



## Participatory Budgeting in Albania

### Context

The World Bank, in collaboration with URI and two other Albanian NGO-s, NACSS and Co-Plan, has embarked in an initiative to support the implementation of pilot activities aimed at building a demand side for better government and strengthening city participation in the governance process in Albania. Participatory Budgeting Pilot (PBP) in Albania, was designed with the objective to improve local governance and accountability in Albania by:

- building the capacity of local government officials and civic groups to engage in consultations that are focused and goal-oriented towards solving community problems;
- and, on a pilot basis, introducing short and long term mechanisms to institutionalize citizen voice in government decision making. The long-term objective is to create opportunities for social inclusion in public decision-making.

### Activity

The PBP activity tests mechanisms that increase citizen participation in decision making in the local budget process in Albania. The desired outcome of the participatory budgeting method is to provide citizens with an opportunity to participate in the financial decision-making process of local government and test mechanisms that foster this participation. Representatives from the Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Finance, Association of Albanian Municipalities, Association of Albanian Communes, Bank staff and relevant Albanian NGOs participate in PBP through a steering committee that has been created to monitor and disseminate the lessons learn from the activities. The pilot was implemented in partnership with three local NGOs. Urban Research Institute (URI) is managing the



overall pilot and designing all major components for three LGU: Kashar, Baldushk and Prrenjas; URI has had extensive experience in facilitating citizen-local government dialogue in Albania.

### The PBP phases

- Joint Citizen-Government Budget Formulation
- Citizen Budget Monitoring and Local Government Feedback on Budget Expenditure.

The PBP entered into its second phase budget monitoring and local government feedback on budget expenditure during the period February-June 2005. Before the start of the second phase URI consultants undertook series of activities to expand the knowledge resources, and revise and improve training materials developed during the first phase of PBP. A comprehensive manual for implementing participatory budgeting in Albanian is currently developed. Meantime four local government units, two communes and two municipalities have been implementing the first and the second phases of the participatory budgeting for year 2006.

### Monitoring of the Budget Implementation and Public Works

According to the activities of the monitoring phase the monitoring group follows three main activities: (i) participate in the procurement

procedure, (ii) monitor twice the implementation of the infrastructure/ public service project implementation, and (iii) evaluate the implementation at the end of the project (public works handover). For each activity the monitoring groups complete/do the reporting. During this phase URI was focused on giving necessary assistance to elected delegates to monitor infrastructure/public services projects in three pilots localities, working closely with citizen groups and supervisors, to ensure the expected quality of the public works, and assist in the hand-over procedures.

### MAIN FACTS

#### PARTNERS:

- ✓ World Bank

#### DURATION:

April 20, 2005 - April 30, 2006

#### BENEFICIARIES:

- ✓ Local Government

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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.

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