

THE FOUNDATION FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

GRANTS DEPARTMENT QUARTER ONE AND TWO REPORT (JANUARY – JUNE 2006)

GENERAL OVERVIEW

During the reporting period the entire grants team remained stable and active in pursuing its core activities indicated in the Foundation operational plan. Key Planned activities for the period includes; Revising and developing policies and systems to reflect the Outcome investor Approach, information disseminations, processing (screening) grants applications, managing grants portfolios, conducting support visits and rendering collaborative support to other departments and the Grantee Facilitator.

1.0. REVISING AND DEVELOPING POLICIES AND SYSTEMS TO REFLECT OUTCOME INVESTOR APPROACH.

This objective was planned to be achieved through reviewing the simplified application form for Medium Grants (MG), prepare a separate simple application form for Rolling Small grants (RSG)and Customer care review.

Table 1. Revising and developing Policies and systems

Activity	Planned	Achieved to date	Remarks
1.1 Revise the simplified application form and screening tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised simplified application form for MG and screening tools in place by Jan. 2006. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft of revised form in place Draft of screening tools in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On January most staff members were on their annual leave up to early February. The actual exercise was done by March 2006. The final draft has been circulated to selection committee members for comments.
1.2. Design a separate and simple application form for RSG and its tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A separate and simple application form and screening tools for RSG in place by February 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft of separate form for RSG and screening tools are in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above.
1.3. Carry out Customer care review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out rejection reasons analysis by March / April 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be conducted in the coming quarter, after completion of the application and processing tools above.

2.0. INCREASING INFORMATION DISSEMINATION.

Information dissemination is one of the core functions of the grants department. This was achieved through;

- Regional information sessions aimed at informing potential applicants about the Foundation, its funding opportunities and mechanisms (how to apply sessions). It also facilitated networking among CSOs and between CSOs and local government authorities
- Front desk services such as issuing of application packs, attending visitors and phone call inquiries. Details on information session and distribution of application forms are as summarized in the Table 2 below.

Table 2. Information Dissemination

Activity	Planned	Achieved	Remarks
2.1 Conduct Information Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information session to be held in districts of Pwani region by March 2006. Information session to be held in Pemba, Zanzbar Dodoma and Singida by June 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sessions were conducted at Kibaha Pwani and Rufiji districts Information sessions were Conducted were at Pemba, Zanzbar, Dodoma, Singida, Moshi, Arusha, Shinyanga, Tabora and Kigoma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sessions started in May 2006 because January and February most of staff were on annual leave. Participants requested foundation to increase number of days of information session from two to three
2.2. Front desk services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issuing application packs Attending visitors Responding phone calls (inquiries) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4358 application forms were issued, and 98 posted to applicants. All visitors (applicants and grantees) were attended to their satisfaction. The grants team has responded to all phone inquiries about Foundation grants procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors were issued forms, guidelines and detailed thematic areas. All visitors attended though most of them drop in without appointment. There is need to record and tally all the visitors attended.

3.0. GRANTS APPLICATIONS SCREENING.

Purpose: To assess the quality of applications for funding and to give feedback to unsuccessful applicants on areas of improvement.

Planned: To screen received applications for February (MG) April (RSG) and June (RSG).

Achieved: Applications screened between January and June are as summarized in table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Applications processed between January and June 2006

Status	MG – February 2006	%	RSG – April 2006	%	RSG - June 2006	%
Applications Received	119	100	342	100	166	100
Applications rejected at screening level	85	71.4	229	67	109	65.7
Applications Forwarded to SC	34	28.6	113	33	57	34.3
Applications Approved	19	16.0	71	20.7	In process	
Strike Rate	1/6		1/20			

Results Summary and Remarks

- 19 MG applications were approved for funding for February round (16% of all application received). Statistics shows that at least 1 application got approved out of 6.
- 71 RSG applications were approved for funding for April round (20.7% of all application received). Statistics shows that at least 1 application got approved out of 20.
- Number of applications received is increasing and quality of project proposals has improved as a result of information sessions
- 71.4% of all applications received were rejected at GO level. I.e. many applications are still being rejected at GO level due to low capacity of CSOs and nonconformity to financial guidelines.
- This time however, there has been good geographical distribution of MG grants to up country (e.g. in Tabora, Kibondo, Kahama, Lindi and Iringa).
- The Outcome Investor philosophy is still not well understood among Foundation stakeholders, especially the applicants.

4.0. GRANTS MANAGEMENT

- Grants management entails contracts preparation and signing, disbursements, quarterly reports review and closing of grants' contracts.

4.1. New Contracts.

- A total of 90 new contracts were prepared and signed in response to screening outcomes of February and April 2006,round.
- Contracts for the 67 approved Registration Development Grants approved last year have been developed and sent to applicants for signature. The process delayed as there are some details to be finalized.
- The over all status on projects managed, project approved and closed is as summarized in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Status of Grants approved as at June 2006

Status of Projects (portfolios) Managed by 2006	Number of projects
Ongoing projects as at January	308
<i>New approved projects (grants)</i>	<i>90</i>
Total Managed Projects	398
<i>Closed projects</i>	<i>138</i>
<i>On going by March 31st</i>	<i>260</i>
Grants officers (GOs) available	6
Grants Portfolio per Grants Officers	43.3

Summary

- 90 new grants were approved for funding between January and June 2006, 19 projects were under Medium Grants and 71 projects were under Rolling Small Grants category.
- 138 grants were successfully closed between January – June 2006
- More than 260 grants portfolios were ongoing at the end of June 2006
- On average each Grants Officer was managing 43 project files by the end of June 2006

4.2. Disbursements

- A total TZS. 824,330,204 were disbursed between January and June 2006, i.e. (RSG - TZS. 16,915,857 MG - TZS. 425,710,564 and SG - TZS. 381,703,783).
- Funds for Registration Development Grants for the 67 approved projects not yet disbursed.
- Very little amount have been disbursed due to shortage of funds for the approved and on going grants contracts. This has negatively affected projects implementation by being stranded for more than 3 months now.

5.0. SUPPORT VISITS TO GRANTEES

Activity	What was done	Results / key observations
Grants Officers' Support visits to grantees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 Organizations were visited in Dodoma Kigoma Tabora and Shinyanga 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The projects visited were 2SG, 5 MG and 11 RSG. Grantees complained that it takes long to be visited by Foundation officials. As far as partnership is concern, they insisted on regular visits and support (advice) to enable them implement projects efficiently. The grantees are doing good work but need more capacity / mentoring on how to track and report the outcomes and success stories from the projects.
Grantee Facilitator's visits monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring visits were conducted to 46 grantees between January and March 2006. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grantees visited were Safety nets 9, Policy 22, Governance 6 and advocacy 9 projects, whereby, 42 projects were under RSG compared to 2 MG. The grantees were implementing well their projects, however, need more mentoring and support so as to be more visionary and effective in implementing their projects.

6.0. MANAGE YOUR GRANT TRAINING

Purpose

- To train new grants recipients on how to manage their grants contracts. Specifically, familiarization of new grantees on the Foundation reporting system (financial and Narrative reports), rules and conditions embedded in the contracts and some aspects of project cycle so as to implement their projects more effectively and efficiently

Achieved

- Training conducted to representatives from the 90 organizations approved for funding between this reporting period. However, this role is mostly coordinated by the Development Department, under the Programme Officer – Capacity building and Training.
- Trainees were facilitated to sign the 19 new contracts while on the training.

7.0. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

Conclusion	Recommendations	Plans for July – December 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region information sessions could not be conducted as planned because most staff were on their annual leave. • .Many projects were closed by the beginning of the year as more RSG were approved last year. • We have note an increase number of applications form received in this period • Very little disbursements were made this quarter. • Grants team commitment and expertise in grants management have increased. Have managed to revise the simplified application form for MG, and designed a separate and simple form for RSG, though not yet printed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants Officers to be more proactive in mentoring applicants on the new philosophy of Outcome – Investor. Also conducting support visits so that they can track and report tangible outcomes and success stories from their projects. • Foundation to spare funds for all approved projects to ensure that grantees are not stranded waiting for funds. • Bank deductions to grantees with NMB accounts are still rampart, need a permanent solution. • Ensuring enough stock of revised forms for MG and new separate form for RSG so as to be tested during information sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To conduct information sessions in Iringa, Ruvuma, Tanga, lindi, Mtwara, Mbeya, Sumbawanga, Mwanza, Kagera, Bukoba and Musoma. Regions. • To screen applications for July (RSG) September (RSG) October (MG) November (RSG) 2006. • Servicing selection committee - June July, September and November Rounds. • Testing the revised application form for MG and RSG. • Preparing contracts and disbursements for RDG Nov. 2006 • Regular grants management through quarterly reports review, disbursement and supportive visits as per Foundation's Criteria. • Conducting Rejections Reasons Analysis • Staff training on Project management and other skill based courses. • To Screen applications for strategic Grants.