ; issue based - Monitoring of Government implementation of ENP Action plans Civil society involvement and interaction with government in finding solutions to environmental problems and sustainable development	Matching support to, total project 118,485 Good partnership approach
9	Eco-Tiras International Environmental association of River Keepers/ Saving lower Dniester biodiversity 24 940 12	Moldova Ukraine Leading organization: Cross- border association of 50 environmental NGOs	3 workgroups with different stakeholders from the 2 countries; mixed research group to monitor enforcement of national and international environment legislation, five public awareness/consultative meetings of local communities and NGOs to draft recommendations, international conference, publication Dniester 2008	Created cross-border mechanism for monitoring of implementation of national and international legislation in the two countries, participation; Concrete suggestions for improvement of policies; Increased public awareness and civic engagement around the common issue of preserving Dniester biodiversity	Co-funding to support of several donors (Total project \$48 750) . Cross-border issue- based cooperation, approach is action oriented for policy monitoring; and partnership involving both countries at various levels;
10	TESEV Turkish Armenian dialogue series: breaking the vicious circle 24,100, 4 months	Turkey +Armenia Policy research and think tank NGO	A workshop in Yerevan, organized together with the Caucasus institute (Armenia) Policy paper developed and distributed	Confidence building measures /conflict resolution Opening dialogue channels between civil society, journalists, academia	Co-funding; to overall \$43,400 project Potential for follow up initiatives. And for linkage with policy work GMF

11	Analytical center for Globalization and Regional cooperation/ “Conference EU and S Caucasus – a security partnership?” \$19,904. 12 months (just started)	Armenia – Germany	Two day conference in Yerevan of experts from the region and Brussels	Awareness and dialogue on regional issues Debate on security of the 3 countries of South Caucasus and creating informal expert/scholars network on this issue	Co-funding Bosch Foundation Conference/Expert level linkage
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East-East Cooperation: 11projects

#	Grantee/project/ Size of grant/duration	Countries/level of action/type organizations	Activities/outputs	Potential Outcomes in regard to BST objectives	Attributive aspects (of BST support, and of project approach
1	OSC Sliven;” Participatory democracy in the BSregion” \$21,500; duration 6 months	Bulgaria , Moldova,Ukraine Spin off OSI – the club has been evolving as community organization	Training and exchange 5NGOs from Molodva and 5 NGOs from Ukraine on training in Bulgaria, 3 workshops delivered on advocacy, participatory democracy, Inclusive policy making	Contacts among NGOs, capacity for participation/advocacy Report too general	More traditional type of exchange/training; no evidence to what extent is demand or supply driven; OSI Sliven is good, but there can be better places to learn
2	Center for International. and Regional Policy. “The Baltic-Black sea region: perspectives and Policy options for regional cooperation and security” \$23,000 ; 10 months	Russia + the Baltics, Poland, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova Leading organization – think tank with a focus and expertise on regional cooperation	Two international conferences and winter and summer schools; policy discussions and capacity development	Expanded capacities in regional thinking; regional cooperation, Shaping Baltic Black sea regional perspective and policy options, increased regional awareness on Euro Atlantic/security issues among young researchers, students and activists	co-funding in total project of \$ 86 000 (various donors)
3	Foundation for Pluralism; “Regional School for young leaders and civic activists 2008”. \$24,900; 6 months	Romania +Moldova Leading organization old GMF partner; 13 years of experience in organizing Young Political Leaders School	training program for 40 participants from local level both political party and community NGO representatives from the two countries	common dialogue in order to create cohesive public policies at local/district levels expanded resources in Moldova for good governance	Provides for interactive participation of different stakeholders locally within capacity building program

4	CENTRAS and FCSD Romania. "Partners for international development". \$46,895. 7 months	Romania -Georgia Leading organization – resource center for NGOs and advocacy for the III sector	Assessment of the Georgian NGO sector. Publish a brochure on NGOs development in the two countries; Two –day workshop in Tbilisi for 40 NGOs to present case studies and practice from Romania. Distributed directory of Romanian and Georgian NGOs	Establishing linkage and cooperation among NGOs in the two countries Increased resources/capacities of Georgian NGOs based n Romanian experience	Transfer of experience on sector level. Is there in-country partner in Georgia?
5	Center for Conflict Prevention and Early warning. Crises Management-Trilateral approach \$17,160, 5 months	Ro + Moldova, Ukraine Leading organization – well established research/policy; and good counterparts in the two countries	Research/analyses of crises management – decision making in the different countries. Presentation in the three countries.	Conflict resolution/prevention Informed knowledge on ways governments operate at time of crises and suggestions for improvement	Good partnership approach of coordinated work on in-country and regional level. Can easily be in Cross-border program.
6	Association Professional Women. "Promoting Awareness of Civil Society and Democracy". \$22,780 , 12 months	Moldova +Estonia Issue based NGO	Women/gender capacity building for women rights and entrepreneurship; training and exchange activities	Expanded resources for economic and entrepreneurship development in Moldova	Study tour and exchange
7	Romanian Academic Society; Where Europe ends 24,900 12	Romania +Moldova and Ukraine. Leading organization – Think tank, high expertise and credibility	Documentary film on new European border regions; to be presented in Brussels and Bucharest; and to broader audience in participating countries	Increased awareness and activated policy discussions at both European and countries in the region on issues of new European borders, visa and freedom of movement	Innovative and creative approach; can serve as awareness /advocacy tool. Potential for linkage with GMF policy work; and for increased strategic visibility of BST
8	IPP-Romania in partnership with CLS Bulgaria, ,IDIS-Vitorul Moldova and Caucasus Institute for Peace. "Transparency, Accountability, Civic Participation- a Plea for Open Parliaments. \$57,570 8 months	Romania , Bulgaria, Moldova, Georgia Partnership of 4 well known and established think-tanks. Leading organization with public policy institute with recognized expertise	Developing country assessments of regulations and mechanisms of Parliaments for informing citizens. Report on Open Parliaments, regional conference to discuss it. Country round tables on transparency and accountability of legislative process	Share practice monitoring parliaments in the region. Advocacy for improvement (during electoral campaigns or with newly elected Parliaments Transparency and accountability of governments and legislative process.	Very good example of equal partnership. Creative approach combining research, advocacy and public outreach. Potential of creating strategy groups of think-tanks for formulating practical suggestions, based on bottom up approach. It can easily be cross-border

9	Pro-democracy, on behalf of ENEMO 25,000 . 4 months	Romania – Azerbaijan	Election monitoring presidential elections 2008 in Azerbaijan Contribution to sending observers; Report issued on the day after elections	Free and fair elections ENEMO presence on the ground will protect domestic monitoring organizations; will provide for accurate reporting on elections	Contribution to a large project of \$134,910 (NDI) Question - how this project relates to BST grant to Election Monitoring Center in Azerbaijan?
10	Center of Public Initiatives Svitovich. “United Europe Multinational culture – Youth Camp;19,920 out of 33,400 , 6 months	Ukraine + Poland, Romaina, Azerbaijan and Georgia	7-day international camp for 40 young leaders from 5 countries– share experience in the area of minority rights, ethnic religious tolerance, discuss roots of discrimination and on what must be directed our effort	Established links between groups/young leaders increasing understanding minority rights/ethnic and religious tolerance	Co-funding Open Ukraine
11	CSDF and FOND Romania. “Time to meet NGO forum” \$77,424	Romania - All BS countries; Organizers well established leading NGOs and the platform for development cooperation; in cooperation with partners from countries	3-day conference with participation from of 117 NGOs from 9 countries in BS region, as well as donors organizations and European institutions.	Regional cooperation, development of regional NGO platform to meet annually Development of follow up projects among participants. Increased opportunities for networking. Valued by participants: found good ideas, chance to meet, potential for identification of common issues and of practical follow up and search for joint projects and funding linked some of the funders for the region. For some - missing clarity on selection of participants; groups from countries not representative; too early “boxed-in” development of concrete projects at the third day of the conference	Co funding to a large \$246,720 initiative funded by the Romanian MFA Fits quite well the objectives of Cross-border/regional cooperation

Program area: Civic participation: total 37 projects

#	Grantee/project/ Size of grant /duration	Countries/level of action/type organizations	Activities/outputs	Potential Outcomes in regard to BST objectives	Attributive aspects (of BST support, and of project approach
Azerbaijan – 9 projects					

1	Public Finance Monitoring Center; Preparation of glossary public finance terminology. \$ 18,000. 6 months (finished)	Central Well established NGO with good record in monitoring public finance and budgetary processes	Developing and publishing a glossary public financing. Published in a book and on the website. Will be distributed to NGO staff, university students and professors, community activities and civil servants – Azeri terminology doesn't match international one.	Transparency of government – monitoring of public spending Increased knowledge and understanding of public finance terminology among civic activists, students and NGOs; this can help government monitoring through other initiatives	Just around a publication, but linked with the core activities of the leading organization, which works in the area in the long-term
2	Election Monitoring Center \$49, 421, 6 months (finished)	Countrywide Experienced NGO in election observation with wide network of volunteer observers	2008 elections monitoring supported by NDI and other funders- TOT and training of non-partisan domestic observers (in total 1836 trained, 60 from BST funding); assisted them with accreditation at election commissions in various locations; produced election observation manual; Final report of Election Monitoring Results (just sent) and published on their website	Free and fair elections Very difficult task in Azerbaijan. Reported in interview about challenges for democracy work; concretely for this project - secrete police blocked their webpage threaten with arrest. Currently organization is actively involved in organizing debates around attempts to change the constitution (no term for President); sending updates and reports internationally	Contribution to a large project of \$148,060 (NDI)
3	Az Taffakur (thinking) association. “Improvement of Knowledge, Activity and Role of Young Electors on Election Campaign” \$24,634, 8 months	5 regions Active NGO working with youth	5 regional training for 155 young leaders Creating a Country-wide Young Leaders network	Youth leaders capacity for participation in election	
4	IMAM Center for Pluralism/ Public discussions of democracy and integration into Europe \$18,466, 8 months At end of implementation	Well established national NGO	Together with Inter-news and Radio Liberty – debates; 16 radio dialogues, 8 internet forums and 8 round table talks. Report on state of democracy produced, resented and published on the website of organization some government official involved, included strategic research center of President	Stimulated public debates and awareness on democracy and European integration	partnership with Internews and a Radio Liberty – direct involvement of media.

5	Public Association for assistance of free economy. “Monitoring of SOCAR financial flows/transparency”. \$21,505 12 months	National level Well established NGO with proven record in monitoring transparency of state oil company	Monitoring spending state oil company, assessment of social investment projects and impact of funding, expert polling on the level of transparency of financial flows; public discussions and radio programs; training module for monitoring for NGOs and journalists; final report published in Azeri and English on the website of EITI NGO coalition and presented at final conference	Transparency of government Monitoring spending and Opening Public debate on spending of social investments Increased capacities of NGOs and journalists for monitoring	Very good initiative for monitoring of government spending, can be shared as a good case with others in the region Linked with the core activity of the organization in the long-term
6	Social Union Sumgait Youth/ Support to increasing voting activity/NGO participation in the regions 22,179 out of 72,179 (NED and US Embassy) 8 months	3 Regions Very good activist organization with record in mobilizing youth	Voter education by series of TV debates in the regions, brochure about all aspects of presidential elections; public opinion survey in the three cities; produce get-out the vote, DVD - 6000 distributed; also shown on public TV; visited Civic Initiatives in Serbia one of the best NGOs working nationwide on civil society, democracy etc.	Free and fair elections Increased voters participation in three regions For the first time DVD produced by NGO was aired on public TV.	Very good approaches of public outreach through media and direct work with citizens; Learning from Serbian counterparts considered very helpful. BST might consider broader looking at the East-East component and expanding exchange with NGOs in the Balkans (together with BTB).
7	Center for economic and political research (EAR). “Development and advocacy of Azerbaijan Good Governance national agenda 24,728 + OSI 10,000 9 months.	nation wide Leading organization well established NGO/policy research	Assessment of legal provisions – identify those hampering good governance criteria; develop draft good governance national agenda and discussion with stakeholders – decision makers, NGOs and media; nationwide media campaign, advocacy for implementation of agenda by newly elected government	Transparency and accountability of government; opening debate and raising awareness on good governance in time before elections;	Project has recently started.
8	Democracy Public Learning Union. “Increasing IDP’s participation in local governance. \$ 19,770, 10 months Just started	Local level of action, 5 municipalities/ rural areas NGO with credibility/record in projects for stimulating civic participation and good governance	Activities combine direct work with IDP communities and with municipal authorities and involve trainings, public forums, awareness raising and interaction among local media, government citizens; Developing practical information material/packet to assist IDP active participation in the local municipalities they are placed/live	Inclusive governance, local level IDP integration into society	Good approach stimulating practical interaction among different local stakeholders, IDPs inclusion and – critical issue for many municipalities, project has recently started

9	Center for economic and social development 21,896 8 Az – 3 districts	3 Regions, local Most active and best Economic Think tank	Enhancing transparency of public expenditures with a regional focus – workshops in the regions; communities, media, public officials – 2day trainings in 5 communities on practical monitoring of how government expenditure is spent and how it should be done in future; dialogue between local governments; prepare booklet 500 copies; recommendations to Ministries of finance and of Health; 400 articles in the mass media;	Transparency public expenditure potential outcomes less corruption; created capacities in the region for monitoring of government some recommendations accepted and some communities invited to discussions on health expenditures in the futures	Very good project; interactive approach linking local and national level; with direct public outreach and good work with the media; chosen communities geographically diverse and ethnic and IDPs population – good case; to be shared with other countries;
Armenia – 1 project					
10	SCARP Health Center. “Accessible Future”. \$18,275; 10months	City district in Yerevan Issue based NGO; good record in advocacy and civic initiatives for people with disabilities	Series of joint workshops of different stakeholders – civil society, local government, media and business; created local advocacy group; discussions on municipal budget	Transparency and inclusiveness of government Advocacy for accessibility of urban infrastructure for people with disability. Enforcement /implementation of legislation and relevant budget provision	Good case of local civic activism/advocacy leading to improvement of governance
Georgia – 8					
11	HRIDC, Monitoring 2008 elections Zugdili (Samegrelo region 11,240 3 months Finished	1 municipality western Georgia Organization – well established human rights organization	50monitors in 50 polling stations in the locality – one day training; direct election monitoring on election day; final monitoring report	Civic participation fair elections Election monitoring in a municipality, close to Abkhazia, with high number of IDPs	Complementary to efforts of other major domestic and international observation missions; monitoring report differed
12	The Strategic Research Institute \$22,515. Strengthening Capacity of Georgian Provincial Press to Foster the Norms of Democratic Citizenship 8 months.	Georgia Leading think tank with high expertise on public policy and awareness raising	Local media capacity development done in partnership with Georgian Regional Media Association; focus groups, practical training for journalists; discussions with media and politicians	<i>Free and independent media</i> Increased civic and democracy awareness and capacities of media for independent reporting. Education of public at large on democracy and civic engagement	Partnership of think tank and media association of over 60 local newspapers.
13	Women’s fund in Georgia/Women Empowerment in the conflict zone \$16,200. 8 months	Georgia Independent grantmaking organization	Workshops and informative meetings for women awareness and empowerment. Establish two resource centers for women	<i>Conflict resolution, linking people</i> Increased women participation in South Ossetia and bordering Shida Kartli region Confidence building and linkage of women on both side of a conflict zone	Good approach of approach to conflict zones “entrance” - women, their issues and empowerment; potential for follow up community initiatives

14	Caucasus institute for Peace Democracy Development/ CSO exchange program \$29,160, 6 months	Georgia Well established NGO with expertise both in-country and regional	Capacity building program for informed participation in decision making; involving training, internships within NGOs, follow up practical field work (field research, policy recommendation paper, public discussions) publication of summaries of papers in local print media	Citizen participation in decision making Strengthen political capacities of local NGO capacity building; informed participation in decision making	Anticipated potential for expanding the initiative in South Caucasus and /or wider Black sea Region
15	Civil society Institute. "Civil society for public service reform in Kobuleti region \$24 914, 10months	Kobuleti municipality, local Well established NGO with expertise and record of work for public service reform at different levels	Legal analyses of administration system and suggestions for structural reform; improving administration staff management, trainings for municipal employees in various areas of management, communication, teamwork, local governance	<i>Transparency and inclusiveness of local government</i> Improved service delivery Increased capacities of local administration	Implemented in partnership with the Municipality, signed memorandum of understanding.
16	Human Rights Protection center/My Town - My Money 24,900 out of 36,700 11 months	Batumi, Adjara region (local) Well established and experienced NGO	Informational campaign on budgetary process; radio programs where citizen call and ask questions, booklets, training for journalists and representatives of condominiums; monitoring of relevant municipal bodies and of media reporting and publishing results in local newspaper and regional radio	<i>Increased Accountability and transparency of municipal bodies</i> Increased involvement of citizens and condominium associations in the budget planning; raised capacities of media reporting; increased public awareness	Co-funding Eurasia foundation Very good interactive approach with involvement of citizens and media.
17	Transparency Georgia \$ 79 110 12 months half way	Georgia Well known and established NGO, local chapter of TI	Setting up and operating Advocacy and Legal Advice Center in Tbilisi – to fight corruption (concrete cases and based on that advocacy for reform), capacity building of government institutions , development of guides, training with TI Romania	<i>Transparency of government</i> Increased capacities of citizens to fight corruption; and of institutions to respond to cases of complaints; advocacy for reform based on cases	Total project \$140 370 (rest own funds) Transfer of experience from model of advice centers in 12 countries CEE and the Caucasus. Institutional grant .
18	HRDIC Georgia/free legal aid and representation of the Victims of Georgian Russian conflict to the European Court of Human rights 24,846, 12 months	Georgia Well established credible human rights organization	Legal consultations, fact collecting and litigation strategy for individual and group cases and assistance for taking those to the European court	<i>Conflict resolution/dealing with the past</i> Human rights of victims of war	(started Oct.2008)
Moldova – 7					
19	International relief Friendship Foundation; Relationship between teenagers Ro Moldova 6,520, 3 months Finished oct.2008	Transdnistria Well established NGO; area – elimination of poverty; sustainable development	5-day Youth camp for 50 young people (14-25 years old). Organized in partnership with Transdnistrian association of teenagers from the left bank of Dniester river. Involved variety of training, joint activities, preparing articles, video and audio spots	<i>Conflict resolution/prevention</i> Interaction among young people; linking people	First encounter of young people from both sides of conflict; joint experiential learning

20	Public Organization Somato/ From community mobilization to social inclusion. \$26,405. 12months	Local level , northern part of Moldova .issue based NGO alternative social assistance for people with mental health problems	Six 3-day TOT for potential trainers to work with people with mental disability, their families and the community. Informational campaign for social inclusion done together with a press agency	Civic education/raise the awareness within Moldovan communities and society on social inclusion	Not clear
21	National youth council of Moldova \$17,802, 2,5 months	Country wide Umbrella organization of 33 member youth NGOs	7-day training for human rights for 30 young leaders (16-25 years old), combining a trainer from Council of Europe and 2 from Moldova	Civic education for young people	Co-funding of Council of Europe of 6000 euro
22	Perspectiva/ Informed youth active citizens. \$9080. 12 months	Cahul region NGO with specialization in work with youth/education	Activites combine informational campaigns and awareness raising activities; seminars/training and community development projects. Work with students and schools in the region, and in partnership with other NGOs	Civic education /Youth civic capacity building, future leaders Increased understanding and skills of youth in the region for civic participation, volunteer work	Very interactive, creative approach; involvement and partnership of the various groups – other NGOs, school authorities, students; demonstrates in practice volunteer work
23	IDIS-Vitorul. “ Gains and Pains for NATO membership of Moldova” 43,890 10	National level Leading and well known think tank with strong expertise	Drafting of series of analytical papers with Cost-benefit comparative analyses of Nato membership, done by international team and feedback from different countries. Series of seminars to present the paper, training for other think tanks to train young leaders, journalists, politicians. Final conference to present study.	Informed debate on NATO membership, Increased awareness on Euro-Atlantic values among key stakeholders	Good approach in matching in-country and international experience; bringing in participation of experts from
24	Regional Development Center Stability. “Civil Participation” \$18,060, 6 months	Local level in Gagauzia autonomous unit/region NGO working for civil society	Roundtable discussion and follow up training for local media NGO leaders and authorities.	Civic education for different stakeholders; increased capacities for participation and active citizen engagement	Just started
25	IPP Moldova/Council experts for conflict resolution 14,800 out of 32,267 12	Transdnistria Think Tank with expertise	Builds upon established national council of experts around the National development plan. Regular diagnoses of the state of conflict; Regular expert advice to the Moldovan Ministry of re-integration; opening information space and policy dialogue with civil society from the left Bank of Dniester	<i>Conflict resolution</i> Created structured platform for dialogue and interaction between governmental actors, international organizations and civil society experts	Co-funding DFID Approach – builds on already created expert structure; Lead organization part of another BST project – regional approach to conflicts; provides learning on role of civil society (policy think tank) for conflict resolution

26	Regional NGO of Journalists Aksynia. “Efficient Social Technologies (EST) for Better Understanding and Cooperation Between NGOs, Citizens, Business and Administration.” \$ 18,000. 12 months	Rostov-Don region Leading NGO - resource center for NGOs and media, good track record	Consultative discussions among NGOs, training for activists for cooperation and communication; publishing of booklet	Revitalizing NGO community in the region, increased interaction among NGOs and with local government and business	Potential for follow up collaborative initiatives
27	GOLOS. “Strategic citizens”. 12 months Approve at \$73 120	Krasnodar, Adygeya, Stavropol and Rostov (southern Russia) Well established and active NGO with extensive experience in monitoring elections; and of elected officials	Education of local officials for the benefit of dialogue with citizens; training of regional civic leaders (together with CeRe Romania and CVU Ukraine); assessment of current level of interaction between authorities and citizens and develop and advocate mechanisms , procedures and activities for improvement	increased participation in decision making through interaction of citizens and locally elected	Just starting

Turkey – 4

28	Women center and counseling KAMER; “Women are organizing in towns”. 25,000, 12 months	Rural areas, 13 districts Eastern Turkey	Forming 26 working groups involving 640 women from villages for awareness and fight violence. Forming of rapid reaction teams in 13 districts from both civic and official institutions to offer assistance against violence	Women empowerment. Creating self-help networks in rural areas; creating interactive mechanisms with official institutions for problem solving and assistance BST: Civic mobilization and engagement	Matching contribution (overall project- \$78000 Good case of grassroots mobilizing/activism
29	Ari Movement 10th International Security Conference \$24,900 ,8 months	National/international	International Security Conference on ,Looking Ahead: Managing Turkey’s International Relations in the Coming Decade.’	Broaden international debate among experts and policy makers on regional and functional issues centered on Turkey	Co-funding (total project\$ 60,370) Regional dimension
30	Turkish association for legislation/ YASADER/. “NGO Parliamentary handbook”. \$21 000, 8 months	National level	Publishing a handbook on how the Parliament work and NGOs role in the legislation process, accompanied by a training guide for conducting workshops for NGOs	Civic education for informed participation and influencing the legislative process	
31	KADER/Ankara branch; Women for local politics \$ 32,753 6	Local three cities: Ankara, Trabzon and Adana	Training for 75 women activists – potential candidates the necessary skills to get party nominations in order to win elections;	increasing women candidates inclusion at local branches of political parties	

Ukraine – 6

32	Kherson Regional Charity and Health foundation V International Days in Human rights Film festival, Ukrainian context. \$ 23,665 grant to overall \$ 281,820, multiple donors. 9 months	Kherson Local country wide Well established organization with record and experience; rights defense/network with advocacy NGOs	Human Rights Festival. Variety of activities – documentary film festival, discussions; traveling festival in over 15 cities in the country	Raised public awareness on democratic values; Good outreach to regions Very strong organization, working in the long-term for rights based approach and advocacy	Contribution to an existing large initiative supported by multiple donors;
33	Integration and Development Center, Crimea Ukr 20,920 7 month	Crimea	Education – campaigns tolerance/community level	Conflict vulnerable zone/ prevention work by civic education Feedback from filed trip – considered as very good organization (Internews);	Crimea - region of importance to work
34	Committee of voters Ukraine (CVU), Kiev. \$24,800 out of 59,360 (CVU) 6 months	in 15 cities One of the largest NGO; very strong organization with expertise and record	Teaching principles of good governance and establishing local monitoring mechanisms; educational materials mailed to administration locally; matrix for monitoring; final report with recommendations; media campaign to disseminate results	Transparency and accountability of governance; increased awareness on good governance principles and skills of civic groups locally to monitor; monitoring; raised awareness through media campaign	Very good and interactive project; part of overall strategy of a strong organization; they plan to apply again
35	Public Organization Youth Center “Volunteer”. \$12,375. 9 months	Sevastopol and participants from 8 oblasts Youth organization	Four-day Youth summit for 30 youth and 10 faculty participants from 8 oblasts/regions, website creation as forum for discussing issues and policy suggestions	Established a permanent Youth think tank/network Forming new generation of civic activism leadership	Interesting in approach very close cooperation with Peace corps. BST may consider establishing contacts with Peace Corps in countries where it is present. Can help outreach, proposal development etc.
36	Open Ukraine/II Annual Kiev Security Forum. \$21,760 out of 44,160 12	National/regional Leading organization: in-country private foundation/co-funder	Kiev security forum is a issue-based annual event to discuss European and regional security issues. 2008 focused on energy and security. Participation from most Black sea countries, from EU, etc. High quality of participants. Achieved in-depth discussion. Raised interest in media –wide coverage BST contribution concretely supported the writing of a policy paper of 6 experts from different countries on energy issues	Dialogue on key regional issues (energy/security) Provides regional platform for independent experts, governments and international and European structures Expanded regional thinking and awareness	Contribution to a large initiative funded mostly by private in-country donors and MFA Ukraine. The initiative has already a “brand name” and recognized important international security forum based in the region

37	Democratic Initiatives Foundation. "Press-clubs round tables on key Euro Atlantic issues, \$25,000. 6 months	National Well established and known organization/policy	Holding open public discussions on Euro Atlantic issues; more than 35 round tables, video-conferences with experts from NATO, EU and the region, based on that developed informational products and hold nation wide informational campaign by distribution through media, NGO networks and think tanks. Work in partnership with relevant institutes for public affairs in Slovakia and Poland	Debate on critical issues for the country Increased awareness on Euro Atlantic issues	Just starting Initiative will be also done in partnership with relevant counterparts in Slovakia and Poland
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