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Small Grants Program Advances the Goal of Transparency in Health Engagement Project in Albania



About the Small Grants Program

Through a competitive selection process, the Small Grants Program identified key local organizations and media groups for health transparency focused grants. These grants are intended to promote media and civil society organizations (CSOs) roles as watchdogs. The recipients will focus on educating the public, leading advocacy campaigns, demanding progress, holding the government publicly accountable, and assisting government institutions to function better. The selected recipients designed their approaches to achieve the following objectives:

- ◆ **Objective 1:** Increase CSOs' role and media professional's capacities in to better informing and educating the public on risks for corruption and corruption practices in the Albanian health system.
- ◆ **Objective 2:** Increase capacities of civil society organizations and media to more effectively advocate and collaborate with the target institutions to urge the Government of Albania to pursue corruption in the health sector.

The recipients of the Small Grants will receive Transparency in Health Engagement Program support throughout the year long grants to ensure projects are reaching target audiences and achieving stated objectives. The Small Grants Program **will reach journalists, CSOs, patient's associations, legal professionals, citizens and patients through targeted awareness campaigns, tailored trainings and in-depth investigative reporting. The recipients of the grants will have strong relationships with independent institutions and be well prepared to access appropriate information and hold the health sector accountable.**

About the Project

USAID's Transparency in Health Engagement project aims to **improve health services for Albanian citizens by focusing on corruption and encouraging cooperation among selected independent government institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs) and media to urge for more responsible governance in the health sector.**

Working with the High Inspectorate for the Declaration and Audit of Assets and Prevention of Conflict of Interest (HIDAACI), the High State Audit (HSA), and the Office of the Ombudsperson, the project will generate evidence to measure corruption and relevant mediating factors; and perform public sector reforms and audits. Through the Small Grants Program, the project is selecting, capacitating and engaging key local organizations and media groups for health transparency focused grants to strengthen their roles as watchdogs.

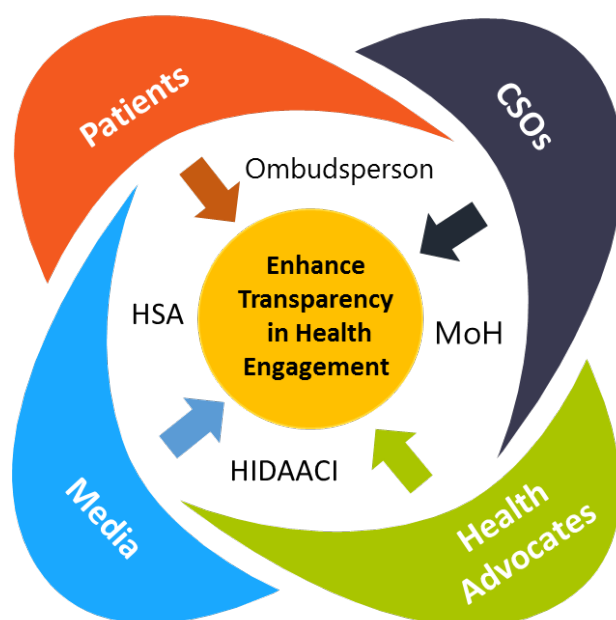
Profiles of Small Grantees

BIRN Albania: Through the *Transparency in Health through Data and Investigative Journalism Project*, BIRN Albania will **target media professionals, CSOs, patient's associations and independent government institutions for networking, collaboration and capacity building.** BIRN Albania will support local journalists through hands-on training to produce in-depth investigative stories on the health sector and facilitate coordination with CSOs to identify instances of corruption in the health sector. Additionally, BIRN Albania will conduct a competitive process to select, support and publish three investigative reports on under-reported topics in health in Albania in coordination with participating CSOs. **The project aims to foster more informed and transparent public debate on the healthcare sector by strengthening cooperation between journalists and civil society in order expose corruption and advocate solutions.**

Partners Albania for Change and Development:

Through the **Stronger CSOs for Transparency in Health Project**, Partners Albania will increase awareness and understanding about the health sector and legal frameworks to fight corruption amongst CSOs in 7 regions of Albania. Activities will strengthen their relations with key oversight agencies, including Ombudsman, HSA, HIDAACI and Commissions for the Right to Information and Data Protection to encourage utilization of a breadth of resources. Additionally, the project will provide capacity building and organizational strengthening to target CSOs to more effectively plan and implement initiatives to raise awareness about anti-corruption programs and serve in a watchdog capacity. Activities will serve to strengthen inter-organizational collaboration to foster greater reach amongst citizens and increased awareness about corruption. The project will **contribute to increased role of CSOs in advocating the government to address issues of corruption in the health sector and to implement practices that increase transparency and accountability of health institutions.**

Albanian Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma and Torture (ARCT): Through the **Transparency in Mental Health Project**, the organization aims to improve the Albanian health system's accountability and transparency by identifying corrupt practices in health sector and advocating for non-repetition and prevention of identified cases/practices. ARCT will work to identify shortcomings in accountability within the health sector in coordination with the Ombudsman Office and work to revise complaint mechanisms and referral process to better meet the needs of patients. Additionally, the project will work **to advocate for legislative amendments to address identified shortcomings to ensure non-repetition of human rights violations through awareness raising events for law practitioners and patients and their families.** The project will host public hearings with the parliamentary commissions on labour, social and health issues.



Together for Life: Through the **Empowering patients: Fighting corruption in the health system through empowering patients and independent oversight institutions project**, Together for Life aims **to educate, to inform and to encourage patients and citizens to denounce the corruption in healthcare system by using mechanisms like media and other independent institutions like the Ombudsman, Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, Information and Data Protection Commissioner, Order of Physicians, and Courts, that have the mandate for implementation and enforcement of the law and for protection of the patient's and citizen's rights.** The project will host informational sessions for patients and their advocates about corruption and avail them to observe the judicial process for cases of corruption in health. Additionally, the project will facilitate an interactive mechanism amongst stakeholders including media, patient's associations, and independent institutions to identify, report and publicize cases of corruption.

For more information, please contact
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