

October 16, 2012
Moscow

The Citi Foundation and Fund for Sustainable Development Provide Grants to Entrepreneurs in Rural Areas

The Citi Foundation and the Fund for Sustainable Development have reviewed the results of their joint program Small Business Development in Local Communities. The program was aimed at training people with low income and the unemployed with theoretical and practical skills on how to start, maintain or expand their small businesses in towns and rural settlements. The program was implemented in the Luga, Tosno and Gatchina districts of the Leningrad Region, the Sasovo and Kasimov districts of the Ryazan Region and in five districts of the Moscow Region centered around the town of Kolomna.

More than 300 first-time entrepreneurs and unemployed citizens completed the entrepreneurship training. Following the training, a business plan contest was held for the awarding of grants to create and develop one's own small business. As a result of the contest 15 projects were selected for financing, and the authors of these business plans received mini-grants ranging in size from 50,000 to 150,000 rubles.

In the Ryazan Region, the projects receiving financing were focused in the development of children's centers and agricultural. In the Leningrad Region, grants were provided for projects to develop public services, including the development of personal care services for the disabled, as well as tourism and farming projects. In the Moscow Region, the project selected included a tire recycling business, a private apiary and other socially beneficial business ideas.

Examples of projects receiving grants

In the Sasovo District (Ryazan Region), a project to organize recreational activities for children has been implemented. As a part of the program, self-employed entrepreneur Olesya Sutyagina took part in a training program on small business development and created a business development plan for the Dragonfly children's center. Using the mini-grant funds, she acquired new sets of games, which helped ensure high attendance at the center. The center also launched a new line of business – the organization of children's celebrations. Once the new project was fully implemented, the employees of the center switch from working part-time (20%) to working full-time.



In the town of Tosno (Leningrad Region), a project to create a small business specializing in the repair of electronic devices and equipment has been implemented. Self-employed entrepreneur Denis Tisnoy completed the training program and prepared a business plan. After being selected as a contest winner, Denis received financial support and purchased equipment which allowed him to ensure the effective functioning of his electronics repair shop. Within six months of implementing the project, the shop had completed 290 repair orders, which represents 77%. Using a flexible pricing system, the entrepreneur plans to organize intensive outreach to low-income residents of the local community as well as those living in remote settlements in the district.

The next phase of the program in 2012-2013 – Small Business for Local Sustainable Development

The new program Small Business for Local Sustainable Development (2012-2013) has been launched. This program will promote sustainable community development in the Moscow and Ryazan regions through small business development. This program incorporates a new component – training for trainers: improving the professional skills of the staff of municipal small business support centers.

As a result of this program, 320 first-time entrepreneurs and unemployed citizens will be trained in the basics of starting and running their own business. The participants will be selected with the help of municipal employment offices and small business support centers. Training sessions will be conducted by 16 employees of municipal small

business development centers who have been trained under this program. After the end of the training component, a contest for mini-grants for small business development will be held.

The Fund for Sustainable Development (FSP) is an independent, nongovernmental and nonprofit Russian fund created to promote regional and community sustainable development through concrete projects addressing environmental, social and economic issues in communities across the Russian Federation. For more information, see the organization's website: <http://www.fund-sd.ru>

The Citi Foundation provides support to organizations which help people improve their lives, facilitating business development and the well-being of communities throughout the world. The Citi Foundation pays particular attention to programs involving 1) micro-financing and micro-entrepreneurship, promoting financial independence; 2) small and developing business, which positively impacts economic development and creation of new jobs; 3) education for the personal and professional success of young people; 4) financial education, which helps people make responsible financial decisions; and 5) protection of the environment with a focus on supporting sustainable businesses, which creating jobs and facilitate economic growth while caring for the environment. For more information, see the Citi Foundation website: www.citigroupfoundation.org.

Citi, a leading global financial services company, has approximately 200 million customer accounts and does business in more than 160 countries and jurisdictions. Citi provides consumers, corporations, governments and institutions with a broad range of financial products and services, including consumer banking and credit, corporate and investment banking, securities brokerage, transaction services, and wealth management. In 2012 Citi is celebrating the 200th anniversary of its founding in 1812.