



Local Governance and Civic Engagement in Rural Russia Project

Context

Taking into consideration the successful implementation of Participatory Budgeting in Albania, URI is requested to work with the Urban Institute in Local Governance and Civic Engagement in rural Russian Project, under WB/CAF support and in close cooperation with the Russian NGO, Institute of Urban Economics.

The goal

The goal of the project is to promote more effective and equitable socio-economic development in rural communities through the improvement of formal local governance and civic engagement. The project will accomplish this by building capacity among formal and informal community leaders and helping communities to increase participation and empowerment through civic engagement. The pilot regions that are included in this project involve: PENZA (Noravchatsky, pop. 14,702; Nikolsky, pop. 12,508; Penzensky, pop. 39,103), PERM (Berezovsky, pop. 18,366; Okhansky, pop. 9,640; Cherdynsky, pop. 20,517) and Republic of Adygheya (Krasnog-vardeisky, pop. 31,536 and Maikopsky, pop. 59,658).

URI's components mainly cover

1. Development/adaptation of training materials for the local coordinators, with a particular focus on the (i) development of local budgets using new participatory budgeting techniques and incentives of the local governance legislation, and (ii) integrating into a community's life new 'rules of the game' that would allow improving public services provision (through municipal and social grants).
2. Overview of participatory planning and budgeting project and key concepts. This involved: 1 – Training for part of the 5-day workshop on general overview, intensive training, and brainstorming/work plan sessions; and Community Meeting 1 –



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Community Visioning Festival. Community meeting 1 introduced settlement community to district the Local Development Plans, derived local goals, action steps, and investment projects to help meet the requirements of current LDP and inform local budget process.

3. Performance Management and Revenue Enhancements for Improvement of Public Services Provision, including: Development of Situational Analysis – engagement of the local governments in development of an analytic framework for the picturing of the community and grounding the annual budgets. This would help Local Governments to use basic information (such as socioeconomic indicators, revenue/expenditure assessment and forecast, and performance information, i.e. citizen satisfaction ratings with current services delivery) for the realistic planning on the improvement of public services provision
 - LG/Community Training 2 – Performance Management and Revenue Enhancements.
 - Community Meeting 2 – Participatory Budgeting: Civic Engagement in Public Services Provision, which introduces the results of the Working Group's work on situational analysis, including the results of the Community Visioning Festival, to the community and begin prioritising budget choices based on this information. Community participants learn about how the budget works, revenue alternatives and their role in making things happen. The meeting especially elicit community input to

possible community contributions and solutions to realizing goals and action steps. URI also attempted to organize meetings with business leaders to see to what extent formal public-private partnership can be developed.

4. Expanding Demand-driven Services Provision: Identification of Best Practices and Scaling Up
5. Building Our Future: Service Improvement Progress and Budget 2007.

MAIN FACTS

PARTNERS:

- ✓ Charities Aid Foundation
- ✓ The Urban Institute

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About URI

Since 1999 the Urban Research Institute (URI) has been delivering big results for development projects and programmers carried out throughout Albania. Our core business focuses on community development, local government strengthening, environmental protection, decentralization, and public services. We conduct studies, lobby the government, train local government units, increase public access to information, and connect development partners. URI has worked with donors such as USAID, Swiss Cooperation, the Netherlands Embassy, UNDP, World Bank, EU, SIDA, Open Society/Soros Foundation, etc.