



PARTNERSHIP FOR TRANSPARENCY FUND

BARRY METZGER RULE OF LAW INITIATIVE



*Pictured above:
Presentation of Findings on
Trial Monitoring at YUCOM
2014 conference*

GRANT MAKING

Supporting projects that address issues related to the rule of law such as freedom of information, conflict of interest, and judicial reform.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Sponsoring both online and on-site opportunities to exchange experiences, learn from best practices, and build the capacity of citizen groups to hold their governments accountable.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Providing expert technical assistance to strengthen the ability of citizen groups to promote good governance through constructive engagement with authorities.

The Barry Metzger Rule of Law Initiative encourages citizen engagement to promote systems of justice that respect individual rights, equality, dignity, and respect for all before the law.

Corruption and weak rule-of-law often go hand-in-hand. A lack of transparency and accountability in a country's judicial system not only causes dysfunction, but damages society's confidence in government institutions, including the court. Conversely, appropriate enactment of legislation prohibiting conflict of interest and the acceptance of bribes can reduce opportunities for corruption.

The Rule of Law Initiative named after PTF founder Barry Metzger is designed to honor his memory by promoting systems of justice that respect individual rights, equality, dignity, and respect for all before the law. Through the Initiative, PTF is promoting the rule of law in developing countries by strengthening civil society institutions to bring about fair and just governance through citizen action.

Our ambition is to help emerging civil society leaders build more transparent and accountable government institutions; level the playing field for businesses seeking to compete honestly; and improve outcomes for ordinary citizens. We accomplish this by providing financial resources and technical advice to local organizations that engage citizens in activities that reduce opportunities for corruption and improve the skills of justice sector professionals to hold their governments accountable.

In 2016, we're focusing on developing the rule of law in the Western Balkans through two initiatives:

- A regional network to strengthen the judiciary of countries on the path to European Union (EU) accession (ReView 23)
- A program to build the capacity of local advocates providing legal aid to victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV)



Barry Metzger, a founder of PTF and board member until his untimely death in 2012, worked tirelessly to promote justice in some of the world's poorest countries. The "Rule of Law Initiative" bearing his name is designed to continue his work. It is the mission of the Metzger Initiative to fund civil society projects in developing countries to assist them in addressing fundamental tools that play a part in bringing about a society governed by the rule of law.

"If you want to fight against corruption you can easily develop the program with the support of PTF... We're now working on new initiatives to build institutions and help the region develop real practices and to have some concrete results."

Milan Antonijevic
Director, Lawyers
Committee for Human
Rights (YUCOM)

REGIONAL NETWORK IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

"ReView23" is a regional network of partner CSOs in the Western Balkans (Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro) who share a common goal to gain membership in the European Union. A key focus of the network is to support these countries to meet the requirements of the specific rule of law and judicial reform targets set out by the EU, in Chapter 23 of its pre-accession documents. This is the first phase of a multi-year, multi-country effort. Other partner countries will join as the network expands. ReView23 has prepared a 'joint' paper entitled "From Independence of the Prosecution to the Right to a Fair Trial." Each partner country is also working on a specific issue identified in Chapter 23: for example trial monitoring. The network provides a structure for building and sharing knowledge related to the technical requirements for membership in the EU.

The CSO that houses the ReView23 Secretariat is the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM), which led past PTF-supported projects to improve judicial process through trial monitoring. The projects trained more than 80 human rights activists, journalists, and citizen volunteers as monitors to document court procedures and report the results. Daily reports were posted on a public web portal. Country partners in trial monitoring were Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The team produced a policy paper entitled "Strengthening the Judiciary in Combatting Corruption."



BUILDING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ADVOCATES IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

The Metzger Initiative is partnering with the American Bar Association's Balkans Regional Rule of Law Network (BBRLN) and international law firm Hogan Lovells to increase the capacity of advocates to represent clients in gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination cases in Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The bar associations of the five countries have identified increased specialization of the legal profession as a key area for reform. One way to strengthen capacity is through increased specialization on gender-based issues in the region.

The project is made up of three sections: a GBV working group of licensed advocates and civil society activists; a training program to enhance the competency of lawyers and civil society activists to represent victims of gender-based violence and discrimination; and collaboration between Hogan Lovells and regional advocates to support litigation and reform in the area of gender-based violence. PTF and its partners will enhance the ability of local leaders to ensure that victims of GBV are provided with fair legal recourse. The training programs will take place in June and September, 2016.