



Impact assessments of the Bridges project

Respondent information	
My name	Tatiana Burieva
My organisation	Regional charity NGO Arkhangelsk Centre of social technologies "Garant"
Date for e-mailing this evaluation to my partners	08.10.2018
The deadline for concluding this impact assessment	08.10.2018

1. Why did you join the project?

Present your Background - own experiences and interests for Nordic – Russian cooperation

We have initiated this project because we saw a big decrease in NGOs' cooperation which was developing quite efficiently in the period 1999-2008 between the North-west of Russia and the Nordic-Baltic countries. Most of the contacts between NGOs started in early 2000-s were stopped due to the political situation; lack of funding opportunities; lack of information about NGOs in Internet; absence of the common language for communication and lack of international opportunities as meeting points for NGOs to get acquainted with each other.

Since 1998 when Centre "Garant" was established and we have been developing as a resource centre for NGOs, we organized several match-making events for Russian and Nordic NGOs in the period of 1998-2003 together with Swedish Forum Syd (Stockholm) and Russian-Finnish friendship society (Oulu), which enabled to launch several joint NGOs' projects. However, since then no match-making events were organized in Arkhangelsk. Filling in the database (one of the project's activities) we asked Russian NGOs if they are eager to communicate and develop joint projects, most of them confirmed their readiness to develop joint projects with Nordic-Baltic NGOs.

2. Your main activities in the project?

Present your main activities in the project including the challenges to provide them.

Activity 1: Making the visual style for the network, leaflet and press-release

In fact, we had only one challenges to collect all the remarks and corrections from the project partners. The visual style was developed by the project designer and approved by the project partners easily.

Activity 2: Database, website for the project

Development of the database and the website took much longer than it was initially planned since it took much time to finalize the draft form for the database: it was important to make it easy but, on the other hand, to provide match-making process it was necessary to give space to write about experience and projects' ideas.

When filling in the database we had to make the telephone calls to more than 300 NGOs and send emails, translate the forms from Russian into English as many NGOs don't have specialists speaking foreign languages.

Activity 3: Workshop in Arkhangelsk (4 September, 2017)

Garant informed NGOs of Arkhangelsk about possibilities of the NGOs' database, receiving support for development of the international projects and events. There were no challenges connected with this event.

Activity 4: Conference 30-31 May 2018 in Arkhangelsk

The conference brought together more than 40 persons from 5 countries (Russia, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Denmark). The detailed information about the conference is in the post-release <https://ngobridges.com/events/view/18>

The main challenge when preparing and carrying out the conference was to identify possible ways of financial support to joint projects between Russia and Nordic countries.

Another issue is to inspire NGOs to keep contacts with potential partner organizations after the conference without accessible funding since NCM delayed the program for cooperation with Russia till autumn 2019.

We plan to continue rendering consultations and support to NGOs in developing cooperation with foreign organizations and disseminate information about the database and the website. We will also try to raise fund for organization of other meeting points' events for the NGOs.

3. Outcome for your own organisation?

Present possible changed motivation for and know-how and ability to be involved in future Nordic – Russian cooperation. Will such cross-border cooperation be embedded in your organisation and be a priority for your organisation's future tasks plans?

The main outcome for Garant is that we could restore international cooperation of NGOs and created conditions for further development of Russian-Nordic NGOs partnerships by joining the database; participating in the common events and etc.

Garant promoted itself as a centre for international NGOs cooperation in Arkhangelsk region.

We are going to keep the project website and database on. In fact, being a resource centre for NGOs for many years, we have been providing all kind of free of charge support to NGOs, grassroots and activists, development of interregional and international cooperation is a part of our work.

The current project showed that it is important to organise match-making events for NGOs of different countries on a regular basis to develop cooperation, exchange experience; learn from each other and launch networking projects. The numerous projects ideas for joint projects suggested by the participants of the conference in Arkhangelsk, 30-31 of May 2018, should be sorted out and some could be developed into real projects.

We will search for the further funding for making match-making events with Nordic and Baltic NGOs, as there is no one regular event of this kind to foster cooperation across the borders.

4. Outcome for other NGOs in your country?

Did other NGOs in your country get involved and motivated for increased Nordic – Russian cooperation?

The NGOs from Russia (Arkhangelsk and Pskov) got very interested in becoming a part of the international cooperation, joined the database and have been looking forward to developing projects. However, the best option for starting collaborating is to meet each other face to face.

One challenge here is a lack of experience of international NGOs collaboration which experience Russian NGOs and require support and consultations which Garant is ready to provide. Another obstacle is lack of funding for joint NGOs projects, especially regular funding for cooperation with Russia.

The conference in Arkhangelsk 30-31 of May showed that NGOs from different countries were eager to exchange experience; have much in common and can develop ideas for joint project together. We as organisers of the project should do our best to continue this tradition of organising meeting-points for NGOs from different countries to get acquainted with other.

5. Outcome for other NGOs in the Nordic (or Northwest Russian) region?

Did NGOs from other Nordic countries outside DK, FI, IS (Other Northwest Russian regions outside the Arkhangelsk and Pskov Regions) get involved and motivated for increased Nordic – Russian cooperation?

Since we cooperated with NGOs from other regions of the Russian Federation, when discussing the database and the project with them we saw interest to become a part of the network.

However, face-to-face meetings and events are needed to start collaboration but so far we are in the process of developing project ideas for organising more events for NGOs from different countries.

6. Outcome for other key stakeholders, such as political decision-makers?

Did the project have any impact on the positions or involvement of political decision-makers etc from your country and region?

When the project started we sent information to Arkhangelsk regional government, local office of the Ministry of foreign affairs and City hall to inform about the project, creation of the database and the planned activities.

The workshop in September 2017 was organised in partnership with Arkhangelsk regional government

The representatives of Arkhangelsk regional government took part in the conference and received the report on the conference – description of interesting and realistic project ideas suggested by the NGOs.

After many years it was the event that brought together NGOs from different countries to

discuss experience and possible project ideas.

Garant promoted itself in the region as the coordinator of not only regional NGOs' movement but also a coordinator for possible international cooperation of Russian NGOs with Nordic NGOs.

Thank you for your time!