



Promoting Human Rights and Minority Protection in South East Europe

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SMALL GRANTS UPDATE (MONTENEGRO), FEBRUARY – JUNE 2015¹

The implementation of the project activities in Montenegro is proceeding according to plan, although some delays were experienced in Bijelo Polje, where implementation could not start before the local government was cleared out of bankruptcy. Tivat local government organized an awareness raising campaign and identified premises for the new Information Center; Plav local government purchased and installed simultaneous translation equipment to be used during the municipal assembly sessions and has begun the translation of the relevant municipal documents. In addition, Kotor local government issued three magazines under the project and promotion activities are planned for the forthcoming period. JP Minority Project Secretariat has noted that in some cases (Kotor) the respective local NGOs are very much engaged in the planning and implementation of the small grants, and thus driving the process, and the respective local governments are taking a much more modest role.

¹ Please note that the project implementation in all municipalities in Montenegro (except for Bijelo Polje) was delayed due to the unresolved issue of VAT eligibility. After failing in their efforts to exempt themselves from the VAT, the selected municipalities agreed to cover the VAT costs from their own funds.

Bijelo Polje - Local Self-Government

Field: Culture

Key minority engaged: Bosniaks

The project aims to promote and affirm the culture and traditions of the Bosniak national minority with the active participation of civil servants and the local self-government bodies. The project will support scientific and expert meetings that deal with international and national mechanisms for the protection of national minorities and Bosniak contemporary literature.

Bijelo Polje local government is implementing a project to promote the rights of the Bosniak national minority in the municipality, by organizing two thematic roundtables to discuss minority rights and the existing position of the national minorities and possible approaches to promoting minority culture, tradition and literature within the municipality. The local government will improve the availability of

minority literature in the municipal library and purchase a number of books by Bosniak authors. Unfortunately, the local government being in a state of bankruptcy delayed the start of the implementation of the small project, however this was resolved at the end of May, and the implementation is now proceeding according to the plan.

Kotor - Local Self-Government

Field: Media

Key minority engaged: Croats

The project idea provides for the use of Croatian language in printed media, in particular - Hrvatski glasnik magazine that promotes cultural heritage and events organised by the members of the Croatian national minority in Montenegro.

Kotor local government is implementing a project to promote the use of minority languages, by supporting the publication of the Croatian language magazine 'Hrvatski Glasnik'. Three editions have already been published, and the next edition will mark the anniversary of the establishment of the Association of Croats in Kotor. The representatives of the local government and Croatian national minority will participate in cultural events in Zagreb and Split, with the aim to exchange experience and build relations with local governments and associations from Croatia. The Croatian language and 'Hrvatski Glasnik' magazine will also be promoted at the municipality's traditional summer festival "Day of Kotor" The Project Secretariat noted very close involvement of NGO Hrvatsko građansko društvo and rather modest direct involvement of the municipal structures in the implementation of the small grant. We sincerely hope that as the process of planning and implementation proceeds, the municipal task force will find an appropriate means for facilitating the closer involvement and benefits for all municipal stakeholders.



Plav - Local Self –Government

Field: Official Use of Languages

Key minority engaged: Albanians, Bosniaks

The project idea will aim to improve the work of municipal services by establishing an office for translation of the main municipal documents in Albanian and Serbian languages. The project will engage local interpreters and equip conference rooms to provide translation.

Plav local government is implementing a project to promote the official use of minority languages, through the translation of municipal documents and forms to Albanian language, and the setting up of interpreter's booths inside the municipal assembly. The local government has begun the translation of documents and forms, following the purchase of the required equipment in May. Once this process has been completed, all documents will be posted on the municipal website. The website has been updated and restructured for this purpose. It is planned to organize a public event in September to promote the newly available documents. Plav municipality has recently been divided administratively to create the additional municipality of Gusinje. The majority of

Albanians living in the original Plav municipality are from communities that subsequently became part of Gusinje municipality. Plav municipality has agreed to share the translated material with the newly established municipality.



Tivat - Local Self –Government

Field: Education

Key minority engaged: Egyptians

The project idea foresees the inclusion of Egyptian and Roma children in the educational system in Montenegro through cooperation with Egyptian and Roma teaching assistants and expert teams that closely cooperate with the Counseling Office for children and parents.

Tivat local government is implementing a project to promote school enrollment and attendance of children from the Roma and Egyptian national minorities, through supporting the deployment of education mediators and creating Information Spot within the local government where children and parents from the national minorities can seek advice and support. The work of the mediators and schools will be aided by a new database containing information on school enrollment and children who are outside the education system.