

Study Tour: Implementation of National and Local Models of Advocacy

Participants: Elite NGO from Kosovo

Financed by: USAID Kosovo FORECAST program, that is implemented by World Learning/FORECAST (www.worldlearning.org)

Time interval: 26 April – 1 May 2010

Goal of this study tour: Exchange of successful experiences in the field of local governing, focus on the experiences of Urban Research Institute related to participatory budgeting in 8 cities of Albania as well as enhancing the collaboration across the borders.

URI proposed an integrated program based on a range of local expertise to provide key



technical inputs for advocacy and lobbying. The program was a combination of two main components:

Component 1. Capacity building: Trainings sessions were organized from the URI experts for bringing the best international and national experiences, the main concepts and the effects of advocacy and lobbying in the positive development of a community, of the participatory

budgeting and the importance of citizens' participation in decision making.

Some of the main subjects presented in the training sessions were:

- General knowledge for local governance and decentralization process in Albania
- Tools and instruments for performance and enhancement of citizens participation in decision making process;
- Budgeting process, list of priorities, monitoring and supervision of the investments with citizens participation;
- Clear examples of successful experience of URI in processes with citizens participation etc.

Component 2. Visits in the municipalities and observation on site. These visits were organized to see on site the practical implementation of the theoretical knowledge in the municipalities that have implemented successfully the projects with citizens' participation. Focus of the visits was on the meetings with municipal staff and other actors in these projects so that opinions and ideas were freely exchanged and shared in enforcing the network capabilities and raising the voice power of the civil society. At the same time meetings were organized with other NGOs that operate in Tirana in the fields of advocacy and lobbying so that they could freely discuss and learn about the best practices in these fields.



Visit in Kavaja municipality

URI in collaboration with Kavaja municipality is implementing a project “Planning of Capital Investments with Citizens’ participation”. Participants had the possibility to see how is implemented in practice the role of civil society in a part of budgeting related to capital investments. The focus was on explaining the process was related to the actors and their respective roles in each phase, such as the citizens’ role in defining the priorities for the investments based on transparent criteria of health and safety. Another important part of this project was the coordination of the strategic development plans for the city with the citizens’ requests in finalizing the budget document. Citizens are encouraged and directed to follow up and monitor the implementation of the investments selected.



Visit in Korca & Pogradec Municipalities

URI in collaboration with Korca & Pogradec Municipalities is implementing the project “Participatory Budgeting and Monitoring in Korca and Pogradec municipalities”.

Participants had the possibility to take part also in concrete meeting of the Citizens Commissions from the due course of the project and to discuss with the representatives from local staff and community the importance and advantages of a participatory process.



The integrated program of theoretical and practical experiences provided good results for the participants such as:

- Building up capacities of the participants in terms of advocacy and lobbying as this is a prerequisite in order to engage effectively in decision making process
- Provided new communication and coordination channels between community and local governing bodies to improve the quality of the services offered.
- Shared experiences in the field of social policies and raising voice of civil society as a crucial factor in bringing a change between Kosovo and Albania

This study tour conducted successfully also established the basis for mutual cooperation in the future between the two organizations.