

# Reconstruction Women's Fund

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## RWF Strategy Evaluation

- Focus group report -

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# 1. Summary

This research was conducted at the request of **Reconstruction Women's Fund**, its basic aim being to answer the question *Has RWF done what it pledged to do?* in a most economical way. That is, to make possible the assessment of the RWF strategy and to open the process of participative development planning.

The direct objective of this research was to answer the question How the current user and partner women organizations / groups see and assess:

1. The mode of operation and the changes that RWF brings about on the women scene through its activities – and thus make possible a general assessment of the RWF activities in the period 2006-07.
2. The participants' real needs and expectations relative to RWF – and thus make possible the setting of developmental priorities and recommendations for the improvement of the RWF activities in the course of 2009-11.

In the course of September and October 2008, three focus groups were formed, with the participation of 17 leaders, representatives of 13 women organizations/groups (27% users of the Fund), which is a miniature reflection of the range of RWF participants.

This Report contains a description of the most important results which were obtained mainly through quantitative, and partly through qualitative analysis of the responses provided by the focus groups participants.

In spite of being obtained from a small sample, the results are indicative of some important tendencies on the grounds of which it was possible to draw two initial conclusions and recommendations (which can further be confirmed or rectified depending on data obtained from other sources):

1. The RWF activities in the period 2006-07 had a great impact on the activities and survival of women NGO's and groups in Serbia, which is an indirect indicator of the efficiency of its implicit strategy and implicitly, of the necessity of the existence of such a strategy.

*Recommendation:* RWF should continue to develop the existing concept of "twofold activity" (as a foundation and as one of the "equal" participants of the women civilian scene) by directing its activities to a) increased visibility and cooperation among women NGO's, including women Roma groups, coupled with defining common strategies and b) the survival and continuity of activities of particular women NGO's, securing their quick response to the current developments.

2. In the course of 2009-11, RWF will better respond to the needs of women NGO's and groups in Serbia on condition that fund-raising activities are intensified, that its programs of financing are made even clearer to the potential users and that a permanent evaluation of the effects of all its activities is introduced.

*Recommendation:* RWF might consider the introduction of informative developmental planning and an interim counseling team, which would have the capacity to develop and implement a) a strategy of development and intensive fund-raising; b) a long-term communication project with special focus on communication with the users and c) a comprehensive plan of participative evaluation focusing on monitoring the effects of projects financed by RWF.

The author of the report is particularly grateful to the focus groups participants and to women

NGO's that they represented: **The Autonomous Women Center / Program of Development of Good Practices** - Belgrade, **The Incest Trauma Center** - Belgrade, **The Center for Women Studies and Gender Research** - Belgrade, **Women for Peace** - Leskovac, **SOS - Vlasotince**, **Women in Action** - Velika Plana, **AR** - Kikinda, **NLO** - Novi Sad, **Roma Association**- Novi Bečej, **Osvit** - Niš, **Roma Association Danica** - Pančevo, **Romnjako Ilo** - Zrenjanin and **Impuls** - Tutin.

## 2. Background, objectives and method

**Reconstruction Women Fund** (RWF) is a domestic organization specialized in fund-raising and distribution of funds directed at supporting activities of women non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and other groups in Serbia.

RWF came into being in 2004 – through transformation of the Women Program of the *Fund for an Open Society Serbia* – in response to the women civilian scene growing need for funds, at the moment when a large number of donors were withdrawing. RWF was seen as a chance for survival of smaller women organizations and initiatives, but also as a way of strategic mainstreaming and interconnecting of women organizations in Serbia. The credibility and trust of the women civilian scene in the professional and impartial functioning of RWF was developed, on one hand, on the principle of participation (e.g. by including the social actors in managing bodies, etc.), and on the other, on broad availability of the raised funds (through simple procedures for allowing small grants) and transparency of their distribution.

In the period 2006-07, RWF raised 243,146 USD through its four fund distribution programs and allocated 139 grants, thus directly supporting the activities of 47 women NGO's (19 large/strong and 28 small ones) from 18 cities and smaller places in Serbia. Some women NGO's received support for several programs, whereas some of them have developed into stable and strong groups in the meantime.

Table 1: Overview of allowed grants in the course of 2006-07.

Year	Women initiatives	Urgent grants	Special focus	Scholarships WP	Total
2006	19 (61,776 USD)	10 (10,152 USD)	20 (34,320 USD)	9 (8,396 USD)	58 (114,644 USD)
2007	20 (70,077 USD)	5 (5,074 USD)	49 (43,438 USD)	7 (9,913 USD)	81 (128,502 USD)
Total	39 (131,853 USD)	15 (15,226 USD)	69 (77,758 USD)	16 (18,309 USD)	139 (243,146 USD)

In May 2008, RWF subcontracts a consultant (*Snježana Nježić Mrše*, Group MOST, Belgrade) to help establish mechanisms that will ensure the evaluation of activities up to that moment and conduct an evaluation of implemented activities and also help plan the strategic priorities of future RWF activities.

### Aim of the evaluation

The aim of this evaluation was to answer the question – *Has RWF done what it promised to do?* , in an economic way. Namely, to make possible the assessment of efficiency of the RWF strategy in 2006-07 and open the process of participative developmental planning and defining priorities in the period 2009-11.

The first step in the evaluation was aimed at answering the questions as to *How the current user and partner women organizations / groups see and assess:*

1. *the method of work and the changes that RWF brings about through its activities on the women scene* – and thus make possible a general assessment of the efficiency of the RWF strategy in 2006-07.
2. *the users 'real needs and expectations in relation to RWF* – and thus make possible the formulation of developmental priorities and recommendations for the improvement of work of RWF in the period 2009-11.

## Approach and method

Guided by the basic aim to strengthen the RWF in establishing mechanisms of continual (self)evaluation and planning, the participative approach to evaluation was applied and two methods of data collecting were agreed upon

- Focus groups with the user NGO (the responsibility of the contracted evaluation expert)
- Analysis of the reports and documents (responsibility of the internal evaluation team)

The first step in evaluation – Based on the commonly agreed efficiency indicators (expected results and impacts), a semi-structured open-ended questionnaire was made up by method of focus groups (a series of 3 focus groups with the same sample of respondents) data was collected from the user and partner women NGO's and groups.

In the course of September and October 2008, three focus groups were formed, with the participation of 17 leaders, representatives of 13 women organizations/groups (27% of the users of the Fund), who are a miniature reflection of the full range of users of RWF:

- The first focus group was made up of 6 representatives of 3 strong Belgrade women NGO's (*Autonomous Women Center – Good Practices Development Programs, The Incest Trauma Center and The Center for Women Studies and Gender Research*).
- The second Focus group was made up of 6 representatives of 5 smaller women NGO's (*Women for Peace – Leskovac, SOS – Vlasotince, Women in Action - Velika Plana, AR - Kikinda and NLO - Novi Sad*).
- The third focus group was made up of 5 representatives of 5 smaller women NGO's (*Association of Roma- Novi Bečej, Osvit - Niš, Roma Association Danica – Pančevo, Rromnjako Ilo - Zrenjanin and Impuls – Tutin*).

The most important results obtained by qualitative and, in a smaller degree, qualitative analysis of the data provided by the participants of the focus groups now follow.

## 3. Main findings

The overview of the key results follows the pattern of the group interview and answers the questions as to how the current user and partner women organizations / groups assess and see

1. The innovations and changes that RWF brings on the women civilian scene
2. The method of functioning of RWF
3. RWF functioning in unpredicted and crisis situations
4. Transparency and the importance of distribution of the raised funds
5. The participants needs and expectations from RWF

### 3.1 Innovations and changes brought on the women civilian scene by RWF

- The participants were asked to formulate the innovations and changes introduced to the women scene through the RWF activities. The following table contains an overview of the obtained responses:

	<b>Caring about our common system of values and policy of our activities</b>	<b>Exchange of academic and women activist experience</b>	<b>Support of women groups that exert public influence</b>	<b>strengthening mutual cooperation and solidarity of WG</b>
<b>All focus group</b>	Clear feminist policy (system of values)		Creation, encouraging activities and survival of small WG Continuity of support and activities of small WG Support for new ideas and activities in the local community	Activism and continual support (including solidarity)  Visibility in public life
<b>Only 1st focus group</b>	Has the role of a political corrective factor on the women scene Support to put key phenomena on the agenda	Link between education and politics (e.g. Women Study records and library ) Scholarship WP	Support to the activities of small authentic WG (e.g. Roma)  Financial security	Well conceived / coordinated political actions of women NGO's
<b>2nd and 3rd focus groups</b>	Value system of women activism. Principles, policy of activities		Growing credibility and influence of WG in the local community	Interconnectedness of women NGO's, cooperation and mutual support (solidarity) Public visibility
<b>Only 2nd focus group</b>		Timely and accurate information  Publishing and purchasing of reference books	accessibility of grants (good understanding of the needs and context) The possibility of quick response to current situations Internal empowerment of WG in crisis situations Autonomy of activities	Breaking the principle of centralization
<b>Only 3rd focus group</b>	Respect and inclusion of otherness		Strengthening of the capacity of WG Help/support in confronting and reacting to difficult situations	Initiating and maintaining Roma women activism Inclusion of Roma NGO's into the women scene

As summarized by the participants, RWF activities bring about

1. a clear feminist policy and system of values of women activism

- autonomy of action based on feminist principles
- acts as a political corrector on the women scene
- makes it possible to put on the agenda the key phenomena (e.g. confronting the past, human rights defenders etc.)
- a link between education and politics (through scholarships, publishing activities and Women Studies functional documentation and library and the like)
- Timely and accurate information

2. formation and survival of small women NGO's

- accessibility of grants and a feeling of financial security
- support to the activities of authentic small women groups and their autonomy
- strengthening of the capacity of women NGO's
- growing credibility and visibility in the local community
- new ideas and the introduction of new forms of activities

3. continuity of support and the possibility of swift response to a current situation

- good understanding of the needs and context
- help/support in confronting and reacting to difficult situations
- internal empowerment of women NGO's and situations of crisis

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4. increased visibility and interconnectedness of women NGO's, with the inclusion of Roma women groups

- well planned /coordinate political actions of women NGO's
- initiation and sustainability of Roma women activism and the influence of Roma women NGO's
- Respect /inclusion of diversity (ethnic, sexual and geographic)
- breaking the pattern of centralization

### 3.2 Method of functioning of RWF

- Responses to the question – *In what way does RWF bring about the above mentioned changes? can be summarized in the following way:*

In addition to programs allocating small grants (Women initiatives, Urgent grants, Special focus and Scholarships), a specific feature and particular strength in the functioning of RWF was seen as

a) on one hand, through parallel additional activities

- initiating and/or organizing joint activities (campaigns, conferences, publications)
- counseling activities ("direct, two-way communication... new ideas and courses of action...")
- direct inclusion in certain NGO and group activities ("support in advocacy and lobbying" – especially emphasized by smaller women NGO's and groups)

b) on the other hand, through a constant application of the principles of

- feminism as a method of work
- respect and developing of autonomy (one's own and that of the others')
- activism ("justifying their words by their deeds")
- flexibility and adaptability in their work ("good understanding and adaptation to the needs and context" – particularly emphasized by the smaller women NGO's)

Assessing the method of work and the changes brought about in the women scene by RWF in 2006-07, these participants agreed that the RWF activities made a decisive impact on the profiling of a common system of values and policy of action, on the creation and survival of small women NGO's, continuity of work and the possibility of quick responses to the current situation, as well as greater visibility and interconnectedness of women NGO's, also including Roma women groups. Such a big contribution and impact is ascribed to the specific "dual action of RWF" - *external*, as a foundation and some kind of small resource center, and *internal*, as one of the "equal" factors of the women political scene, which is always present, directly accessible and sensitive to the needs and the general context.

### 3.3 RWF activities in unpredictable and crisis situations

One of the specific features of the RWF is reflected in its capacity to enable its users to respond to the current political context and crisis situations their organizations might find themselves in, by extending timely financial and /or expert assistance.

- Responses to the question – *Who they address and from whom they receive timely support when in crisis or when they confront a major problem? are given in the following table:*

Timely assistance	Foundations (number of	Women NGO's (number of responses)	Other NGO's	Experienced women

	responses)			activists
<b>1st focus group</b>	RWF (3) BCIF (1)	Women Studies Center (1) Astra (1); Glas razlike (1)	(1)	(1)
<b>2nd focus group</b>	RWF (5) Global Fund (1) KTK (1)	WiB (3); AWC (1); Larger women NGO's (1)		(2)
<b>3rd focus group</b>	RWF (5)	ITC (2); AWC (1); Damad (1) Roma Association - N. Bečej (2)		

- Responses to the question *To what extent does RWF enable the users to react to the current political context are given in the following table*

	1 (insufficiently)	2 (occasionally)	3 (predominantly)	4 (greatly)
<b>1st focus group</b>				3
<b>2nd focus group</b>				5
<b>3rd focus group</b>		3	2	

The obtained responses indicate that RWF is a place each of the examined groups addressed and from whom they receive timely financial or expert assistance in times of crisis or when in need to react to the current political challenges. Besides RWF, other donor organization extended help in times of crisis, such as (BCIF, KTK and Global Fund) or affiliated women NGO's.

### 3.4 Transparency and the importance of distribution of the raised funds.

- The following table contains the answers to the question *Are the users familiar with the principle of allocation of funds in RWF?*

	1 (unclear)	2 (partly – they did not seek information)	3 (mostly – they did not show enough interest)	4 (completely)
<b>1st focus group</b>			1	2
<b>2nd focus group</b>			4	1
<b>3rd focus group</b>	1	3		

The majority of the examined user organizations find the method of distribution of funds rather unclear, which they explain by the lack of personal interest to find out or find out more on this subject (e.g. the volume of the raised funds, what exactly is financed by certain programs, what are the criteria and the procedure in decision making, etc.

Responses to the question – *What is the proportion of RWF grants on the level of your NGO and what is the importance of the effects of their implementation?* are given in the following table

The proportion of RWF grants	1 – 10%	20 – 30%	50%	80 - 100%
<i>The importance of the effects</i>				
<b>1 (small)</b>				
<b>2 (medium)</b>				
<b>3 (remarkable)</b>		1		1
<b>4 (great)</b>	3	4	1	2

The majority of the examined user organizations assessed the importance of the effect of the implementation of RWF grants on the level of their organization as being great. This assessment does not differ between the organizations that were predominantly financed by other foundations (where the percentage of RWF grants in the total funding is small) and those which were predominantly financed by RWF (where the percentage of RWF grants in the total funding is high).

Spheres of activity where important effects are achieved as defined by the participants: promotion of women's rights, support to women victims of violence (e.g. "the visibility of violence in Roma families has been raised by one third") and women peace activism.

- Responses to the question *What is the proportion of RWF grants in preserving the continuity of activities, strengthening of the capacity and increasing of visibility and impact of our NGO?* are given in the following table

Proportion of RWF grants <i>Importance – percentage in</i>	<b>1 – 10%</b>	<b>20 – 30%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>80 - 100%</b>
<b>preservation of the continuity of activities</b>	40% (1) 5% (1)	75-95% (4) 40% (1)	80% (1)	100% (3)
<b>strengthening of capacities</b>	40% (1) 0% (1)	20-30% (3) 50-70% (2)	70% (1)	100% (3)
<b>increasing visibility and impact</b>	15% (1) 5% (1)	60-80% (4) 40% (1)	60% (1)	100% (3)

The majority of the respondents assessed that the obtained RWF grants contribute greatly to the preservation of continuity of activities and increasing the visibility and impact of their organization. This is particularly visible in smaller user organizations, where the contribution of RWF funds to the preservation of the continuity of activities (40-95%) and strengthening of the visibility and impact of their organization (40-80%) exceeds by far the proportion of their presence in the budget of the organization (RWF grants making up 20-50%).

- Responses to the question – *How much has RWF contributed to the strengthening of cooperation of women groups (and –How is this contribution reflected)?* are given in the following table

	<b>1</b> (slightly)	<b>2</b> (a little)	<b>3</b> (remarkably)	<b>4</b> (greatly)
<b>1st focus group</b>			1	2
<b>2nd focus group</b>			4	1
<b>3rd focus group</b>			2	2

Although the cooperation among women groups was assessed as weak, (on a 1-4 scale the average grade being 2.3), all the respondents agreed that RWF remarkably or greatly contributes to the strengthening of cooperation of women groups ("the level of cooperation is low, but it is of good quality, which is mainly their merit") and it is reflected in

- the support to creating and maintaining networks of cooperation on the national and local level (with the inclusion of Roma women in the women movement)
- Support to joint activities (organization of conferences, round table discussions, etc.)
- Establishing ties and relying on one another
- Information and distribution of materials to women groups

### 3.5 Users' needs and expectations in relation to RWF

- Responses to the question – *What changes in the method of work and distribution of RWF are indispensable?* are given in the following table

Indispensable changes	Raising and distribution of funds	Functioning of RWF	Other
<b>1st focus group</b>	To upgrade and intensify fund-raising activities  Intensify PR define more clearly the programs (what they finance).	Introduce additional mechanisms assessing the effects of the projects of the organizations they finance.	
<b>2nd and 3rd focus group</b>	Increase allocations for the projects (unanimously proposed)  Focus on the successful NGO's that have difficulty in obtaining funds	Conduct field research and data collecting about the work of the NGO's in a direct way Continue this form of functioning with one innovation –an umbrella organization and connecting smaller NGO's with the Donors	At least once a year organize a meeting of all the NGO's with the aim to exchange experiences and ideas, networking and establishing cooperation

- Answers to the questions *Which RWF programs and forms of support should exist in 2009-11?* and *What areas of activity of women NGO activities ought to be given absolute priority?* can be summarized in the following way:

- Urgent grants - “intended for primary support to organizations in crisis“
- Women initiatives
  - Prevention of and protection from violence against women (4)
  - Education (3)
  - Standardization and licensing of services, grounds for violence (1)
  - Re-establish cooperation and parity between female activists and academic institutions / connect the women activists in state institutions with the genuine women scene (1)
  - Integration in the local community – women centers on the city level (1)
- Activist / campaign – “intended for ad hoc political actions“
  - Visibility / campaigns, lobbying (6)
  - Women groups strategies for future activities (1)
- Special focus – “continuation of support to Roma women groups (with clear focus)“
  - Sensitization for work with Roma women and working on the strengthening of capacities of Roma women (2)
- Grants

- Answers to the question *What extent of RWF support is necessary in order to maintain the continuity of our activities in 2009-11? (on the annual level):*

**NLO**, Novi Sad – 5.000 euros (the program we organize for new members ), up to 10.000 euros

□**AR**, Kikinda – between 10.000 and 20.000 euros

**Women in Action**, Velika Plana – 10.000 (SOS telephone) up to 20.000 euros

**Women for Peace**, Leskovac – 10.000 (Peace activism and Women's Rights) up to 20.000 euros

**Impuls**, Tutin – a minimum of 10.000 euros (developing of activities, securing funds for employees, the functioning of the library, video projections, etc.)

**Osvit**, Niš – a minimum of 10.000 euros (for basic activities), and ideally 20.000 euros (education of the representatives of the institutions regarding the specific position of Roma women, with regard to domestic violence in Roma families / seminars and round table discussions in Serbia)  
**Roma Association**, Novi Beograd – a minimum of 10.000 (SOS telephone and free legal assistance), whereas 20.000 euros would enable us to extend better service  
**Danica**, Pančevo – 10.000 (panels ) up to 15.000 euros

- Answers to the final question *Why is it important that RWF survive?*, were summarized in the following way:

“Without RWF **many women NGO’s would disappear**”

- “RWF is like the center of gravity of the women scene system which has many small and large satellites, which remain in the system owing to its gravity“
- “The only place where the small groups can be profiled and defined as feminist – wherever they apply as feminist groups, big donors will refuse to grant them funds (they do not understand the notion of women space and why women groups are exclusively women...)“

“RWF is a **guarantee of the feminist movement in the broader sense**” because

- it represents the framework for the system of values of the women movement and a *role model* for other organizations
- it understands, values and invests in new activist capacities
- it coordinates, networks, empowers, and promotes the activities of our organizations
- it ensures security, independence, continuity and diversity of the women movement
- it respects us and says: *You are not alone*

All the responses obtained from the participants can be summarized in several basic recommendations for the future activities of RWF:

1. To strengthen and intensify fund-raising activities
2. To upgrade PR and to define the programs more clearly (what exactly is being financed).
  - Urgent grants – “intended for basic support to organizations in crisis”
  - Women initiatives – “grants primarily intended for prevention of and protection from violence against women and education”
  - Activist / campaigns – “grants intended for ad hoc political actions”
  - Special focus – “continuation of support to Roma women groups (with a more clearly defined focus)“
  - Scholarships
3. Increase the amounts of the grants
3. Introduce additional assessment mechanisms for the effects of the projects that are being financed. (By doing field research and directly collecting data on NGO activities.)

## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

Although the results obtained reflect the opinions of only 17 representatives and 13 user and partner women NGO's (27% users of RWF, who are a miniature picture of the entire range), they are important indicators on the basis of which important conclusions and

recommendations can be made, which can further be supported and confirmed (or corrected) by data obtained from other sources.

**Conclusion 1: RWF activities in 2006-07 were of great importance for the functioning and survival of women NGO's and groups in Serbia, which indirectly confirms the efficiency of its implicit strategy and the need for such a foundation.**

**Innovations and changes brought about on the women civilian scene by RWF** – The users unanimously agreed that RWF activities had a decisive impact on

- profiling a common value system and action policy of women NGO's. (encouraging autonomous operation on feminist principles, acting as a political corrective factor on the women scene, connecting education and politics)
- the creation and survival of small women NGO's (accessibility of grants and a feeling of financial security, support to the work of small authentic women groups, growing credibility and visibility in the local community)
- continuity of activities and the possibility of quick response to current situations (good understanding of the needs and the context, assistance/support in confronting and reacting to difficult situations, internal empowerment of women NGO's and situations of crisis)
- a greater visibility and interconnectedness of women NGO's, including Roma women groups (well conceived / coordinated political actions of women NGO's, initiation and sustainability of Roma women activism and the impact of Roma women activism and Roma women NGO's on breaking the pattern of centralization).

**Method of functioning of RWF** – The users ascribe the remarkable contribution of RWF to its specific “dual action” - *externally*, as a foundation (or a kind of small resource center) and *internally*, as one of the “equal” actors on the women civilian scene, which is always present, directly accessible and understanding of the needs and context of the women scene in Serbia.

Besides the broad accessibility of small grants (Women initiatives, Urgent grants, Special focus and Scholarships), a specific feature and particular strength of RWF are

- a) on one hand, parallel additional engagement
  - initiating and/or organizing joint activities (campaigns, gatherings, publications)
  - counseling activities (“direct, two-way communication... new ideas and courses of action...”)
  - direct involvement in certain activities of women NGO's and groups (advocacy and lobbying)
- b) on the other hand, a principled implementation of the principles of
  - feminism as a functional approach
  - respect and encouraging autonomy (one's own and the others')
  - activism (“their actions justify their words”)
  - flexibility and adaptability in their work “understanding and conforming to the needs in context” – especially emphasized by smaller women NGO's)

**RWF actions in unpredicted and crisis situations** – A specific feature of RWF method of work is reflected in its ability to enable the users to react to the current political context and crisis situations their organizations might find themselves in by extending timely financial and/or expert assistance

**The impact and the effects of the grants** – The users estimate that the impact of the effects of the implementation of RWF grants on the level of their organization is remarkable and that they primarily contribute to a) the maintenance of the continuity of activities and b) the growing visibility and impact of their organization (visible in the sphere of promotion of women's rights, support to women victims of violence and

women activism for peace. Parallel with that, the users agree that RWF considerably contributes to the strengthening of cooperation of women groups, ("Cooperation is limited, but it exists, and whatever is good in it, is such primarily owing to them") which is best reflected in the support to the creation and development of networks of cooperation (both on the national and local level) and in the inclusion of Roma women in the feminist movement.

**Recommendation 1:** *RWF should continue developing the existing concept of "dual action" (as a foundation and as "one among the equal" actors on the women civilian scene), directing its activities to*

- a) greater visibility and cooperation of women NGO's, including Roma women groups, coupled with the profiling of a joint action policy.
- b) the survival and continuity of work of particular NGO's and their capacity to provide swift responses to the current situation.

**Conclusion 2:** **In the period 2009-11. RWF will improve its response to the needs of women NGO's and groups in Serbia if it intensifies its fund-raising activities, further clarifies its programs of financing to its potential users and introduces a continual evaluation of the effects of its overall activities.**

**Transparency of the distribution of raised funds** – The majority of the surveyed user organizations is unclear about the method of distribution of funds (e.g. the volume of funds, what precisely is financed by certain programs, what criteria and procedures are applied in decision making, etc.), but they ascribe this primarily to their own lack of interest to find out more about it.

**Users' needs and expectations regarding RWF in the period 2009-11.** – The users do not have major complaints regarding the work of RWF, and their expectations from RWF in the forthcoming period are to:

1. Upgrade and intensify fund-raising activities.
2. Boost PR and define the programs more clearly (what precisely is being financed).
  - Urgent grant – "intended for essential support to organizations in crisis"
  - Women initiative – "grants primarily allocated for prevention of and protection from violence against women and education"
  - Activist / campaign – "grants allocated ad hoc to political actions"
  - Special focus – "continuing support to Roma women groups (with a more clearly defined focus)"
  - Scholarships
3. Increase the amounts of the grants
4. Introduce additional mechanisms of assessment of the effects of the projects implemented by the organizations it financially.

**Recommendation 2:** *RWF might consider introducing information-based development planning and an interim counseling team which would have the capacity of developing and implementing:*

- a) a strategy of development and intensive fund-raising;
- b) a long-term communicational project with special focus on communication with the users;
- c) a comprehensive plan of participative evaluation with special focus on monitoring the effects of the projects financed by RWF..

# Annex 1

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR USER WOMEN GROUPS

### **I PART: RWF Strategy efficiency assessment for the period 2006-07** (120 min)

#### **Block 1: General part – values, strategy and changes**

Questions:

##### **1.1**

*Where do you appeal for help in a crisis situation or when you confront a major problem?  
Whose advice and support have so far proved to be timely and helpful?*

##### **1.2**

*To what extent do you manage to preserve the freedom and autonomy of your NGO's and in groups?*

*(Assessment scale: 1-4 / define the levels!)*

*Whose support has so far been decisive for the preservation of autonomy of your activities?*

*What is the share of RWF in this ( and how is it reflected)?*

*(Assessment scale: 0-100%)*

##### **1.3**

*What innovations/changes on the women scene do the RWF activities make possible?*

*What would the women scene or your organization be deprived of if RWF discontinued its activities?*

*Which RWF programs, principles, activities contribute to this and to what extent)?*

##### **1.4**

*How do the users (and partner NGO's) see RWF – what values and principles does RWF promote?*

*What values and principles do the users share with RWF and the other women NGO's and which they don't?*

##### **1.6**

*Has RWF influenced the policy of your NGO (if so, please explain what it influenced and how)?*

#### **Block 2: Programs of support and cooperation**

Questions:

##### **2.1**

*Are the users familiar with the method of distribution of RWF funds ?*

*(Assessment scale: 1-4 / define levels!)*

*How has the distribution method used so far been equitable and what were its shortcomings?*

##### **2.2**

*Which RWF programs and forms of support, considerably improve the effects of work and which do not?*

*(Assessment scale: 1-4 / define levels!)*

##### **2.3**

*Do the users receive timely the support they asked for (and from whom)?*

*In what spheres of work of women NGO's does RWF provide timely support, and in which does it fail to do so ?*

##### **2.4**

*To what extent does RWF enable its users (women NGO's and groups) to react and influence the current political context?*

*(Assessment scale 1-4 / define levels!)*

#### **Block 3: Effects**

Questions:

.....

**3.1**

What is the proportion of RWF grants in your NGO (state the number and the kind of obtained grants)?

(Assessment scale: 0-100%)

What is the importance of the effects of the realization of RWF grants on the level of your NGO?

(assessment scale: 1-4 / define the levels!)

To which spheres of activities does this refer to (How is this reflected)?

**3.2**

What is the role of RWF grants in the preservation of the continuity of your NGO/group?

(Assessment scale: 0-100%)

What sphere of activity does this refer to (How is this reflected)?

**3.3**

What is the role of RWF grants in strengthening the capacities and efficiency of your NGO/group?

(Assessment scale: 0-100%)

What capacities does this refer to (in order of importance)?

**3.4**

What is the role of RWF grants in upgrading the visibility and impact of your NGO/group?

(Assessment scale: 0-100%)

What influence does this refer to in order of importance)?

**3.5**

How do the users assess the degree and quality of cooperation with different women NGO's and groups?

How much has RWF contributed to this (and where is this contribution reflected)?

(Assessment scale: 1-4 / define levels!)

(Alternative task) Block 4: Sociogram – real and desired situation

Task:

- o Draw a graphic representation of the relations between RWF and other women NGO's and groups – prior to 2004. / currently, 2008 / what they should be like (a projection)
- o Formulate and write down the principal courses of the desired changes that have been brought about so far

**II PART: Planning of strategic priorities of action in the period 2009-11 (60 min)**

**Block 5:** Courses of desired changes

Questions:

**5.1**

What changes in the RWF method of operation and distribution of funds are indispensable?

**5.2**

Which RWF programs and forms of support ought to exist in the period 2009-11?

**5.3**

What target groups and topics ought to be given priority?

**Block 6:** The needs of women NGO's in the period 2009-11

Questions:

**6.1**

What extent of RWF support is requisite for the preservation of the continuity of your activities in the period 2009-11?

**6.2**

Which of your key programs could not have started /survived without the support of RWF? (quote only one program and the minimum necessary means!)

**6.3**

What areas of work of women NGO's should RWF give absolute priority?

**Final question:** Try to summarize today's discussion by giving a short answer to this question:  
Why is it important that RWF should survive?

