



Partnership for Transparency Fund

...providing small grants to CSOs in developing countries to fight corruption

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Press Release

New Anti-Corruption Fund For Civil Society Organizations in Southern Cone of South America, Attracts Massive Volume of Applications

Regional Fund for the Promotion of Transparency (FONTRA), Developed by the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF), the Inter-American Development Bank's Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) and the Institute for Communication and Development (ICD)

Montevideo and Washington DC, 21 February 2007: A total of 118 grant applications from civil society organizations (CSOs) across Brazil, Bolivia and the Southern Cone of South America have been made to FONTRA, directly following the launch of this new fund dedicated to fighting corruption. FONTRA will give small grants (generally up to \$25,000) to CSOs for projects that increase transparency and reduce corruption. It was promoted to CSOs, government and businesses by a launch event in each of the six countries.

FONTRA has been established by the Partnership for Transparency Fund, a global not-for-profit organization that provides grants to CSOs to fight corruption, and by the Uruguayan-based NGO Institute for Communication and Development (ICD), with key financing from the Inter-American Development Bank's Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF).

"The enormous response testifies to the critical determination of civil society in Latin America to curb corruption," said Anabel Cruz, Vice-Chair of the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) and founder and Chair of ICD in Montevideo, Uruguay. ICD is the recipient of a \$600,000 grant from the MIF for establishing FONTRA, which ICD houses in Montevideo.

FONTRA's Director Héctor Villaverde stated that FONTRA has received 31 grant applications from CSOs in Brazil, 27 from Argentina, 21 from Chile, 16 from Bolivia, 15 from Paraguay and 8 from Uruguay. He added, "We plan to make 6 to 10 grants this year, depending upon the additional resources that we are able to raise from the private sector." FONTRA has already received pledges of funds from Brazil's Construtora Norberto Odebrecht S.A. and Argentina's IRSA (Inversiones y Representaciones S.A.).

The grants from FONTRA are modelled after those from PTF, which is a not-for-profit organization established in 2000, and which has given more than US\$1 million in grants to CSO across the developing world. PTF's evaluations suggest that 85 percent of grantees use the funds well to meet their key project objectives (see *Project Assessments* at www.PTFund.org).

Stephen Ettinger, PTF's coordinator for Latin America and an advisor to FONTRA, stressed, "PTF, ICD and FONTRA are now pursuing a very thorough due diligence phase where we are evaluating all the grant proposals in terms of both the capabilities of the applicant CSOs and the viability and potential impact of the projects. We are looking especially for projects that will promote sound and equitable private sector development in the region by reducing corruption in government procurement, regulations, budgeting and other activities. When we have determined the projects that FONTRA can support then these will be submitted to the MIF for its concurrence."

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