

**PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
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**UDF-KOS-08-265 ±Empowering civil society inclusion on
democratic policy-making in Kosovo**

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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I. Executive Summary

(i)

Governmental Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society at the end of 2012. Much of that strategy is reportedly based on the contents of the manual that the project helped develop. Changed attitudes and practices are likely to be **sustainable** as long as these consultative processes remain constructive. Although the rules are changed, they still need to be implemented and many public officials, especially at municipal levels, still have the old mind-set. The Advisory Group meetings are still continuing under the CiviKos platform that was revived to replace the Advisory Group. This platform is expected to continue the NGO coordination role, at least for the near term.

KCSF did see **UNDEF value added** for this project as a distance donor that did not micro-manage its project. This gave them the flexibility to adjust the project activities in the fluid post-independence political context and to take advantage of openings and address unanticipated needs.

(iii) Conclusions

f The project's focus and activities were relevant and important given the political and democratic context in Kosovo.

f It was done at the right time when the government was in the process of updating and consolidating its national framework for democratic governance. KCSF seized this opportunity and the partnership it developed with the key officials who were driving this process and with the group of CSOs in the Advisory Group gave the reform effort structure and momentum through its regular meetings, topical workshops, training and information sharing.

f Its approach of working on both sides of the participation problem was effective and project results would not have been as great if it had only worked on one side or the other.

f The model provided by this project and others to develop constructive partnerships with government officials should be used to advance citizen participation and the democratic governance agenda.

f It should also be replicated at the municipal level .

f Civil society should actively use the openings made by the project to help ensure their implementation and continuity. Follow-on projects should build on the achievements of this project and similar initiatives, and expand the discussions to include more sensitive policies that are not now open for real discussion. This would make the consultation process more systemic and meaningful.

f The CSO coordination mechanism should also continue its structured participation with government , and expand it to bring in professional networks and business associations on areas of common interests and to strengthen the collective voice of civil society.

f The coordination group should develop a monitoring and evaluation plan to track the status of consultations, the

f

out to a select group of individuals or organizations that they knew rather than reaching out to the broader public sector or to CSOs that would be best placed to assist them.³

CSOs have two entry points in the policy making cycle in Kosovo - either at the drafting stage with the responsible ministry or agency or at the parliamentary committee stage through public hearings and debates and sometimes working groups. Civil society has had difficulty responding to these openings, generally lacking capacity, experience and/or interest to consult with government. The OSCE study found that the existing mechanisms for public consultations in the legislature were underused by CSOs. In their survey, only 14 percent of the CSO respondents had ever taken part in any stage of legislative consultations. Many of the CSOs were felt to be project-driven rather than vision driven and lack ownership for advocacy efforts. The Civicus study on CSOs in Kosovo found that the most important CSO weaknesses included a lack of motivation and information on civic engagement and they had problems responding to the critical needs of their constituents (citizens). It also found that Kosovo has low levels of interpersonal trust and high levels of citizen apathy, with enect

both CSOs and government, and widely disseminating best practices on public consultations and the benefits of a participatory, inclusive process.

As policy making in Kosovo was primarily law making, KCSF targeted the government and the legal officers within the ministries where most of the policies and legislation are drafted. It also worked horizontally at the national level to effect change at local level by working with the Ministry of Local Governance Administration, as well as on the J R Y H U Q P H Q W ¶ V U X O H V R I S that both national and municipal level officials must follow for

public consultations. It also targeted training at the legal officers at the ministerial and municipal levels who were involved in the drafting processes and in ensuring compliance with public consultation requirements. KCSF also worked primarily with CSOs advocating at the ministerial level, although it did include some local CSOs in its training and mentoring programme, providing CSO training in seven cities in three languages (Albanian, Bosnian/Serbian and Turkish languages). For coordination, it intended to build on an existing CSO forum in Pristina, the NGO Advisory Group, that had brought together CSOs advocating with the Assembly of Kosovo for legislative changes and expand it to include a broader range of CSOs and issues related to government policy making and drafting. This Advisory Group had been funded by an earlier UNDEF project implemented through the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), National Democratic Institute (NDI), and Kosovo Democratic Institute (KDI).⁴

According to KCSF the project had some implementation delays due to the political situation in Kosovo and the early elections held in December 2010. The country was without a president from September 2010 or government/assembly from October 2010 - February 2011. This put most of the activities with the government on hold even though the key officials targeted by the project were civil servants until the new government was seated. In addition, KCSF was able to have some cost-savings in the project due to use of its office facilities for meetings. These contributed to the six month no-cost time extension for the project.

⁴ UDF-KOS-07-

(ii) Logical framework

BUILDING CSO CAPACITY TO INFLUENCE POLICY MAKING

IV. Evaluation findings

(i) Relevance

The project objective and activities seemed appropriate and relevant to the Kosovar context. Kosovo is a newly independent country with an evolving legal and policy system and a pre-independence history of centralized decision making without meaningful tradition of stakeholder participation. Many of its social policies were adopted rapidly in the lead up to

The project worked with some minority groups, primarily Kosovo-Bosnian CSOs in Prizren that received coaching in August/September 2011, but it did not work with Kosovo-Serb groups as anticipated in the project document. According to KCSF, it intended to bring in a Serbian trainer from Belgrade to mentor these CSOs, but an incident of ethnic violence at the start of the project made it difficult to work with them at the time. KCSF also cited a lack of interest by Kosovo-Serb CSOs in consulting with the government so it did not pick up on these activities when the situation normalized. However, some of the project products were translated into Serbian.

(ii) Effectiveness

The KCSF strategy of working in partnership with the government and civil society to strengthen the public consultation process of government was a very effective technique and KCSF met and exceeded most of the intended outputs for the project. They had an impressive rate of participation from

Training provided by the project on the principles of public consultation, best European practices and specific advocacy steps CSOs can take, gave the Advisory Group members insight on how they could more effectively approach government and get their messages heard, while the participat

activities from other donor-funded projects to support these project activities. There was a good use of synergies between KCSF funded projects and this one, as well as with the earlier UNDEF funded project and those of other CSOs. The project budget approved by UNDEF was around USD 50,000 less than requested by KCSF. Nevertheless, there still appeared to have been ample funds to implement this project. KCSF was still able to exceed the number of activities, add two additional countries onto its study tour and hold three workshops in Albania.

At the same time, the project appeared to be well managed with an efficient use of inputs. The main activities were directly IRFXVHG RQ DFKLHYLQJ WKH SURMHFW¶V R I The KCSF staff seemed dedicated towards the purpose of the project and technically competent WR PDQDJH DQG GLUHFW D SURMHFW RI WKLV QDWXUH Executive Director also helped to ensure good relations with the government although the government officials who participated seemed to have done so out of genuine interest in the substance of the project, DQG EHFDXVH WKH SURMHFW¶V Mr ¶E MHFWLY GHSDUWPHQW¶V JRDOV

- x **Improved structure for public consultations.** The changes improved the ability of CSOs to provide input and comment on draft policies and legislation than previously and at earlier stages in the process. This will improve the enabling environment for general CSO participation

x **Increased**

Integration said he used the manual for guidance on sharing the MLQLVWU\¶V LQIRUPDWL communications strategy with civil society. He had already sent the draft to all NGOs but only one NGO had returned the draft with substantive input. These were justified and he said he

V. Conclusions

Based on the evaluation findings, the team concludes:

(i) The SURMHFW activities designed were relevant and important given the political context and democratic developments in Kosovo. Kosovo's history of centralized government left it with no consolidated tradition of open and consultative processes in government. This project supported policy-making processes and making them more open and inclusive which was needed.

VI. Recommendations

To strengthen similar projects in the future, the team recommends:

- (i) Civil society should continue to build on

UNDEF will be funding another project in Kosovo through KDI for Round 6. This project intends to increase transparency and accountability in 20 municipalities. It will do this through training and support to CSOs to monitor municipal assemblies and public administration in certain departments. KDI was a participant of the KCSF project and has incorporated a few of those elements in its proposed design. Among these is a monthly meeting of participating CSOs in Pristina and linking CSOs with officials in a final conference. In addition, the evaluators recommend that the KDI project establish regular meetings at the municipal levels to coordinate participating CSOs with other CSOs in these areas. Local officials and elected officers should be invited often

VIII. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Evaluation questions:

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>f</i> Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? <i>f</i> Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? <i>f</i> Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?

Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

19 August 2012	
Arrival, international consultant	
20 August 2012	

Annex 4 : Acronyms

BIRN	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network
CSO	Civil Society Organization
D4D	Democracy for Development (Kosovar NGO/Think-tank)
EU	European Union
KCSF	Kosovo Civil Society Foundation
KDI	Kosovo Democratic Institute
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
USD	U.S. Dollar

The terms NGO and CSO are used interchangeably in this report.