

List of Tolerance and National Integration Program grantees

1) **Organization:** Liberty Institute

Project: Participatory Budgeting: A Tool for Effective Integration

To promote the integration of minority and disadvantaged groups through increased participation in secondary school governance in Georgia. A major education reform law passed in 2003 gave much greater autonomy to individual schools to set budgets, but implementation of the law is lagging in rural areas, particularly those heavily populated by ethnic minorities. The project envisions introduction of and establishment of a participatory budgeting approach, a model that has been effectively used by the Liberty Institute for the past several years in 40 schools in the Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions of Georgia.

2) **Organization:** Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration

Project: Enhance Democratic Governance within Ethnic Minority Communities

To support the integration and development of national minority communities within Georgia, the Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration (ZSP) plans to train and provide internships in public institutions across Georgia for more than 70 graduates of ZSP representing local administrations or municipalities from communities with large Azerbaijani, Armenian and other ethnic minority populations. The project participants will learn important public administration and management skills through the internship program that will help them improve professionally and at the same time promote integration of these individuals into Georgia's economic and political processes.

3) **Organization:** Interethnic Unity of Kvemo Kartli

Project: Increasing the Levels of Tolerance and Integration of Ethnic Minorities;

To contribute to the formation of civil society based on close relationships between various ethnic groups in Kvemo Kartli that will help mitigate the possibility of potential interethnic frictions and assist ethnic minorities to better integrate into Georgian society.

4) **Organization:** Center of Democracy and Civil Integration

Project: A Step to Tolerance

To develop intercultural awareness and facilitate greater tolerance and understanding of the needs of minorities in Tbilisi. As a result of the recent political and economic challenges in the country, there has been a steady increase in religious, ethnic and cultural tensions in Georgia. There have been cases when fundamental human rights have come under direct assault. Intolerance is very often rooted in ignorance and fear of other cultures, nations and religions. For these reasons, the project interventions place great emphasis on educating the target group of young agents of change (30 students selected from 5 schools of Tbilisi) about tolerance, human rights, multiculturalism and religious and cultural diversity.

The project team will train a core group of secondary school students as agents of change, who will communicate the key project messages to a wider community and act as long term catalysts of social change in their respective communities. Through meetings with various religious representatives and celebrities from various ethnic groups, the project will foster intercultural understanding of the core target group of young people exclusively through participation within a new culture. A new website will open a forum for the exchange of ideas, allowing project participants and stakeholders to express their personal commitment to tolerance and contribute to the public awareness campaign. An essay competition for the secondary school students on the issues of tolerance will also help the students to develop capacities for independent judgment, critical thinking and ethical reasoning.