

## SUMMARY OF BAPP-ESTONIA 2005-2007 STRATEGY

BAPP-Estonia's main goal is to enhance the capacity of the NGO sector to act as a component of an open and democratic society. On one hand, this requires an enabling environment for NGOs' activities (legal and fiscal environment, clear principles and mechanisms for NGOs to participate in political decision-making processes, public image favorable to NGO activities); on the other hand, NGOs' capacity to act for and on behalf of their constituencies becomes even more critical once access to decision-making has been created. The basis to all of the above is an informed and educated populace, aware of its rights and responsibilities.

During the period 2005-2007, BAPP-Estonia will focus on two main goals: increasing the sustainability of the NGO sector and enhancing civic participation.

The most important result achieved thus far is increased participation of NGOs in policy-making processes. Today, it can be said that NGOs are better able to formulate and lobby for their priorities than before; the government is more conscious of the importance of engaging NGOs into decision-making processes; and, finally, the NGO Compact "EKAK" has created an initial formal framework for these interactions.

Therefore, BAPP-Estonia has set the following main objectives for 2005-2007: to ensure a more favorable funding climate for NGOs; to increase the number of professional NGOs involved in policy-making and civil society development; and, to strengthen the resources available to NGO leaders, including educated and inspired constituencies, and professional expertise and analysis on third sector development in Estonia and abroad.

By 2008, in the area of **External Environment & Infrastructure**, BAPP-Estonia seeks to ensure that there will be:

- clear and transparent funding principles and mechanisms for government support to civil society development and NGO activities, in ways that do not compromise the independence of NGOs
- strengthened capacity of the third sector as a whole to participate in civil society development and other policy development processes
- regular monitoring and evaluation of civil society and third sector development, together with strategies and policies are based on analysis and research.

Through its grantmaking, BAPP Estonia will support initiatives that are expected to contribute to the above objectives, including the following:

- a potential multi-year policy project to analyze all current funding schemes and practices for the NGO sector, in order to develop new mechanisms that are clear and transparent. This may include a funding facility in which the government commits a certain amount of funding, but contracts out the decision-making to an independent body. This is viewed as important for the sustainability prospects of advocacy NGOs in particular.
- continued engagement of NGOs in civil society development, particularly in the work of the Joint NGO/Government Committee on the Implementation of EKAK and other networks

- Based on the findings of a current civil society research project, commitment from stakeholders, and financial viability considerations, BAPP-Estonia will consider supporting an institution responsible for providing regular feedback and analysis on civil society development to both decision-makers and civil society practitioners.

In the area of **Institutional Development**, for the period 2005-2007, BAPP-Estonia will continue to focus upon the following:

- institutional strengthening of a core group of mature, leading NGOs, able to serve as role models and peers for others to follow.
- providing support to advocacy NGOs, primarily those working on fundamental rights.

Implementation methods will include:

- awarding of multi-year institutional development grants
- facilitating NGO training in advocacy (policy development in particular) and leadership.

In the area of **Civic Participation and Cross-sector Cooperation**, BAPP-Estonia's priorities are to:

- increase civic participation at local level, thereby ensuring a more vibrant civil society and non-profit sector
- continue to support the development of community foundations, which – although they will not necessarily be able to contribute significantly to the financial sustainability of the NGO sector as a whole – have already proven to be an effective mechanism for mobilizing both human and financial resources at the local level.

Implementation methods will include:

- providing ongoing support to the two existing community foundations (in Järva and Viljandi) that other communities can learn from
- a continued civic engagement small grants program
- a civic education program, providing young people with concrete experience and opportunities to become involved with the NGO sector and carry out voluntary work for the good of their communities.

**At the conclusion of its work in 2008, BAPP-Estonia expects that its legacy will encompass:**

- an environment and infrastructure favorable to NGOs and their work, supported by increased public awareness about the role of the third sector and civic participation
- a group of individuals and institutions committed to the development of civil society, sharing and carrying forward the values promoted by BAPP-Estonia
- a developed advocacy culture and accompanying skills among NGOs
- adequate data collection, regular evaluation, and analysis describing the state of civic engagement and the third sector, enabling knowledge-based development of strategies and policies affecting civil society

- young people who are aware of and exercise their civic rights and responsibilities; and, a general respect for voluntary work for the community benefit.