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CIVIL SOCIETY RESILIENCE STRENGTHENING

Civil Society Resilience Strengthening is a five-year activity in partnership with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) that will help civil society respond to closing civic space challenges and improve the legal enabling environment. The activity will equip civil society to operate in a complex environment, foster dialogue and participation in public policy processes, and bridge the gap between civil society and citizens. By increasing informed citizen participation, the activity will increase the resiliency of democratic actors and contribute to USAID's overall goal of a more prosperous and democratic Serbia committed to European integration and self-reliance.

ACTIVITIES

- Recruit and engage 25 local civil society actors across Serbia (five in each of Serbia's five regions) that will serve as hubs to support a network of more than 300 Civil society organizations (CSOs), movements, activists and informal initiatives.
- Launch comprehensive capacity-building and resiliency-building programs focused on legal awareness, business and financial acumen, constituent engagement, and sectoral cooperation and accountability for CSOs.
- Establish a Rapid response facility to provide direct legal and technical support to CSOs and other civic actors facing sudden threats because of new legislation or government regulations.
- Organize dialogue with domestic and international funders, private sector representatives, CSOs, informal civic actors, and activists on new funding streams for civil society.
- Provide technical support to the Government of Serbia on effective dialogue, inclusive policy development and best practices related to civil society legislative framework.
- Support longer-term advocacy to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework affecting civil society.

RESULTS

- Established long-term partnerships with 25 civil society organizations who will act as local resource hubs for a wide circle of civil society actors in 16 towns and municipalities across Serbia. They will work with a range of community members including young people, persons with disabilities, the LGBTQI+ community, environmental activists, and victims of domestic violence and human trafficking.
- Provided organizational support (specialized training, tailored legal and technical advice) to more than 200 CSOs representing diverse demographic groups to become and/or remain compliant with local laws and regulations; implement high standards of transparency and accountability; develop physical and digital security practices, and use EU law to pursue litigation related to legal restrictions on civic space.
- Launched new and adapted tools for nurturing organizational accountability and transparency of organizations on the “Neprofitne” platform that provides effective insight into the work of non-profit organizations from Serbia.
- Facilitated five dialogues between Government and civil society representatives attended by 148 participants.
- Provided technical support that resulted in a Government Council for Cooperation with Civil Society model.
- Launched the Pop culture challenge for support to novel pop culture content solutions that promote positive attitudes towards democracy. ArtAparat was selected as first awardee.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PROJECT FUNDING

Co-funded by U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID/Serbia) and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

PartnersGlobal and consortium members: DT Institute, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL), Građanske Inicijative, and Partneri Srbija

WHERE WE WORK

Nationwide

PROJECT DURATION

Feb 2022 – Feb 2027

TOTAL FUNDING

\$9,000,000 (USAID: \$6,000,000; SDC: \$3,000,000)

CONTACT

Biljana Dakić
Kralja Milana 6, 11000 Belgrade
E-mail: bdakic@partnersglobal.org
Website: <https://www.partners-serbia.org/en>