

Project Title:	Culture of engagement of Polish NGOs in debates on EU Development Policy with decision makers and the public
Implementing Organisation:	Polish Humanitarian Organisation Foundation
Project Manager:	Justyna Stepień
Project Budget:	50 001 euros
Request from the Fund:	45 000 euros

#### Identified Need

The survey run by PHO in 2005 shows that Poles find international aid (also development aid) less important to the aid activities undertaken in Poland. There are two main reasons for this lack of interest in development issues in Poland:

- **The political and economic context:** The recent elections (September 2005) did not lead to stabilization of the political scene. In order to keep social legitimacy the minority government searched for more resources for popular internal social policy. As an outcome of this policy, the government reduced budget funding for development aid from 80 mln PLZ to 30 mln in January 2006. There is a risk of further reduction of these funds.
- **w kontekście społecznym:** The UNDP survey (2005) shows that over 65 % Poles believe that Poland is one of 100 less developed states (in the group of 200 countries in the survey) when in fact Poland is among the 30 most developed countries. This misinformation results in a broad belief that Poland should be the beneficiary of international relief. The lack of information on international aid leaves no place in the Polish society to comprehend and accept the EU development policy. NGOs with their limited resources and know-how nor government officials, politicians or the media have attempted to initiate public debate about the connection between Poland, EU and the Global South to Polish society as well as the obligation of the Global North to the Global South. The media only provide very general information concerning decisions being made on the international level without giving any real context, incomprehensive for the average news viewer.

#### Project Strategy:

The broad objectives of this project are:

1. The project should raise awareness among government actors, journalists and Polish society about development issues and in this way enhance their commitment to the EU development policy.
2. NGOs shall be given the opportunity to broaden their knowledge-base and will acquire skills and tools to ensure their access to government and media. This will result in presenting the NGO's point of view on development issues to Polish society and facilitate the role of NGOs as equal partners in policy dialogue.
3. Providing journalists with information materials and the opportunity to visit a country of the Global South. In the latter initiative, meeting with a representative of a local NGO (in the developing country) will result in greater volume and more relevant reporting on development aid in the Polish media. Another outcome will be the launching of a public debate in the media on development issues influencing decision-making in this field.

4. Identifying and facilitating relationships between NGOs and government officials and politicians should lead to the implementation of the EU development policy by Poland.

### Project Potential

The manner in which the project is designed ensures its sustainability on the termination of funding from the Presidency Fund.

The project creates products that can be used after the one-year implementation period:

- In-depth information materials on EU development policy, a broad active contact network of all the actors in the project as a tool that will continue to be used in the future.
- NGO's contacts with decision-makers within the government responsible for formulating and implementing the Polish Development Policy and implementing the EU Development Policy as well as skills in keeping the contacts active.
- NGO's contacts with journalists interested in producing media coverage on development aid issues.
- Well-trained NGO employees, prepared to coordinate following projects and continue cooperation with journalists and government actors.