



WOMEN'S FUND IN GEORGIA
ქალთა ფონდი საქართველოში

Evaluation of WFG Grant-making Programs in Georgia

Report

Report is prepared by

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Foreword

The present document represents an external evaluation report on four grant - making programs of the Women's Fund during 2009 - 2012. The evaluation was performed by the Applied Research Company (ARC) during October – November, 2012. The purpose of the external evaluation was to analyze the outcome of the Fund's activities against four criteria: relevance, efficiency, sustainability and effectiveness.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our appreciation to the staff of the Women's Fund for their assistance provided in the course of evaluation. Our special thanks go to Mrs. Nana Pantsulaia, the Executive Director and Mrs. Ia Qajaia, the Office Manager. We also would like to thank all those grantees who participated in interviews and group meetings.

About Programs

External evaluation covered four grant - making programs of the Fund:

Women's Economic Independence Program - The Program aimed to empower women in the most vulnerable, poor and remote areas of Georgia by providing financial resources. The program was implemented in four regions of Georgia during 2010 – 2012, while the evaluation covered projects funded in three regions, namely in Shida Kartli, Imereti and Kakheti. Overall, 159 grants got disbursed within the program framework, however the evaluation encompassed 144 grants.

Program Donor: United States Agency of International Development (USAID).

Open Door Grants Program - The Program aimed to meet individual women's, women's groups' and organizations' up-and-coming needs in Tbilisi and the regions of Georgia.

The evaluation covered projects financed in 2009 – 2011 within the framework of grant program. 40 grants got disbursed during this period in Tbilisi and 9 regions of Georgia (Kvemo Kartli, Guria, Shida Kartli, Adjara, Imereti, Samtskhe - Javakheti, Mtskheta - Mtianeti, Kakheti, Samegrelo).

Program Donors: Women's Global Fund (GFW), Filia, Mama Cash and individual supporters.

Rapid Response Grant - making Program - The Program provides timely small grants to support women's human rights in a situation where rapid intervention can have a significant impact. During 2009 – 2011, 9 grants were extended in Tbilisi, Adjara, Samegrelo and Kvemo Kartli.

Program Donor: Urgent Action Fund

Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Program - The Program supports initiatives aiming at changing practices, policies, attitudes, perceptions concerning women and their human rights in Georgia and facilitating the process of building the culture of non-discrimination and attaining the gender equality in the country. The Fund, within the program framework, awarded 10 grants in 2011 in Tbilisi, Shida Kartli, Kakheti, Samegrelo, Imereti and Guria.

Program Donor: Oak Foundation

Methodological Approach of Evaluation

Purpose of Grant Programs' Evaluation

Evaluation of the Women's Fund's grant - making programs was based on the Fund's intention to have its activities assessed by the "external eye". When reviewing the activities for the period of 2005 – 2009, the Fund was using grantees' reports and interviews. However, this was not sufficient for having the full picture of their activities. Although there was no request from donors to have external evaluation, the Women's Fund, under its own initiative, decided to evaluate grant - making activities for 2009 – 2012. The aim of the evaluation was to assess performance during 2009 – 2012, share the acquired experience and identify strengths and weaknesses of the Fund's grant - making activities. The evaluation findings will be considered for revision of the Fund's grant - making policy and introducing potential amendments to the future strategy. Evaluation report will also be a reporting document for donors.

Evaluation was based on the terms of reference for the contest announced by the Fund. See Annex 1.

Evaluation Design for Women's Economic Independence Program

The approach used in evaluation of the Women's Economic Independence Program was different from those used in the other three grant - making programs. When assessing the Women's Economic Independence Program, the researchers had to answer the following evaluating questions:

Relevance

- To what extent did the project activities meet the needs and interests of the target groups?
- To what extent did the program's overall strategy and expected results correspond to the raised problem?

Efficiency

- How productive were program activities with respect to achieving the set objectives?
- Was it possible to use the other strategy or approaches, which would increase the project productivity?

Sustainability

- To what extent were the results of the program forward -looking?

- How sustainable were the project results, activities and effect after completion of the project.

Efficiency

- How efficiently were program resources (human and financial) used for accomplishing the set objectives?

To answer these questions the following data collecting methods were used:

Table 1. Methods used in Evaluation of Women's Economic Independence Program

Method	Information Collecting Method	Number of Respondents
Quantitative Method	Interviewing grant beneficiaries through semi-structured questionnaire	90
Qualitative Method	Focus groups with participation of grant beneficiaries	Two focus groups, 35 participants in total
	Interview with program implementing staff	2 interviews
	Interviews with grantees (in-depth interviews)	30
Review of Documents	See the list of used documents in the annex	8 documents

Evaluation Design for Open Door, Rapid Response and Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Grant - making Programs

The approach applied in assessment of *Open Door, Rapid Response and Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Grant - making Programs* was different from the economic one. In case of the latter the purpose of all funded projects was to improve the economic situation and the beneficiaries were grantees themselves, respectively it was possible to see the final outcome in these programs. In case of majority of projects funded within the framework of the other three grant - making programs, beneficiaries / target audience were represented by the organization beneficiaries or large public and the aim was changing their knowledge / values / behavior. Respectively it was impossible to see what was the impact of project implementation within the given task. Therefore, for these three programs, compliance of the funded projects with the Fund's strategic goals and objectives and grant - making policy was assessed. Furthermore, management of grant - making programs and implementation process were evaluated, project results were analyzed (at level of outcomes) and the benefit brought by the project to the organization in the light of organizational development or business area was reviewed.

Qualitative methods of data collection were used in the evaluation of these three programs.

Table 2. Data collection methods used in evaluation of Open Door, Rapid Response and Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Grant - making Programs

Method	Information Collecting Method	Number of Respondents
Qualitative Methods	Focus groups with participation of grant beneficiaries	Two focus groups, 30 participants in total
	Interview with project implementing staff	2 interviews
	Interviews with beneficiaries (in-depth interviews)	28
Review of Documents	See the list of used documents in the Annex	5 documents
Review of Open Sources	Review of grantee organizations' WebPages (if any)	

2. Major Findings

Women's Economic Independence Program

About the Program

The Fund, under the Women's Economic Independence Program, has been implementing 3-year project Economic Strengthening of Women in Post-Conflict Regions of Georgia and Hardly Reachable Regions. The project is funded by the United States Agency of International Development (USAID). The project covers 4 regions of Georgia: Shida Kartli, Kakheti, Imereti and Racha. As of the evaluation period, projects were completed in three regions: Shida Kartli, Kakheti and Imereti. Funded projects have just started in Racha, therefore the evaluation did not cover this region.

Purpose of the Woman's Economic Independence Program was supporting those categories of women, who, due to their proprietary and social status and living in isolated areas, did not have access to financial resources, were unable to take credit and did not have knowledge how to pursue small business.

Selection of persons willing to participate in the grant - making program was conducted within the grant - making program framework. Business plans prepared as a result of respective trainings were funded. The grant amount did not exceed GEL 4,800.

Dissemination of Information about the Project, Selection and Training of Applicants

The fund addressed the applicant selection and training process with attention in order to maximize the result of using grants.

Working regions and districts were selected by the Fund at the project development stage. For dissemination of information on grant - making programs in the selected regions, the Fund was using local NGOs (in case of Shida Kartli and Imereti), contact persons and was communicating with the local municipalities. Representatives of municipalities were undertaking the obligation to spread the information, they were posting applications at municipality buildings and distributing the information verbally. People willing to participate in the contest were filling the forms and leaving those with the contact person. Later the fund was conducting testing, for which respective premises were allocated by the local government and school administrations. At testing applicants were filling the questionnaire consisting of three sections: personal data, mathematical and logical tasks and business game. Personal information was assisting the Fund to ascertain how vulnerable the applicant was, the mathematical section was helping to identify the applicant's skills to perform simple calculations and finally, the idea section was making an

impression about business instinct of a candidate. Selected candidates were attending 7-day trainings organized by the Fund, where women were receiving the information on book-keeping, maintaining tax documents and simultaneously were preparing business plans. At the end of the training, each participant had a ready business plan. Trainings were attended by the Fund employees as well. Later the Fund personnel reviewed business plans and selected projects to be financed.

Table 3. Number of Grantees of the Women's Economic Strengthening Program by Regions

Round of Grant making Program	Region / Town	Year	Number of Applicants selected for the Training	Full Training Course	Number of Funded Projects
I	Shida Kartli/Gori	2010	30	28	28
II	Shida Kartli Gori	2010	28	24	19
III	Shida Kartli/Gori	2010	27	27	17
IV	Shida Kartli / Khashuri	2011	25	25	17
V	Kakhety /Akhmeta	2011	25	21	16
VI	Kakhety / Alvani	2011	26	26	17
VII	Imereti / Chiatura	2012	26	22	14
VIII	Imereti / Tkibuli	2012	26	26	16

Projects funded under the grant - making program may be divided into two groups: agriculture and service sector projects. Examples of agricultural projects are: market-gardening, apiculture, swine breeding, poultry farming, livestock husbandry, mushroom growing and flower greenhouses. Examples of projects in the service sector are: organizing computer center, bakery, sewing workshop, petty shops, café, beauty parlor, canteen.

Table 4. Projects Funded within the Program Framework

Project Type	Supported Business	Number of Funded Projects
Agricultural Sector	Crop production	3
	Apiculture	17
	Growing thornless blackberries	1
	Broom production	1
	Cabbage	1
	Mushroom growing	3
	Tomatoes / Cucumber	4

	Flower greenhouse	1
	Garlic	4
	Swine farm	8
	Livestock husbandry	32
	Sapling production	1
	Growing onions	3
	Potatoes	2
	Poultry farming	12
	Rabbit farming	1
	Sheep breeding	6
Services	Production of semi-finished products	1
	Bakery	2
	Beauty parlor	1
	Canteen	3
	Coffee house	1
	Computer center	2
	Cosmetic saloon	1
	Dentist's room	1
	Sewing workshop	12
	Small bakery	4
	Petty shop	16

Relevance of Grant - making Program

Beneficiaries of the Women's Fund, within the framework of the Women's Economic independence Program, became representatives of the extremely vulnerable groups, internally displaced persons (IDPs), women living in post-conflict zones and families that lost breadwinner. Their absolute majority, prior to winning in the grant program, did not have the opportunity to make products for sale or render the services in a volume that would be sufficient for supporting the family.

One group of grantees was represented by families affected by the war in 2008 that found themselves in the especially hard economic state. They lost land, cattle, poultry and therefore were unable to pursue traditional agricultural activities.

Access to financial resources for women in rural areas usually is complicated by the fact that the family property, as a rule, is owned by a man and a woman cannot dispose of (sell or pledge) those independently. In addition, due to lack of knowledge, required for starting small business, women have difficulty in making risky decisions and take a bank loan.

Respectively, grant - making activities of the Women's Fund completely complied with needs and interests of target groups.

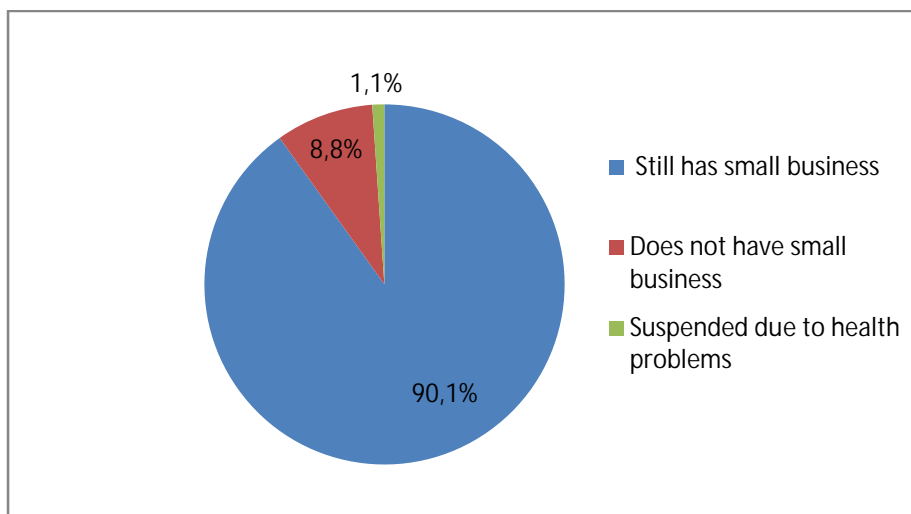
Efficiency and Sustainability of Grant - making Program

Positive Planned Outcome

Aim of the grant - making program was improving financial position of women. Therefore, in the interviews main focus was placed on progress of activities specified in the grantees' business plans, how satisfied they were with the situation, whether they managed to continue / expand their activities after termination of the agreement with the Fund and what their plans were for the future (whether they would be able to expand their activities or continue their operation at the current scale).

As it turned out, 90% of interviewed grantees still were pursuing activities commenced under the Fund's grant - making program. Only 8.8% (8 grantees) did not (were unable to) continue their activities. One of them even within the agreement validity period was unable to fulfill the planned tasks.

Diagram 1 Do the grantees currently pursue small business?

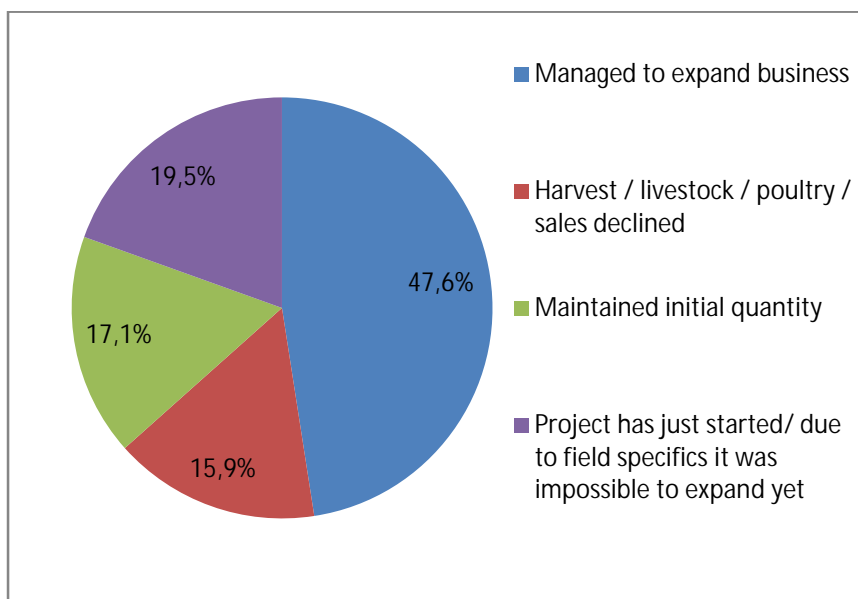


Among those who no longer pursue grant funded business are 2 grantees engaged in poultry breeding, 2 grantees pursuing livestock breeding, 1 grantee pursuing swine breeding and 3 grantees operating petty shops (commerce). Business plan of those 2 grantees, who no longer have cattle, implied purchase of calves, their breeding and selling. Although they successfully conducted their activities and gained projected profit, they discontinued this business and probably will not get back to it in the future either. Both grantees are young and they moved to the urban area. The reason of failure in poultry breeding was chicken disease, so called “plague” causing death of poultry. One of grantees managed to save part of poultry and intends to continue her activities in the spring. Women engaged in commerce (petty shops) listed destruction of the bazaar (a trading place), sales problem and sales in credit as the main reasons for failure.

In the course of interviews we were trying to identify how the grantee managed to increase the quantity of “production means” (cattle, poultry, bees), the cropped land purchased with the Fund’s finances and the value of services and number of clients in case of service sector projects. As it turned out, from those who currently are continuing their activities, almost half managed to expand operations. Moreover, women occupied with livestock breeding and apiculture had the best results, their majority achieved significant business growth even during the first year. The situation was relatively complicated with persons engaged in poultry breeding. This was partly determined by the survey season. In the beginning of winter, it is a common practice to reduce the number and increase it in the spring again, however in some cases the reason was chicken disease. Among grantees pursuing sheep breeding only one person decided to keep the surplus, the others sold the offspring, however in the future they are planning to proceed with

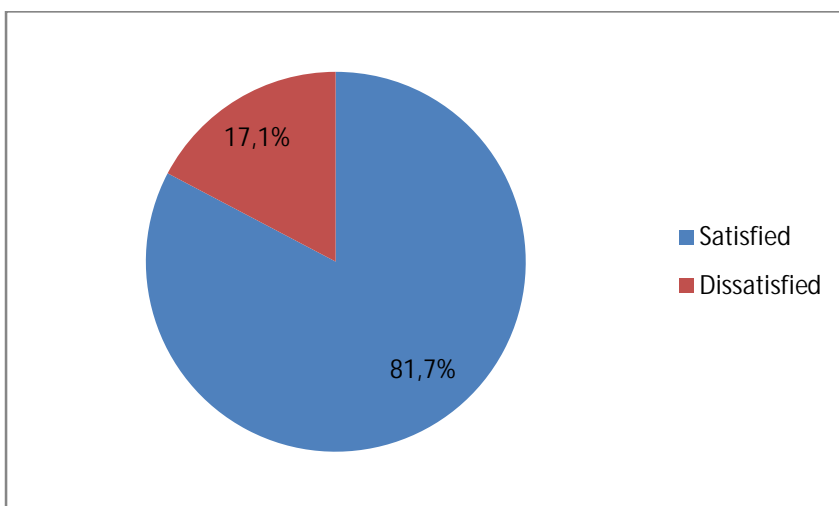
breeding. Initial sales declined for grantees operating sewing workshops and computer centers. Persons engaged in computer centers stated the reason for this: free computer center was opened in the settlement and therefore they had income only from making photocopies. Grantees in sewing workshops noted that the reason for sales decline was growth of purchase prices on fabrics. In addition, bed linen represent durable goods and those who needed it already made a respective purchase.

Diagram 2. Did the Grantee manage to expand the business or not (sales volume, number of livestock /poultry / hives, increasing the cropped land)



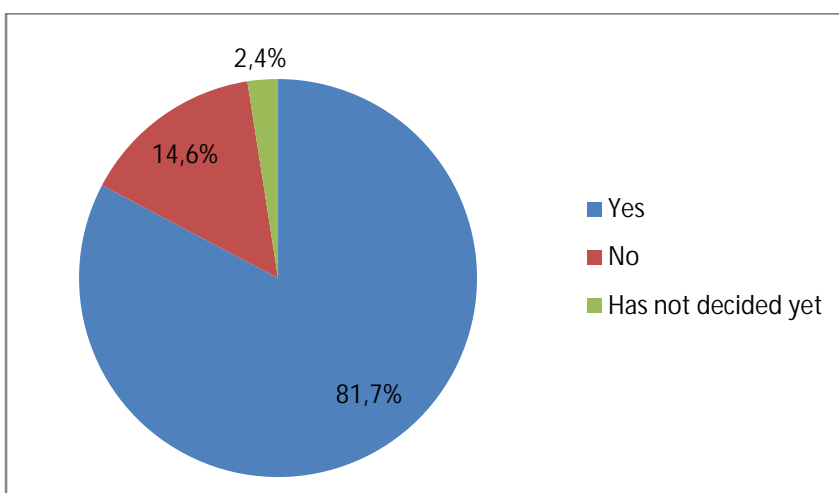
Majority (81,7%) of surveyed grantees stated that they were satisfied with the status of their businesses. Their financial situation improved through activities financed by the Fund and they had the money to meet daily needs of their families. Part of grantees managed to acquire household equipment, rehabilitate the part of residential area, cover healthcare costs or tuition fees for their children.

Diagram 3. Is the grantee satisfied with the state of its small business?



Most grantees plan to expand their businesses in the future – breed livestock / poultry / bees / sheep, increase the cropped area, increase assortment in case of shops and cafes and add new services in case of beauty parlors’. Those, who stated that they would not expand their activities in the future, the majority was pursuing market gardening/ growing crop. They intend to keep the planted area that they had lately. It is interesting that some grantees managed and created additional sources of income with proceeds. E.g. those pursuing livestock husbandry purchased pigs and hives, which would clearly increase stability of their income.

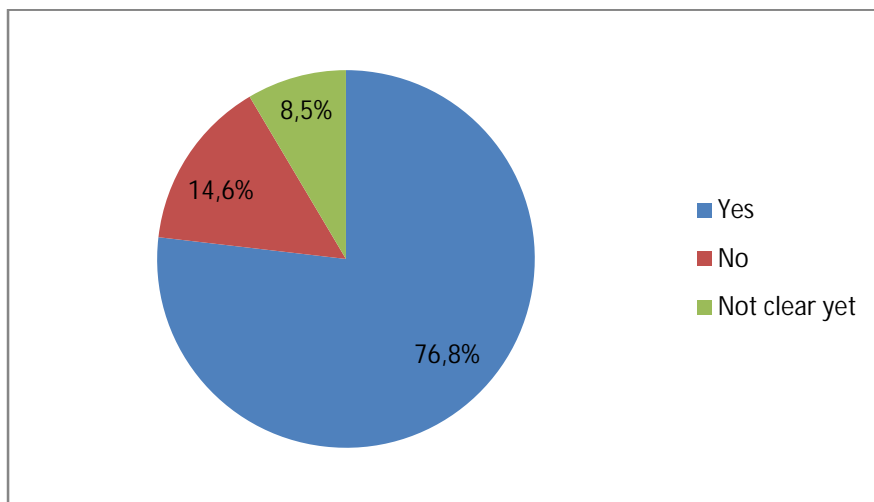
Diagram 4. Does the grantee intend to expand business in the future, increase the cropped area, breed livestock / poultry / hives and etc.



It is noteworthy that the three fourth out of those who intend to expand the business, will manage to achieve this goal without financial assistance. Grantees engaged in livestock breeding

and apiculture feel themselves especially stable, since their products are demanded on the market and prices are more or less stable and increasing.

Diagram 5. Will the grantee be able to expand its business with his/her own income?



In the course of an interview we got interested how satisfied grantees were with trainings organized within the scope of the granting program. All of them mentioned that participation in the training was a significant experience both with respect to acquiring the knowledge and transforming their minds. Days spent at trainings were remembered as the transition period in their lives.

In addition to acquiring knowledge and financial assistance, grantees talked about positive emotions they were receiving from communication with the trainer, fund staff and other grantees.

„I used to be a different person. After the war I was completely destroyed. The training made me stronger, I found myself in a different world, got acquainted with interesting people. Now because of my business I have working relations with many people and the life got far more interesting. The knowledge I acquired was nonetheless important than the financial assistance. I think I can move mountains.”

„I got acquainted with small business issues, the training provided me with very useful information.”

(Grantee of economic program)

Purpose of grant - making activities of the Women's Fund, in addition to enhancing the financial position, was increasing self-assessment of women and their role in the local

community. Majority of grantees in focus groups and meetings used to mention that their self-esteem increased significantly, as well as their role in the family and in the community.

„I have become popular in the village, my peers come and ask for an advice. I learned how to deal with funds, I learned planning and got a busy person.”

„Participation in this project made me to rely on myself. I did not think that I could do so much.”

“Training taught me how to make calculations, plan. Now I feel myself realized in the professional aspect. I am proud.”

“I got convinced that I can do something, I can contemplate.”

“I got more purposeful an audacious.”

“My life changed completely, I learned how to be independent, how to value the money and how to plan. I am looking with hope in the future.”

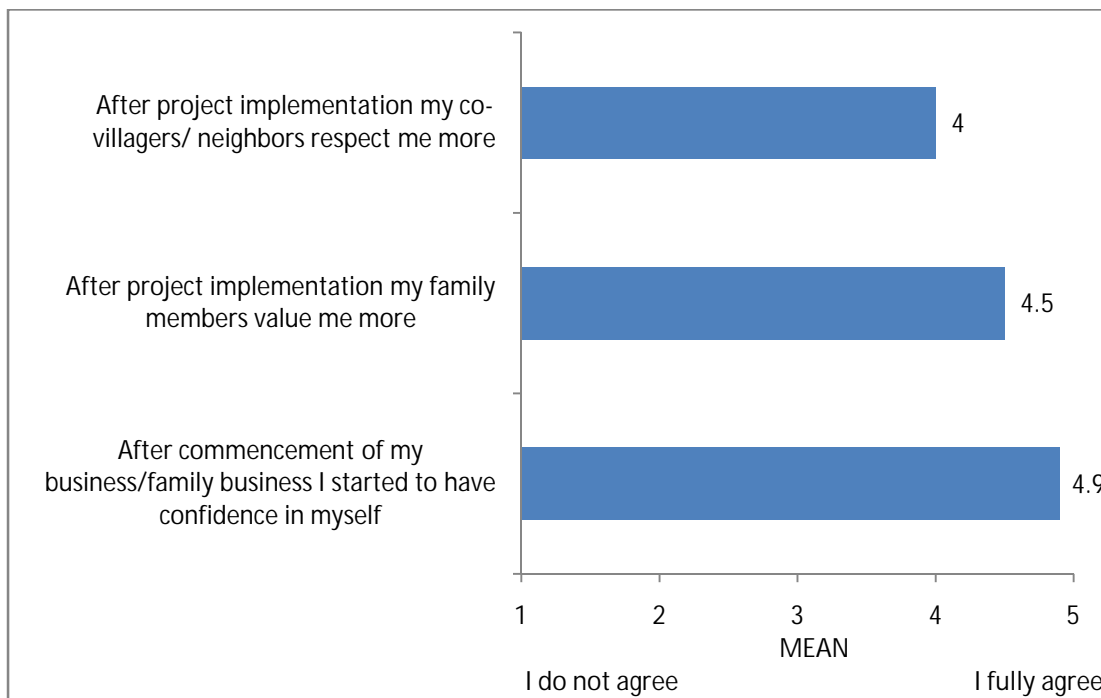
„I got confident, I am sure that I can do my business independently. In addition to knowledge, acquired at the training, it was important for me to get acquainted with the other participants from whom I received many interesting ideas and information about various agricultural sectors. I have the feeling of stability, since I know that if my business is not profitable in the future, I can start another business. I know who apply to for sharing an experience. We, training participants, meet and get in touch with each other quite often and share our problems and achievements.”

In the course of survey we asked grantees to rank on a 5-point scale to what extent they agreed with the following three phrases:

- “After I started my business I began to have confidence in myself”.
- “After project implementation, family members started to value me more.”
- “After the project implementation my villagers / neighbors started to respect me more.”

As it is shown on the diagram, women grantees feel changes most in self-esteem, however they also recognize their increasing role in the family and in the community.

Diagram 6. What was the impact of activities performed within the grant - making program framework?

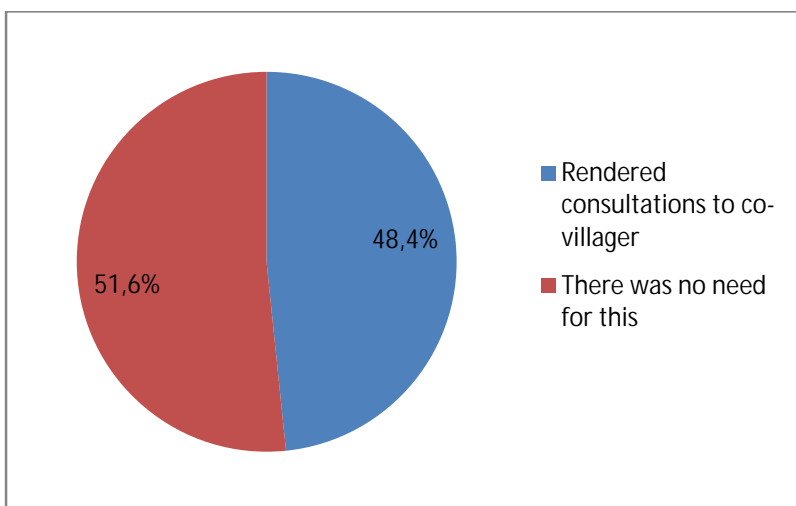


Positive Unplanned Outcome

In addition to planned results, the grant - making program also produced non-planned positive outcome. It is important that women grantees share the knowledge acquired at the training (writing a business plan, calculations ...), when necessary, with their villagers or relatives. This is especially needed in those villages where the other international organizations / funds (Red Cross, Taso, Abkhazia, NEO Project) commence supporting agricultural and social projects.

Almost a half of interviewed women (48%) said that they provided consultation in this or that form to villagers. In some cases this was assistance in writing project / business plan, calculations, in some cases consultations in the business, which was pursued by grantees. In villages where the other organizations started working, Women's Fund's grantees represented a support for the village and assisted their villagers to achieve success. Frequently the projects written as a result of consultations with the Fund's grantees were the winning projects. Some grantees of the Women's Fund received funding from other funds as well and even more improved position of their family businesses.

Diagram 7. Consultations rendered to villagers in drafting a business plan/business



Part of women has become socially more responsible and tries to participate in resolution of common village problems. Grantees of the Women’s Fund turned out to be good pillars for the other organizations that finance social projects. Villagers are getting together around the grantees to share their successful experience and apply themselves for social grants.

“I am so motivated. Now I’m thinking not only of myself, I want to help others and become useful for the village.”

Unplanned positive outcome of the program may also be the fact that in villages, where the Women’s Fund Economic Independence Program was implemented, confidence in funds increased. If in the beginning the Women’s Fund was coming across with distrust in some villages (especially in mountainous regions of Kakheti) and fear against taking part in the program, after seeing successful examples, the population got convinced that participation in similar projects was safe and directed to improvement of their well-being.

Unplanned Negative Outcome

Those factors need to be identified with respect to the unplanned negative results, which, in certain cases, created problems for grantees or became the reason of failure. In the majority of cases, grantees, due to the fund flexibility, managed to overcome barriers and successfully implemented the project.

Changes in prices on purchasable goods / products – occasionally grantees were facing the reality when the prices on purchasable products / goods, as of drafting the business plan, was different from those at the moment of receiving funding and actual purchase. Such cases were quite frequent with respect to livestock prices. As grantees noted themselves, the price depended on a season, which was not considered in the beginning. E.g. usually products are

more expensive in the spring than in the beginning of winter, when there is necessity to spend additional funds for over-wintering the livestock. From the moment of drafting the project till its funding (receipt of transferred amount) sometimes the season was changing and the grantees had to seek for ways out (to purchase cows with a lower milking capacity, to purchase female calves along with male ones, to add their own funds (GEL 100 - 150) to bring those from another region). Such changes, at least in the beginning, were affecting the project progress. Those applicants who intended to pursue apiculture, in their business plans, written in the spring, were unable to foresee, that within the period required for decision-making, concluding a contract and grant transfer the season would change. According to those who started apiculture business, the bee families purchased in the summer were weaker and one harvest of the honey was already taken by that time, therefore, they collected income less than forecasted in the first year (in case of 2 grantees), however this delay did not impact the next year outcome.

Garlic projects turned out to be relatively unsuccessful. During 2010 - 11 price for garlic was very high GEL 7 - 10 per kg. Grantees had hopes that the higher price would have been maintained for the next year as well. They purchased seeds at high price and in 2012 garlic price declined, due to which grantees were unable to generate profit in the expected volume. However, they managed to keep seeds and planted garlic this year.

Spreading Disease – three grantees, out of 9 pursuing poultry breeding, came across with problems caused by so-called “chicken plague”. Two grantees completely lost their poultry and discontinued the activities. One is planning to purchase chickens in the spring and resume the business.

Increasing the price on raw materials – this problem partly affected women engaged in sewing business. According to them, prices on fabrics increased, therefore they generated profit less than planned.

Lack of knowledge in the chosen industry – in case of some grantees one of the experienced difficulties was the lack of knowledge in the industry (e.g. broom production, flower growing).

Effectiveness

Effectiveness of the Women’s Fund’s grant - making program was obvious. With relatively few human and financial resources they managed to serve large number of grantees. 3 employees were managing the grant - making program in all regions, which can be achieved only by high commitment and hard work.

Major Findings of Open Door, Women's Human Rights and Rapid Response Grant - making Programs

About management and Implementation of Grant-making Programs

In this section we shall address non-economic implementation procedures for grant - making programs.

The evaluation revealed that the Fund had a good communication with organizations at all stages of the grant - making programs (even without grant - making program).

The fund is distributing information on calling for grant proposals in all possible ways. The information is being posted at the Fund's website, facebook page and www.jobs.ge. Also the Fund sends letters to former grantees.

According to grantee organizations, procedures that the fund requires from applicants to go through are easy: filling application forms/or application preparation does not create problems for organizations, including for starting and inexperienced ones /initiative groups, by which new organizations and initiative groups are being encouraged. The Fund is always ready to meet the applicant and provide additional consultations in the course of grant project drafting process. Even after submission of the application, if necessary, the Fund allows applicants to specify / elaborate this or that section.

„If the project idea is in compliance with their priorities and is interesting at the same time, the Fund is always assisting us to improve the project, as if it is supporting the project with you.”

(Focus Group Participant)

According to organizations, the Women's Fund regards the organizations as their partners and always tries to care for them.

„Quite frequently the Women's Fund provides us the information about the other donors as well, from whom we can obtain funding.”

“The Fund often invites us to its events; therefore we are always informed about the Fund's activities.”

„They are very friendly, you do not have the feeling that it is the Fund and you are an applicant, every visit here is like coming to your family, this makes communication very easy.”

Applications submitted within the contest framework are being reviewed by the Fund's advisory council, which makes the final decision about winning projects. Decision making is very prompt and review process is not delayed. At this stage the functions of the Fund's personnel are limited to recommendations only.

In case the Applicant's project is not financed, the Fund, in any form (telephone or mail), will contact the applicant and notify about failure and explain reasons persuasively, why the project has not been financed. The fund makes individual substantiation for each non-funded project, due to which the applicant is not left dissatisfied (or with a feeling of being treated unfairly) and does not have additional questions. The fund tries to be open, at maximum extent, with applicants, answer all questions and dissolve potential doubts about fairness of its decisions. Such approach even more contributes to strengthening the trust between the Fund and its partner organizations.

„Due to the fact that it is not well substantiated the Applicant does not have the feeling that the Fund reviewed the application superficially, it is obvious that the project was reviewed in detail. Substantiated refusal may determine future success, since you are given the opportunity to take into account deficiencies of the unsuccessful application in the future.”

(Focus Group Participant)

The fund monitors the progress of funded projects with special attention. Grantee organizations, as a rule, invite the Fund representatives to events organized within the project framework (trainings, campaigns, working meetings, exhibitions, presentations). Fund representatives, within their capacity, try to attend such events. Organizations operating in regions send the photo and video materials depicting the project activities funded through the grant. The fund keeps telephone contact with grantees at each stage of the project. In addition to drafting the final report, upon the project completion, the grantees fill the special questionnaire.

„It is very good when the donor is so flexible and does not create problems, because it means that the fund trusts you and does not make you lose time. Excessive bureaucracy only harms the business.”

Compliance of Projects Funded within the Grant - making Program Framework with the Fund's Priorities

Evaluation findings by each grant making program will be addressed below.

Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Program

About the Program

Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Program aims supporting such initiatives, which contribute to changing policy, practice, views and attitudes against women in Georgia, protecting Women's rights, implementing non-discriminative culture and achieving the gender equality.

Priorities of the tender held within the program framework were initiatives oriented to social changes:

- Protection of women's rights;
- Detecting, documenting and reacting to facts of violation of women's rights and discrimination;
- Facilitating enforcement of the Law on Gender Equality;
- Legislative initiatives;
- Monitoring, advocating, lobbying campaigns directed to protection of women's rights;
- Implementation of CEDAW Convention;
- Academic review of women's rights and gender issues;
- Raising awareness of the public about gender issues;
- Protection of rights of those women groups who suffer from several forms of discrimination.

During 2011, within the framework of **Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Program**, the Women's Fund extended 10 grants. The amount of each extended grant did not exceed \$5,000.

In the course of the evaluation process interviews were held with implementers of 7 projects.

Table 5. Number of Projects Funded under the Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Program by Regions

Grant Year	Disbursement Location	Number of Grants
2011	Kvemo Kartli	1
	Samegrelo	1
	Tbilisi	4
	Guria	1
	Shida Kartli	2
	Imereti	1
Total		10 Grants

Activities of 6 projects, out of ten funded ones, were directed to spreading the information on women's rights and three were devoted to recovery and advocacy of women's groups. One project was of research type. Beneficiaries of the first two projects occasionally were represented by the public, and in some cases by specific groups, namely:

- Representatives of gypsy community (women and men)
- Inspectors (Policemen)
- Female victims of family violence
- Female drug addicts
- Women IDPs
- Divorced women having proprietary dispute
- Students

The following methods were used in projects directed to spreading the information on women's rights:

- Organizing seminars
- Organizing roundtables
- Dissemination of flyers
- Preparation of video on violence against women in Georgia and its presentation at various events
- Organizing "flesh mobs" at public places
- Preparation of radio programs
- Preparation of Articles for local newspapers
- Organizing live stand-ups through internet television (so-called "Live Stream")

Positive Outcome

In projects dedicated to informing specific groups or the entire public about women's rights or advocating, grantees successfully implemented planned activities and informed beneficiaries about their rights. In such projects organizations did not have the possibility to measure the impact of these activities, however the success of the projects could be judged by the following results:

- Following dissemination of the information within the project framework, the applications by women (whose human rights had been violated) to implementing organizations or partner organizations, whose contact information was being distributed in the course of campaigns (flyers, programs / meetings/ seminars), increased. In addition, the number of those women who could talk freely about their problems and family violence grew up;
- The implementing organizations themselves got stronger, they established partner relations with the other organizations working on the women-related issues, they acquired supporters and volunteers;
- Women received information about the issues they were interested in (rights, healthcare, resolution of local problems);
- The reputation of organizations among the beneficiaries improved;
- Their vision got wider, they saw new possibilities for continuation of activities.
- Several specific cases were identified when women (whose rights were violated as a result of their activities) applied to the respective organization for assistance and they achieved restitution of their rights.

Advocacy projects produced specific results:

- 13 female drug addicts were identified (recruiting) and services of the medical – rehabilitation center were offered to their majority (11 women) (free methadone program, passing through detoxication therapy). The organization tried to lobby the opening of methadone program separately for women with the Ministry of Healthcare, the Institute of Narcology and the Healthcare Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, however this process got temporarily suspended due to change of government after the Parliamentary Elections (Project - Establishing the Medical – Rehabilitation Center for Female Drug Addicts).

- Using the modern advocacy methods in legal services contributed to increasing the number of settled cases (mediation, reaching agreement, psychological rehabilitation of victim). In case of offering the out-of-court methods for problem resolution the project beneficiaries (divorced women having proprietary disputes, women in nonregistered marriage, female victims of family violence) were receiving the result faster than in case of court proceedings.

„This project was like oxygen for us, like transfusion of new blood. When you see that after one consultation you can reach significant result, this makes you stronger, it gave much to us, as to professionals; we saw completely different horizon, and we realized what steps need to be taken.”

(Project -The Law at Women’s Service, Implementer - Human Rights Priority)

Unplanned Result

Although the duration of the funded projects was several months, the activities in some cases were continuing beyond the project end. Since the information provided in the course of campaigns / programs / seminars is being spread after completion of the project as well, women, quite frequently, contact the organization upon the project end with this or that issue related to their rights. However, if the grant making organization is not stable financially and does not pursue activities under the longer-term project, it may not be able to render service (consultation). Respectively the project effect turns out to be short-term in such case.

Open Door Grants Program

About the Program

Aim of the Open Door Grants Program was to meet individual women's, women's groups' and organizations' up-and-coming needs in Tbilisi and in the regions of Georgia. During the period of 2009 – 2011, 40 grants were issued within the framework of this program.

Interviews were held with 23 grant makers in the course of the survey.

Table 6. Grants disbursed under the Open Door Grants Program by regions and years

Grant Year	Location	Number
2011	Adjara	1
	Tbilisi, Kvemo Kartli, Kakhety	1

	Tbilisi	6
	Kvemo Kartli	1
	Shida Kartli	1
	Guria	1
	Total	11
2010	Tbilisi	11
	Kvemo Kartli	1
	Imereti	1
	Samtskhe - Javakheti	1
	Shida Kartli	1
	Mtskheta Mtianeti	1
	Kakhety	1
Total in 2010		17
2009	Tbilisi	5
	Samegrelo	3
	Kakhety	2
	Mtskheta Mtianeti	1
	Kvemo Kartli	1
Total in 2009		12
Total in 2009-2011		40

Women's Fund, under the Open Door Grants Program, welcomes such projects of women's groups and organizations, which correspond to the Fund's major priorities. The Fund does not limit potential grantees in selection of project direction. The objective of this grant making program is initiation of such projects, which are regarded as a priority by the women's groups / organizations themselves. Respectively, diverse projects got funded within the Open Door Grant Making Program by topics, as well as variety of beneficiary groups and activity forms. We attempted to group projects funded under the program below:

- Psycho – social rehabilitation of female victims of violence;
- Strengthening the Women NGOs and initiative groups operating in Tbilisi and regions inter alia by facilitating cooperation among them;
- Resolution of women and girls' health problems, prevention of diseases (5 projects);
- Cultural activities (2 projects);
- Professional retraining of women's groups (2 projects);
- Supporting LGBT groups (3 projects);
- Technical equipment (2 projects);
- Supporting women representing victims of family violence (1 project);

- Spreading the information about gender and feminism issues (5 projects);
- Informational activities for the purpose of preventing the violence (2 projects);
- Facilitating active participation of women / girls in resolution of community problems (3 projects);
- Keeping the radio project on migration issues (1 project);
- Supporting the peace-keeping initiatives, supporting girls living in conflict regions (2 projects);
- Facilitating religious tolerance (1 project);
- Training in prevention of conflict and crisis situations (1 project);
- Psychological rehabilitation (1 project);
- Enhancement of women's role in politics (3 projects);
- Lobbying gender issues (1 project);
- Creation of video materials on women-related and gender issues (2 projects);
- Research of representation on gender identity in media (1 project);
- Review of legislation with respect to gender inequality (1 project);
- Support of lonely elderly women (1 project);
- Showing achievements of women in science and creative work by preparation of electronic directory (1 project).

Women's target groups of funded projects were:

- Women representing victims of violence
- Women IDPs
- Disabled women
- Women deprived of healthcare services
- Girls deprived of care
- LGBT groups
- Young girls
- Students
- Women representing religious minorities

Positive Outcome

Results of projects funded through grant making programs were different and these differences quite frequently were proceeding from the project specifics. Results of those project types,

which pertained to disease prevention, were easily noticeable (e.g. identification of person with tumor and providing respective assistance).

As a result of some projects, educational – informational products (videos, films, internet page, thematic posters, comics ...) were created, which continued existence after the project-end and which, in case of necessity, were being used by the implementing organization or by stakeholders.

Projects of the grant making program, which entailed enhancement of grant making organizations need to be mentioned separately.

Winning of the Women's Fund in the Open Door Grants Program and project implementation in some cases determined livelihood of this organization:

„The fact that my organization exists today and functions is the merit of the Women's Fund. The fund gave me the incentive to continue the activities.”

The women's fund's grant gave us the opportunity to purchase the required technical base in the beginning, which was a very significant assistance for us at that time.”

„The Women's Fund gave us the opportunity to feel secure and maintain the current business in the critical situation for our organization.”

(Extracts from interviews)

Because of short duration and small budget of projects, to view such outcome of projects aimed at changing disposition, stereotypes, knowledge or behavior of various groups is difficult. However, as it was revealed during the survey, many granters managed to obtain further finances from other funds and expand their activities.

„Women's Fund's grant was a great assistance for us. By implementing that project (enhancing women's organizations and initiative groups) women's organizations started to have confidence in us, the image improved and we established partner relations. We use this resource successfully within the other projects when lobbying the issue, raising or resolving problem.”

„The fact that the major priority for our organization is resolution of women-related issues is the merit of the women's fund. In the beginning women-related issues were one of the directions. After implementing this project, working on such problems became the main objective of our activities“.

Unfortunately the grantee organization is not always able to continue or expand activities commenced within the grant program. However, after completion of these types of projects, the purpose of which was consulting the beneficiaries about women health or violence issues, the organization still managed to provide such support to beneficiaries, which did not require too much of financial resources (e.g. telephone consulting).

Rapid Response Grant Making Program

Small grants in the field of women’s human rights were being disbursed within the Rapid Response Grant Making Program, in situations where rapid response might achieve significant result. 8 grants were disbursed during 2010 – 2011.

Table 7. Grants Disbursed under the Rapid Response Grant-making Program by Regions.

Grant Year	Region	Number
2011	Samegrelo	1
	Adjara	1
	Shida Kartli	1
	Tbilisi	2
2010	Tbilisi	4
Total		9

Positive Outcome

Due to specifics of grant-making program funded activities were very short-term and served supporting specific person or resolving the problem situation created during that period. Namely:

- Evacuation of the human rights defender activist from the country to secure its safety;
- Assistance of the Russian human rights’ defender, whose disease – leucosis got complicated during its stay in Tbilisi. The Women’s Fund handed the finances, received from UAF specially for this project, over to Russian defender for medical treatment at the clinic, food and purchase of medicines.

In both aforementioned cases the patient was in need for emergency treatment, which could not be provided by any other Fund. With assistance of the Women’s Fund this problem got resolved.

Another objective of the program was supporting 17-year old girl, a victim of violence, and thus raising a problem issue:

- The girl was a victim of family violence including incest. She was living in the street. Employees of the Adjara Office of Public Defender found her and applied to grantee organization for assistance. The grantee attempted to study the case with very little amount (\$300), contact the girl's family, relatives, social agency and resolve the problem. Return to home was impossible, however the grantee managed to find a temporary shelter for the girl. The grantee also organized a program in the local television Channel 25, to inform the public about incest based on this example. Following the program, the grantee was contacted several times and asked for consultation about incest. As the professional psychologist and the head of the organization said, public awareness about family violence (including incest) was very poor in Adjara and especially in high mountainous regions. She was planning to continue educational activities and obtain larger funding for the project.

Part of projects was pertaining to meeting the needs existing at the moment of funding. Such projects were:

- Project - Women's Activity in Local Elections of May 2010; topicality of the project was determined by extraordinary elections of self-governance bodies. The project aimed to support women candidates, on the one hand, and to introduce gender issues to them on the other. To achieve this goal, brief information was collected and posted on the website about women candidates. The program was organized on the Radio Green Wave, also an extended meeting was arranged between the women candidates and non – governmental organizations working on gender problems. This project was designed by several organizations and since they failed to attract the lump sum, they decided to search for funding separately. Part of activities was financed with assistance of the Women's Fund.

„In Georgia participation of women in politics is quite low, therefore we decided to support women candidates. As a result, 11% share of women in local self-governance was achieved. Perhaps this is still a low figure, however we think that without this project it could have been even less. That is why we consider it as a successful project.”

- The grantee saw the necessity of implementing the project - **Information Campaign against Violence towards Women and Girls** based on several dreadful facts of violence against women, which took place during that period. The organization decided to react to these facts and organized information campaign against forms of violence directed to

women. Within the campaign framework 5km run and demonstration were organized at the Tbilisi Hippodrome. In addition, informational meetings were held at educational institutions at 12 universities with use of videos on facts of violence against women. 5,000 triplets got distributed at the meeting places with the information for victims of violence where to apply in case of necessity.

„The project was short-term and small budgeted and, of course, it was difficult to assess the impact achieved by the campaign. However, we tried to reach maximum number of people especially young ones. Through one of the blogs we found out that one girl, after being introduced to the information provided throughout the campaign, contacted the respective organization where she received requested assistance. This project gave us many friends and we found likeminded people.”

- „When organizing the 3-day session of the European Youth Parliament – Georgia, the Women’s Fund allocated part of required amount. The session committees worked on women’s human rights and gender issues.

„We are still continuing our cooperation with the Youth Parliament. The session organized in Georgia was recognized as one of the best organized sessions.” The grantee organization was Mercury.

The analysis of grants disbursed within the Rapid Response Grants Project showed that all projects met the Women’s Fund’s priorities and as a result of provided financial assistance, all originated needs were addressed in a prompt manner.

3. Conclusions

Evaluation of the Women’s Fund’s Grant-making programs proved that the Fund was well realizing its priorities and strictly observing them in the course of grant tenders and decision-making process.

Activities supported within the grant programs are relevant to existing needs. Women’s Fund’s management well perceives the needs experienced by women in Tbilisi as well as in regions.

Women’s Fund has good communication with the organizations, individuals and initiative groups working on the women-related issues within the grant-making framework, as well as beyond its boundaries. The Fund plays a role of a certain liaison for parties interested in women related issues.

Majority of projects funded within the framework of the Women's Economic Program produced a long-term effect with respect to improving financial position of the beneficiaries. However, personal changes achieved through grant program activities were nonetheless important, as noted by majority of women grantees (self- confidence, independence ...)".

Importance and necessity of the Rapid Response Grants Program was doubtless. There is no other fund in Georgia, which extends grants in such a situation when the problem resolution is possible only via prompt reaction.

The main advantage of the Open Door Grants program is that it tries to encourage organizations/ groups working on women-related issues for creation of innovative projects and not to impose any specific direction over grantees. Consequently the projects address problems, which are regarded as priorities by organizations/groups themselves. And the fund receives diverse projects.

The aim of project activities, funded under the Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Program, was increasing public awareness about women's human rights, which was attempted by grantee organizations in various forms.

The major weakness of Women's Fund's grant making programs (in case of non-economic programs) is small budget. Obtaining the small budget grant, in many cases, is interesting for starter organizations/initiative groups or such organization, which (may not be a starter) does not have long-term funding for the moment. Small volume of grant partly determines the content of activities funded within the project. Frequently this is the activity, which may be completed within the short period and have the specific outcome (informational /educational activities, development of television / video / printing / internet products, organizing events / meetings), disease or violence prevention campaigns ...). Those projects that aim at psycho – social rehabilitation and advocating women (with violated human rights) or the other vulnerable groups (elderly people, drug addicts, victims of violence, persons with violated proprietary rights ...) are relatively rare. Such types of projects may be offered only by relatively strong organization, which apart from funding the Women's Fund, can invest its own resources in such activities. Otherwise the project outcome may become questionable and beneficiaries, as well as the grantee organization may find themselves in a difficult situation.

4. Recommendations

This chapter presents recommendations that may be considered by the Fund for the future in the event of implementing the program similar to the Women's Economic Independence Program.

- In the course of distributing the information on grant tender it is advisable to give priority to so-called door-to-door campaign and dissemination of information through co-villagers. It is also possible to use the method of placing announcements at shops.
- At the stage of drafting the business plans by applicants the seasonal changes in prices for raw materials/goods to be purchased need to be taken into account. In addition, the presumable period of grant transfer needs to be considered in the plan preparation process.
- When calculating the expected profit the applicants need to exercise due care in drafting project business plans for such products, on which prices significantly fluctuate from year to year (example of garlic).
- Due to the fact that among funded projects poultry breeding ones turned out to be relatively riskier, the Fund can recommend potential grantees not to give priority to poultry projects without having sufficient experience in the industry.
- In some cases applicants were not experienced in that sphere of agriculture/service sector on which they were intending to prepare a business plan. From the project viability perspective, it would be advisable if the applicant, at the business plan drafting stage, realizes how to eliminate information/knowledge deficit (purchase of books, attendance of short-term courses, consultations with experts ...). In cases where it is clear that without acquiring the industry knowledge project implementation is doubtful, respective item may be included in the project expenditure.
- In the event of continuation of the grant making program in the future, the Fund may establish the experts' base, which, on a voluntary basis or in exchange for remuneration, will provide consultations to the Women's Fund's grantees (especially regarding the agricultural projects).

Annex 1.

Ad title: **External Evaluation Provider**

Provided by: **Women's Fund in Georgia**

Published: **Sep 6** / Deadline: **Sep 24, 12:00**

Women's Fund in Georgia (WFG) is a local, independent grant-making organization which supports women's groups' activities and initiatives throughout Georgia. WFG's Vision: Strong, equal, recognized and happy women in free, safe and just world. WFG's Mission: Empowering women in Georgia for social change through providing financial and technical support, capacity building and development of feminist philanthropy.

WFG targets women's groups and individual women that have limited access to funding and are working on underfunded areas of women's rights. The awarded grants enable women gain more experience and expertise in the field that will allow them better access to other bigger donors locally and internationally.

Project title: Impact Assessment of WFG's Grant making Programs

Position Title: **External Evaluation Provider**

Contract type: Service Agreement

Starting Date: 1 October, 2012

Finishing Date: 20 December, 2012

Summary of the project:

WFG aims to conduct assessment of WFG's current grant - making programs with the aim to identify lessons learnt for the further improvement of the Fund's work.

The evaluation will target four grant - making programs of the Fund:

1. Women's Economic Independence Program

Goal: The Program aims to empower women in the most vulnerable, poor and remote areas of Georgia by providing with financial resources to affect the social and economic context in which they live.

Duration: 2010-2012

Regions covered: Shida Kartli, Imereti, Kakheti

Grants awarded: 144

M&E: there is a specific M&E plan in place with narrative and financial reports in the end and regular monitoring site-visits

Donor: USAID

2. Open Door Grants Program

Goal: The Program aims to meet individual women's, women's groups' and organizations' up-and-coming needs in Tbilisi and the regions of Georgia.

Duration: 2009-2011

Regions covered: Kvemo Kartli, Guria, Shida Kartli, Kakheti, Adjara, Imereti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Tbilisi

Grants awarded: 40

M&E: there is no specific M&E plan in place apart from the narrative and financial reports

Donor: GFW, filia, Mama Cash, individual supporters

3. Rapid Response Grant-making Program

Goal: The Program provides timely small grants to support strategic interventions that take advantage of opportunities to advance women's human rights, creates a situation in which rapid intervention can have a significant impact.

Duration: 2010-2011

Regions covered: Adjara, Samegrelo, Kvemo Kartli, Tbilisi

Grants awarded: 9

M&E: there is no specific M&E plan in place apart from the narrative and financial reports

Donor: Urgent Action Fund

4. Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights Program

Goal: The Program supports initiatives aiming at changing practices, policies, attitudes, perceptions concerning women and their human rights in Georgia and to facilitate the process of building the culture of non-discrimination and achievement of gender equality in the country.

Duration: 2011

Regions covered: Shida Kartli, Kakheti, Samegrelo, Imereti, Guria, Tbilisi

Grants awarded: 10

M&E: there is no specific M&E plan in place apart from the narrative and financial reports and monitoring site-visits

Donor: Oak Foundation

Number of grants awarded in all programs: 204

Several organizations/groups received grant more than once.

Assignment:

Women's Fund in Georgia announces an open call for the recruitment of an evaluator or team of evaluators for conducting assessment of WFG's grant - making programs. The aim of the external evaluation is to carry out analysis of the range of programs that WFG currently implements and to draw recommendations for further development. The candidates will have to submit a proposal for evaluation, indicating proposed methodology – methods, tools, type of

analysis (desirably utilizing qualitative methodology and participatory evaluation methods).

The evaluation will be made by external evaluator(s) - qualified expert(s) - and involves following stages:

- ** Elaboration of the evaluation methodology
- ** Data collection
- ** Data analysis
- ** Delivery of the final evaluation report (in English and Georgian languages)

The most successful candidate/candidates will be chosen by WFG management and will be invited for the interview. The final decision will be made based on the experience of the evaluator (or team) as well as the proposed methodology for the evaluation considering specificity of WFG's work. The selected candidate/candidates will start work by October 1, 2012 and will evaluate the impact of WFG's grant - making programs: Women's Economic Independence Program, Open Door Grants Program, Rapid Response Grants Program, and the program Promoting the Culture of Women's Human Rights.

The final evaluation report is due to be submitted by December 15, 2012.

Required Qualifications and Experience:

- ** Track record of elaboration of M&E methodology and successful management of project M&E systems, survey design and implementation;
- ** Skills in all aspects of qualitative evaluation with knowledge of participatory evaluation methodologies;
- ** Experience with data collection using any of the following: semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and other methods;
- ** Experience with evaluating gender-related projects/programs
- ** Readiness to travel;
- ** Good interpersonal and communication skills;
- ** Fluency in Georgian, English and Russian;
- ** Ability to elaborate task-related documents in both Georgian and English languages;
- ** Strong professional and personal ethics;
- ** Respect to ethnic, religious, gender, sexual and other diversities;
- ** Gender sensitivity and respect for women's rights.

Submission of Proposals:

Interested individuals/organizations/companies need to submit the following documents to Women's Fund in Georgia:

- ** Technical Proposal (including outline of methodology and time-frame)
- ** Technical Proposal Budget (separately for all four required components)
- ** CV (in case of individual expert)
- ** Capacity Statement (in case of organization/company)
- ** 2 references

All documents have to be sent to ia@womenfundgeorgia.org no later than **24 September, 2012 (noon)**. Please indicate the position title in the subject line.

For more information about Women's Fund in Georgia, please refer to its website: <http://www.womenfundgeorgia.org>

Note on Budget: WFG has allocated 8 000 USD for the assessment, but the final budget depends on the applicants proposal and on our mutual agreement.

References:

- 1. Strategic Development Plan of the Women's Fund for the period of 2011 – 2015**
- 2. Women's Fund's Policy developed in 2005, the third revised edition, January, 2012.**
- 3. Guide for grant managers**
- 4. Performance Monitoring Plan, 2010-2011-2012 for DGP**
- 5. Report on Women's Economic Development Program**
- 6. Women's Fund's annual reports (2009, 2010, 2011)**