

Civil Diary



ISSUE 02 // AUGUST 2009

The Festival "Civil Voices"



The STGM is organizing an NGO festival to support the creation of a strong and participatory understanding of civil society in Turkey. The festival "**Civil Voices**" whose organization is undertaken by the STGM is designed as a 3-day gathering bringing together different voices and colours of NGOs. It focuses on encouraging the culture of collective and organized action to create common spaces of living. Festival activities are geared to bringing NGOs and their representatives in both Turkey and from abroad together and coming up with joint activities in various areas. Another objective of the festival is to inform non-organized citizens about the activities of NGOs and mobilize them to support such activities.

Campaign Support

The STGM provides modest support in terms of technical expertise and stationery / printing to campaigns conducted by local organizations in the fields of sustainable utilization of natural resources and discrimination.

Below are some examples of STGM support in this context:

- > The Constitution should recognize all sexual orientations and identities!
- > End Violence against Children!
- > Campaign for Claiming our Land
- > Don't let Belek Fall Victim to Golfing!
- > Sign Kyoto!
- > Campaign for Decent Human Life to SSPE Victims
- > No to Media Assault!



Petition has been started by NGOs in Turkey for freedom of association

NGOs inviting the Turkish Grand Assembly, the government and the political parties for some amendments in laws and regulation in order to lift some barriers in front of freedom of association to enhance participatory democracy in Turkey.



The Freedom of Association campaign which has been carried out by STGM with the participation of NGOs proceeded with street activities and media events in Adana, Diyarbakır, Denizli and Eskişehir since January to overcome the negative apprehension towards the word associating, to get rid of prejudices against collective activities and to increase participation in civil society organizations.

As a second step of the campaign, NGOs has started for petition in July to invite the state to abolish the legal obstacles to freedom of association and to provide the necessary regulations for the civil society organizations for their effective participation in decision taking processes. Since then 250 NGOs signed the petition and it will carry on until October. After that, the negotiation will start with related organs of the grand assembly and the government for necessary changes demanded by NGOs.

Legal Support Line

Civil organizations can appeal to the legal consultancy team of the STGM through the Legal Support Line in the website when they confront with some problems in legislation relating to civil society. Questions responded to through e-mails are also published on the website. Questions raised and responded to in the period 2005-2007, together with the relevant legislation, were also published as "Legal Handbook for Non-Governmental Organizations".



Technical Support to NGOs

While extending civil organizations in its thematic target group counselling and technical support services in various areas (i.e. project development, communication, campaigning, legislation, etc.) the STGM also provides free use of meeting rooms and communication devices at its central office in Ankara as well as in local support centres to those NGOs who have difficulty in finding venues and such endowments. Furthermore, local support centres also provides free basic office services (i.e. fax, copying, computer, Internet connection, etc.) to NGOs with limited local office means.

Civil Networks

The STGM mainly functions as a supporting agency in the field of civil networks which are yet not so well developed in Turkey. While making logistic contribution to already existing networks, it provides both logistic and technical expertise support to those yet at the stage of initiation. Networks so far supported by the STGM include:

- > Autism Platform of Turkey
- > Ankara Child Rights Cooperation Platform
- > Justice for Children Initiative
- > Platform for the Rights of LGBTTT (Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Travesties and Transsexuals)
- > Gathering of Women against Violence
- > Turkish Coordination of European Women's Lobby
- > Women Coalition Çanakkale Meeting
- > Trabzon Women's Platform
- > Environmental Platform of Turkey (TÜRÇEP)
- > Network for Refugees and Migrants
- > Migration Platform
- > Southeastern Youth NGOs Platform

Furthermore a training seminar on discrimination was organized in İzmir for Roma associations, an advocacy seminar took place for human rights organizations in Adana and its vicinity, a seminar for women's NGOs on Gender and Sexual Violence, a seminar on Rights of People Living with HIV/AIDS and the Role of Right Based Organizations and a seminar on Disabled Rights for NGOs disabled people was organized.

For the coming period, STGM plans to matchmake MPs and civil networks to discuss right based issues in Turkey.



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