



BALKAN  
CIVIL  
SOCIETY  
DEVELOPMENT  
NETWORK



**ANNUAL  
NARRATIVE  
PROGRAMME  
REPORT  
2007**

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## SUMMARY

Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) is a network of 12 civil society organizations from 9 countries and territories in the Balkan (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia).

Its vision is sustainable peace, harmony and prosperity of societies in the region. Its mission is to empower civil society through sharing and developing local practices, concepts and strengthening civil society actors. Its goals and objectives are: to increase communication with civil society actors in the region as a basis for bi/multilateral cooperation; to increase mobilization of resources and support; to increase knowledge and skills as a base for higher quality of our work; to promote intercultural exchange and culture of resource-sharing as a base for efficient/effective network.

The overall objective of this Programme was to contribute to development of capacities and strengthening of cooperation between civil societies in the Balkans. The specific objective and purpose of this Programme is to increase individual/staff and organizational capacity of relevant CSOs and their cooperation in the Balkans. The main goals within the Programme purpose were: to improve/mediate financial constraints of CSOs through improved skills and knowledge about mobilization of resources and support; to improve cross-border and cross-sector cooperation; and to improve quality standards, skills and knowledge among CSOs.

This Programme was based on the needs assessment of network's members from the 4<sup>th</sup> Partnership meeting (10-11 May, 2004, Skopje). It also built on past cooperation between member organizations and successful implementation of a joint three-year Capacity Building Hub Programme (2001-2003). Both formed the basis for network's plan of action for the period 2004-2007, which focused on thematic cooperation on 3 common priority themes (EU funding, lobbying and advocacy; mobilization of resources and support; training and consultancy standards and ethics) and on cooperation on specific themes (women and anti-trafficking; corporate social responsibility and anti-corruption; decentralization; diaconal practices). Activities on the above topics ranged from trainings, exchanges/exposures, workshops, website, resources databases, weekly e-mail alerts, newsletter, publications etc. with the aim to strengthen capacities and skills as well as cooperation, exchange of information and develop joint platform of action on those activities. Additionally, activities which promoted intercultural and resource-sharing such as civil society dictionary, case study exchange, and regional visits were promoted.

The network is based on partnership among member organizations, which share a common vision and mission and have similar capacity-building needs and resources. The Programme was managed by the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (MCIC), Skopje, Macedonia. MCIC is the seat of BCSDN Secretariat.

In 2007, BCSDN continued and completed the implementation of activities under this Programme supported by project "Partnership in Action -Strengthening BCSDN" (EU CARDS 2003 Network to Network Programme). These activities concentrated on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> common priority theme. The activities on the 3<sup>rd</sup> theme as well as remaining activities under specific themes were not realized due to lack of time, initiative from organizations and financial support. Out of 12 projects planned for 2007, 5 were newly started in 2007, 1 project was continued from 2005 and 6 from 2006. All 12 projects were finalized and closed as of 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2007, thus enabling timely closing of this Programme.

## 1. PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK

### 1.1. Overall objective

The overall objective was to contribute to development of capacities and strengthening of cooperation in civil society in the Balkans.

### 1.2. Programme purpose

The specific objective and purpose of this Programme was to increase individual/staff and organizational capacity of relevant CSOs and their cooperation in the Balkans. The main goals within the Programme purpose were:

- to improve/mediate financial constraints of CSOs through improved skills and knowledge about mobilization of resources and support;
- to improve cross-border and cross-sector cooperation;
- and to improve quality standards, skills and knowledge among CSOs.

### 1.3. Tasks (components)

Tasks to be fulfilled were:

- identification of specific, targeted and tailor-made capacity building activities;
- planning of capacity building activities;
- promotion of partnership and cooperation through information-sharing;
- implementation and monitoring of all activities.

### 1.4. Target group

The Programme was aimed at a two-fold target group: members and other relevant intermediary CSOs in Balkan countries.

#### 1. Members:

- Albania: Albanian Civil Society Foundation (ACSF), Diakonia Agapes;
- Bulgaria: Women's Alliance for Development (WAD), Pokrov Foundation;
- Croatia: Non-profit's Information and Training Centre/CENZURA (NIT/CENZURA)<sup>1</sup>, Education for Organizations in Civil Sector (EOS);
- Kosovo: We Are With You (WAWY)<sup>2</sup>;
- Macedonia: Macedonian Centre for International cooperation (MCIC);
- Romania: Opportunity Associates Romania (OAR), Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania (AIDRom);
- Montenegro: Center for Development of NGOs (CRNVO)<sup>3</sup>;
- Serbia: Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO);
- Slovenia: Center for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS)<sup>4</sup>.

#### 2. Other intermediary CSOs in Balkan countries:

These organizations are selected additionally, based on the theme or/and existing partnerships and cooperation with organizations and networks in the region.

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<sup>1</sup> NIT merged with CENZURA, another CSO from Croatia. On the 4<sup>th</sup> SG meeting, the members accepted NIT/CENZURA to continue the membership in the network.

<sup>2</sup> As of 4<sup>th</sup> SG meeting, WAWY was no longer a member of the network. New organization from Kosovo (KCSF) was identified to replace it in the network.

<sup>3</sup> CRNVO became a member of the network in 2005.

<sup>4</sup> CNVOS became a member in 2007.

## 2. ACTIVITIES

### 2.1. Planned activities

The Programme envisaged development of capacity-building package of services needed in order to develop capacities and strengthen cooperation in civil society in the Balkans. This was primarily targeted at BCSDN member organizations. Besides information-sharing, capacity-building packages (consisting of tailor-made training/ToT; exchange/exposure/consultancy visits) and workshops were the core activities of this Programme. Identified areas of common expertise that need to be strengthened were: 1) EU fundraising, lobbying and advocacy; 2) resource and support mobilization and 3) ethic standards in training and consultancy. This Programme also promoted regional cooperation and built capacities (through Working Groups) in specific areas of: gender and anti-trafficking; decentralization; corporate social responsibility and anti-corruption and diaconal practices.

In 2007, BCSDN continued and completed the implementation of activities under the project "Partnership in Action -Strengthening BCSDN" supported by the EU CARDS 2003 Network to Network Programme. These concentrated on the 1st and 2nd common priority theme. The activities on the 3rd theme as well as remaining activities under specific themes were not realized due to lack of time, initiative by organizations and financial support. Out of 12 projects<sup>5</sup> planned for 2007, 5 were newly started in 2007, 1 project was continued from 2005 and 6 from 2006.

### 2.2. Realized activities

Based on the Programme 2004-7 and annual plan of activities all 12 projects were finalized and closed as of 31st December, 2007, thus enabling timely closing of the Programme. Within the framework of these projects: 2 training activities (training on media and civil dialogue), 1 exchange activity (small grant support to 6 exchange projects), 2 consultancy (on-the-job training and help-desk), 5 information-sharing activities (website, project-partner database, Weekly e-mail alerts, Newsletter, mailing list), 3 publications (Balkan Civic Practices no. 3-5) and 2 coordination activities (operational support to the implementation of the Programme, Steering Group meeting). Small project funds activities were also realized, but as a separately funded project.

#### 2.2.1. Capacity-building activities

##### Training activities

**Training on media** was implemented in two rounds; in Novi Sad, Serbia between 18 and 20 January and in Tirana, Albania between 8 and 10 February. The aim of the training was to contribute to enhanced role of CSOs to influence public policy through organizing public campaign and building successful partnership with media in their work. The training was delivered by a media expert from Slovenia provided by Center for Information Service, Cooperation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS) from Slovenia. The Novi Sad training was hosted by Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) and Tirana training by Diakonia Agapes (DA), all BCSDN members. Both trainings were attended by 32 participants from Albania, BiH, Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Croatia, and Montenegro. Training focused on the following topics: knowing, understanding and working with the media, tools and techniques of media relations, practical exercises, and development of strategic, proactive, long-term, qualitative media relations. Participants of the trainings were satisfied with the trainer and training delivery and thought the training was very useful for their work.

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<sup>5</sup> One project usually consists of several project activities/events. Therefore, the number of activities in the Programme does not necessarily correspond to the number of projects. For list of all projects see Annex 1.

**Training on civil dialogue** was also implemented in two rounds; in Novi Sad, Serbia between 4 and 6 July and in Tirana, Albania between 11 and 13 July. The aim of the training was to contribute to enhanced ability to influence public policies and decision-making through exchanged examples of good practices in strengthening the capacity of CSOs in dialogue with authorities and development of structures for political dialogue. The training was delivered by a training team from CNVOS, Slovenia. The Novi Sad training was hosted by EHO and Tirana training by DA. 41 participants from Albania, BiH, Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Croatia, and Montenegro attended the trainings. Training covered the following topics: civil dialog between CSOs, government and EU, mechanisms of civil dialog, state of civil dialog in Slovenia, the region, and EU Slovenian experience in civil dialog, development of regional strategies in civil dialog. The interest for this training was higher than expected as this is a relatively new topic for civil society in the region.

#### Exchange activities

In May 2006, BCSDN launched Call for proposal "Support to Exchange Activities in the Area of Mobilization of Resources". The aim of the Call was to improve individual/staff and organizational capacities in mediating financial constraints of CSOs through support of exchange, backstopping/coaching visits between BCSDN members and their partner organizations in the area of networking, funding, lobbying and advocacy. Under the Call six transnational projects by six CSOs were supported. In their report, all supported organizations stated the need for more exchange projects. Most of the projects supported exchange between BCSDN members and partner organization (which are not in the network) through partnerships and project ideas from the partnership and networking training organized in Novi Sad (April) and Tirana (May), 2006. Additionally, this contributed toward strengthening of partnerships in the network with mobilization of resources. Participants of the visits point out need for further support for concrete initiatives outcome from the trainings organized in the framework of BCSDN Programme. While the Call and exchange activities were finalized in 2006, some of the payments were realized in 2007.

**Small project funds** supported small grants to grass-root civil society activities that are managed by EHO and Ecumenical Women Solidarity Fund (EWSF) with the aim of improving capacities of grass-root local CSOs in the region, with a focus on marginalized groups like women, Roma, people with special needs, poor and elderly. The fund is operation for several years and has been supported through this Programme since 2005. The project fund is funded through a separate funding mechanism<sup>6</sup> and has been attached to the Programme as both pursue the same goal.

#### Consultancy

**On-the-job training** is a new type of activity introduced into the Programme. The aim was to upgrade theoretical knowledge of selected participants to capacity-building activities with a one-month placement of CSOs representatives from the region to a Brussels-based partner organization. The training was implemented in the framework of already existing activity of partner organization European Citizens' Action Service (ECAS). Five candidates (one from Albania, BiH, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia) were selected through a call of proposal and positioned in ECAS between March and December. The reports of all candidates are published on the websites of BCSDN and ECAS. All candidate found this new activity very useful in developing better understanding of the EU institutions, polices, EU networks and funding opportunities for their organizations.

**Help-desk**, also a new type of activity introduced to the Programme, was establishment in July. The aim was to give additional support to BCSDN members and

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<sup>6</sup> Namely, DanChurch Aid.

partner organization for tailor-made organizational needs for advice in the area of EU funding, lobbying and advocacy (through EU help-desk managed by ECAS) and civil dialogue (through civil dialogue help-desk managed by CNVOS). The help desk was promoted to CSOs in the region through BCSDN website, Newsletter, and Weekly e-mail alerts. In addition, participants from the trainings organized in the framework of other projects were contacted individually for the possibilities that help-desk offers. All questions received and answers prepared by ECAS and CNVOS were published on the BCSDN website. Unexpectedly, the help-desk generated less interest than anticipated. The reasons for this are combination of still generally low level of knowledge of EU processes and procedures and interest of thereof and on the other hand, level of capacity to articulate concrete needs in the field by CSOs.

### *2.2.2. Information-sharing activities*

#### Website

BCSDN website consists of basic information about the network, its activities and updates on funding, opportunities, network documents and reports. The website is registered under an independent domain name <http://www.balkancsd.net>. The website is updated daily and maintained by the Secretariat. In 2006, the main activity was upgrading the site with sub-sites featuring basic network information in 3 local languages (Albanian, Serbian/Croatian, Macedonian) and establishing links to other relevant networks and CSOs (in the page "links"). Both activities resulted in easier approach on the partners side and other users. In 2007, the focus was on continued integration of other information services (Weekly e-mail alerts, FAQ (in the framework of help-desk service), partner-project database) developed in 2006 to the website. The website also features cover stories of all activities implemented by the network. With this, BCSDN website became central point for exchange of information and cooperation in the network and further. Before the start of intensive work on the site (mid 2004 - beginning January 2006, the website had 2,737 visitors. In the period of this project (January 2006 - December 2007) the rating of visits went up for over 40% i.e 6,259 visitors for the same period. Additional indicator of usefulness and accessibility of the website is that in biggest search engines (i.e. Google, Yahoo) BCSDN website is shown as the first or one of the first results under "civil society" and "Balkan". Even though the project is closing the website will continue functioning and will be up-dated regularly with activities (e.g. Weekly e-mail alerts) for which there is interest and further funding possibilities.

#### Weekly e-mail alerts

Weekly e-mail alerts (WEA) are an information service introduced in 2004. The aim of this information service is to provide timely, effective and useful information on funding, training, education and other opportunities to its members and other interested CSOs in the region. Distribution list at the end of the 2007 numbered 222 addresses (the service started with 30 addresses). They are distributed each Friday (save during holidays, when there was bi-weekly edition). In 2007, 49 issues were published (or 92 since 2006). The WEA consists of 4 categories of information: news, funding, training and education opportunities and new publications. Each item consists of basic information based on which readers can identify whether the opportunity is of interest to them or not. Based on a survey conducted in 2005 and continues feedback from individual users, this is one of the most useful services of the network and has reported concrete results (at least 1 reported successful outcome).

### Project-partner database

The aim of the database was to provide for a tool for exchange of information on possible projects and partnerships between CSOs in the region. For this purpose, a questionnaire and a special software solution was designed which enables electronic submission and search by users through the database. Guide for users was also developed and published in English and 3 local languages. The database was integrated into the BCSDN website. For easier use the database was filled with several project examples. The database was promoted through WEA and Newsletter. Although this activity was identified as useful by the members, it was not utilized. The reason for this is that member organization lacked to identify the link between the possibilities offered by the database and developing new partnerships and fundraising. Nevertheless, the database is a permanent resource and remains to be utilized by members and interested CSOs.

### Balkan Civic Practices

Balkan Civic Practices is a periodical publication of BCSDN. Every issue contains articles on a focus theme and related topics, based on previously held seminar/workshop/training on the same topic. The selection of topics is done by the network. Additional to the English edition, the publication is available in three regional languages (Albanian, Serbian/Croatian, and Macedonian). Electronic copies of all guides are available on BCSDN website.

**Balkan Civic Practices #3: A Guide to European Union - Funding for NGOs** is a follow-up to the training on mobilization of resources organized in autumn 2006. This Guide is an attempt to provide complete and up-to-date information and access to EU funding instrument relevant for CSOs in the region and wider. The guide has in total 262 pages (English edition) and gives an overview of funding information scattered through the websites of different General Directorates of European Commission in one place as well as on other Brussels-based corporate sponsors. The Guide was published in 550 copies (100 in English and 150 in each of the local languages) in April. The Guide is result of cooperation with three partner organizations (ECAS, EHO and DA)

**Balkan Civic Practices #4: Media Relations - Guide for Civil Society Organizations** attempts to give answer to most common questions, doubts and misconceptions about the media while communicating and working with them. The guide is based on notes prepared for the media relations trainings held in spring this year. It includes feedbacks, experience and illustrative case studies given by the participants of the trainings. The Guide was published in 550 copies (100 in English and 150 in each of the local languages) in September. The Guide is result of cooperation with three BCSDN member organizations (CNVOS, EHO and DA)

**Balkan Civic Practices #5: Guide to Civil Dialogue in the Balkans** for the first time explores the setting (legal and practices) of civil dialogue in Western Balkan countries. It also presents the experience in civil dialogue in Slovenia as a New Member State of the EU with relevant lesson learned for other acceding and candidate countries. The Guide is based on training for development of civil dialogue organized by BCSDN in summer of this year. The Guide was published in 550 copies (100 in English and 150 in each of the local languages). The Guide is result of cooperation with three BCSDN member organizations (CNVOS, EHO and DA)

### Newsletter& mailing list& calendar of events

The **Newsletter** is published on BCSDN website and sent to members on a monthly basis. The Newsletter is prepared by the Secretariat and edited by BCSDN Coordinator with the aim to inform partner organizations about latest developments in the network, otherwise published on networks' website. It is published in electronic (PDF format) and consists of 3-4 pages on average. The Newsletter was published irregularly (2 issues) in 2007.



**BCSDN mailing list** was created in January 2004. It is designed as a public discussion group (organized through yahoo group service) at [balkancs@yahooqroups.com](mailto:balkancs@yahooqroups.com). (<http://qroups.yahoo.com/qroup/balkancs/>). Problems have been reported in use of the Yahoo group in 2007. For this reasons, communication with the target group was channeled through the WEA list (which is also more encompassing), while targeted communication with BCSDN members is channeled through specific (internal) mailing lists.

Aim of the **calendar of events** was to be the main tool for sharing information on partner organizations' events and activities. The aim is to share information on organizational, training and other activities in order to promote culture of information-sharing for effective and efficient work. Calendar of events was to be published and distributed in printed and electronic form once to twice a year, based on information provided by partner organization. Calendar of events is currently not realized through a special service, but rather through other information-sharing tools (e.g. BCSDN website, WEA).

### *2.2.3. Coordination*

The **4th Steering Group Meeting**, the annual meeting of BCSDN partners, took place from 15 to 17 June, 2007 on the island of Brijuni, Croatia. The meeting was hosted and chaired by partner organization EOS. Eight organizations from seven different partner countries participated in the meeting. The aim of the meeting was to review network activities in 2006-7 and discuss future of the network after the end of the programme 2004-7. The main highlights of this year's meeting were: CNVOS, Slovenia, organization that is a partner in EU N2N project, became officially the member of the network; CENZURA which has merged with NIT, Croatia, has been confirmed as its successor in the network; due to absence on three consecutive meetings, WAVY membership is cancelled automatically. As this is the final year of the current programme some basic steps on network's future were agreed: minimum activities would present" maintenance of the Secretariat (staff, website, newsletter, weekly e-mail alerts) and one capacity-building activity per year (to be fundraised upon); additional fundraising (Belgrade- and Brussels-based foundations) and membership (inclusion of organizations from BiH, Kosovo and other interested organizations) activities; closing event for the N2N project (end of 2007/beginning of 2008) would be the 2nd event where the issued on the future of the network would be discussed; evaluation will form the basis for future definition of institutional (membership, secretariat, registration) and operational (based on funding, min vs. optimum scenario) framework of the network. Based on CRNVO proposal, a Working Group of interested organizations will draft format and coordinate the development of reports for interested countries on the issue of country situation with regards to EU and CSOs in the Western Balkans. CNVOS supported the idea to organize a conference in the framework of Slovenian EU presidency - beginning of the next year in Ljubljana. CRNVO accepted the initiative for the next SG meeting to take place in spring-summer 2008 in Montenegro (depending of N2N closing event).

### **3. ORGANISATION**

#### **3. 1. Governance and Management**

All undertaken activities (formulated as projects) are approved by MCIC Governing Board. Overall responsibility for the Programme management lies with the Executive Director. Project Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the overall running of the Programme. Full-time BCSDN Coordinator (Project Officer) is responsible for programme coordination, its administration and thus, running of the Secretariat (established to divide responsibilities of MCIC as manager and member organization in the network).

The Programme is governed in cooperation and consultation with other BCSDN members through annual Steering Group meetings. The Group consists of directors/senior representatives of member organizations. The 2007 annual meeting, which took place on 15-17 June on Brijuni, Croatia, approved the Annual BCSDN Narrative and Financial Report 2007, and discussed future cooperation after the end of this Programme.

MCIC has well defined administrative and financial procedures. The Executive Director is responsible for overall management, while the Accountant is in charge of financial management of the organization. Expenditures above a certain amount (as stated in Rules of Procedure) must be approved by the Governing Board (programme as well as operational). MCIC also has a Supervisory Board that has the right to control the management of finances.

#### **3. 2. Procedures**

All activities are managed and coordinated by MCIC, i.e. the BCSDN Secretariat, and follow MCIC standard rules and procedures for activities (formulated as projects). Activities on specific areas (i.e. Working Groups on specific issues) as well as part of joint activities (e.g. exchange visits) are managed by MCIC and implemented directly by BCSDN member organizations. For this reason, MCIC developed a regular procedure to initiate, fund, monitor and report on BCSDN activities. This was necessary to create a simple and effective procedure to manage relationships between MCIC and other BCSDN members, as well as to create basis for monitoring and evaluation of implemented activities.

The procedure consists of three elements:

- a) Funding Proposal - a short standard form to present activity (including goals, target group, schedule, description of activities, participants and budget);
- b) Contract - after reviewing the proposal, MCIC and the leading agency for the particular activity sign a standard contract (in English), which represents legal base and a financial document for the fund disbursement;
- c) Reports - the leading agency for particular activity, according to the clauses of the contract, is required to submit a final report including an evaluation.

Invoices are checked on 3 levels (Responsible Officer, Accountant, and Executive Director). Annual financial statements are audited by KPMG.

Activities organized under the support of "Partnership in Action - Strengthening of BCSDN" project were implemented in cooperation with 4 partner organizations: ECAS, CNVOS, DA and EHO (last three are members of the network). Each organization was responsible for implementation of whole part of activity and for this purpose an agreement for project support was signed between MCIC (as the manager of activities) and partner organization. Based on the agreement, partner organizations regularly reported to MCIC through mid-term and final narrative and financial reports.

## 4. EXTERNAL COOPERATION

As an informal and open network, BCSDN cooperates with other networks, organizations and stakeholders to realize its goals. In 2007, BCSDN continued or started its cooperation with several **EU-level networks/organizations**:

- APRODEV (Brussels, Belgium) through participation of BCSDN Coordinator as a member of Working Group on Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA);
- European Citizens' Action Service (ECAS) through partnership in project "Partnership in Action-Strengthening BCSDN";
- CONCORD-TRIALOG Working Group Enlargement, Pre-Accession and Neighbourhood (EPAN) through participation of BCSDN Coordinator as a member of Working Group.

On **regional level** cooperation with Balkan Forum, a new regional initiative, was established. The initiative is lead by Center for Promotion of Civil Society (CPCS) from Sarajevo, BiH. A delegation from the Central Asian Platform (CAP) visited the BCSDN Secretariat between 16 and 18 July, 2007. The aim of the visit was to exchange experience between the two platforms and define join possibilities for cooperation.

## 5. BOTTLENECKS, PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

One of the main bottlenecks was lower-level of participation of CSO representatives from some countries (mainly BiH, Croatia, Kosovo) to BCSDN training activities. This is a result of sever factors: weak partnerships in this countries with the network and different issues/problems (or lack of thereof) in which CSOs in the mentioned countries are engage (especially Croatia). Additional problems present the fact that some of the organized activities had less added-value (e.g. EU fundraising) than others (e.g. on-the-job training) due to provision of similar activities in the region and different expectations on division of labor among implementing partners in terms of recruitment of participants to trainings and other activities. Some of this have been detected and addressed during (e.g. division of labor) the running of the project activities, while other remain to be addressed (e.g. stronger involvement of CSOs from BiH, Croatia, Kosovo).

Certain (expected) problems emerged in implementation of two new activities, namely on-the-job training and help desk service. In the on-the-job training additional clarification were needed to agree on division of responsibility and rights concerning the decision on candidates (i.e. agreement on decision-making procedure, criteria and selection of candidates). ECAS is running the on-the-job training activity independently of this project and this was their first experience in such an activity being part of separate project/network. Help desk service, unexpectedly generated less interest than anticipated, although several channels of communication and motivation were used (e-mails, telephone call, newsletter, WEA). The reasons for this are combination of still generally low level of knowledge of EU processes and procedures and interest of thereof and on the other hand, level of capacity to articulate concrete needs in the field by CSOs. For this reasons, capacity-building activities in relation to EU fundraising, lobbying and advocacy are still needed but need to planned on a needs assessment on specific needs and measures.

In the implementation of information-sharing activities two problems occurred which relate to organization and implementation of Balkan Civic Practices. The realized time frame for writing of publications, translation and design was longer than planned originally. Additional hindrance in this occurred with preparation of the third edition (EU funding) due to unexpected changes in the relevant EU legal framework (i.e. prolonged adoption of regulations concerning some of the new financial instruments). In future

planning of such an activity, this experience needs to be taken into consideration as well as each mentioned phase of the process should take up to at least 2 months. Secondly, division of responsibilities between the organizations/authors preparing the texts and publisher (MCIC) needed to be clarified in terms of author and publishing rights. These were regulated through a special Annex to Partner project support agreement.

## **6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Evaluation of the Programme took place in June-August. Evaluation mission of the programme, lead by John Beauclerk from INTRAC, took place between 5-13 July (training on civil dialogue in Novi Sad and Tirana). The evaluation team consisted also of local consultant Plamen Sivov from partner organization Pokrov Foundation, Bulgaria. The evaluators participated to two training where they had the possibility to get feedback from participants and conduct interviews with relevant partners and other stakeholders. The evaluators were asked to assess network's activities in terms of its achievements, strengths and weaknesses in the period 2004-7 and based on these suggest possible further development of the network and its activities. Thus, the evaluation gave an important input into the planning process for the network's future. One of the main conclusions of the evaluation was that "the network has made significant contributions to cross-border cooperation and is well positioned to build on further cooperation between members in the future." The redirection of focus from capacity-building to advocacy is suggested in the evaluation report.

**ANNEX 1: List of implemented projects**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Project no.</b>
Small project funds	05-12 BNT 105
Organizing of media training	06-12 BNT 105
Development of BCSDN web site	06-12 BNT 201
Development of partner-project database	06-12 BNT 202
Publishing of Weekly e-mail alerts	06-12 BNT 204
Publishing Balkan Civic Practices No.3: EU fundraising guide	06-12 BNT 205
Organizing on-the-job training and help-desk service	07-12 BNT 101
Organizing training and publishing civil dialogue guide (BCP no.5)	07-12 BNT 102
Publishing Balkan Civic Practices No.4: Media guide	07-12 BNT 201
Organizing annual Steering Group meeting	07-12 BNT 202
Partner implementation of the Programme	07-12 BNT 301

**ANNEX 2: Additional references**

- 222-5 Minutes of the 4th Steering Group Meeting, Brijuni, Croatia (15-17 June,2007);
- BCSDN Annual Report 2006;
- Evaluation of the BCSDN Programme (August 2007);
- BCSDN website (<http://www.balkancsd.net>).