

➤ **The Open Society**

**Institute (OSI) works  
to build vibrant and  
tolerant democracies  
whose governments  
are accountable to  
their citizens.**



**OSI**

**Open Society Institute**

# OSI

## OPEN SOCIETIES

are characterized by the rule of law; respect for human rights, minorities, and a diversity of opinions; democratically elected governments; market economies in which business and government are separate; and a civil society that helps keep government power in check.

To achieve its mission, OSI seeks to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, OSI implements a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health, and independent media.

At the same time, OSI builds alliances across borders and continents on issues such as corruption and freedom of information. OSI places a high priority on protecting and improving the lives of marginalized people and communities.



Investor and philanthropist George Soros in 1993 created OSI as a private operating and grantmaking foundation to support his foundations in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Those foundations were established, starting in 1984, to help countries make the transition from communism. OSI has expanded the activities of the Soros foundations network to encompass the United States and more than 60 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Each Soros foundation relies on the expertise of boards composed of eminent citizens who determine individual agendas based on local priorities.

< OSI and the Soros foundations have given away over \$6 billion to build open, democratic societies. In 2007, the network spent approximately \$450 million to help people around the world.

The Open Society Institute's initiatives are as far-reaching as its mission.

The following pages feature selected activities and achievements.



**TO CHAMPION** freedom and democracy in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, OSI and the Soros foundations since before the fall of communism have worked to support progressive economic, social, and legal reforms. This work has helped transform the region and contributed to the successful efforts of 10 countries to join the EU.

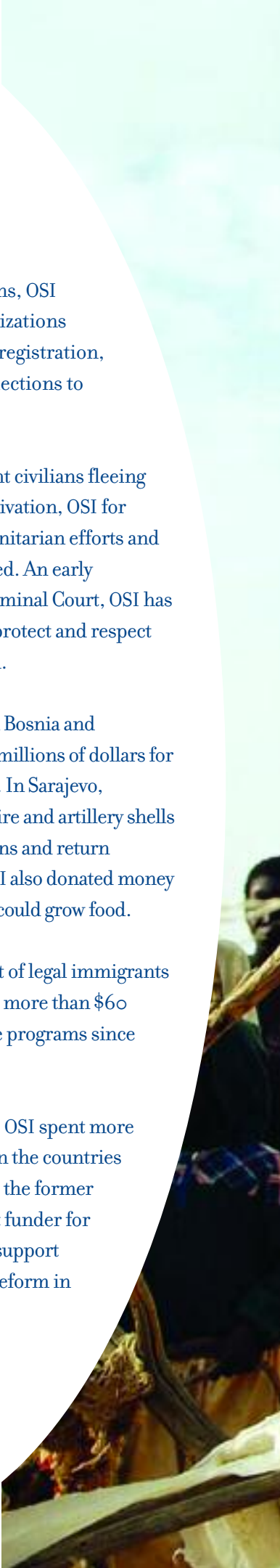
**TO PROMOTE** peace and tolerance in countries that emerged from the former Yugoslavia, OSI has spent over \$300 million on programs that advance the rule of law, independent media, human rights, and democratic values.

**TO SUPPORT** civil society and good governance in Africa, OSI has supported anticorruption initiatives and grassroots civic education. In South Africa, OSI has helped strengthen the institutions and practices of democracy with funding for reconciliation efforts, law reform, education, and media. OSI has contributed to the building of hundreds of thousands of low-cost houses for the millions still living in apartheid-era shantytowns.

**TO ASSIST** the Burmese people in their struggle for freedom, OSI has kept an international spotlight on the authoritarian rule of Burma's repressive military government and its crackdown on political protesters. OSI has funded education and job training initiatives and aided efforts by grassroots organizations dedicated to the preservation of fundamental political and economic rights. In the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis in May 2008, OSI committed funds in an effort to funnel much-needed assistance to victims inside the country.



< freedom and  
democracy >



TO ENSURE free and fair elections, OSI supports nongovernmental organizations that work on voter education and registration, conduct exit polls, and monitor elections to expose fraud and corruption.

TO PROTECT the lives of innocent civilians fleeing armed conflict and economic deprivation, OSI for over a decade has supported humanitarian efforts and legal initiatives to help the displaced. An early proponent of the International Criminal Court, OSI has consistently advocated that states protect and respect the people under their jurisdiction.

TO HELP the victims of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, OSI provided tens of millions of dollars for humanitarian aid and relief efforts. In Sarajevo, construction crews braved sniper fire and artillery shells to restore drinking water for civilians and return electricity to the city's hospitals. OSI also donated money for seeds so the people of Sarajevo could grow food.

TO COMBAT the unfair treatment of legal immigrants in the United States, OSI has spent more than \$60 million on advocacy and assistance programs since 1997.


TO SECURE the rights of women, OSI spent more than \$30 million over eight years in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, making it the largest funder for women's rights in the region. OSI support contributed to domestic violence reform in at least 17 countries.

< human  
rights >






**TO IMPROVE** the lives and advance the human rights of the Roma, Europe's largest and most marginalized ethnic minority, OSI has been a leading supporter of Roma rights advocacy organizations and initiatives. OSI and the World Bank supported and developed the Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2005–2015, an international effort to fight discrimination against Roma and improve their living conditions through comprehensive reform across Central and South Eastern Europe. In November 2007, Europe's highest court ruled that segregating Roma students into separate schools violates fundamental human rights, marking the end of an eight-year OSI-supported legal battle.



**TO ENSURE** that all Americans have access to justice and receive equal protection under the law, OSI has spent more than \$165 million on justice projects, including efforts to improve legal aid services, advocate for sentencing and incarceration reforms, and combat racial profiling.



**TO RAISE** awareness about the humanitarian and human rights crises in Zimbabwe, OSI has supported an international advocacy campaign to end political persecution, free dissidents, and ensure that the results of the March 2008 election are respected.





< human  
rights >



**TO HELP** children succeed in school and involve parents in their education, OSI has spent more than \$110 million to establish and expand its early childhood development program in 30 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The program, which emphasizes child-centered teaching, has trained over 220,000 early childhood educators, serving over 1 million children and their families.


**TO SUPPLEMENT** Haiti's overburdened and ineffective school system, OSI established early childhood education programs and supported over 50 community libraries. Haiti has no public libraries and an illiteracy rate of over 65 percent.

**TO FUND** advanced studies as well as promote democratic values, OSI has given hundreds of millions of dollars in fellowships and scholarships. The scholarships, some with support from USAID and the U.S. Department of State, empower individuals around the world to improve the social, political, and intellectual environments of their home communities.

**TO PROMOTE** peaceful solutions in the Middle East, OSI has supported scholarships for law school graduates from the Gaza Strip or West Bank who are committed to building a democratic society based on the rule of law.



< education >




**TO HELP** train a new generation of political and economic leaders, George Soros established Central European University in 1991 as a center of research and policy analysis that promotes the principles of open, democratic societies. CEU, with an endowment of \$500 million, has educated well over 5,000 students, mostly on full scholarships.



**TO TEACH** young people critical thinking and tolerance for opposing views, OSI, starting in Central and Eastern Europe, has funded hundreds of student debate programs, involving more than 100,000 secondary students, 30,000 university students, and 20,000 teachers in 40 countries, including states in the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia.



**TO EDUCATE** future civic leaders, OSI in 2005 provided \$5 million, with USAID contributing \$10 million, for an endowment to the American University–Central Asia, a liberal arts institution in Kyrgyzstan with more than 1,100 students from 25 countries.



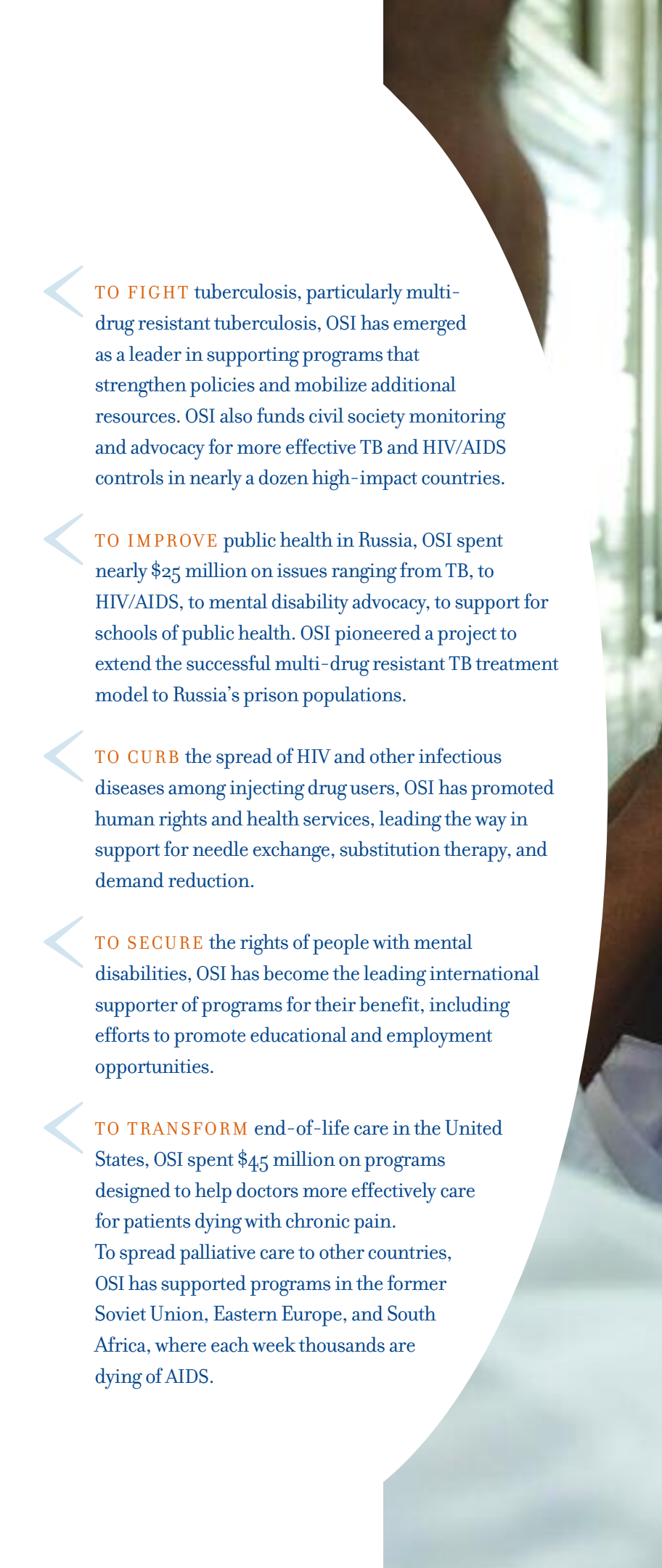
**TO HELP** inner city students in the United States benefit from learning debate, OSI has spent nearly \$12 million on high school debate programs in 15 cities. Debaters build leadership skills, improve grades, and are more likely to continue to college.

TO IMPROVE opportunities for New York City youth, OSI spent \$125 million to establish The After-School Corporation, the largest provider of after-school programs in the city. After-school programs enrich children's experiences in school and help create safe communities.

## < education >

TO REHABILITATE education in Albania, OSI began by rebuilding neglected and deteriorating schools. When an economic crisis caused violent social unrest, including the looting of schools, the 89 schools constructed or repaired by OSI with community participation escaped damage as parents rallied to protect them.

TO TACKLE the most difficult urban social problems, OSI has been working in Baltimore, Maryland, spending over \$50 million since 1998 on projects that helped boost reading and math test scores for public school students, secure funding for after-school programs for 14,000 students, double the number of people receiving drug treatment, and cut fatal overdoses to their lowest level in five years.



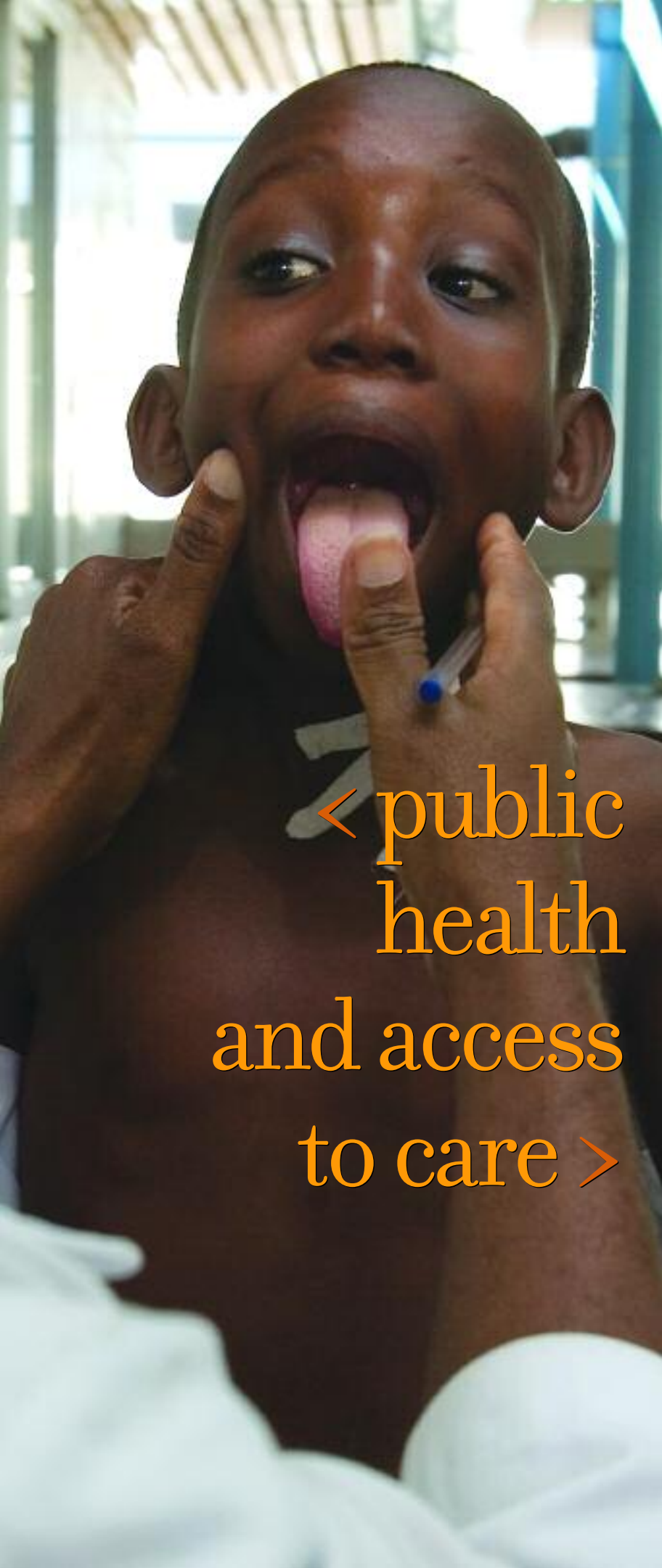
**TO FIGHT** tuberculosis, particularly multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, OSI has emerged as a leader in supporting programs that strengthen policies and mobilize additional resources. OSI also funds civil society monitoring and advocacy for more effective TB and HIV/AIDS controls in nearly a dozen high-impact countries.

**TO IMPROVE** public health in Russia, OSI spent nearly \$25 million on issues ranging from TB, to HIV/AIDS, to mental disability advocacy, to support for schools of public health. OSI pioneered a project to extend the successful multi-drug resistant TB treatment model to Russia's prison populations.

**TO CURB** the spread of HIV and other infectious diseases among injecting drug users, OSI has promoted human rights and health services, leading the way in support for needle exchange, substitution therapy, and demand reduction.

**TO SECURE** the rights of people with mental disabilities, OSI has become the leading international supporter of programs for their benefit, including efforts to promote educational and employment opportunities.

**TO TRANSFORM** end-of-life care in the United States, OSI spent \$45 million on programs designed to help doctors more effectively care for patients dying with chronic pain. To spread palliative care to other countries, OSI has supported programs in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and South Africa, where each week thousands are dying of AIDS.



< public  
health  
and access  
to care >



TO CURB corruption and ensure that citizens benefit from the natural wealth of their countries, OSI is committed to bringing about revenue and budget transparency in resource-rich countries. OSI founded the Revenue Watch Institute, which promotes international efforts calling for the disclosure of payments that oil, gas, and mining companies make to governments, and helps citizens become effective monitors of government revenues and expenditures.

TO UNDERMINE government censorship in communist Hungary in 1984, George Soros shipped photocopiers to civil society organizations in Budapest. Since then, OSI has supported independent media during the wars in the former Yugoslavia, community radio in Africa, and Internet development throughout the world as part of its larger mission to increase access to information.

TO STRENGTHEN open society values in Russia, OSI spent nearly \$1 billion, much of it on information and education programs. OSI brought Internet service to rural areas, filled the shelves of local libraries with new titles, funded the production of new textbooks, and trained teachers and university professors.

TO SUSTAIN Russian science and to prevent Russian scientists from emigrating after the collapse of communism, OSI paid approximately \$100 million to supplement their salaries. The stipends prevented thousands of scientists from leaving the country and selling their expertise, including their possession of nuclear secrets, to the highest bidders.





< transparency  
and access to  
information >

OSI's priorities in 2007 included advancing international justice and strengthening domestic justice systems, monitoring and supporting reforms in public health, advocating for transparency and the fair distribution of natural resource riches, improving the lives and securing the human rights of the Roma, and protecting the rights of other marginalized groups such as the developmentally disabled and injecting drug users.

In the face of ongoing armed conflicts across the world, OSI sought to bring to justice government leaders who commit crimes against humanity. OSI continued to support and monitor the work of special war crimes tribunals, including the permanent International Criminal Court, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the Khmer Rouge tribunal in Cambodia.

OSI joined other funders to create the European Council on Foreign Relations as an organization with the potential for developing foreign policy that promotes open society values throughout the region and the world.

In the United States, with a national debate about the use of detention and torture in the war on terrorism, OSI brought attention to how race and ethnicity have shaped attitudes and international and domestic policies from arbitrary detention to profiling to overincarceration to hostility toward immigrants.

As drug-resistant TB spread alarmingly, threatening people living with HIV, OSI stepped up pressure to link more closely TB and HIV/AIDS programs in the struggle to contain and reverse the twin epidemics. OSI increased its efforts to include human rights protections in the implementation of national and regional HIV prevention and treatment efforts. OSI also kept up support for the inclusion of civil society groups in all programs fighting TB and HIV/AIDS.

As oil prices rose to record highs, the Revenue Watch Institute, with OSI support, expanded its programs to assure that governments account for their natural resource revenues and use those funds for the benefit of the country's people.

As part of its commitment to Roma rights advocacy, OSI and the Soros foundations supported organizations and initiatives that used policy reports, environmental activism, and photography exhibits to inform the public about the importance and benefits of including Roma in mainstream society.

OSI's work in 2007 also covered education, information, media, women's rights, local government services, economic and business development, and arts and culture. Programs in education, such as early childhood education and debate, sought to promote democratic values and improve opportunities for young people.



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