



**PARTNERS - ALBANIA,  
CENTER FOR CHANGE  
AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

# **Activities Report 2009**

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# PROJECTS

PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Working together to make local government more transparent and accountable	April 2008 - May 2009	British Embassy and Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Tirana	£ 49,000 and ALL 2,783,430	Municipalities of Korça, Kuçova, Rubiku, Elbasani, Municipal Unit 1 and Municipal Unit 5 in Tirana

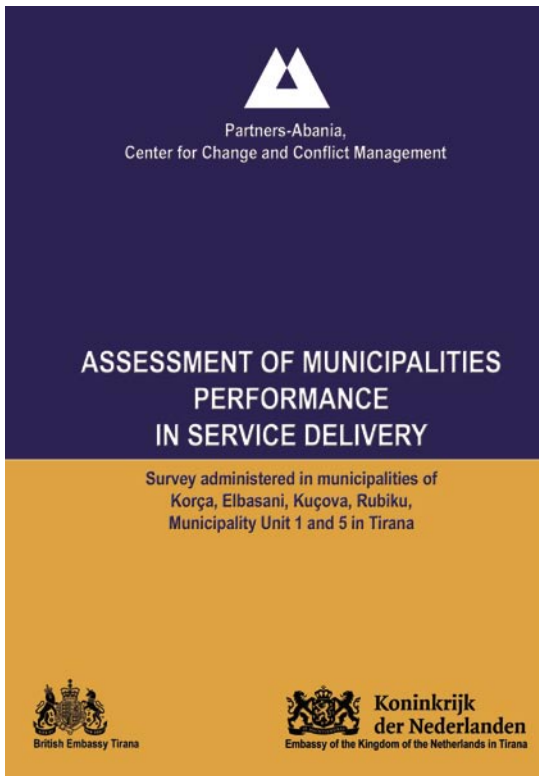
Like many other countries in transition, Albania is faced with a great need to develop and strengthen the most appropriate systems and practices to promote transparent, accountable and democratic governance that responds with ease and flexibility to the citizens' concerns. Despite the efforts made in this respect, the transparency and accountability of the elected representatives and the consultative processes still remain limited. A low turnout of citizens and interest groups and a non-systematic and instable effort in policy and decision-making processes is observed, when it comes to the fundamental issues of local governance such as priority identification, policy formulation, development and information strategies and service monitoring.

In order to respond to these needs, Partners-Albania launched this project, the goal of which was *the development and dissemination of means and new ways to increase the accountability and transparency of local employees as well as curing and prevention of corruption and bribery at the local level.*

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS	
<b>Objective 1</b> Proposal of innovative methods to address corruption issues, to open dialogue and to propose reforms for reducing corruption at the local level	
ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drafting, publication and distribution to all local government units of the practical guide <i>"Restore the health of your organization"</i> to cure and prevent corruption within local governments and local communities</li> <li>Drafting of a tailored training manual for the local government units on <i>"How to cure and prevent corruption at the local level"</i></li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2</b> Building and strengthening of the local government capacity to adopt and implement comprehensive plans to prevent and fight corruption over the next three years	

<p>ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building the capacity of 51 mayors and heads of communes, members of the municipal councils and employees of the municipalities of Tirana, Korça, Saranda, Kuçova, Pogradeci, Elbasani, Rubiku, Kruja, Durrësi, Municipal Units no. 1, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11 in Tirana and the communes of Kashar and Peza through three training programs on <i>“Increasing the level of interest of the local elected representatives in curing and preventing corruption”</i></li> <li>• Strengthening the capacities of the pilot municipalities, based on the current needs assessment and the training of their staff in drafting communication strategies, establishing and running the information office, improving internal procedures, enhancing their capacity to administer and conduct internal monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3</b> Increase of the accountability of the local government by making the activity of the institutions and the representatives at this level more transparent, by reducing the chances for corruption to infiltrate</p>	
<p>ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of the actual situation and specific needs through conducting a survey with 600 questionnaires in the municipalities of Korça, Elbasani, Kuçova, Rubiku, Municipal Units no. 1 and 5 in Tirana, on <i>“Monitoring the performance of municipalities in delivering services to the citizens”</i></li> <li>• Analysis of findings and identified needs and their sharing and public disclosure at the local level with the municipal leaders and staff involved in the project, through the organization of five round tables</li> <li>• Identification of achievements and challenges and public disclosure in the national seminar <i>“Local government transparency in service delivery”</i>, with the participation of approximately 47 representatives of local government, civil society, donors working in the area of good governance and anticorruption</li> <li>• Publication of the survey in Albanian (circulation of 1000 copies) and English (circulation of 200 copies)</li> <li>• Distribution of the survey in 102 local government units (municipalities, communes and regions), associations of local authorities, NPOs and donor community</li> <li>• Provision of information and raising of awareness of the local government units and citizens through 2000 leaflets and 1000 posters distributed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4</b> Transfer of knowledge, best practices and experiences on the fight against corruption to the pilot municipalities</p>	
<p>ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange and sharing of best practices on the prevention of corruption among 109 local government and civil society representatives in four regional workshops in the cities of Korça, Kuçova, Rubiku and Elbasani</li> <li>• Analysis, presentation and dissemination of successful experiences of the pilot municipalities in this project at a national workshop attended by 40 senior representatives of these municipalities, associations of local authorities, NPOs, donor community and national media</li> <li>• Introduction of best practices in fighting corruption at the local level and their promotion through five articles published in the national media and local newspapers such as “Ballkan,” “Tribuna Qytetare,” Journal of the Association of municipalities, “Vëzhguesi” and television chronicles and programs on Top Channel, News 24 and A1, Korça TV, Egnatia TV etc.</li> </ul>

## British Ambassador Mr. Fraser Wilson and Vice Ambassador of the Royal Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Mrs. Ardi Stoios-Braken address the National workshop





PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Improving Performance and Accountability in Local Government with Citizen Participation	April - October 2009	Local Government Program for Albania, USAID	ALL 1,748,250	Municipality of Lezha

In the framework of the decentralization process, several reforms and initiatives have been undertaken to adapt the local government system as well as to build the capacity of the public administration to cope with the challenges arising from these changes. However, the civic education on the rights and responsibilities to participate in governance and the capacity of the administration to apply participatory governance methods still show low levels.

In most cases, projects aimed at participatory governance through advanced experiences were not driven by the needs of the beneficiaries. Therefore, the sustainability of the results and the continuity of the project have encountered challenges and require a more serious commitment from the local elected representatives.

*The goal of this project initiated by Partners-Albania was to encourage transparency and develop accountability towards citizens in the delivery of public services at the local level in Lezha municipality.*

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS	
<b>Objective 1</b> Build capacities of the government officials to meet citizen's needs toward improved service delivery at local level	
ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction and discussion on the successful experiences of Korça, Durrësi, Elbasani, Rubiku and Kuçova municipalities regarding transparency and accountability at the round table <i>"Innovations in accountability and transparency of local government through citizen participation"</i>, attended by 20 municipal officials of Lezha</li> <li>• Strengthening the capacity of approximately 45 employees of the municipality of Lezha through three training programs: "Participatory governance," "Code of Ethics for local government" and "Increasing the interest of elected leaders in fighting corruption"</li> <li>• Building capacities and skills of employees in the municipality of Lezha through direct technical assistance in drafting the Code of Ethics, as well as an action plan to improve municipal performance in the area of transparency, accountability and internal monitoring and evaluation of the complaint system</li> </ul>

## Objective 2

Development of mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the success of the good governance procedures at the local level

### ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

- Assessment of citizen participation in the decision-making processes through a study conducted with 52 interviews and questionnaires with different actors of the local government, public institutions and civil society organizations in the municipality of Lezha
- Drafting of the Code of Ethics for the municipality of Lezha by its own representatives with the assistance of Partners-Albania experts
- Endorsement of the Code of Ethics and its entry into force for implementation
- Introduction and promotion of the Code of Ethics through publication (circulation of 100 copies) and its distribution to the representatives of local government and other institutions at the local level
- Drafting and endorsement of the action plan to increase transparency and accountability

## Objective 3

Using of experiences and models designed to advocate for further action to increase transparency at local level

### ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

- Presentation and analysis of best practices on civic participation in the decision-making processes and increase of the accountability and transparency of local officials among 28 representatives of local government in a workshop organized in Lezha to this end



**Mr. Viktor Tushaj, Mayor of Lezha, in the round table with municipal staff, civil society representatives and local media**





PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Towards a more accountable and transparent local government in Albania	June - December 2008	United States of America Embassy in Tirana	\$18,900	Municipality of Durrësi Municipality of Kruja

The project was initiated based on a thorough analysis of the results of previous projects implemented by Partners-Albania and other local organizations. This analysis showed that the participatory techniques were used only to design different strategies and there were no initiatives at the local level to monitor their implementation. It was also observed that no capacities existed at the local level to monitor the implementation of strategies and other programs. The selection of the municipalities of Durrësi and Kruja was based on the results of the initiative “I support good governance,” implemented during the campaign for the local elections of 2007. During the implementation of this initiative, the interest groups had expressed their willingness to monitor the implementation of the local strategies.

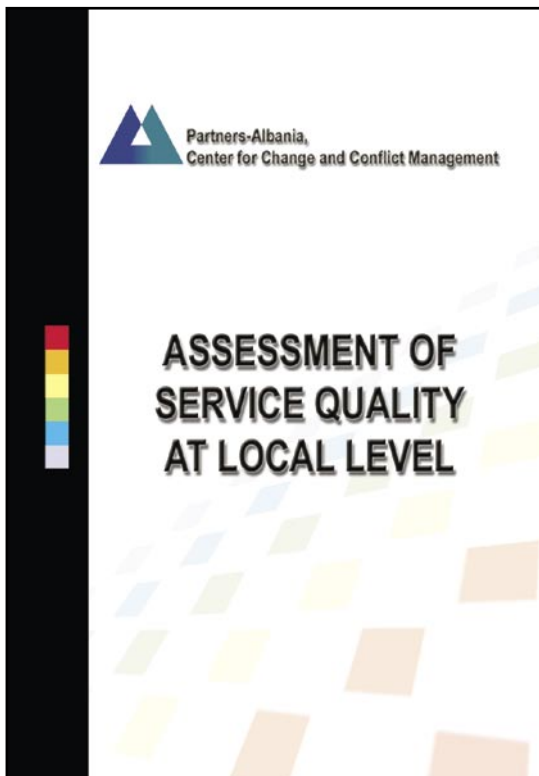
*The main goal of this project was to promote the enforcement of good governance and improve it by making governance more effective, more accountable and more transparent.*

The novelty of this project consisted in building the local capacity and the local expertise to monitor the daily activities of the municipalities through the implementation of new participatory techniques and by building and empowering sustainable networks at the local level among the civil society, business community and local government.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS	
<b>Objective 1</b> Increasing the knowledge of civil society organizations, local government and business community to monitor and evaluate services provided by the local government units	
ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening the capacities of about 90 representatives of the civil society and local government in the municipalities of Durrësi and Kruja on the tools and techniques for monitoring and evaluation, participatory governance, advocacy and lobbying at local level</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 2</b> Establishment of permanent monitoring mechanisms with the involvement of the civil society organizations, citizens, business community and media	
ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of the quality of services delivered in the municipalities of Durrësi and Kruja, from the perspective of the citizens of these municipalities</li> <li>Conducting the survey “<i>Assessment of service quality at local level</i>”</li> <li>Dissemination of findings and their public dissemination through the publication of the survey in Albanian and English (circulation of 400 copies)</li> <li>Recognition and discussion of the findings of the study in two roundtables with 37 representatives from the municipalities and local NPOs</li> <li>Drafting and distribution of a manual for the management of the information office in the municipalities of Durrësi and Kruja</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3</b> Promotion of civic engagement through enabling civil society organizations to interact more effectively and actively with the local government officials (elected representatives and administrative staff)	
ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporation of some of the priorities identified by the citizens into the drafting of the 2009 budget in the municipalities of Durrësi and Kruja</li> <li>Incorporation in the investment plan of projects aimed at improving the situation of service provision, based on the findings of the “<i>Assessment of service quality at local level</i>” survey</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 4</b> Increase of local government accountability through the increase of the transparency of operations and reduction of opportunities for corruptive practices	
ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement of the operation procedures in the citizen information office in the municipality of Kruja</li> <li>Reflection of citizens needs in the investment plan and amendments to the fiscal package in the municipality of Durrësi, based on the survey’s conclusions</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 5</b> Enhancing of the debate on improvement of the performance of local government work in Albania through advocacy campaigns	
ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation and analysis of the level of transparency towards citizens, as well as the tools and methods used by the municipalities of Durrësi and Kruja to this end, in two regional workshops with 44 representatives of local government and civil society</li> </ul>

Discussing the survey findings with representatives of municipalities and civil society  
in Durrësi and Kruja



PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Monitoring of the parliamentary elections 2009	April - June 2009	Open Society Foundation for Albania	\$ 22,000	65 municipalities and 114 communes

The monitoring of the election processes is a right and obligation, which stems from many international conventions and laws, as a further guarantee for free and fair elections. Over these last 18 years, elections in Albania have been observed by a large number of local observers, among which is worth pointing out the monitoring process for the 2005 parliamentary elections and 2007 local elections. These elections were monitored by the Coalition of Domestic Observers with the financial and technical support of Partners-Albania, as part of the Democracy and Governance in Albania program, financially supported by USAID.

Given the above experiences, Partners-Albania in partnership with the Coalition of Domestic Observers organized and supported the efforts to monitor the parliamentary elections of June 2009.

*The project aimed at monitoring the 2009 parliamentary elections and increasing the role of civil society in order to achieve a free and fair electoral process.* These were the first elections monitored by the Coalition of Domestic Observers, outside the framework of support by a foreign aid program in the country. For the first time, the monitoring was an entirely Albanian product, coordinated by Partners-Albania.

As part of this effort, it was successfully introduced the reporting via SMS by the observers in the field, their recording in a database and the generation of reports in real time. The idea and technical solution for this form of reporting was designed and managed by Partners-Albania, as part of a joint monitoring initiative with the organizations of the Coalition of Domestic Observers. This aspect of monitoring the elections was made possible through the financial support of the Open Society Foundation for Albania, SOROS.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS	
<b>Objective 1</b> Recruitment of a committed group of observers to monitor the election process, guided by the principles of impartiality and political independence, objectivity, transparency and accountability in respect of all principles of democracy	
ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of 2,675 observers, of whom 2,537 were short-term and 138 were long-term observers</li> <li>Accreditation by the Central Election Commission of 2,300 short-term observers and 138 long-term observers</li> <li>Establishment of a database at national level containing all the necessary information on the short and long-term local observers</li> </ul>



## Objective 2

Strengthening the capacities of the local observers to enable the implementation of a professional, politically impartial and effective monitoring process in compliance with the requirements of the new legal framework

### ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

- Preparation of the manual for reporting via SMS in real time and building the capacities of 50 trainers, who in turn trained the groups of observers in the 12 Qarks of the country
- Strengthening the capacities of the local observers through 146 intensive training sessions organized throughout the country on the Electoral Code of the Republic of Albania and the guidelines of the Central Election Commission regarding the voting and counting procedures and the announcement of results; the Code of Ethics and professionalism during monitoring, reporting via SMS

## Objective 3

Monitoring of the process and dissemination of information in real time on the progress of the election process in the 12 Qarks of the country

### ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

- Monitoring of the election process on the election day in 2,143 polling stations and of the counting process in 66 counting stations in 12 Qarks
- Establishment of the Operation Center for communication with the local observers and the processing of information sent via SMS
- Processing of over 10,000 SMSs
- Dissemination of information in real time on the monitoring process through five press conferences on the election day
- Dissemination of information on the counting process, its progress and standing issues through two press conferences

## Objective 4

Issuing of an alternative report by the Coalition of Domestic Observers

### ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

- A preliminary report on the 2009 parliamentary elections compiled and issued on the election day, June 29, 2009
- A final report on the 2009 parliamentary elections issued on September 4, 2009



## Work at the Operation Center during the reporting hours from the observers in the field



## Mr. Bruce George, Head of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly delegation visits the Operation Center





PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Enhancement of women's role in governance	April - October 2009	OSCE with the financial support of the Royal Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Swedish International Development Agency	€ 32,658	Tirana, Shkodër and Vlora

The low level of women participation in politics and decision-making throughout the country is closely linked to the political, social, cultural and economic development of Albania. Some of the main obstacles affecting the lack of participation or withdrawal of Albanian women from politics are the cultural context, stereotyping of politics as a male domain, negative context surrounding the Albanian politics, family responsibilities, lack of social support, lack of financial support, lack of support from family members, lack of support from the party leaders, who represent also the non-favorable and often also the prohibitive policies within the structures of the entire political organization at the local and central level.

*The goal of this project was to empower and support women who are active in politics, civil society, public administration and business, to strengthen their leadership skills and increase their role in local and central decision-making. The project implemented by Partners-Albania is part of the three-year program "Strengthening the Role of Women in Governance" initiated by OSCE and supported by SIDA and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.*



**Participants in the program drafting their strategies of the work in public**



## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS

### Objective 1

Increasing the capacities of active women in politics, civil society, public administration and business community to establish coalitions, promote and advocate for women's participation in decision-making at the local and central level

#### ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

- Identification of about 43 girls and women, representing the political parties, civil society, public administration and business community, selected through an open application process and meetings with the parties across the political spectrum (SP, DP, HRUP, RP, SDP, SMI, DAP)
- Strengthening of their advocacy capacity and development of effective messages, through three regional training programs organized in Tirana, Shkodra and Vlora
- Strengthening of their capacity to promote the role of women in governance and their skills in public speaking and media relations through three regional training programs organized in Tirana, Shkodra and Vlora

### Objective 2

Increase the capacities of girls and women candidates in the elections of June 2009 to mobilize constituencies and organize effective electoral campaigns

#### ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

- Building knowledge and skills of 16 girls and women candidates and representatives of the various political parties in mobilization of voters in the electoral campaign, use of innovative tools and methods for a more effective election campaign through an intensive training program
- Strengthening of the personal skills, decision-making and leadership skills of 16 girls and women candidates and representatives of the various political parties through individual and group assistance by international and local experts on gender issues and the role of women in policy-making.



President of the Republic, Mr. Bamir Topi deliver certificates to the program participants

PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Improving the women's visibility and outreach at local and central level	November 2009 - May 2010	OSCE with the financial support of the Royal Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Swedish International Development Agency	€ 23.910	4 regions Fier, Vlorë, Gjirokastrë dhe Berat, including the Municipalities of Lushnja, Fieri, Ura Vajgurore, Berati, Kucova, Rroskoveci, Patosi, Vlora, Orikumi, Ballshi, Tepelena, Gjirokastra and Saranda

Despite awareness campaigns, lobbying on all levels, and changes in the electoral code for a greater involvement of women in higher levels of representation, this representation remains at low levels. This is verified in local and central level, as well as in public administration and business sector, academic levels etc.

This low representation is needed to be addressed by the girls and women in communities in which they live, as well as at the political parties' structures and forums and local and central government, aiming to change the status and balance of involvement and representation in government.

Partners Albania throughout the years has implemented a number of programs focusing on empowerment of women and its role in society, mentioning here "Women Leadership Program", training programs and technical assistance to organizations working on women's rights and gender equality etc.

Following the work in this sector, Partners-Albania since November 2009, in the framework of OSCE program "Enhancing Women's Role in Governance" started the implementation of the project "Improving the women's visibility and outreach at local and central level".

*The main goal of this initiative is to improve women visibility and outreach at local and central level through promotion of women leaders across the political spectrum, provision of a platform for mutually reinforcing networking, and encouragement of the public authorities' response to women's needs at central and local level.*

The project targets four main regions in Albania: Berati, Fieri, Vlora and Gjirokastra, including 12 main municipalities in these regions.

Organization and moderation of nine regional forums on Women Leadership and Advocacy; organization and delivery of 12 training programs on gender mainstreaming and women's rights, and organization of 24 community meetings in the cities of Lushnja, Fieri, Ura Vajgurore, Berati, Kucova, Rroskoveci, Patosi, Vlora, Orikumi, Ballshi, Tepelena, Gjirokastra and Saranda, to discuss public services provision from a gender perspective, are the main activities to be organized within this project.

Through December 2009, PA organized eight regional forums "Women Leadership and Advocacy" in Fier, Vlora, Saranda, Tepelena, Gjirokastra, Permeti, Berati and Kucova with the participation of about 140 women representatives of the local public administration, political parties, civil society, academic circles, media and business.



PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Building the capacities of civil society organizations to promote participatory consultation in policy formulation processes in Albania	November 2009 - August 2010	Balkan Trust for Democracy	\$ 24,900	At the national level

Like many countries in transition, Albania is faced with an urgent need to develop and strengthen appropriate systems and practices to promote public participation and consultation processes in order to improve the quality of the formulated policies.

The process of policy formulation in Albania is divided between the line ministries and the public institutions. However, until now, experience has shown that neither the ministries nor the other public institutions have enough capacities to carry out sustainable and regular public consultations with the civil society and interest groups. On the other hand, the civil society organizations need to develop further their advocating, cooperating and monitoring capacities in order to become a significant factor in the process of formulating the policies that affect the groups they work for. Often times, this has affected the quality of the political documents and the approved draft-laws, and also their enforcement at the local and central level.

*The main goal of this project is to raise the capacity of the civil society organizations to engage and participate more effectively in the consultation processes related to policies and strategies, and to disseminate best practices through the development of advocacy and monitoring skills.*

The project will last ten months and it will involve representatives of the civil society organizations from the north, south and middle Albania and also representatives of the public administration from the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration.

The representatives of the civil society will be trained in how to advocate and participate in the formulation of policies and also in drafting and amending of the relevant laws, which are part of the agenda of these ministries for the year 2010, while the representatives of the relevant ministries will be trained in how to include civil society in the participatory consultation processes. During the first phase of the project implementation, Partners-Albania has organized preliminary meetings with the representatives of the ministries and representatives of the civil society groups in various districts of the country to facilitate the dialogue among all stakeholders involved.

PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Monitoring the Performance of National Registration Center of Businesses	October 2009 - March 2010	Millennium Challenge Corporation, Threshold Program for Albania II, USAID	ALL 1,033,048	National Registration Center HQ and its branches in the municipalities of Tirana, Durrësi, Vlora, Fieri, Elbasani, Pogradeci, Gjirokastra, Saranda, Lushnja, Berati, Kavaja, Kruja, Lezha and Shkodra

One of the key initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy (METE) was the reform in the business registration procedures, reducing its cost to ALL 100 and reducing the time needed to register a new business to one day, combining all the registration steps - including tax registration - in a single procedure. This reform was an important step towards the overall goal of the government to improve the business climate in Albania.

The National Registration Center began its operation on September 3, 2007 and in addition to the main office in Tirana, it has 29 windows in the following municipalities: Tirana, Durrësi, Elbasani, Vlora, Korça, Shkodra, Fieri, Gjirokastra, Kruja, Rrësheni, Berati, Bulqiza, Kavaja, Lushnja, Pogradeci, Çorovoda, Librazhdi, Burreli, Bajram Curri, Gramshi, Peshkopia, Tepelena, Laçi, Lezha, Erseka, Përmeti, Puka, Saranda, Kukësi and also inside the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Tirana and Durrësi. The NRC windows in the districts have made possible for the businesses to complete all the registration procedures at the local level.

*The goal of this project is to assess the services of the NRC in terms of sustainability, quality, professionalism, transparency, fairness and effectiveness.* Partners-Albania has conducted a similar survey in February-September 2008 supported by the Millennium Challenge Corporation Threshold Program for Albania II, USAID, to assess the services of the NRC a year after its opening and operation of its first windows.

Some of the areas this project focuses on are:

- Collection of data on the NRC's performance, the experience of its clients and the perception the clients have on the NRC.
- Assessment of the NRC's interaction with the other government agencies of significant interest for the business community in Albania, such as the General Tax Directorate, Labor Inspectorate, etc.
- Monitoring of the performance and formulation of concrete recommendations for improvement of the NRC's services.

PROJECT TITLE	IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD	DONOR	BUDGET	PLACE
Logistic organization and facilitation of two trainings on investigative journalism	December 2009	Rule of Law Program for Albania/ USAID through DPK Consulting	\$ 2,700	Shkodër Vlora

Investigative journalism is a new field of journalism in Albania, which is attracting more interest every day. In Albania, the number of journalists working in this area is small, but at the same time the knowledge of journalists on the field is generally low.

In December 2009, Partners-Albania was contracted by the Rule of Law Program for Albania to handle the logistic organization and facilitate a two-day training on “Investigative Journalism” for journalists of Shkodra and Vlora region.

Participants represented 51 journalists of the local electronic and print media and correspondents of the national media in these regions. The training aimed at increasing the participants’ capacities by providing them with new tools and techniques of investigative journalism, as an effective tool of monitoring and civic engagement against corruption.

The programs were offered by a prominent Croatian expert with 30 years experience as a journalist who is licensed as an investigative journalism trainer and media consultant at international level. Partners-Albania facilitated the training by using a participatory methodology that enabled journalists to share experiences in the field of investigative journalism and discuss real cases of corruptive practices reported by the local media.



## OTHER ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

### STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN GEORGIA TO MONITOR THE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Currently, most civil society organizations in Georgia see themselves bypassed by the reform process, as often the authorities accuse them of bias and lack of professionalism. Research shows that the vast majority of civil society organizations do not have sufficient capacity to have their voice heard and influence the reform process. To date, efforts towards civic monitoring have encountered obstacles in Georgia.

Many NGOs have encountered open or passive resistance from the government authorities at all levels, particularly regarding requests for public information. However, the NGOs themselves seem very sure of the information obtained from the official sources, instead of being innovative in their approaches to verify the information through other means, particularly by involving communities at the local level.

*In order to support the NGOs in Georgia to overcome these difficulties, Partners-Albania in cooperation with Partners for Democratic Change and Partners Georgia, initiated a project aimed at increasing the knowledge and understanding of the nature and tools of civic monitoring activities, recognition of their importance for the development of the civil society in general and for addressing problems of various interest groups in particular.*

Partners-Albania conducted a needs assessment of the civil society sector in Georgia, on the citizen participation techniques to monitor and evaluate the government performance. Based on the identified needs and the interest expressed by the civil society organizations, in June 2009, Partners-Albania offered 2 two-day trainings on such techniques. The first training took place in Bakurani and was offered to a group of 15 organizations from western Georgia and the other training, which took place in Mckheta, was offered to 13 organizations from eastern Georgia.

During the training, the participants were introduced to the concept of citizen participation in the monitoring and evaluation of governance and to some practical tools and techniques to be used by the citizens and NGOs to participate more actively in decision-making policies, advocacy and monitoring of government performance. The training was focused on the participatory and monitoring techniques such as *the citizen advisory committees, citizen report card and participatory budgeting*, in order to equip participating organizations with the necessary skills to address the needs of the community and the knowledge how to use these tools effectively by adapting them to the specific needs and situations.

### ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY OF RUBIKU MUNICIPALITY

During 2009, Partners-Albania facilitated the process of drafting the Environmental Strategy of the municipality of Rubiku, in partnership with the Albanian Regional Environmental Board and the municipality of Rubiku. The drafting of the strategy was developed through a broad participatory process and the organization of a series of workshops in which the mayor of Rubiku, municipal staff, civil society organizations, intellectuals, youth, teachers and representatives of other public institutions participated.

### INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE YOUNG LEADERS OF YOUTH CENTERS IN CËRRIK AND KUÇOVA

As part of a cooperation agreement with Save the Children in Albania, the training team of Partners-Albania offered between April and May 2009, two training programs on “Training for trainers” and “Project Cycle Management” for 35 young activists from the youth centers in Cërrik and Kuçova, an initiative of Save the Children program on child protection.

The purpose of the training programs was to build the capacities of these young people, providing them with the necessary information, knowledge and skills on the issues addressed.

## **STRENGTHENING THE LOCAL CAPACITIES IN VLORA FOR FUND-RAISING AND PROJECT PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT**

In November 2009, Partners-Albania staff designed and organized a training program for 20 representatives of the civil society organizations and local authorities on fund-raising and project proposal development in Vlora municipality. Given its participation in a new set of funding schemes at the international level and also in local government programs on civil society, the local government is working to strengthen the local capacities in order to design good competitive projects and manage the funds effectively.

## **YOUTH IN DECISION-MAKING**

In the context of strengthening the leadership capacity of youth, Partners-Albania assisted the Youth Center “New Age” in Fier, providing a training program for about 50 representatives of the youth parliament and student governments to mobilize them in the decision-making processes.

## **EMPOWERMENT OF CANDIDATES OF ELBASANI DISTRICT FOR THE 2009 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS**

Partners-Albania, in support of a project implemented by the Independent Forum of Women in Elbasani, provided two training programs on the “Role of Women in Politics”, on the verge of the 2009 parliamentary elections. About 20 women and girls, representing various political parties, representatives of the municipal council of Elbasani and the commune councils of the area, were trained on their role in decision-making processes, organization of electoral campaigns, public debate, effective communication skills etc.

## **ADVANCEMENT OF GENDER ISSUES AS PART OF CENTRAL AND LOCAL POLICIES**

Partners-Albania staff has delivered various training programs and expertise on issues such as gender budgeting, gender equality and European Union, gender as part of local policies, to representatives of the public administration, local government, teachers and high school students.

Some of these programs include:

- Drafting the “Gender and career development” chapter in the gender book for teachers and secondary school students, in cooperation with the Gender Alliance for Development Center, funded by the Spanish Agency for International Development and Cooperation.
- Training program for high school teachers in the region of Shkodra, as part of the extra curricular activities for high schools in Albania, after the publication of the gender book.
- Training and expertise to the representatives of the municipality of Elbasani on “Gender budgeting,” as part of the UNIFEM Project “How to improve the policy and budgetary monitoring process from a gender perspective”.
- Training programs on “The basics of gender for the local government” in various municipalities around the country, as part of the Austrian project “Equity in Governance.” These trainings are intended to increase the skills and capacities of the Albanian municipalities in preparing plans and implementing policies that promote gender equality.

# FINANCES

## ALB BB AUDITING SH.P.K.

### Independent auditors report

To the Board of Directors  
Partners Albania  
Center for Change and Conflit Management  
for Democratic Changes

Tirana, 10 Maj 2010

Rr "Muhamet Gjolllesha"  
Pll 16/1, Shk 1, Ap 9, K5  
Tirana, Albania

#### 1. Report on Financial Statement

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Foundation Partners Albania Center for Change and Conflit Management (the Foundation), which comprise the Financial Position as of 31 December 2009 and the Statement of Total Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity and Cash Flow Statement for the year then ended and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

#### Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with National Accounting Standards approved following the Law Nr 9228 dt 29.04.2004 "On Accounting and Financial Statements" and the related changes. This responsibility includes: designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

#### Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

#### 2. Emphasis of a matter

##### a. Review of beginning balances

##### 1.1 Tangible Fixed Assets

During the period 2001-2008 the Foundation have recognized the tangible fixed assets bought in foreign currency applying the exchange rate of the end of each accounting period. This accounting treatment is Foundation brought to a continues revaluation of the ending balances in foreign currency, thus fluctuating the amount of their depreciation and consequently the foundation own funds.

The Accounting Policies the foundation applies requires the application of the historical cost for the balance sheet items note: 2 (b), accompanied from the application of the effects of foreign exchange transactions through the recognition with the spot rate of these transactions note 3.2., The changes deriving from the

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## ALB BB AUDITING SH.P.K.

correction of the application of the accounting policies above brought to an increase of the foundation own funds of Lek 6,4 Mio ( USD 67K).

We asked the management to make the necessary correction of the above, while details of these corrections are given to note 3.9.

#### 1.2 Other assets and Liabilities

During the review process we required some additional changes to the beginning balances of other assets and liabilities, which were duly done from the management for Lek 300K ( USD 3K) and explained on note 3.9

#### 1.3 Own Funds

During our review of the beginning balance a correction was needed to be done to the Foundation own funds as a result of the error on application of accounting policy as explained above. This corrections were done from the management and explained on note 3.9 of the financial statement for the amount of Lek 6 Mio 8 USD 60K).

#### 3. Review of Beginning Balances

We conducted our review in accordance with the International Standards of Auditing for the Related Services. This standard requires that we plan and perform the review to obtain moderate assurance as to whether the Beginning Balances of the period than ended 31 December 2009 of the Foundation are free of material misstatement. A review is limited primarily to inquiries of Foundation personnel and analytical procedures applied to financial data and thus provide less assurance than an audit. We have not performed an audit and, accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion in relation to beginning Balances of the period than ended 31 December 2009 of the Foundation

#### Conclusion in relation to the beginning balances

Based on our review, and the issues raised on the emphasis of a matter pghr 2.a., nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the Beginning Balances of the period than ended 31 December 2009 of the Foundation contains material misstatements

#### 4. Opinion

In our opinion, while taking into consideration the above emphasis of a matter pghr 2 and our conclusion at pghr 3., the accompanying financial statements prepared in accordance with the National Accounting Standards approved following the Law nr 9228 dt 29.04.2004 "On Accounting and Financial Statements and its changes, give a true and fair view of the financial position of Foundation Partners Albania Center for Change and Conflit Management as of 31 December 2009.

Firma : Lavdimir Fusha  
Managing Partner  
ALB BB Auditing Sh.p.k.

*[Handwritten signature]*

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