

Places of power: how community foundations in Russia help in the new environment

Irina Novikova, CAF Russia, offers some examples below of community foundation responses to the Coronavirus crisis around Russia.

Quarantine in each region of the country is different, but one thing unites almost all cities and villages: many community foundations remain to be active - they come up with new activities, conduct campaigns, helping people and supporting non-profit organizations in their territories.



A volunteer of the charity campaign “Grocery basket” in Arkhangelsk and Severodvinsk

Arkhangelsk: help when you buy and grants for NGOs

“We began to receive many calls from entrepreneurs who were ready to help people in difficult situations,” says Marina Mikhailova, director of the “Garant” Center , - “and we are already successfully cooperating with some of them.”

One of the current campaigns is “Time to be kind”, launched by the fusion cafe TERRASA together with “Garant” and the regional public organization “Most”. By placing a takeaway order or ordering delivery in this cafe, you can pay a “Kind lunch” which costs 200 rubles or purchase a “Kind gingerbread cookie” for 100 rubles. All proceeds from the sale will be spend to arrange meals for people with mental disabilities, which are supported by the "Most" (organization provides workshops for people with disabilities, but now the activities are stopped and people don't have any sources of income).

The local entrepreneur, who bakes GRANO bread, launched his kind campaign: 50 kopecks from each loaf sold is transferred to “Garant”. Such a “charitable” bread is marked with a sticker of a flying angel - it is a symbol of the charity marathon “Arkhangelsk region of kindness”. “Garant” sends all the money to help older people.

And the chain of cafes the “Garden-bed” and the “Pizza for friends” decided to support the people in need also in cooperation with “Garant”, but in a slightly different way. In the "Garden-bed" they handed over 200 coupons for purchases in their culinary, and "Pizza for friends" gave part of their products to be sent to low-income people.

“It is important for us that all people in need receive support, and not the same people are given help several times, while the rest are left completely without it,” explains Marina Mikhailova. “Therefore, here we perform an important coordinating function, compile lists, cover different target groups.”

The Garant Center itself also continues to actively support colleagues and community. The action “Power together” was launched: within the framework of it, posters offering help were issued and posted for free access, which everyone can download and hang out at their entrance. And for NGOs a grant competition “People of action” was announced. Until May 15, “Garant” is waiting for the ideas of microprojects aimed at solving local problems.



The poster says “Helping from home”

Angarsk: flatparty and getting ready for #GivingTuesdayNow

The New Angarsk Foundation has launched a mutual assistance program for non-profit organizations in the city. Fifty NPOs have already filled out a questionnaire about pressing issues and points of growth, and also conducted an online flatparty for them to talk about.

“After analyzing all the data, we begin to work individually with each NGO, providing the necessary assistance. Someone needs advice on how to optimize a remote work, someone needs help to cope with a stressful situation,” says Alina Ionova, Executive Director of the New Angarsk Foundation. “We are also looking for partners for financial and resource assistance among businesses, talk about other non-profit organizations and their activities in our social networks.”

It’s now planned to hold “flatparties” regularly and invite experts. The first has already been found. “Here we have fortuitous combination of circumstances. - Alina Ionova shares. - Many colleagues express the need in psychological help, and at the same time, the Baikal Nordic Walking Association

approached us: they reported financial difficulties in the current situation. They have a psychologist on staff, and we decided to invite him to speak at our “flatparty” so that the fee paid to him would just go to cover the expenses of the fund. Thus, we do two good deeds at once - provide the necessary expert help to colleagues, and help the organization! ”

In the same time "New Angarsk" is getting ready for the # GivingTuesday, which will be held on May 5. By this day, the foundation plans to release a video in support of the city's NGOs. According to representatives of the foundation, this will be the beginning of a larger program, in which they will talk about non-profit organizations, their activities and destinies, problems and needs.

In addition, together with the Angarsk Red Cross, the foundation launched an aid campaign during the coronavirus pandemic “We are Angarchans”. Its goal is to support people in crisis with grocery baskets and personal safety apparel.



Perm Krai: the older generation activities

The “Sodeystvie” Foundation launched a group at WhatsApp to support and promptly inform older people. It publishes important information from partners - the Perm branch of Sberbank: safety materials, instructions on how to avoid fraudsters who became active during the pandemic, tips on using the Sberbank mobile application, etc.

And in its VKontakte e-community, the foundation publishes options for activities and education for retirees, tells inspiring stories of active grandparents in the region. “Veterans from small towns and villages became real generators of ideas in lockdown,” said Nina Samarina, president of the Foundation. - For example, in the Nozhovsky rural settlement of the Chastinsky district, a community

of veterans launched the flash mob “In lockdown - not feel down!”. They are engaged in self-education, sports, crafts, some even sew protection masks and pass them on to other people.”



Participant of the project “In lockdown - not feel down!” Shustova L.F.

Vladivostok: baskets of kindness and help to “invisible”

The Resource Center "Razvitie" actively helps older people - together with the Timchenko Foundation and Horoshie Istории Foundation (Samara), they participate in the coalition "Care is nearby". “Today our task is to find the “invisible” old people - those who do not receive help and support from social services,” explains director Svetlana Bazhenova, - We are looking for them, raise this issue in social networks, we ask friends, other NGOs ... Over the first two days, more than 60 people sent us information about themselves. We made lists and prepared food baskets for these people.”

Entrepreneurs of Vladivostok city help in collecting groceries. They united in the project “Let's Help Together” and daily deliver about 120 food packages with the help of volunteers.

In addition, the fund launched the “Basket of kindness” campaign in “Remy” supermarket chain. In this basket, everyone can leave something to help those in need. Some of these products will also go to the “Razvitie” and then sent to the needy.

Volunteers help with packing, products delivery, as well as the distribution of leaflets with information on how to help their neighbors and where to turn for support if necessary. Now there are more than 40 of them. For example, volunteers of the Walking League «Ginshen» joined the foundation's activities with entire families, they sew masks, participate in food delivery and pack food themselves.

The “Razvitie” also collects information on what local NGOs are doing in the region and what are their needs. “Already 15 organizations have filled out questionnaires and sent information about themselves. Almost everyone asks for food for their wards, individual protective equipment for volunteers, informational and psychological assistance. We’ll do our best to support everyone” says Svetlana Bazhenova.

Mayma: social networks campaigns

Initiated by the first community foundation in Altai Republic “Perspektiva”, the campaigns #tvoridobro (do kindness) and # razberishkaf (sort out wardrobe) are held. Information about them is published on Instagram, in the same social network participants tell their stories with the corresponding hashtag.



Ongudaisky municipal district is always among the active in Altai. During the coronavirus epidemic, a volunteer detachment was created here under the leadership of Arzhan Maymanov. They help single elderly villagers to buy necessary food and medicine.

As part of these campaigns people are told about different kinds of assistance - that you can become a donor at the Blood Transfusion Center or donate things that are no longer necessary to them, which will then be sent to those in need. “People respond, donate blood, bring clothes, utensils and other things,” says Olga Volosovtseva, president of “Perspektiva”. - We call for other kind deeds that can be done without leaving your home, for example, to share useful tips on what to do in self-isolation, to visit lonely old people, etc. All this takes place under the slogan #GivingTuesdayNow, which will be held on the May 5th. ”

In addition, the “Perspektiva” Foundation joined the All-Russian campaign #wearetogether. There are not enough volunteers, so foundation’s activists help to deliver goods for the elderly.

Bogotol: books and giving stories

The «Power of Siberia” Charitable Foundation continues to work on existing and pre-quarantined projects. One of them is Knizhkin Park (Books’ park). The idea is to create a new educational space in the city for family leisure for young parents and children. “The main activities of the project are planned for the summer, and we hope that we will be able to carry them out,” says Marina Konovalenkova, foundation’s manager. “In the meantime, preparations are in full swing: developing models of art objects and the design concept, making agreements and holding online meetings with partners.”



The project manager of the Knizhkin Park is looking for lumber that will be used to make elements of the family reading zone in the park.

The foundation has started the preparation for #GivingTuesdayNow with literature as well, particularly with the genre of “a little giving story”. This way the “Power of Siberia” tells about its volunteers, assistants, partners. “Unfortunately, we do not always pay due attention and openly say thanks to those who help us,” Marina Konovalenkova shares. - And now, being in lockdown, just the right time to do it. Indeed, right now we understand that our strength is in interaction and solidarity. Only together and only collectively we will manage to go through this challenging time and will not let those who need support fall. ”

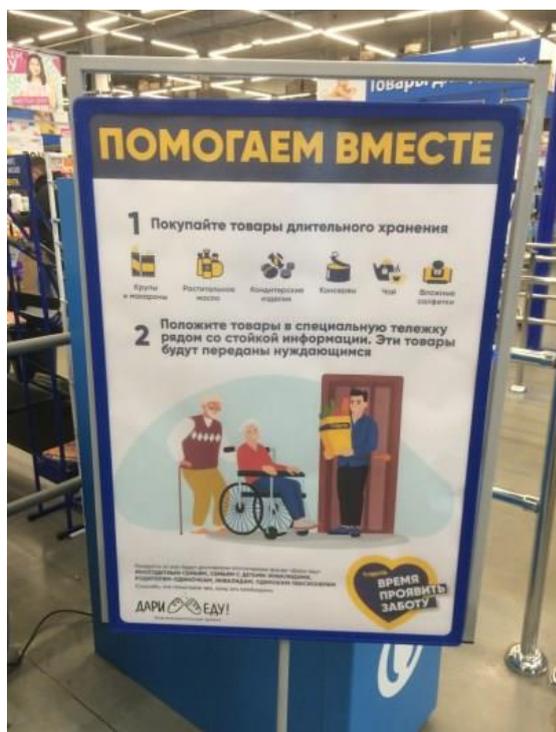


Pskov: advocacy for NGOs and humanitarian aid

The Center for Sustainable Development of the Pskov Region conducted a survey among more than thirty public organizations, learning how the situation with coronavirus had impacted their activities and what support NGOs need now. The answers expressed the general mood of the non-profit sector in the country: not enough skills for conducting events online, help is needed from the authorities to pay rent and salaries and postponing the audit is necessary. The Center processed the results of the survey and proposals on the necessary measures to support the third sector of the region and sent them to the Governor of the Pskov Region and the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation.

“There is no answer yet, but we did everything to join forces and be heard,” says Semyon Nikonov, , chairman of the Center. - The employees of our NGOs are really worthy of support, as today they continue to do their job and a lot of important things for society: volunteering, online legal advice, help with food and clothes, hotline work, employment, free counseling for citizens and much more.”

The Center itself also provides direct help to the community: collects humanitarian aid together with the “Give Food” Foundation. The collected food packages are handed over to organizations that work with people in difficult situations: the Russian Red Cross, the Russian Children's Fund, the Independent Social Women's Center and the modern family, and the Cascade Social Center. During the first week of the campaign, 176 kg of food was already given to people in need.



The banner in the shop saying “Helping together”

Irina Novikova, CAF

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