

44 projects financed through the Swiss - Romanian Cooperation Programme, Block Grant for NGOs

Background: On May 10th, 2012, the Swiss Intermediate Body (SIB - a consortium formed by KEK-CDC Consultants, the Civil Society Development Foundation and the Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation) for the Thematic Fund “Civil Society Participation” launched the first Call for Proposals for the NGO Block Grant that is aiming to strengthen Romanian NGOs and to enable their active participation in policy processes. It offers support in two major domains: social issues and environmental protection. Small grants ranging from CHF 10,000 to CHF 75,000 and large grants ranging from CHF 75,001 to CHF 250,000 (only for social projects) are offered.

This first round of Call for Proposals was very successful showing a high demand from Romanian NGOs. The SIB received 779 project proposals within the deadline of July 12, 2012. 109 concerned the environmental domain and 670 the social domain.

Initially, CHF 2 million was available for the Social Component and CHF 600,000 was available for the Environment Component, for the first round. Due to the high number and good quality of applications received, the Steering Committee decided to reallocate additional CHF 2.4 million to the first round of Call for Proposals, which now totals **CHF 5 million**.

Independent evaluators assessed the project proposals having passed the administrative verification and eligibility check. The evaluation process resulted in **29 projects** recommended to be financed (14 small and 15 large grants) under the **Social Component** and **15 projects** recommended to be financed under the **Environmental Component**. The Selection Committee, formed by representatives of Civil Society Organisations (CSO), the Swiss Contribution Office (SCO) and the National Coordination Unit (NCU) committed 3,988,965.89 Swiss Francs for financing the projects under the Social Component and CHF 1,007,176.06 for funding the projects under the Environmental Component of the Block Grant for NGOs. The complete list of the financed projects is available *here*.

Next steps: The second Call for Proposals for the Block Grant for NGOs is planned to be launched in 2014.