

COVID-19

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## Community Foundations in Action

### Russia - New demands, new ways of working



*Tatiana Burieva,  
Community Garant /  
Arkhangelsk Centre of  
Social Technologies*

While talking to Tatiana Burieva, the situation of citizens of her community in the north of Russia keeps worsening. “At the beginning of the countrywide lockdown in March we were not affected heavily here. Even till the middle of May everything was ok and there was no panic”, she recounts, “but now there’s a high increase of people who are sick with Coronavirus and we’re afraid of what’s still to come.” The late spreading of the pandemic in the region of the harbor city of Arkhangelsk can be traced back to the several big enterprises that are located in the area, which kept doing their businesses and couldn’t provide precautionary measures for their employees, explains Tatiana.

“Also the virus spread fast in hospitals because at the beginning of the pandemic everyone who was infected was put there, leading to excessive demand of medical services and therefore the lack of separate sections for highly infectious patients.”

For Tatiana, who is Deputy Director of the Garant Center, the Arkhangelsk Centre of Social Technologies and the Community Foundation Garant, the current situation is a huge challenge. “Here, the lockdown has been going on for too long”, she bemoans, “Lots of people lost their jobs and income. We have a lot of hungry families here.”

To provide support in these times of crisis, there have been some major changes in the work of Garant Center. Normally, the organisation is separating its work: on the one hand, there is the Garant Center of Social Technologies which is in charge of different projects, providing support in social services for all kinds of organisations, entrepreneurs and businesses, on the other hand there is the Community Foundation Garant,



*Providing food and protective equipment Photo: Arkhangelsk Centre of Social Technologies "Garant" and Community Foundation "Garant"*

organising grant competitions, individual grants and similar work. Since the pandemic has led to a whole new level of demands, the two parts of the organisation are working side by side.

Governmental and private funds have to be coordinated, as well as the cooperation of different stakeholders. And this is where another big change in the work of Community Foundation Garant appears: “Our main job was and still is to support, unite and develop, but now for the first time we also help directly.” That means that Garant Center is still working with non-governmental organisations, for example when they used their funds to buy equipment for medical staff and elderly people, but they don't leave the realisation to the organisations alone. The staff of Garant Center themselves is helping to deliver the contributions to those in need, together with a lot of volunteers that were acquired in cooperation with volunteer and youth centers. “Usually we only work with a handful of volunteers who help us with our events, today there are about 200 who help to realise the aid campaigns.”



The Community Foundation Garant closely works together with the Arkhangelsk Centre of Social Technologies "Garant", established in 1998 as a regional NGO. The community foundation started in 2011. Both legal entities work in the same premises and with the same team (10 employees). Together with the Arkhangelsk Centre of Social Technologies "Garant" they raised 70 million Rubel (€900,000) during the period of March-June 2020. The number of volunteers raised from 10 (only for events) to more than 200 since the pandemic.

*The Community Foundation Garant is one of 70 Community Foundations in Russia. The Charities Aid Foundation and the Partnership of Community Foundations Associations work both on promotion of community foundations and exchange of experiences. For more information see on our [website](#).*