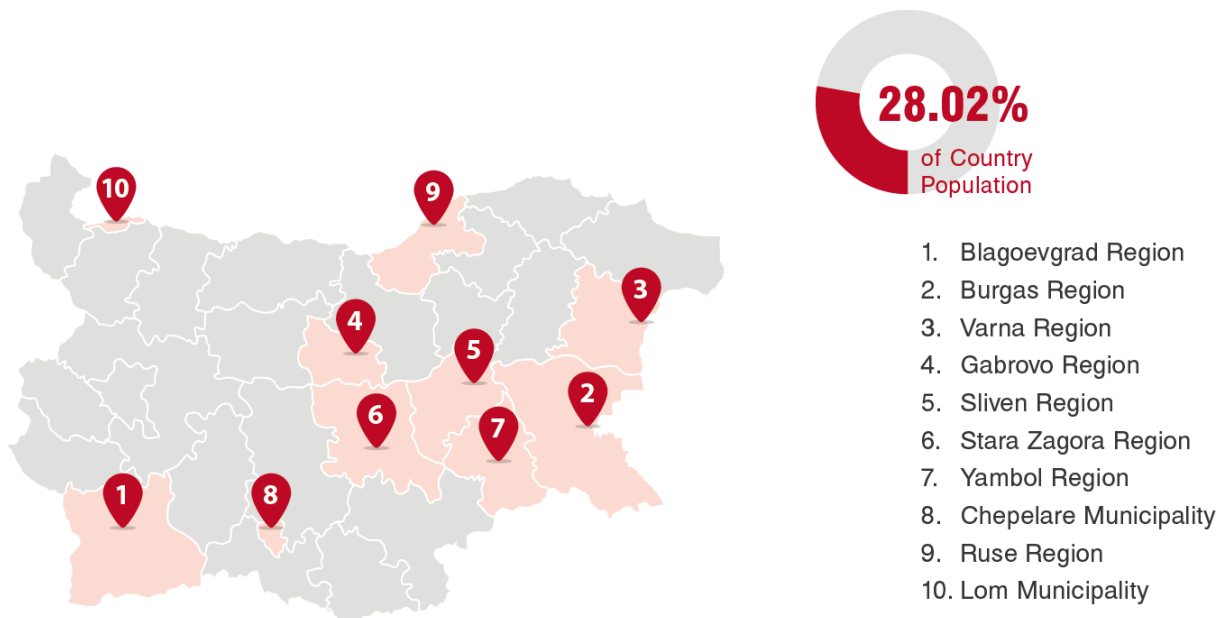


## Bulgaria Community Foundations Development Program

### Annual Report 2014

The Bulgaria Community Foundations Development Program program provides tailored support to the existing and newly emerging community foundations and youthbanks in Bulgaria with the purpose to enhance their positive impact on local philanthropy, youth development and sustainable community development. In 2014, the program distributed **institutional development grants to community foundations**: 50:50 matching of locally raised funds (source: Mott Foundation), **special project matching grants (for innovative projects)**: 50:50 matching of locally raised funds (sources America for Bulgaria Foundation and WCIF), and **YouthBank capacity building grants** (source Mott Foundation).

In 2014 the program supported 10 community foundations in: Blagoevgrad, Bourgas, Chepelare, Gabrovo, Sofia, Lom, Ruse, Sliven, Stara Zagora, Yambol.



Most of the community foundations operate in medium-size and larger cities. Two of the supported community foundations operate in rural areas: Chepelare and Lom.

According to their mode of operation and staffing the community foundations, supported by the program fall into 3 different groups:

- Volunteer-based: in which the Managing Board is an operating board, and implements all work tasks; the ongoing work relies on volunteers. People with relevant expertise are hired for a few months per year when the grants made locally need to be monitored.
- Semi-institutionalized: these are the majority of the community foundations. They hire 1-2 permanent part-time staff members, but the Managing Board still undertakes many operational tasks.
- Fully institutionalized: only the community foundation of Stara Zagora falls into this group. It has 3 full-time staff members and clear divisions of tasks between the staff and the board.

All community foundations supported by the program have proved to contribute to:

- Boosting local giving: The Bulgarian community foundations have proved that anyone can be a donor for the benefit of their community. They have provided flexible giving options to people from all walks of life, and have increased communities' self-help awareness.
- Fostering cross-sector partnerships: many of the projects funded by the community foundations have also received matching funding by local governments, thus helping to create synergies that improved social cohesion in the communities.
- Setting standards of transparency and accountability in local giving. All of the community foundations had to overcome negative feelings of mistrust towards the voluntary sector, which have emerged in the first decade of the Bulgarian transition and have regularly been instigated by various factors (politically instigated mistrust towards NGOs as a conduit of foreign interests). The only way to deal with public mistrust was to set up and maintain high level of

transparency and accountability: the annual reports of the community foundations are usually presented at public gatherings and the community foundations are proud to report that all of the projects funded by them have been successfully accomplished.

- Supporting a culture of participation and gradually building a culture of philanthropy: all projects supported by the community foundations inspired volunteerism and attracted in-kind support of 20% on the average. The number of volunteers is estimated at around 20 people per project on the average. This is one of the most important impacts of the community foundations' local grantmaking: it supports citizen-identified and citizen-led projects, which contribute to self-empowerment of local groups and stimulate the mobilization of local resources.
- Adjusting international know-how for community philanthropy to the local expectations and opportunities.
- Building social capital by fostering strategic coalitions around shared goals.
- Strengthening local leadership (building a cohort of civic minded leaders).

In the reporting period, WCIF also consulted 2 local groups in Veliko Tarnovo (Central Bulgaria) and in Montana, interested to establish a community foundation. The results from this demand-driven assistance will be seen in the next phase of the program.

The program maintained high return on investment ratio, which is illustrated in the graph below. The data collection follows the fiscal calendar year in Bulgaria, which is from January 1 till December 31 and shows the progress in CF local fundraising from 2012 to the end of 2014:

## Community Foundations Program Input and Output from January 2012 till December 2014



### Program Input

America for Bulgaria Foundation	BGN 307,429 as matching grants for regranting
Mott Foundation	BGN 440,600 as institutional development grants
Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation	BGN 70,000 as matching grants for regranting
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>BGN 818,029</b>

### Program Output

10 Community Foundations Supported by the Program	
Locally Raised Funds	BGN 1,518,694
Grants by CFs to Local Organizations	344
Volunteers Attracted by the Projects	2,657
Approximate Number of Direct Beneficiaries	45,000
In-kind Contribution to the Locally Funded Projects	20% on the average

Community Foundations distinctly contributed to the development of local philanthropy by maintaining ongoing relationship with local donors from different sectors, and reinforcing know-how and field-tested approaches transferred from other countries.

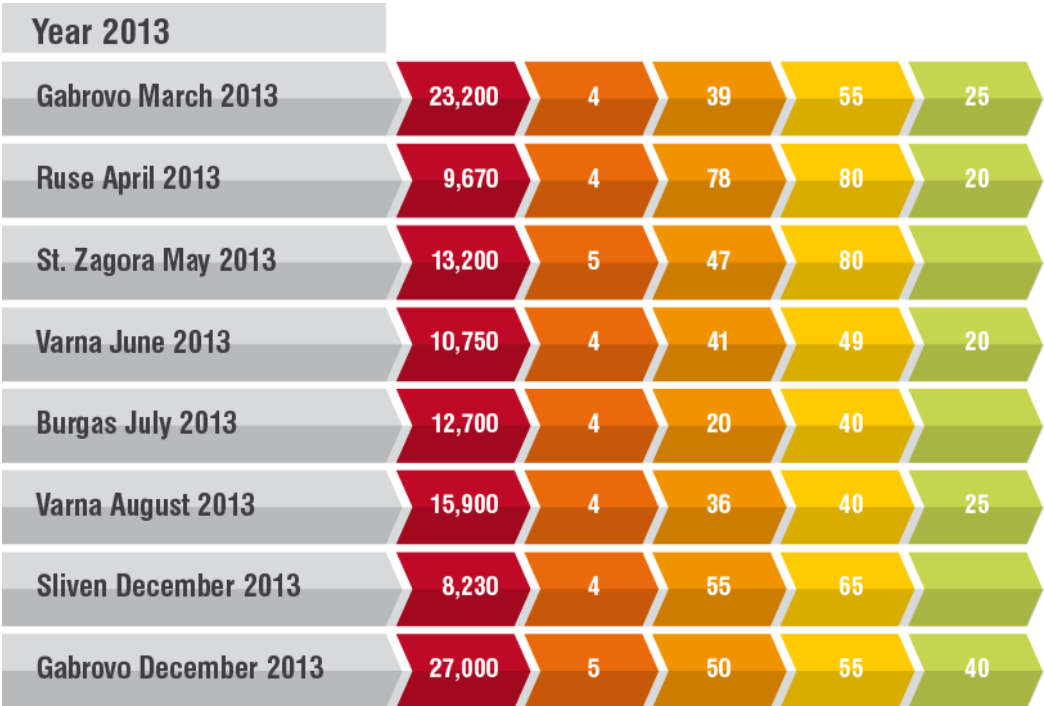
### Giving Circles, based on TFN, UK Model

The community foundations embraced the opportunity to develop giving circles of individual donors, based on the model disseminated globally by The Funding Network, UK, and introduced in Bulgaria in 2012 by WCIF. The giving circle model reflects a new trend in the philanthropy world. Though they vary in formats and styles, the ultimate goal is for a group of individuals who desire to make an impact on society with limited funds, to get together, discuss various civil society-initiated projects they are interested in and eventually decide on one or more they wish to support financially. This is the model that the community foundations were using in order to involve local individual donors in the decision-making related to fundraising and making grants to specific projects. After the successful launch of TFN Bulgaria in May 2012, 7 community

foundations applied it in their local towns and achieved growing popularity of the model and a growing number of returning donors to the local events.

The growth of the TFN giving circles in Bulgaria could be illustrated by the graphs below:

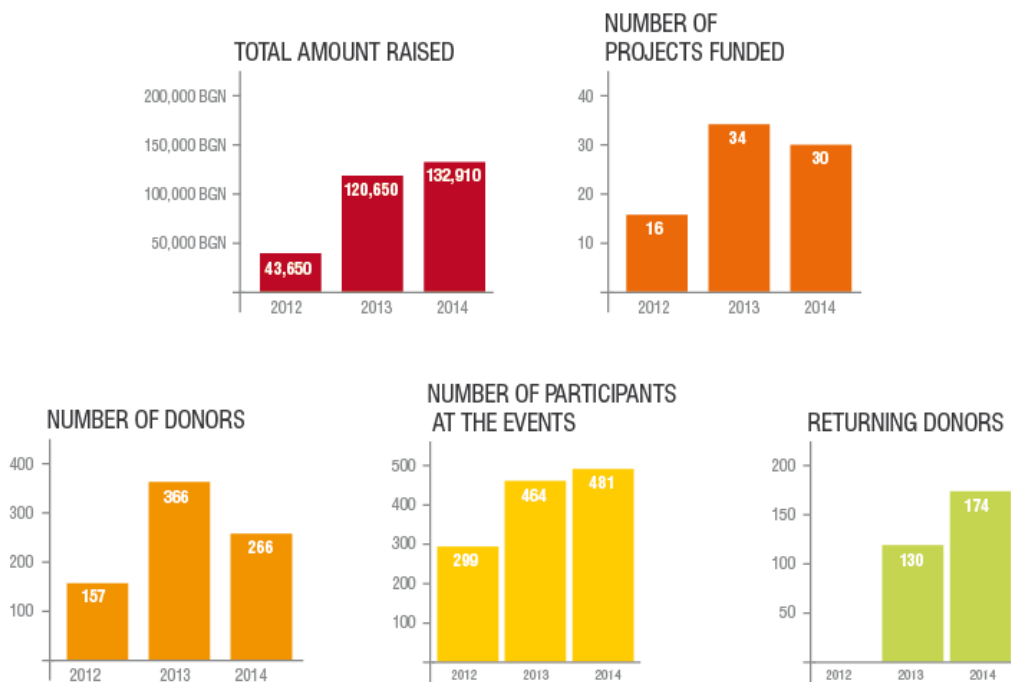
### GIVING CIRCLES





■ Total Amount Raised   
 ■ Number of Projects Funded   
 ■ Number of Donors   
 ■ Number of Participants at the Events   
 ■ Returning Donors

## Giving Circles TOTALS

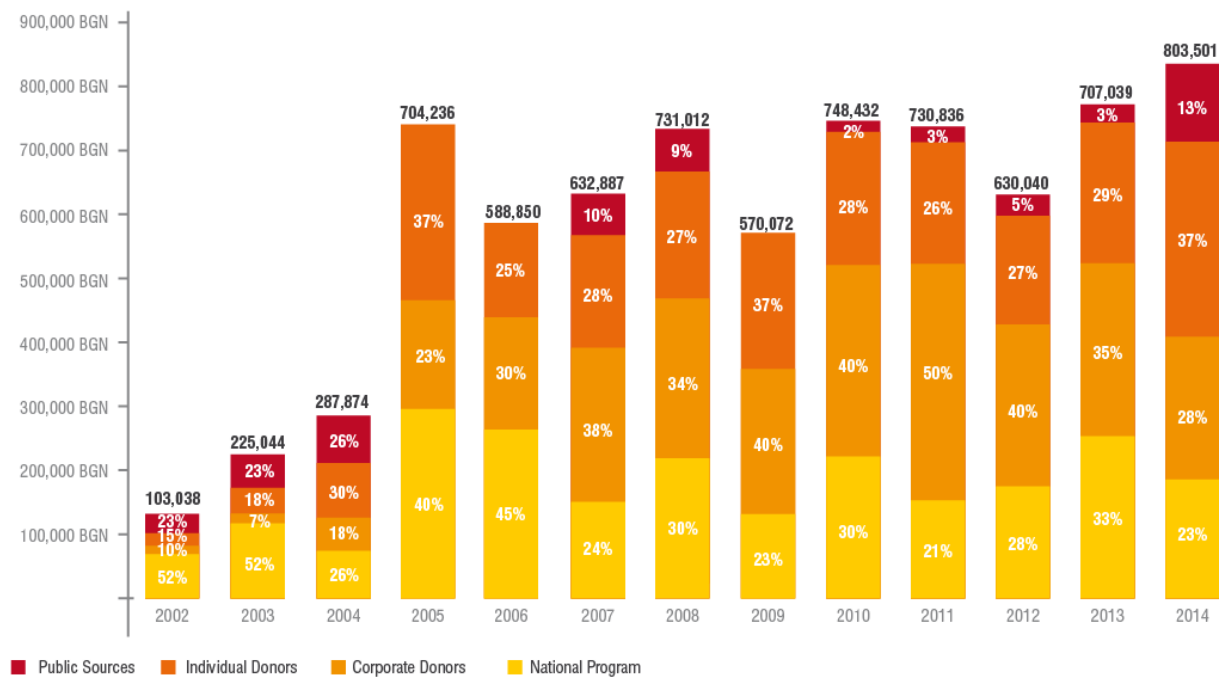


### Community Foundations Local Grantmaking

The program helped reinforce the community foundations as local grantmakers, which address local issues with local resources, and achieve high level of civic engagement. A peculiar feature, which makes the community foundations significantly different from other local charities, is that they bring together potential donors with potential

beneficiaries in mobilizing the resources of the community: money, voluntary labor, and in-kind contribution. They achieve a powerful synergy of resources that enables them to exercise significant impact in the communities with relatively little financial investment (compared, for example, to the investment from the local administration).

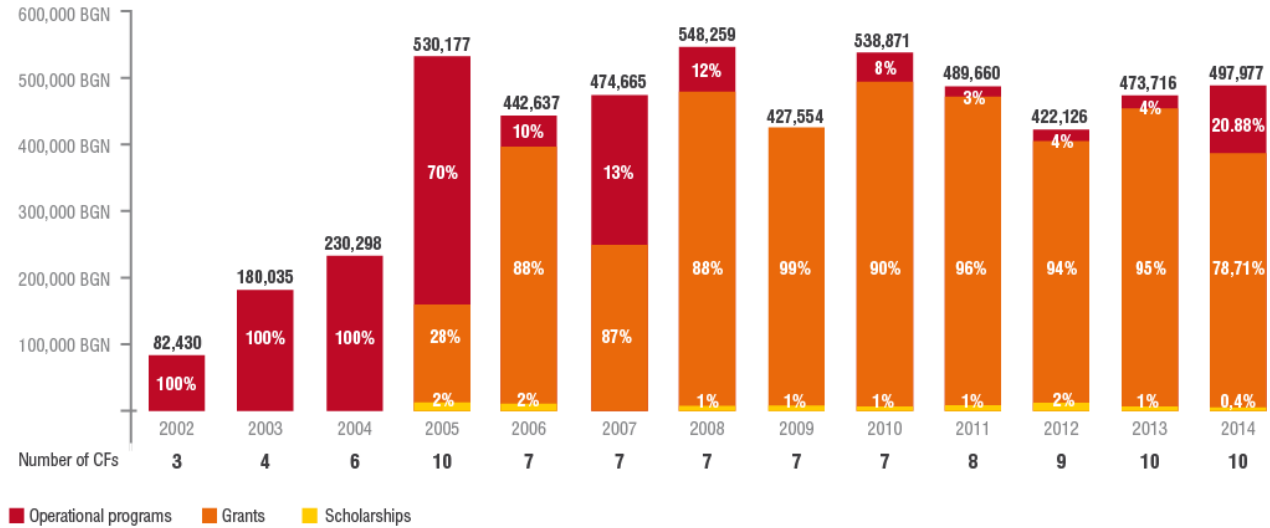
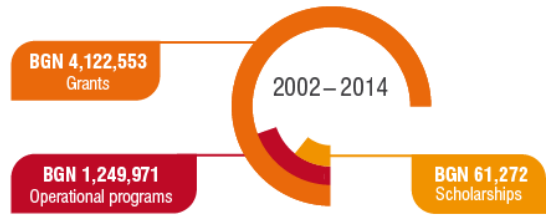
## SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS



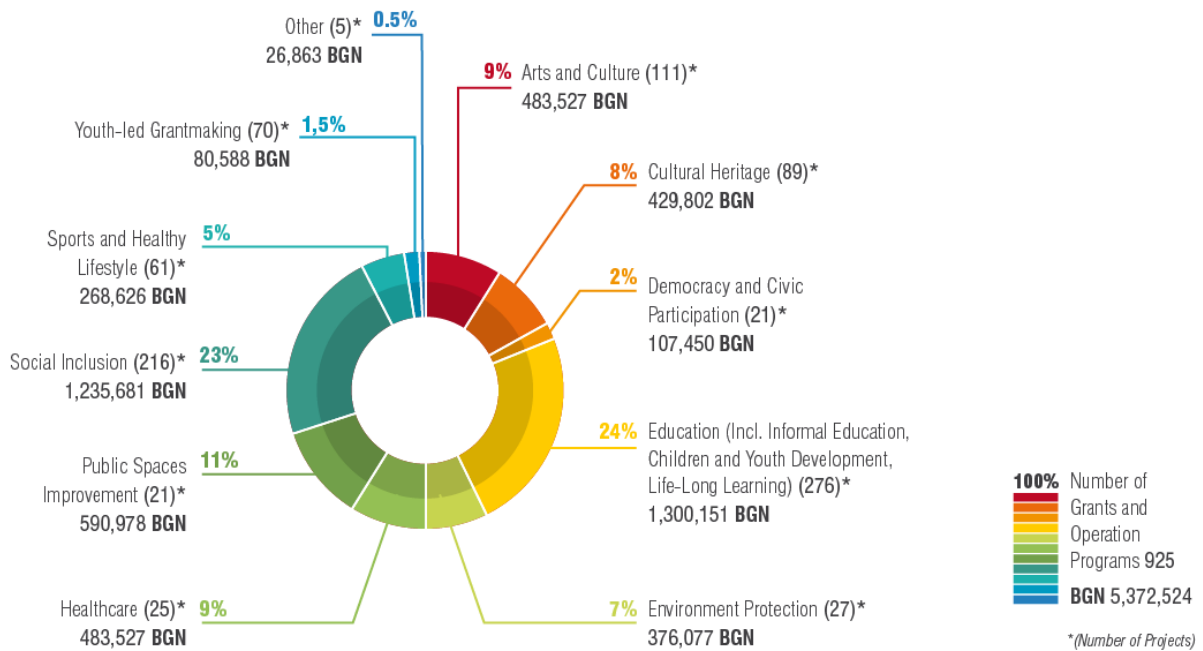
In 2014, the 10 community foundations have distributed about half a million Bulgarian leva into grants and scholarships to local beneficiaries. The operational programs, which some of the community foundations implemented were also targeted to enhancing local philanthropy. For example, CF Varna trained 50 local ambassadors of giving; familiarized them with different models of individual and corporate donor engagement, and they became ambassadors of local giving. The foundation also published and popularized a handbook on giving, which could be used by both NGOs and businesses.

The graphs below demonstrate the accumulated result of the community foundations investment into grants, scholarships and operational programs since 2002 till the end of 2014, and the diversity of the spheres of funding.

# ANNUAL DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND OPERATIONAL PROGRAMS



## COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS SPHERES OF FUNDING





## Capacity Building Grants to YouthBanks

Another concept, introduced in the program in 2012, and reinforced in 2013-2015, was the internationally recognized YouthBank: a team of young people, which works to raise funds from local donors and make grants to youth projects. YouthBanks are valuable instruments for developing youth philanthropy and youth leadership in general. They motivate young people to start caring about their communities. The YouthBanks, supported by the program, empowered over 300 young people from all over Bulgaria to start thinking of philanthropy as a social investment; to work for identifying the most viable youth ideas, which would improve young people's lives in the communities. In addition, the young people developed skills for fundraising and applied creative fundraising approaches: Speed Dating, Face Painting; inter-school competition in recycling plastic bottles, etc.

Responding to the enhanced interest among youth groups from across the country, WCIF decided to support several YouthBanks, which are not based in cities with active community foundations. In this way, the network of YouthBanks began developing relatively independently from the network of the community foundations. This allows for greater diversification of the YouthBanks and covering a higher percentage of the territory/population of the country.

The results of the YouthBanks work in the period June 2013- December 2014 could be seen in the graph below:

### YOUTH BANKS (01.06.2013 – 31.12.2014)



## Branding of the Concepts Community Foundations and YouthBanks

WCIF published detailed information about the program at our organizational web site and the NGO portal.

The objectives of the program communication strategy were the following:

- promote the community foundation concept and understanding of its philosophy;
- promote new concepts, which enhance local giving (such as the TFN model) and feature the linkages with community foundations;
- promote the YouthBanks and their influence on building a culture of philanthropy in the young generation.

In the autumn of 2014, WCIF launched a new web-site, [communityfoundations.bg](http://communityfoundations.bg) which provides easily accessible information about the work of community foundations and youth banks in Bulgaria.

Special videos featuring the leaders of the community foundations who talk about their foundations history and achievements were shot and uploaded at the web site.

In November 2014, WCIF published a series of articles in the online daily [vesti.bg](http://vesti.bg), which marked the centennial of the community foundations in the USA, and also familiarized the general public with the achievements of the community foundations in Bulgaria.

### **Supporting Leadership in Local Philanthropy**

Responding to the growing interest of local organizations which stimulate private giving to have access to the know-how of the program, WCIF revised the initial program plan and introduced a new type of grant: matching grant for enhancing leadership in local philanthropy.

We consulted the proposed change with the Mott Program Officer, and following her approval opened a new call for proposals in December 2013 which invited proposals from groups/organizations which work in the spheres of social inclusion; social justice;

cultural preservation and development; sports and healthy lifestyle; formal and informal education; environment preservation and green ideas, and their work leads to the establishment of local philanthropy infrastructure in support of development projects in the above-mentioned spheres. The new grants would help the selected groups to apply creativity and innovation in attracting local donors, and building philanthropic leadership.

Since January 2014, WCIF has consulted 9 groups (from Aytos, Kystendil, Veliko Turnovo, Trudovets, Troyan, Plovdiv, Pazardzhik, and 2 from Sofia), which submitted concept papers expressing their interest to participate in the program. Two of them (in Pazardzhik and Kystendil) decided to create YouthBanks in the process of consultation, as their work was largely based in the youth sphere. Two other groups in Troyan and in Plovdiv have been consulted to develop their initial concepts into full proposals.

In 2014, WCIF began consulting the community development foundations, established in Plovdiv and Sofia by the Municipal Councils, which are uniquely positioned to attract private donations in support of various community projects. Having in mind the absence of community foundations in the two largest cities of Bulgaria, and the interest of the above-mentioned organizations to expand their fundraising from private donors, WCIF decided to provide assistance in making their philanthropic work more strategic and more effective.

### **Community Foundations Capacity Building Trainings**

In the beginning of 2014, WCIF organized a training needs assessment meeting for the community foundations, based on which we developed the program training plan. Several distinct topics came out as priorities for all community foundations:

- Self-evaluation and strategic planning;
- Building a community of donors by means of active usage of the social media;
- Mainstreaming the community foundation concept: developing interactive dissemination tools;
- Fundraising and fund development.

The first training on fundraising already took place in the end of June, 2014, facilitated by WCIF. It focused on effective communication with donors, donor relationship building and upgrading current donors, based on the materials from a training course, which was completed by WCIF Program Manager at Fullbright Summer Institute in 2013.

### **Capacity Building of YouthBanks**

The YouthBanks received regular technical support from WCIF. The person dealing directly with the YouthBanks was Petar Adreev, Program Assistant. The annual meeting of all YouthBanks supported by the program took place in May 2014, and included a distinct training part. The topics covered in this training followed the YouthBank annual work cycle: attracting new team members, team building, fundraising, opening a grants call, selecting grantees, making grants, monitoring and evaluation. The YouthBanks with more than one year of experience served as mentors to the newcomers and shared valuable field experience. An obvious training need was identified during this general meeting: several of the newcomers in the YouthBank network needed some in-depth training on understanding and supporting diversity, confronting and breaking down negative stereotypes about marginalized groups. This training was planned for the fall of 2014.

### **Inter-Program Exchanges and Trainings**

WCIF offered several other training opportunities to the Youth Banks and Community Foundations, which were open to all grantees of the foundation:

- **NGO Day**

In June 2014, some of the community foundations and youth banks took part in the so-called NGO Day, traditionally organized by WCIF in partnership with Microsoft Bulgaria. This one-day training event presented an opportunity for the participants coming from different organizations in the third sector to upgrade their skills in using present-day information technology in their daily work. The topics for this year's training were: how

to use effectively Office 365 in the work of non-profit organizations, and the various possibilities of Excel.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of the Program Achievements**

All funded CFs and YouthBanks were regularly monitored during the reporting period. Site visits of CFs were part of the grantee monitoring system applied by WCIF and they involved meetings with the CF staff and board, meetings with some local grantees of the CFs, meetings with journalists from the regional media. The CF archives and accounting documents were also reviewed on the spot. The monitoring visits showed that the CFs maintain adequate administrative documentation.

The monitoring plan and the training plan of the program are closely linked. The institutional development of the community foundations was monitored on the basis of preliminary set indicators, differing slightly for volunteer-based and institutionalized CFs. These indicators are in the spheres of governance; fundraising and donor development; grantmaking; and community leadership.