



Promoting Human Rights and Minority Protection in South East Europe



SMALL GRANTS UPDATE (KOSOVO¹), FEBRUARY – JUNE 2015

The municipalities in Kosovo had a slow start due to late transfer of the project funds and political issue of blockage of municipal bank accounts in the northern municipalities in Kosovo*. Nonetheless, there is progress recorded in nearly all municipalities and some noteworthy elements of good practice coming from Rrahovec and Vushtri. The Project secretariat noted a strong involvement of NGOs in the implementation of the Project activities that can potentially hinder the capacity building element foreseen for the employees of the local governments. Nevertheless, there is a strong support and ownership in the process provided by the Steering Committee members from Kosovo*.*

Kamenica - Local Self-Government

Theme covered: Effective participation/Nondiscrimination

Affected minorities: Non majority communities

The project will support and fulfil the preparatory steps needed for the municipality to enhance capacity of non-majority communities to participate and take an active role in the cultural, social and economic life and public affairs as well to develop the cultural strategy in Kamenica. The idea is to increase contact and communication among key stakeholders (civil society organizations, municipality, local communities and school communities etc.) with regard to cultural policies, strategies and initiatives at the local level and to revitalize cultural life in Kamenica through the development of local cultural policies.

¹ All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nation's Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Municipality of Kamenica received the small grant funds later than anticipated which and affected the implementation of the planned activities. Nonetheless, the municipality task force used the time to set the foundation and organize administrative tasks before the implementation of the activities begin. The production of the bi-monthly bulletin in minority languages as well as specialized programmes on

the radio and TV are being prepared and will be organized during the next reporting period. A two-day training for members of the Committee for communities to develop strategy on minority priority infrastructure projects will be organized on 28-30 May 2015. An event to promote minority culture through national foods will be organized on 23 June 2015.

Leposavic - Local Self-Government

Theme covered: Effective participation

Affected minorities: Non majority communities

The project idea is to identify and adopt a comprehensive strategy for cultural development in municipality of Leposavic. The strategy aspires to identify the needs of inclusive cultural developments for all ethnic communities (Serbs, Albanians, Bosniaks, Roma) living in this municipality and translate them into recommendations for municipal assembly. With this objective in perspective, the project opens with initiation of dialogue between relevant representatives of these ethnic communities. The open dialogue method, which foresees the application of standard methodological tools (workshops, round tables etc) will facilitate community dialogue and consensus over the issues, principles and milestones the very strategy should contain.

Municipality of Leposavic faced an additional problem at the start of the project as the bank accounts in North Kosovo* were frozen for a period of time due to political crisis at the central level. This issue has been resolved at present and the municipality task force can proceed with the activities as planned. Even without access to the funds, the municipal task force (heavily supported by an NGO (AKTIV), organized a

workshop for municipal authorities and ethnic representatives on "Minority Rights and Cultural Development on 15th April 2015. The active participation of representatives from several minority groups indicated the interest of the minority populations in this field. Preparations for the Etno fest to be held in July 2015 are in progress.

Rahovec - Local Self-Government

Theme covered: Culture

Affected minorities: Roma, Ashakli and Egyptians (RAE)

The project aims to implement the Action plan for the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The Action plan is approved by the municipality structures, and thus this project foresees implementation of different activities aiming to improve the life conditions of these communities.

The small grant in Rrahovec is on a good track. The Municipality formed a Municipal Commission composed of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian representatives as well as representatives of the Municipal Centre for Employment. This Commission will supervise the implementation of the training courses offered through the small grant project. The activities foreseen within the small grant project will support the implementation of the Action Plan for the integration of the RAE communities already approved by the Municipality. The municipal task force organized a number of meetings to promote the trainings and qualification courses. These efforts have been also supplemented by the production of leaflets promoting and advertising this activity. At the moment there are three candidates being trained

to become hairdressers, three candidates for welders, three cooks and one greenhouse gardener. Their training started on 15th March 2015 and will finish with certificate award ceremony in mid-June 2015.



Young trainees attending courses in Rrahovec

Vushtrri - Local Self-Government

Theme covered: Effective participation

Affected minorities: Non majority communities

The project aims to enhance the capacities of non-majority communities, civil society and municipality through different activities, in order to draft the municipal strategy for non-majority communities. This strategy will be drafted and implemented in collaboration with the civil society. Through this project, the municipality has foreseen to invest in sports and recreation activities equipment in mixed areas and non-majority communities.

The functional project task force in Vushtrri is composed of 10 members, representing all communities living in the municipality. The municipal task force met with the Mayor, heads of departments and civil society representatives to present the small grant idea and involve them into the grant implementation. A three day workshop on “Enhancing participation of non-majority communities in decision making processes” was organized in Durres on 26-29 March 2015. The participants in the workshop spanned from the members of municipal administration, municipal assembly representatives to Kosovo* Police, civil society, etc. Based on the results of the workshop, the Municipality of Vushtrri formed a Commission to design and draft a municipal strategy for non-majority communities in Vushtrri. The Commission will work from April to July 2015 and will organize public debates, round table discussion and other activities aiming to help the adoption of the strategy.