



Programme Area:

Democratic Governance

Project Number:

00071115

Planned Duration:

June 2009 – December 2013

Partners:

- Ministry of Culture
(Lead Organization)
- United Nations Development Programme
(Implementing Agency)
- Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications
- National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria (NAMRB)
- Bulgarian Library and Information Association (BLIA)

Budget:

- USD 15 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)
- In-kind: USD 6 million software donation from Microsoft
- USD 29 million parallel funding from Bulgaria's central and local authorities

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Program Portal

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Project Description

Following a Planning Phase from April 2008 to October 2009, Glob@I Libraries - Bulgaria was designed to facilitate the access of citizens to information, knowledge, communication, e-contents and community services through Bulgaria's public libraries.

Glob@I Libraries - Bulgaria will ensure free information and communications technology (ICT) equipment and Internet for the users of 900 public libraries in towns and villages across the country. The program will strive to additionally mobilize resources for ICT equipment and Internet for another 700 libraries.

Approximately 3,000 librarians from over 1,600 libraries will be trained in information and communication technologies, public library management, modern library services and soft skills (250 hours per trainee envisaged on average).

The program team will carry out PR, fundraising and advocacy activities to help public libraries gain recognition as agents of change and vibrant community centers.

The program relies on the joint efforts of the central government, the local authorities and the non-government sector for successful implementation of the BMGF grant and sustainability of the results.

Objectives

- To accelerate the process of integration of Bulgarian citizens into the global information world
- To enhance Bulgaria's human capital through formal and informal training and life-long learning
- To foster community development, stimulate the advancement of civil society and improve the quality of life

Results achieved (as of July 2010)

- 455 public libraries from 234 of Bulgaria's 264 municipalities selected competitively in the first stage (2009) of the program. The total number of applications submitted for Stage 2009 was 840.
- 740 libraries from 214 municipalities submitted applications for inclusion in the program's second stage (2010). Data processing of the applications completed. The Program Board is expected to select 341 libraries for inclusion in the program's Stage 2010 in July 2010.
- Six companies placed bids in an international tender for delivery, installation and support of ICT equipment for the program's 900 target libraries. Tender dossier currently under scrutiny by UNDP Headquarters in New York.
- *Competency Index for Public Librarians* (framework document for the Glob@I Libraries–Bulgaria training component) developed.
- 4 thematic areas of the training program (with a total of 17 modules) have been identified and planned: Information and Communication Technologies, Public Library Management, Modern Library Services and Soft Skills.
- Draft training materials for the 4 thematic areas prepared from December 2009 to June 2010.
- 120 trainers in the 4 areas selected competitively (interviews) in April 2010.
- 31 regional IT specialists selected competitively in April 2010 and instructed on verification of library readiness to receive the ICT equipment in May 2010.
- *General Introductory Training of Trainers* to be held in Sofia from 7 to 11 July, and again from 14 to 18 July 2010.
- Preparation of a tender for selecting an insurance provider for the ICT equipment at target libraries ongoing since May 2010.
- Tender for selecting a contractor to carry out a Baseline Study for the program's *Impact Planning and Assessment Framework* launched in July 2010.
- Bi-lingual Internet portal - updated daily.