

# INITIATIVES

## Justice and Governance

The protection of human rights is a priority for the Open Society Institute and the Soros foundations network. A number of programs sought to strengthen the rule of law globally and nationally, open up government decision making to public scrutiny, and eliminate discrimination against women and Roma and other minorities. These programs helped win significant legal victories in 2007, from a school desegregation case involving Roma in the Czech Republic to a reproductive rights case in Poland. OSI organized the training of lawyers in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan on litigating cases challenging the use of torture by police to obtain confessions, sponsored an antidiscrimination campaign in Romania that included messages from star soccer players, and moved to protect the rights of women and girls living in countries marked by armed conflict.





Residents of Aker Camp, an informal settlement in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, mourn the loss of their homes after the military set fire to the entire neighborhood in reprisal for the killing of a soldier.

## Open Society Justice Initiative

The Open Society Justice Initiative works to protect human rights, promote the rule of law, and develop legal capacity for open societies. The Justice Initiative uses litigation, legal advocacy, technical assistance, and the dissemination of knowledge to secure advances in the following priority areas: national criminal justice reform, international justice, freedom of information and expression, anticorruption, and equality and citizenship. The Justice Initiative engages in significant activities across the world, with a number of notable 2007 developments in Africa, Asia, and Central and Eastern Europe.

The war crimes trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor is a signal moment for international justice and especially for people in West Africa who suffered most from his misdeeds. Taylor stands charged by the Special Court for Sierra Leone with 11 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious violations of international law related to the conflict in Sierra Leone. Over the last few years the Justice Initiative has provided significant assistance to local and international efforts to bring Taylor to justice. The trial was transferred to The Hague—a world away from most of Taylor's victims—due to concerns about the political destabilization a trial in Sierra Leone might cause. To bring news and information about the trial

to West Africans and others, the Justice Initiative helped create [charles-taylortrial.org](http://charles-taylortrial.org), offering daily updates from the courtroom as well as expert analysis and information crucial to understanding the trial proceedings.

A law passed by the Mauritanian National Assembly in 2007 explicitly outlaws slavery and related practices, such as the sexual exploitation of female slaves, and provides up to 10 years in prison as the punishment for slave owners. Although slavery is widely practiced in the country, previous governments denied its existence. The Justice Initiative provided advice and expertise in antidiscrimination law to a coalition of Mauritanian NGOs that consulted with the government on the bill.

As a proponent of international justice—including in particular international and internationalized processes for prosecuting high-level perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and other atrocities—the Justice Initiative has been a long-time supporter of the establishment and implementation of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal. The Justice Initiative has provided training for the court's judges and other staff and pushed the court to improve its practices in areas such as victims' services, outreach, and administration. In 2007, the Justice Initiative reported allegations that the court's personnel were required to provide salary kickbacks, resulting in a UN investigation and, eventually, greater transparency at the court.

The Justice Initiative organized trainings for lawyers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan on how to overcome the challenges of litigating torture cases. Torture is widely used in Central Asia to obtain confessions and other statements admitted as evidence in criminal proceedings. The trainings focused on legal challenges in domestic courts and international bodies to prompt states in the region to comply with their international obligations to prevent, investigate, and punish torture.

Parliaments in Moldova and Georgia took important steps toward improving access to justice by approving new legal aid laws guaranteeing qualified legal assistance for all poor defendants. The laws, developed and drafted by the Justice Initiative and Soros foundations and legal NGOs in Moldova and Georgia, are part of broader efforts to improve each country's justice system.

In a landmark decision for minorities across Europe, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights ruled that segregating Roma students into special schools is a form of unlawful discrimination that violates fundamental human rights. The ruling came in *D.H. and Others v. the Czech Republic*, an eight-year case in which 18 Roma children challenged the practice of shunting Roma students—regardless of their intellectual abilities—into “special” schools for children with learning disabilities. The Justice Initiative advised the plaintiffs and worked with an OSI grantee, the European Roma

## OSI provided expertise on antidiscrimination law to Mauritanian NGOs in their successful effort to outlaw slavery in a country where previous governments denied its existence.

Rights Centre, and local counsel to argue the case.

The Justice Initiative submitted comments to the European Court of Human Rights highlighting the plight of thousands of residents of Slovenia who were unjustly “erased” from the government’s registry of citizens in 1996. The 11 long-term residents in *Makuc and Others v. Slovenia* were stripped of their legal status after Slovenia’s secession from Yugoslavia, and left with no meaningful options for obtaining Slovene citizenship. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the emergence of an independent Slovenia, the new state adopted laws allowing residents to apply for Slovene citizenship. However, the citizenship application process was cumbersome and the government did not publicize it effectively. As a result, thousands of legal residents of Slovenia did not apply. In 1996, the Slovene government literally erased the names of 18,305 residents from its register of citizens. Since then, these “erased” citizens have been denied social services including health care and schooling, and some have been rendered stateless.

### Human Rights and Governance Grants Program

The Human Rights and Governance Grants Program is the principle grantmaking effort of the Open Society Institute focusing on human

rights, accountability, and rule of law promotion in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia. The program provides direct support to advocacy NGOs that use monitoring, litigation, and domestic and international advocacy to hold governments accountable for respecting fundamental human rights and combating corruption.

The program also partners with Soros foundations and other OSI programs to achieve common objectives in advancing human rights and the rule of law, develop new projects, and build networks among human rights and legal advocacy groups.

Program grantees such as the Center for Reproductive Rights, Interights, and the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights in Poland provided support and advocacy in 2007 that led to a major victory for women’s rights. The European Court of Human Rights ruled that the government of Poland had denied a woman her right to privacy by preventing her from having an abortion, despite doctors’ warnings that the pregnancy posed a threat to her health. The birth rendered the woman partially blind and unable to work. The court determined that Poland had breached the woman’s right to privacy as defined by the European Convention for Human Rights and awarded her damages.

Green Alternative, another grantee, won an important case for freedom of information and privatization accountability in Georgia. The Tbilisi City Court decided against the

Ministry of Economic Development, requiring the agency to declassify documents related to the transfer of shares of a state-owned enterprise and provide Green Alternative with a copy of the privatization agreement.

In *Baysayeva v. Russia*—a case brought before the European Court of Human Rights by the grantee Russian Justice Initiative—the court handed down a strongly worded decision condemning the disappearances of people detained by Russian forces in Chechnya. The court ordered Russia to pay compensation for moral damages and also to take steps to properly investigate disappearances. The court’s recognition of the problem of disappearances can set a precedent for the way future cases are handled in Chechnya.

The human rights community achieved a significant victory in September 2007 when Kazakhstan signed the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. Advocacy by OSI partners, the Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, the Almaty Helsinki Committee, and the Charter for Human Rights, played a strong role in winning the government’s decision to ratify. The protocols will substantially strengthen human rights protections and remedies for violations.

**An antidiscrimination campaign in Romania included a television series and live half-time messages from professional soccer players about the dangers of racism and discrimination.**

## **Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative**

The Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI) promotes democratic and effective local and regional governance and advances the role of policy analysis in public affairs. Working with civil society partners, LGI supports governmental reform by monitoring and assessing how governments perform and by providing them with analytical and technical support.

LGI and the OSI-supported Revenue Watch Institute began working in 2007 to ensure that regions and communities experiencing vast increases in wealth from rising commodity prices for natural resources such as oil, gas, and minerals will use that wealth in transparent and strategic ways to improve public services and reduce poverty. LGI and the Revenue Watch Institute started promoting participatory development planning and local, national, and international initiatives like the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative in Indonesia and Peru. They aim to follow and help guide the “money” from the time it leaves the ground as a commodity until it arrives in national coffers, is transferred to local governments, and then re-invested for local needs and services.

A coalition of OSI programs coordinated by LGI was established to ensure that European Union funding is used effectively to help the Roma communities in Central

and Eastern Europe. The coalition seeks to engage local governments and communities in Eastern Europe in connecting EU-funded social and economic opportunities with the Decade of Roma Inclusion and in using EU funding for Roma inclusion targets in public education, public health, employment, housing, and infrastructure. LGI will share and disseminate best practices, and advocate in Brussels for a better use of EU funding for the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

LGI teamed up with OSI’s Roma Initiatives Office to enhance the policy writing and advocacy skills of Roma NGO leaders engaged in the Decade Watch’s monitoring of decade activities. In Macedonia, Roma NGO leaders prepared a policy brief that outlined ways for the government to reduce its dependence on donors when implementing programs. In Bulgaria, Roma advocates used a policy brief to generate support to create a resource center for elected Roma officials. LGI plans to expand this advocacy capacity building throughout Central and South Eastern Europe.

In Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, LGI advocated for education finance reform, which has often been overlooked by other donors interested in improving fiscal transparency and educational services. LGI aims to assist finance and education ministries in devolving financing and management decisions to municipal governments and individual schools. Education is one

of the largest budget lines in most of the region’s countries, yet centralized control of budgets makes it nearly impossible for schools to manage staff and resources according to real local needs. Central control also results in citizens feeling disconnected from their children’s educational systems and having less oversight over how schools are managed. As LGI helps bring education financing and administration to the municipal or school level, it works with communities and local governments to preempt corruption and inefficiency by establishing municipal transparency and accountability measures.

## **Roma Programs**

OSI, the largest nongovernmental supporter of Roma-related initiatives in Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe, has provided some \$100 million since 1993 to increase the capacity of the Roma to act effectively for themselves, to advocate for systemic change in government and EU policies affecting Roma, to challenge the negative image of Roma, and to make the Decade of Roma Inclusion a success. In 2007, OSI Roma programs, such as the Roma Initiatives Office and the Roma Participation Program, and Soros foundations worked to empower Roma communities and change attitudes among the public and policymakers in areas ranging

from arts and culture to public health to education and economic development.

Chachipe (“truth” or “reality” in Romany), an online international photography contest organized by OSI and the Open Society Archives under the Decade of Roma Inclusion, sought photos by both professional and amateur photographers that defied traditional prejudiced images of Roma and portrayed Roma as equal and active members in society. Nearly 300 photographers from 18 countries submitted some 2,200 images to the contest. All contest photographs are available on the Chachipe website (<http://photo.romadecade.org>). The photos were also exhibited in Budapest and will travel to several European cities in 2008.

Another project supported by OSI brought Roma artists to the Venice Biennale contemporary art exhibition for the first time. The Roma pavilion, sponsored by OSI, the Allianz Kulturstiftung, and the European Cultural Foundation, featured *Paradise Lost*, an exhibition of works by 16 contemporary Roma artists representing eight European countries. The pavilion’s presence at the biennale exposed Roma artists to a wider audience and demonstrated the vital cultural and political contributions that Roma can make to Europe.

Roma women in Hungary are three times as likely to die from breast cancer as non-Roma women. OSI addressed this crisis by organiz-

ing a public information campaign designed by local organizations and Roma artists to raise awareness about breast cancer and improve Roma women’s access to screening and early detection services. The Roma Participation Program and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee worked with leading Hungarian cancer organizations on the campaign, which included conferences and “Open Health Day” events providing breast scanning and information about breast cancer and healthy living.

Tuberculosis is another health crisis facing Roma communities throughout Europe. Two OSI initiatives, the Roma Health Project and Public Health Watch, collaborated with the World Lung Foundation, the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, and the World Health Organization to make the TB emergency in Roma communities a political priority. The Roma Health Project supported an international seminar on TB and social exclusion, published a policy report, and helped organize a meeting for civil society representatives, increasing awareness of Roma TB issues among policymakers and international health organizations.

An award-winning antidiscrimination campaign in Romania sponsored by the Roma Initiatives Office and the Roma Participation Program integrated the first national-level policy report by Roma researchers, a television series examining relations between Roma communities and

the majority population, and TV and live half-time messages from professional soccer players about the dangers of racism and discrimination. As part of the soccer campaign, led by OSI Roma Initiatives fellow Valeriu Nicolae and largely funded by national and international soccer associations, Romania’s president named Bănel Nicolită, a popular player of Roma origin, as the ambassador against racism and violence in Romania.

A polling project cofunded by OSI–Sofia demonstrated that information and discussion about Roma integration in Bulgaria can change public opinion. The project initially surveyed 1,344 people on issues involving Roma and housing, crime, and education. From this group, pollsters selected 250 respondents to consider proposals from political parties, the government, and non-governmental organizations and then attend a two-day meeting. After the meeting, the participants showed increased tolerance toward Roma and lower acceptance of exclusionary policies.

For the 2007 elections, the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society helped NGOs produce a booklet promoting the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities’ expectations on issues such as political participation, education, and the return of refugees. OSI organized a microfinance workshop in Skopje, conducted by OSI’s East East: Partnership Beyond Borders Program, to help Roma communities in Mace-

donia pursue housing development. The workshop, which was the first time that stakeholders in the region integrated Roma, housing, and microcredit issues, resulted in the establishment of a Roma housing fund in Macedonia.

Legal efforts to advance Roma rights had a major breakthrough in 2007. After eight years of litigation, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that racial segregation of Roma in education is a violation of fundamental human rights. The case, *D.H. and Others v. Czech Republic*, was brought by the European Roma Rights Centre, an OSI grantee.

To foster reading and creative writing in Roma communities in Bulgaria, the Next Page Foundation, an OSI Information Program grantee, worked with 12 partners in four countries to implement the “Our Stories” project. The project involved children in the creation of books, provided communities with access to age and culturally appropriate materials, and organized mentoring activities between communities and 40 authors, artists, and educators.

## International Women’s Program

The International Women’s Program aims to promote, protect, and guarantee the rights of women and girls living in countries marked by armed conflict, unstable governments, lack of the rule of law, poor public health, and economic

inequity. The program also advances women’s rights and gender equality in law and practice, and works to increase women’s participation in the democratic process.

Promoting justice with a focus on gender issues and women’s rights in societies making democratic transitions was a major priority for the International Women’s Program in 2007. Working individually as well as in cooperation with the Open Society Justice Initiative, the program supported groups such as the Women’s Initiatives for Gender Justice, which provided gender training to more than 100 legal counsel and staff from the International Criminal Court and African women activists working with the International Criminal Court.

The program assisted local groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, such as Ajedi-Ka and Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral, that provided medical, legal, and educational assistance to demobilized girl soldiers and pursued justice for survivors of sexual violence. In Europe, the program helped Medica Mondiale in Bosnia and Herzegovina produce a best practices manual for how to treat victims of sexual violence based on the NGO’s work during the wars in the former Yugoslavia.

In Asia, the International Women’s Program supported the first efforts to document the Khmer Rouge’s treatment of women from Cambodia’s Cham Muslim minority. Filipina women supported by the pro-

gram attended the first international conference on Japan’s use of sexual slavery in World War II; activists, attorneys, scholars, and survivors discussed how to get Japan to officially acknowledge that its army engaged in sexual trafficking.

In Latin America, the program supported a Peruvian human rights group that gathered evidence and documented cases of sexual violence, an issue that has been largely unaddressed by the country’s truth and reconciliation process.

The International Women’s Program also focused on promoting the rights of women facing multiple forms of discrimination. The program supported the efforts of the Johannesburg-based Forum for the Empowerment of Women to protect black lesbians and develop nationwide advocacy campaigns to advance their rights. In Cambodia, the program provided funding to the Working Group for Weapons Reduction, an NGO that challenges discrimination based on gender and physical disabilities caused by landmines that litter the country, particularly in poor, rural areas. In Nepal, the program supported the Feminist Dalit Organization, an NGO that advances the rights of Dalit women, who belong to an “untouchable” caste and face triple discrimination on the basis of gender, class, and caste.

To advance women’s rights at the regional level, the International Women’s Program sustained networks such as V-Day Karama (which means “dignity” in Arabic), consist-

## **OSI supported groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that provided assistance to demobilized girl soldiers and pursued justice for survivors of sexual violence.**

ing of NGOs from nine Middle Eastern countries. With support from the program and OSI's Middle East and North Africa Initiative, Karama members from Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia formed a delegation at the 51st Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women and addressed the UN General Assembly. Karama members in Jordan created a coal-

ition that submitted the country's first CEDAW shadow report and carried out advocacy work around its recommendations.

In Central and Eastern Europe, the Women's Program supported reproductive health and rights by funding the ASTRA (The Federation for Women and Family Planning) youth network that works to develop

a new generation of reproductive rights and health issues activists. The network developed recommendations on sex education for health and education ministers in Central and Eastern European countries, highlighting the damaging effects of abstinence-only based sex education and ineffective HIV and AIDS prevention programs.



Drug users return used needles and select clean ones in a needle exchange van operated by OSI grantee Humanitarian Action in St. Petersburg, Russia.



# INITIATIVES

## Public Health

In public health, OSI promotes policies based upon social inclusion, human rights, justice, and scientific evidence, empowering socially marginalized groups to participate in the creation of such policies. It launched an initiative to support efforts that would increase access to essential medicines for the treatment of neglected diseases in developing countries. It organized or participated in major conferences and workshops on harm reduction, media coverage of health, pediatric palliative care, drug-resistant TB, and sex workers' rights. OSI's call for a greater focus on human rights in the global AIDS crisis has been endorsed by more than 250 organizations. In mental health, OSI helped secure alternatives to institutionalization in a number of countries, including Azerbaijan, where the government agreed to a community-based pilot project.

## Public Health Program

Unique in the donor community for its ability to move cutting-edge issues in the field of public health, OSI's Public Health Program promotes policies based upon social inclusion, human rights, justice, and scientific evidence. The Public Health Program works with civil society organizations to engage socially marginalized groups in shaping public health policies, particularly those related to HIV and AIDS, and advocates for greater government accountability and transparency.

In its efforts to establish stronger civil society advocacy, the program has stepped up its investment in leadership development and capacity building, and increased core support for national and regional organizations such as the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network; the Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and AIDS; and the African Palliative Care Association. It sponsored a conference in Cape Town in 2007 on critical health and human rights issues, including HIV and AIDS, patient care, harm reduction, palliative care, sexual health, and minority health. Rule of law and public health coordinators from more than 25 Soros foundations attended workshops for collaborative advocacy and grantmaking.

### Access to Essential Medicines Initiative

According to the World Health Organization, 30 percent of the world's population—estimated

at between 1.3 and 2.1 billion people—lack access to essential medicines. In 2007, the Public Health Program launched its Access to Essential Medicines Initiative to support efforts to increase access to drugs to treat neglected diseases in developing countries, especially for marginalized populations.

The initiative promotes civil society engagement in work that focuses on three key areas: monitoring and ensuring transparency of the pharmaceutical industry, fostering models of drug innovation that protect public health, and supporting fair and efficient mechanisms to ensure availability of medicines. The grant program includes technical assistance in such areas as organizational development and media skills.

### Health Budget Monitoring and Advocacy Project

National health budgets are telling indicators of the priority and commitment of a government's response to health issues such as HIV and TB. The Health Budget Monitoring and Advocacy Project supports civil society participation in tracking and analyzing national and local resources for HIV and AIDS and other health issues. The project works to promote transparency of public funding, increase access to key health information, strengthen participation of marginalized populations in health policy debates, and increase the effectiveness, equity, and impact of health expenditures.

The monitoring project is engaged, for example, in a budget analysis of Kyrgyzstan's mental health system. OSI and the Bishkek-based advocacy organization, Mental Health and Society, are calling for reform of Kyrgyzstan's mental health system—favoring a shift in funds away from large institutions, which can perpetuate human rights abuses, and into community-based mental health services. The project provided technical assistance and support to train advocates on health budget monitoring in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine, and supported a number of advocacy campaigns in Africa, including in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Malawi.

### Health Media Initiative

The Health Media Initiative works to increase public awareness of health issues, especially health issues involving stigmatization and marginalized populations. The initiative focuses on building the capacity of health-related nongovernmental organizations to utilize media and communicate effectively with the public. The initiative also seeks to build the capacity of media professionals to report responsibly on health issues.

OSI held a regional workshop in Johannesburg for journalists and advocates from throughout eastern and southern Africa. The initiative also worked toward improving HIV and AIDS reporting in China. OSI supported the Wuhan University School of Journalism and Communication to

## An OSI report underscored the crucial need for increasing the access of women drug users to integrated harm reduction services, drug treatment, and sexual and reproductive health care.

conduct a month-long training program for 20 mid-career Chinese journalists.

### International Harm Reduction Development Program

The International Harm Reduction Development Program (IHRD) is dedicated to reducing HIV and other harms related to injecting drug use and advocates for policies that reduce discrimination against illicit drug users. In 2007, IHRD worked to improve the quality and accessibility of needle exchange programs; ensure the provision of effective drug addiction treatment, including methadone and buprenorphine treatment; provide access to antiretroviral medicines for injecting drug users living with HIV, including prisoners; end law enforcement policies and practices that impede HIV prevention and health promotion; improve women's access to harm reduction services; and mobilize people who use drugs and those living with HIV to protect their health and human rights. An IHRD conference in Bangkok brought together harm reduction advocates and health and legal experts, including former police officers, from more than 20 countries to develop strategies for HIV prevention services to work effectively with law enforcement.

The IHRD report *Women, Harm Reduction, and HIV* underscored the crucial need for increasing the access of women drug users to inte-

grated harm reduction services, drug treatment, and sexual and reproductive health care, and to ensure their reproductive rights. IHRD sponsored a panel discussion on women and harm reduction at the international Women Deliver conference in London. IHRD and its partners helped bring progress in drug policies and health practices in many countries, including China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine.

### International Palliative Care Initiative

The International Palliative Care Initiative (IPCI) works in resource-poor countries to integrate palliative care into national health care plans and policies, delivery systems, and professional and public education. IPCI convened multiple seminars and trainings in 2007 as part of its ongoing commitment to health care leadership development. The initiative held its first seminar on pediatric palliative care in Salzburg, Austria, bringing together physicians and health care practitioners from every region of the world to discuss pressing issues on end-of-life care for children. IPCI also convened a two-day pediatric palliative care course in Tbilisi, Georgia, for 40 regional health care professionals. The initiative was particularly active in Africa in 2007, supporting the production of manuals for palliative care professionals and legal advocates, and workshops on access to essential pain medication.

### Law and Health Initiative

The Law and Health Initiative (LAHI) collaborates with other Public Health projects to further their goals through litigation, law reform, legal services, and human rights documentation and advocacy. In 2007, LAHI developed a range of tools to support health and human rights advocacy throughout the Soros network. Chief among these tools was a comprehensive resource guide that includes fact sheets, jurisprudence, and case studies on six priority areas of health and human rights. LAHI also worked with Soros foundations in Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, and Ukraine to develop a series of practitioner guides for lawyers interested in taking patients' rights cases.

LAHI and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa provided unrestricted support and technical assistance to six AIDS and human rights organizations in southern Africa. LAHI also launched a joint initiative with the Open Society Initiative for East Africa to expand access to legal services for people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS in eastern Africa. An accompanying report found that rampant human rights abuses were fueling Kenya's HIV epidemic, and urged the Kenyan government to make legal services a centerpiece of its AIDS response.

As one of the few donor-funded projects dedicated to health and human rights, LAHI has taken a leading role in advocating for human rights-based responses to HIV and

## OSI brought sex worker activists and health and human rights advocates to Cambodia to discuss responses to human rights abuses committed in the name of “rescuing sex workers.”

AIDS before governmental and multilateral bodies. Advocacy included pressuring UNAIDS and the World Health Organization to include strong protection for informed consent, counseling, and confidentiality in their new guidelines on HIV testing.

In advance of World AIDS Day, LAHI and an international coalition of leading AIDS organizations issued a ten-point declaration, *Human Rights and HIV/AIDS: Now More Than Ever*, and called for a greater focus on human rights in the global AIDS response. The declaration focuses on stigmatized groups who are at highest risk of HIV, including people who use drugs, sex workers, incarcerated persons, women and girls, and men who have sex with men. The declaration has been endorsed by more than 250 organizations worldwide.

### Mental Health Initiative

The Open Society Mental Health Initiative aims to ensure that people with mental disabilities are able to live as equal citizens in the community and to participate in society with full respect for their human rights. The initiative’s activities focus on ending the unjustified and inappropriate institutionalization of people with mental disabilities by advocating for the closure of institutions and the development of community-based alternatives.

In 2007, the Mental Health Initiative helped secure alternatives to institutionalization in a number

of countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In Azerbaijan, it joined with the Ministry of Education to create a pilot project to replace institutional care for children with a community-based system. The project is focused on closing one large institution and relocating children and staff to community settings. In Kyrgyzstan, the Mental Health Initiative joined with Habitat for Humanity to provide decent housing and support services to Kyrgyz families with mentally ill or disabled relatives.

### Public Health Watch

Public Health Watch works to ensure that affected communities—including socially marginalized populations—are full and equal partners in developing and implementing TB and HIV policies.

Drug-resistant TB, found in 28 countries, is a growing danger for people who are HIV-positive. In advance of the WHO Euro Ministerial Forum on TB in Europe, Public Health Watch and the Roma Health Project of the Public Health Program prepared an “Offer of Partnership” between civil society representatives and European leaders, and stressed the importance of addressing underlying determinants, such as poverty and stigma, that fuel the TB epidemic. Public Health Watch also convened several sessions on TB and HIV for the World Lung Conference held in South Africa. At the conference, Public Health Watch coorganized a “Time for Change” satellite session, which was the be-

ginning of a much-needed dialogue on developing alternative, community-based approaches to treating and preventing drug-resistant TB in southern Africa.

The Public Health Watch report series, *Civil Society Perspectives on HIV/AIDS Policy*, documents how stigma and discrimination against marginalized groups can affect national HIV and AIDS policies. The series looks at both developed and developing countries, including Nicaragua, Senegal, Ukraine, the United States, and Vietnam.

### Roma Health Project

The Roma Health Project supports civil society groups to promote equal access to health services for Roma communities. In 2007, the project and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria released a report outlining how Roma NGOs can develop and implement Global Fund projects to better address Roma health concerns.

The Roma Health Project raised awareness on how socioeconomic difficulties that disproportionately affect Roma can lead to higher risk for contracting HIV, TB, and other diseases. It collaborated with the International Harm Reduction Development Program to produce training seminars and resources focused specifically on health outreach for Roma drug users. The project supported the European Roma Rights Centre to produce a report on discrimination against Roma women in Serbia, which was submitted to the

UN Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

In conjunction with the Health Media Initiative and OSI's Media Program, the Roma Health Project cofunded a number of media centers in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia, and supported investigative journalism on Roma access to health care.

### **Sexual Health and Rights Project**

The Sexual Health and Rights Project (SHARP) works to ensure that people who are stigmatized because of their sexual practices, real or perceived

sexual orientation, or gender identity, have access to quality health and social services and can effectively advocate for their rights.

In 2007, SHARP provided financial and technical support to create much-needed resources to help advance sexual health and rights. SHARP also supported the Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center to develop and release a multilanguage toolkit on sex work issues for journalists, activists, and the general public.

Through a series of workshops and regional meetings, SHARP promoted the full participation of

sex workers in developing and implementing policies and services that impact their health and rights.

SHARP brought sex worker activists and health and human rights advocates from around the world to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where they discussed responses to human rights abuses committed in the name of "rescuing sex workers." Working with the Law and Health Initiative, SHARP held a human rights training in Thailand for sex worker organizations to help them better understand their rights in the face of routine abuse by police and health care workers.

# INITIATIVES

## Education, Information, and Media

OSI's education programs attempt to reduce global education disparities, reform education in the humanities and social sciences, empower youth by teaching them critical thinking skills, and provide access to education for marginalized children. Among other activities, OSI released reports warning that most Roma children continue to face disadvantages in every aspect of education; an OSI-supported scholar became a senior advisor to Kosovo's education minister; and early childhood programs expanded into the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. At a conference in Cape Town, OSI helped expand the idea of open access to publicly funded information to include educational and legal materials. OSI supported efforts to overcome attacks on freedom of the press, assisting media organizations in Indonesia, South Africa, and elsewhere.





Georgian journalists cover a political meeting in front of the parliament.

## Education Support Program

The Education Support Program (ESP) made significant progress in advancing educational justice in 2007 by working to reduce global education disparities and promoting access to education for marginalized children. The program began to expand beyond postsocialist countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia, Europe, and Mongolia, and into Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and Turkey.

A core activity in 2007 was supporting initiatives and research to improve the chances of children with special education needs—those who suffer from disabilities, learning difficulties, or are socially disadvantaged. In Mongolia, for example, the Education Support Program and other international partners launched a project to provide educational opportunities for deaf and hard-of-hearing children, teenagers, and adults. In Europe, the program released reports on equal access to quality education for Roma populations in the eight Decade of Roma Inclusion countries, warning that most Roma children continue to face disadvantages in every aspect of their education.

In Serbia, the Education Support Program concluded a two-year program focusing on children with disabilities that established an education network, published an inclusive education practices guide for teachers, and launched a follow-

up multicultural education project. In Western Europe, it launched a new initiative to examine the educational disadvantages faced by migrant and minority groups.

A grant to the Global Campaign for Education allowed the group to prepare three years of research on schools in 178 countries for publication as an advocacy tool. As part of a new three-year project examining education inclusion and quality in eight countries in South Eastern Europe, the program will conduct research to help determine disparities across the region and formulate initiatives to address them. Working with the Network of Education Policy Centers, the program conducted research and monitoring on school dropouts in Albania, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Mongolia, Slovakia, and Tajikistan; published a study examining how private tutoring has affected education in nine postsocialist countries with high-stakes testing systems; and launched a project investigating the impact and transparency of financial donations from parents to public schools in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Moldova, Slovakia, and Tajikistan.

The program's Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking project supported training for 60 primary and secondary school teachers and 25 higher education teachers, expanding its activities in Africa, Central Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Turkey, and Ukraine. The Mongolian Education Alliance, an NGO established

with OSI funding, received World Bank financing to provide training to 3,300 teachers in rural schools and increase access to reading materials for 104,000 primary school students.

A project implemented by the Education Support Program and the International Renaissance Foundation (Ukraine) received a \$5 million grant from the U.S. government to expand its work in making the country's higher education exams fair and transparent. In Pakistan, the program supported a two-year study to disseminate and publicize best practice examples from the country's education system.

## International Higher Education Support Program

The International Higher Education Support Program (HESP) promotes the advancement of higher education within the humanities and social sciences in Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia. HESP provides financial and technical assistance to a network of institutions, ranging from undergraduate universities to doctoral programs and centers for advanced study. The program also works closely with Central European University, OSI's Scholarship Programs, and Soros foundations to fund and implement a variety of programs for students, academics, and education professionals.

**Since the late 1980s, OSI has supported scholars with innovative ideas who have contributed to their countries in fields ranging from human rights to macroeconomics.**

HESP launched the Research Initiative for China in 2007 to provide two-year fellowships for doctoral students and young academics based in the Inner Mongolia and the autonomous Xinjiang Uygur regions of China. The fellowships focus on developing teaching and learning about the cultures and societies of national minority groups in each region. Building upon its previous effort to give Afghan women access to higher education, HESP pledged to support three more entering classes of 10 undergraduate female students from Afghanistan to study at the American University of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan. HESP has provided support for some 40 Afghan students, both men and women.

In Russia, HESP pledged important financial support for endowment campaigns at the European University at St. Petersburg and Smolny College at St. Petersburg State University. HESP pledged up to \$5 million per institution in matching funds for the general endowments, which are expected to cover student scholarships and faculty development.

## **Network Scholarship Programs**

Network Scholarship Programs fund the participation of students, scholars, and professionals from Eastern and South Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Mongolia, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia in competitive academic

programs outside of their home countries. Scholarship programs work to revitalize and reform the teaching of the social sciences and humanities, provide professional training in fields unavailable or underrepresented at institutions in scholars' home countries, and assist outstanding students from a range of backgrounds to pursue their studies in alternative academic and cultural environments. Since the late 1980s, the program has supported scholars with innovative ideas who have made substantial contributions to their countries in fields ranging from education to human rights to macroeconomics.

The following are highlights from among the many achievements of program scholars in 2007:

After earning a PhD in economics at Staffordshire University, Avdullah Hoti was appointed as a senior advisor to Kosovo's minister of education, science, and technology. Hoti persuaded the minister to direct 5 percent of the University of Pristina's self-generated revenues to research. He also convinced the university to hire a vice dean for research in each of its academic faculties, as well as a vice rector for research. Hoti's promotion of research in the university helped facilitate the adoption of European financing systems that give students at Kosovo universities opportunities to study abroad. Hoti also prepared a paper on Kosovo higher education that the government is using to advance its membership in the Bologna Process,

an EU higher education initiative that aims to create common European higher education standards by 2010.

Elnura Gurbanova, an Azeri alumna of a joint OSI/German Academic Exchange Service scholarship program, worked with other Azeris educated overseas to prompt the government in Azerbaijan to channel a portion of the country's oil revenues into scholarships for study abroad. As a result, the government announced in 2007 that it plans to fund upwards of 15,000 scholarships over the next seven years. The program will be administered with help from Fuad Ahmadov, a Scholarship Program faculty fellow currently at Columbia University.

Munir Nuseibah, an alumnus of the Palestinian Rule of Law Program, worked in 2007 as a lecturer at the Al-Quds Human Rights Clinic in Palestine. The clinic, the first accredited program of its kind in the Arab world, documents human rights violations in the Palestinian territories and teaches undergraduate law students. Nuseibah, who received his LLM from the American University's Washington College of Law, taught a course that connects students to practitioners so that they can learn from real human rights cases. The clinic bolsters this learning by having students provide supervised free legal services to the public.

**The U.S. National Institutes of Health, the world's largest funder of scientific research, mandated that all journal publications resulting from NIH-funded research should be available to the public.**

## **Network Debate Program**

The OSI Network Debate Program, which operates in 40 countries, empowers youth by teaching them how to engage in critical, reasoned discussions examining issues important to their lives and communities. Debate helps young people become active citizens who can influence public life and promote open society ideals.

Working with its international spin-off, the International Debate Education Association, the program improved and promoted [idebate.org](http://idebate.org), which provides free debate and educational resources to help debaters meet, exchange ideas, and build community. One website project is the Debatepedia wiki, which allows debaters, students, and citizens to create an encyclopedia of debates, pro and con arguments, supporting evidence, and the positions of the key politicians, organizations, and leaders involved in important debates. The Debate Program also worked with IDEBATE Press to publish debate books for teachers, students, coaches, and debaters from middle school through lower college, as well as debate societies.

The program's broad range of activities in 2007 included international debate tournaments in Italy and the Czech Republic, the European Youth Speak project to encourage young people to discuss the European Union's role in their lives, and continuing work with Roma

youth in Central and Eastern Europe to promote interethnic tolerance and awareness and understanding of issues important to Roma communities. With support from the U.S. Department of State, the Debate Program worked with local schools and civil society groups in Uganda and Rwanda to organize debates promoting nonviolent change and critical thinking.

In Burma, the program worked with the American Center to support the Myanmar Debate Society, which held public debates on contemporary issues, attracting hundreds of people; organized workshops for debate trainers; and produced a Burmese-language instructional film. Public interest in debate remains strong in Burma despite acts of government intimidation against the debating society.

The Youth Citizen Journalism project, developed by the Debate Program and two other OSI programs, the Middle East and North Africa Initiative and the Moving Walls International Photography Exhibition, organized journalism and photography projects in Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine. By training young people with accessible, affordable equipment and pairing them with professional journalists and photographers as mentors and teachers, the project allows young people to quickly document and advocate for issues that are important to them. Project activities in 2007 included photography training for girls in the West Bank and a workshop series for young

journalists at a bilingual newspaper in Ramallah.

In mid-2008, the Open Society Institute Youth Initiative, a new program, took over the Debate Program's activities and expanded the focus to encourage a broader range of youth-led projects to promote open society values.

## **Early Childhood Program**

OSI has maintained a strong commitment to early childhood care and education because scientific research has repeatedly shown that early childhood interventions can help at-risk children overcome the effects of social disadvantage. The aims of the Early Childhood Program reflect OSI's mission to promote social justice by supporting activities that expand access to quality early childhood development, with special attention to minorities, children with disabilities, and children living in poverty.

The Early Childhood Program helped Roma and other minority communities achieve a major education antidiscrimination success by cooperating with the Open Society Justice Initiative's efforts at the European Court of Human Rights to hold governments accountable for unjust placement of Roma children in inappropriate "special schools." The Early Childhood Program was instrumental in consolidating information about culturally appropriate

educational testing and early tracking for presentation to the court.

The Early Childhood Program's Step by Step initiative continued to build its institutional strength in 2007. Step by Step, started in 1994 in Central and Eastern Europe, introduced a child-centered approach and community engagement into the rigid, teacher-centered education systems of the communist era. Step by Step has grown to include working to develop national early childhood NGOs and institutions, formally evaluating pilot projects, and supporting advocacy to reform early childhood policies. The initiative is implemented through the Open Society Foundation in London, the International Step by Step Association, and Step by Step NGOs located in 29 countries. Step by Step continues to diversify its funding base, with OSI providing less than 20 percent of the funding for national NGOs implementing the program. The bulk of Step by Step funding currently comes from national and local governments, the European Union, the World Bank, UNICEF, USAID, and the sale of educational services and publications.

The Early Childhood Program in 2007 extended its technical expertise to the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, promoting long-term systemic change that involves children, their families, and a wide group of education, health, and social service providers. The program intends to use single country initiatives to also formulate regional strategies.

Projects launched in 2007 included the establishment of post-graduate programs in child development at the Institute of Educational Development at BRAC University in Bangladesh, and technical support for analysis and the development of policies for young children by the Ministry of Education in Liberia.

## Information Program

The Information Program works to increase public access to knowledge, facilitate communication among civil society groups, and protect civil liberties and the freedom to communicate in the digital environment. The program gives particular attention to the information needs of disadvantaged groups and less developed parts of the world.

There is a growing awareness around the world that global intellectual property rules are unbalanced and at odds with the public interest, creating barriers to scientific and medical information in places where it is most needed. For example, bilateral trade agreements between developed and developing countries often deny the poorer countries the same fair use rights that are enshrined in the laws of richer countries. The program addressed this issue in 2007 by supporting the Access to Knowledge advocacy coalition in its successful efforts to get the UN World Intellectual Property Organization to adopt a new development agenda that aims

to make intellectual property rules more responsive to the needs of poorer countries. The program also supported projects to devise reforms and alternative approaches to copyright in Brazil, Kenya, Macedonia, Serbia, and South Africa.

The Open Access Initiative, a multiyear Information Program advocacy effort to make access to scholarly information more equitable and affordable across the globe, helped prompt significant change at the U.S. National Institutes of Health. The agency, the world's largest funder of scientific research, responded to open access advocates by mandating that all journal publications resulting from NIH-funded research should be available to the public. Many other research funding agencies around the world are expected to adopt similar policies.

The idea of open access to publicly funded information is being expanded to educational and legal materials. Together with the Shuttleworth Foundation, the Information Program initiated the development and launch of the Cape Town Open Education Declaration, the founding statement for efforts to allow textbooks and other educational materials to be freely translated and adapted around the world. The program advanced open access to legal materials in Africa through a project that made case law from 18 southern African countries freely available online.

To increase access to publications on business, science and tech-

## In South Africa, OSI supported a court case that resulted in a decision establishing the public's right to know through media coverage of trials.

nology, the social sciences, and the humanities, the program continued to support Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL), a global consortium of libraries in transition and developing countries. EIFL provides low-cost access to thousands of premium journals through a consortium of more than 3,000 libraries in over 50 countries that serve about 5 million students, teachers, researchers, and citizens.

Helping civil society groups use information technology, program grantees brought together organizations in Africa that use mobile phones for monitoring and advocacy for the purpose of developing toolkits for civil society. In Ukraine, a program-supported blogcamp brought together several hundred bloggers and youth activists from across the Commonwealth of Independent States. The public affairs website Transitions Online worked with NewEurasia.net to promote citizen journalism among youth and civil society organizations in Central Asia. The Tactical Technology Collective used program support to produce *Visualizing Information for Advocacy: An Introduction to Information Design*, a handbook on using design tools and techniques to make data more transparent and accessible in advocacy campaigning.

The program also supported work on monitoring and circumventing Internet censorship worldwide by groups such as the OpenNet Initiative, and the drafting of a code of conduct for major IT companies

providing search, email, and blogging services to protect users rights, especially in repressive countries. The program also sustained a network of electronic privacy activists across Europe, and pursued policy advocacy in Eastern Africa to ensure access to major new Internet infrastructure in the region.

### Media Program

As part of its mission to defend and advance media freedom across the globe, the Media Program supported efforts to overcome attacks on freedom of the press by helping train lawyers to defend journalists and media organizations and submit cases to international tribunals. The program collaborated with the Open Society Justice Initiative and the Soros foundations to establish media lawyers' networks in Southeast Asia, Africa, Russia, and Ukraine.

The Media Program also supported numerous individual cases. In the Philippines, the program provided support to a class action suit by journalists and media organizations against the secretary of justice and senior police officials for their illegal detention in attempting to cover up an alleged coup attempt. The program and its partners brought together a coalition of NGOs and media organizations to submit an amicus brief in the *H.M. Suharto v. TIME Inc. Asia et al.* defamation case in the Indonesian Supreme Court,

which concerned a \$128.59 million award against *Time Asia* for a story detailing former President Suharto's financial interests. In South Africa, the Freedom of Expression Institute, a legal NGO supported by the program, challenged government efforts to try in secret two individuals for smuggling nuclear materials, by restraining media coverage of the court proceedings; the court's ruling became South Africa's first major legal precedent in favor of the public's right to know through the media and reinforced the concept of open justice.

The Media Program supported press freedom monitoring and advocacy by funding groups such as the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX), a network of 80 press freedom organizations. IFEX campaigns highlighted the deterioration of press freedom in countries such as Burma, Gambia, and Tunisia. To increase collaborative monitoring and advocacy efforts, the program convened a meeting that brought international press freedom organizations together with practitioners and advocates from organizations across Latin America. The meeting has led to progress on more coordinated monitoring efforts between many of the groups present and joint efforts in advocacy for freedom of expression.

To help develop and strengthen national independent media networks, the program assisted organizations like Pajhwok Afghan News, a national news and photography

agency in Afghanistan that provides daily coverage of efforts to rebuild the country amidst ongoing conflict. In Nepal, Communications Corner, a media venture supported by the program, used the Internet to link local radio stations across the country in the lead-up to the 2008 elections. In Peru, the broadcasting service Red TV worked to democratize and decentralize public information by building a national network of local TV stations. The Media Program also strengthened an independent national TV and radio network in Moldova.

Because investigative journalism plays a key role in keeping the public informed and powerful economic and political players accountable, the program supported international conferences and exchanges for investigative journalists and investigative journalism networks and organizations in Brazil, Chile, the Philippines, and South Eastern Europe.

The Media Program sought to influence European attitudes toward Roma by continuing its support to a coproduction fund for Roma and non-Roma journalists to jointly produce stories for mainstream and Roma

radio and TV stations. In Africa, the program engaged in media donor and aid policy in Africa, working to ensure African inclusion and leadership in key European and U.S. media policy and donor initiatives, and encouraging international support for an Africa-driven media development agenda.

*Television Across Europe*, a 2005 report analyzing Europe's public service broadcasting produced by the Media Program and EUMAP, continued to influence EU debates and policies, including amendments to Italy's 2007 media legislation.

# Other Programs

## Arts and Culture Network Program

The Arts and Culture Network Program worked in the Caucasus, Inner Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and the Balkans to develop, empower, and build the capacity of organizations and individuals promoting cultural exchange, understanding, and tolerance through the arts.

The Arts and Culture Network Program continued its partnership with the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) in 2007 to support the exchange of artists and cultural managers between Europe and the Caucasus. The program also continued funding the ECF's Balkan Incentive Fund for Culture to support collaborative artistic and cultural initiatives across Europe to help prepare the cultural ground for South Eastern European states acceding to the European Union. In Central Asia, the program supported matching funds grants with the Dutch organization Hivos for museum and cinema development and for the second Central Asia Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale, which featured young media artists presenting video works emphasizing the

imagery and musicality of the Central Asian states.

As part of the International Human Rights Documentary Film festival, a program grantee, One World Kyrgyzstan, screened films about women, Islam, and children, followed by discussions, in Bishkek, Osh, and Jalalabad. The Central Asian School of Performing Arts provided training in acting, directing, dancing, and singing to talented young people from Central Asia, selected in an open competition. The Armenian Jewish Music & Poetry Festival introduced the public to the contemporary music and poetry of Jewish composers and authors to help create a respectful and tolerant view toward people from different nationalities and cultures residing in Armenia.

In Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, the Arts and Culture Network Program carried out two major activities in 2007: the Roma Mentoring Project and the First Roma Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale.

The Roma Mentor Project brought Roma painters, musicians, media stars, and other cultural professionals together with ethnically mixed children and youth groups at schools

and community centers to develop the children's awareness and knowledge about Roma culture.

The First Roma Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, a groundbreaking effort initiated by OSI with support from the ECF, the Allianz Kulturstiftung, and Pro Helvetia, marked the arrival of Roma contemporary culture on the international stage. The pavilion, featuring the works of 16 contemporary Roma artists, challenged the exotic "Gypsy" stereotype. While the pavilion was open, the program organized concerts by Roma musicians, roundtable discussions, and a video installation of racist, anti-Roma films and advertisements.

## East East: Partnership Beyond Borders Program

Through a combination of grants and initiatives, the East East: Partnership Beyond Borders Program uses exchanges to foster collaboration among civil society organizations in more than one country and promote practical responses to social, economic, and cultural issues. The program works with individuals and groups in Central Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Mongolia, and

## The First Roma Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, a groundbreaking effort initiated by OSI, marked the arrival of Roma contemporary culture on the international stage.

Turkey, and has institutional partners in Croatia, Russia, and Slovenia. A special subprogram arranges exchanges among groups within the European Union and neighboring states to share experiences and expertise regarding EU integration. East East supported over 300 initiatives in 2007, including exchanges addressing issues such as election monitoring, public interest law, and microfinance.

Independent election monitors and experts from the former Soviet Union came together in Kyiv in October to share methodologies and evaluate monitoring of recent elections in Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and other postcommunist societies. The exchange, organized by the Moscow Center of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the International Renaissance Foundation in Kyiv, resulted in participants developing new collaborative initiatives to improve election analysis and monitoring.

Human rights and public interest law were strengthened in Mongolia through an exchange supported by the Open Society Forum in Mongolia. The exchange in March allowed Mongolian public interest lawyers and NGO staff members to learn new skills and share experiences with their counterparts in Hungary and Slovakia. Participants came away from the exchange with fresh ideas about increasing international collaboration to further social justice.

Working with the Open Society Institute–Macedonia, the program

brought together experts, nongovernmental organizations, and microfinance housing practitioners from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia in Skopje to increase awareness about the use of microfinance to build housing for the Roma in South Eastern Europe.

NGO representatives, journalists, activists, and scholars from Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Moldova, Poland, Slovakia, and Ukraine used exchanges facilitated by the Stefan Batory Foundation in Poland to increase cooperation on energy issues and recommend EU policies that reflect the public interest.

### International Policy Fellowships

The International Policy Fellowships program concluded nearly a decade of activities at the end of 2007. A successor initiative, the Open Society Fellowship, was launched in February 2008 and will continue OSI's commitment to supporting the development of public policy that advances civil society and democratic reform. In addition to many publications produced by individual fellows, the International Policy Fellowship Program and a team of fellows produced two books that received critical praise: *Islam and Tolerance in Wider Europe*, published by the program, and *Political Finance and Corruption in Eastern Europe*, coedited by fellow

Daniel Smilov, featuring five chapters by fellows. In the program's final year of operation, the fellows completed projects that included the launch of a new think tank in Afghanistan and initiatives for Roma women.

Fellow Ahmad Idrees Rahmani led a team of local and international specialists that conducted field research in Afghanistan and drafted the country's five-year plan for subnational governance. Rahmani, together with several Afghan colleagues, also launched a new think tank in Kabul, the Afghanistan Center for Research and Policy Studies. The center will provide economic development policy analysis to legislators and cabinet ministers and submit papers to the international donor community.

With support from the European Roma Rights Centre and the Vojvodina Secretariat for Labour, Employment, and Gender Equality of Serbia, fellow Tatjana Peric organized a regional conference for Roma women in Serbia; the conference stressed the need to include Roma women in international action plans to fight gender discrimination and in all Decade of Roma Inclusion decision making and to secure gender equality principles in Decade planning.

Working with other NGOs and OSI programs and foundations, fellow Raluca Maria Popa organized a workshop in Bucharest to assist local NGOs and Roma organizations in accessing EU structural funds for gender equality and social inclusion programs.

## Documentary Photography Project

The Documentary Photography Project looks at the nexus between photography and advocacy. Through exhibits, workshops, grantmaking, and public programs, the project explores how photography can shape public perception and effect social change. The Moving Walls exhibition series aims to visually represent the transitional condition of open societies and the promotion and maintenance of democratic values. It is an artistic interpretation of obstacles—such as political oppression, economic instability, and racism—and the struggles to tear those barriers down.

In 2007, the project presented

Moving Walls at OSI offices and cultural and educational institutions in New York, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. In addition, the project, in partnership with OSI's Middle East and North Africa Initiative, presented an international tour of Moving Walls at cultural venues in Aleppo, Beirut, Cairo, and Damascus. This traveling exhibit consists of a core exhibition of seven past Moving Walls photographers shown alongside one to two local photographers selected for each venue. Two workshops are held in conjunction with the exhibition: a master class for local photographers and a youth media photography workshop (run by OSI's Network Debate Program) that uses Moving Walls in the curriculum.

Distribution grants are awarded

to support partnerships between individual documentary photographers and NGOs or other organizations. Projects must propose new and innovative models for disseminating and exhibiting photography that are designed to engage audiences and stimulate positive social change. In 2007, grants were awarded to Breaking the Silence, Wendy Ewald, Leora Kahn, Tim Matsui, and Jonathan Torgovnik. Production grants are awarded, on occasion, to support organizations that run their own grantmaking programs for the creation of new bodies of work. Production grants were awarded to The Aftermath Project and the W. Eugene Smith Grant in Humanistic Photography.



A church destroyed by Hurricane Katrina is still abandoned two years later. Lower Ninth Ward, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2007. The photograph by Stanley Greene appears on OSI's site for *Katrina: An Unnatural Disaster*, along with the work of three dozen print and radio journalists, photographers, filmmakers, and youth media organizations who received Open Society Institute Katrina Media Fellowships. *Katrina: An Unnatural Disaster* was named the best nonprofit website of the year in the 12th Annual Webby Awards.



When the city of Chicago closed the Juan Diego Workers' Center, immigrant workers were forced to return to the street to look for work.