



МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЕ ОБЩЕСТВЕННОЕ ОБЪЕДИНЕНИЕ

«ПОНИМАНИЕ»



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“Social” NGO in Belarus: Analysis of situation, sources of funding, and prospects for its development

2010

For what we need this?

- Belarus is a unique country in frames of extended European Family (CoE + BY) – Terra Incognita where special local rules are actual.
- To arrange successful cooperation aiming at the integration of Belarus to European Family in all dimensions, especially of civil society matter.
- To provide EU and other partners with the information and effective gateways to realize common projects/ programs in Belarus in PARTNERSHIP with Belarus CS “Social” sector NGOs.

What is Civil Society in Belarus?

- 17 Political Parties, 43 Trade Unions, 2225 NGOs officially registered by Ministry of Justice and its Regional Departments.
- As to our informal study, just 1100-1200 NGO maintain everyday activity.
- As to further – about 400 NGO follow the rules of democracy – both internal and societal.
- And finally, just 100-150 NGO are pro-active to solve social problems & challenges.
- There are about 40 of them – in e.g. Child Sector.

Issue

- Is Belarus a deadlocked country or is it a geographical center of Europe, having equal rights member of extended European Family? What is the attitude and approach of our partners?
- What is your choice?

Strengths of Belarusian Social NGO

- Quality
- Mobility
- Experience
- Deep knowledge of local context
- Lobbying abilities and good reputation between Governmental agencies
- Those who have survived and developed their activity in 2000-2010 are very strong and able to fast quantitative and qualitative growth when surrounding will become completely NGO-friendly

Weak

- Washing-Out Human Resources
- Bad role of “empowered” experts
- Local restriction – both in content and finance
- In general: very limited access to funding
- In particular: hardly and sometime dirty competitive surrounding for very limited resources, gaps in long-term planning of donors – wrong priorities and already NOT ACTUAL (min. 5 years delayed)
- No instrument of long-term sustainability and development

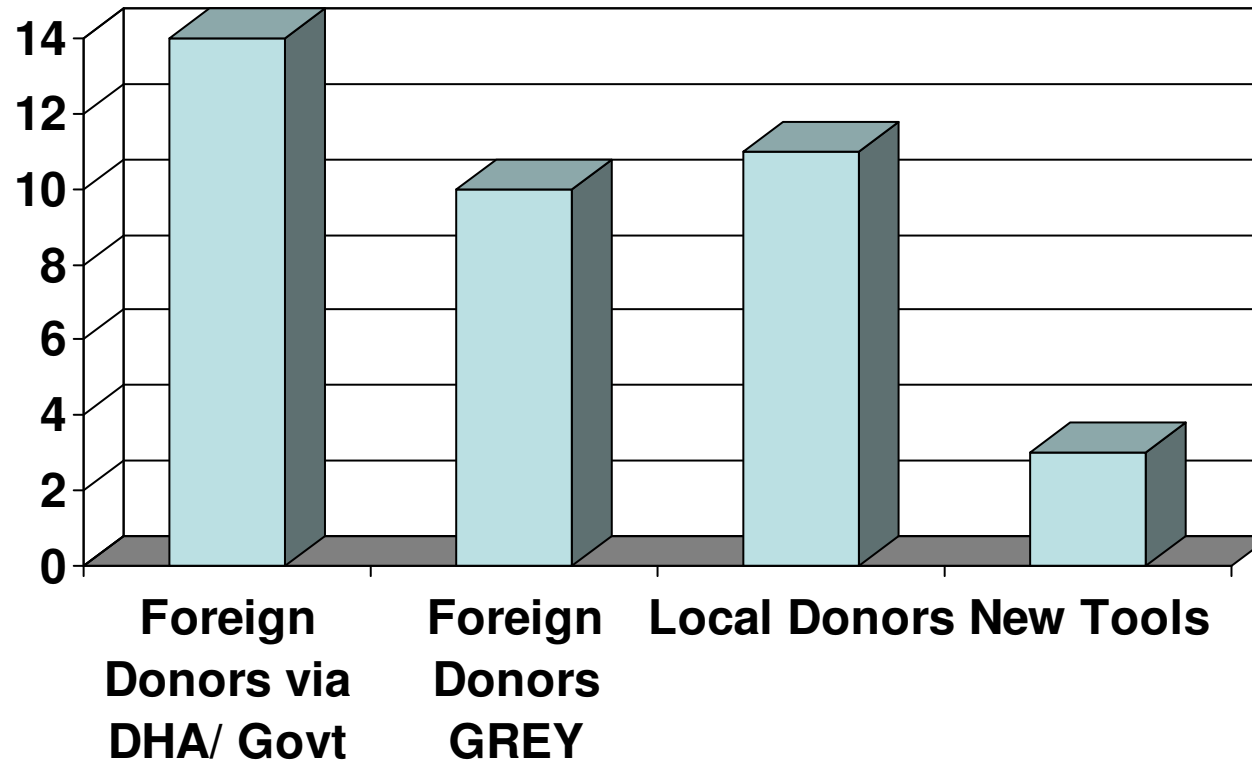
Opportunities

- To provide NGO personnel with attractive job offers
- To create instruments of dialog between NGO and both national and local Government, and to create new opportunities to open finance flows to Belarusian NGOs
- To use alternate sources of funding: inside and outside the country, and to make re-focusing of some donor agencies
- To arrange long-term planning of donors aiming at RIGHT priorities and to be actual and PROACTIVE
- To change focus of donors to create instrument of long-term sustainability and development of the NGO sector – purchasing of the property, establishment and development of endowments, support to capital campaigns, creation and development of daughter businesses, etc.

Threats

- Only global...
- Threat from Government to make conditions for NGO harder...
- Threat from donors community and the biggest international NGO aiming to keep full control over national civil society.
- Russia will take Belarus under its not only informal but also official control, and Belarusian NGO will face a new type of competition.
- Second phase of Global Economic Crisis will come approx. in 2012.

Analysis of funding of social NGO (N=14)



The most effective gateways

- Partnering cross-border projects/ programs on bilateral and multilateral BSR level and wider when Belarus partners will play EQUAL role but not “trainee forever”.
- Solidarity to national Belarusian NGOs from the part of NOT ONLY national NGOs in EU, USA, etc., but from the part of international/ intergovernmental organizations and funding bodies:
 - 1) Experts and expert commissions which donors establish for Calls for Proposals need to be changed, their professionalism and competencies must be proved (Community and Media Development Fund as crucial example)
 - 2) Belarus-based key national, regional (CEE/NIS, BSR, EP), and international NGOs must be involved into donor’s long-term planning process, not only “empowered” (POW) experts participating everywhere: from NGO Development Index to MDG implementation meetings, though nobody has empowered them.
 - 3) LISTEN to those who work in the particular sphere, who are not only “well-English-speaking-attractive-and-tell-what-I-want-to-hear”, but mostly those who tell the truth, even if it is not nice sometime.

In what directions we can operate together?

- Children's Rights & Child Protection (Child Abuse & Neglect, Child Disability, Child Participation and so on);
- Human Rights defense, especially for vulnerable groups (elderly, disabled, unemployed, homeless, HIV, etc.)
- Informational Exchange, Networking and Cooperation between NGOs on BSR level (for ex. www.childcentre.info)
- Establishment of Content Guidance/Capacity Building/Capital Development Fund for NGOs in Baltic Sea Region.



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Thank you for attention and
welcome to partnership!

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