



Advocacy Training & Resource Center

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Volume IV • Issue 8 • September 2006

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New funding opportunities, news, events, trainings, etc

can be found on ATRC web site:
www.advocacy-center.org

ATRC Offers Training Services Free of Charge for Kosovo NGOs

The Advocacy Training and Resource Center (ATRC) conducted training workshops on project cycle management; project proposal writing; and introduction to advocacy and coalition building; attended by local NGO representatives on Sept. 6-8; 20-21; and Oct. 4-5.

The workshop on project cycle management covered key components of project management such as idea development, need for analysis, proposal writing, project implementation, monitoring, evaluation, budgeting and sustainability. Participants were exposed to the methodologies and tools used in successful project management.

Project proposal writing workshop covered general overview of writing project proposal including all elements of the project proposal. The methodology was based in Logical Framework Approach and it enabled participants to develop projects from ini-



A training session at ATRC on September 21

tial ideas on a problem or issue.

Whereas workshop on introduction to advocacy and coalition building informed participants about important skills necessary for advocacy work. The sessions were part of this year's workshop series.

In 2006 ATRC will offer additional training services (as listed below). Services are free of charge to Kosovo NGOs registered with ATRC. To register, NGOs should

download and complete the NGO Client Registration Form available on www.advocacy-center.org.

Upcoming 2006 ATRC training workshops are:
24-26 Oct.: NGO Management

29-30 Nov.: Project Proposal Writing

The workshops will take place at ATRC: St. Agim Ramadani, Nr.15, Prishtina.

For more information, contact 038 244 810 or e-mail training@advocacy-center.org.

This newsletter is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of ATRC and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Regional women's lobby sends letter to Martti Ahtisaari

"Supporting a Just and Lasting Solution for Kosovo"



The Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in South East Europe gave Martti Ahtisaari, UN Secretary General Envoy in Charge of the Negotiations on the future status on Kosovo, a letter supporting the independence of Kosovo at a meeting in Vienna on Sept. 11.

The letter is signed by members of the lobby, which was established following consultations among women political leaders and women's human rights activists from countries in South East Europe. The letter read:

The Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice, in its follow up meeting in Vienna on 9-10 September 2006, addressed the Vienna talks on the status of Kosovo and decided to share with you the following:

Having in mind that resolution of the status of Kosovo, as soon as possible, is an imperative for lasting regional stability;

Assessing critically important that the future status talks are not stalled by any side, which can lead to frustration;

Warning that a solution should not cause new divisions that will create further tensions down the line and prevent sustainable peace...

For the full letter, visit: www.womensnetwork.org

The role of civil society

"Civil Society Can Influence Government Decisions"

NGOs and citizens can influence decisions made by governments in administrating their countries, EU experts on civil society comment. According to them, societies aware of the influence they can have over decision-making can steer their countries away from mismanagement and curb the spread of corruption. "Any government that does not recognize that [the people's power] is doomed to fail sooner or later."

Igballe Rogova and Alban Krasniqi lead two of the largest NGO networks in Kosovo.

Rogova, director of the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN), said KWN works toward the development of a strong, transparent and effective civil society to advocate at the local and national level. She considers a new election system with open lists a new opportunity for society to influence decisions made by the government in Kosovo. "The representatives we [citizens] elect will be held responsible for their work."

Rogova believes civil society can influence government decisions, but the current government has not listened to civil society. "Civil society in Kosovo does not have the influence to change government decisions," she said.

Alban Krasniqi, chair of the Kosovo Youth Network (KYN), agreed with Rogova. While the opportunity



Kosovo Women Network has 85 member organizations of all ethnicities from throughout Kosovo

for NGOs to influence decision-making is there, they have not really succeeded in using this opportunity, he said. Future influence will depend upon democratic values and practices being incorporated into society and community support of NGOs, according to Krasniqi.

"Civil society itself is frail," he said. "And there's a lack of citizen courage to undertake actions necessary for influencing decisions made by the government."



Kosovo Youth Network is a multiethnic network that represents 124 youth centers and youth organizations throughout Kosovo

KYN has attempted to promote an active citizenship among the youth so they may play an important role in Kosovo's future developments, Krasniqi said.

Despite the limitations, numerous NGOs have influenced the government at the local and national level, especially by advocating for new laws.

KWN together with women politicians and international organizations drafted and then advocated for the adoption of the National Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality, which was adopted by the government on April 2004.

Another example is "Epoka e Re" a NGO from Deçan, which advocated for the adoption of Regulation for Public Participation and Consultation in Decision-Making at the local level. It was adopted by the Municipality Assembly on May 2003.

The Kosovo Women's Network serves, protects and promotes the rights of women and girls in Kosovo. It advocates on behalf of women at the local, regional and international level; and has 85 member organizations of all ethnicities from throughout Kosovo, making it one of the largest functioning networks in the region.

For more information, see: www.womensnetwork.org

The Kosovo Youth Network is an independent, multiethnic network that represents 124 youth centers and youth organizations throughout Kosovo. It aims to develop the capacity of youth to better address their needs and become effective actors in a free, open, democratic society in Kosovo.

For more information, see: www.kosoyouth.net

EU, NGOs Debate Financial Regulations



The EU's Financial Regulation contains all the rules relating to EU grants which are made to NGOs. Many social NGOs, at the European and national levels, have long felt that the EU's grant-funding process should be made more efficient, less bureaucratic, and more effective in achieving the EU's aims.

In order to make positive suggestions, the Social Platform, together with the European Policy Centre, and the European Women's Lobby, has commissioned a study examining the financial regulation and making detailed proposals to improve the relationship between NGOs and the European Commission.

The 90-page report states "The creative partnership between NGOs and the European Commission is being jeopardized by the too rigid application of the regulations which govern the financing of NGO activities. The commission has overemphasized adherence to procedures at the cost of damaging the effectiveness of their programs, spending a great deal of money on unnecessary and ineffective bureaucracy. The Commission could have avoided many of the problems caused by their Financial Regulations had they consulted NGOs. Now that the regulations are being revised they are at risk of compounding their mistakes by once again not consulting with NGOs."

You can read an advance copy of the report by visiting: <http://www.socialplatform.org/module/FileLib/StrikingaBalance.pdf>

Regional conference on EU financial assistance for the Western Balkans

Kosovo Learns from Regional Experiences about the Process of EU Integration

Municipality officials and representatives of international and local organizations discussed the advancement of local governance in Kosovo and EU integration during a two-day conference in Prishtina on 7-8 Sept. entitled "EU financial assistance for the Western Balkans - opportunities for Local Governments."

Representatives from the governments of Slovenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Albania and Macedonia, participated as well, sharing experiences from their countries' EU integration processes.

Linda Bunjaku from the Community Development Fund stressed the importance of discussing European integration. "The EU has opened its doors to the Western Balkans, and this is a big step toward the



Participants discuss the advancement of local governance and EU integration on 7-8 Sept, Prishtina

whole region integrating into a high standard union," she said.

Through regular dialogue and financial support from the EU, Kosovo is gradually advancing on the European agenda, Aziz Lila, deputy minister of local government, said.

The Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) organized this conference in part-

nership with the Ministry of Local Government and with support from the Community Development Fund (CDF), the European Commission Liaison Office to Kosovo and United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

For further information, contact office@kcsfoundation.org

NGO initiated roundtable discussion

Civil Society Demands Municipality of Prishtina Organize Public Debates

The Kosovo Democratic Institute (KDI) organized a roundtable discussion about the work of the Municipality of Prishtina, which brought representatives from the municipality, political parties and civil society to ATRC on Aug. 30.

Through the meeting, organizers hoped to discuss ways to improve cooperation between legislative and executive bodies in Prishtina municipality.

Representing the political opposition Shemsi Veseli, a municipal councilor from



Municipality, political parties and civil society discuss the work of the Municipality of Prishtina on Aug. 30 at ATRC

the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) criticized the executive body's lack of accountability to the legislature. "The Municipal Assembly does not moni-

tor the work of the executive body," he said.

Civil society representatives also complained that the Municipality of Prishtina does not organize public debates about issues affecting its citizens.

The Kosovo Democratic Institute is a NGO that monitors the work of the legislature and uses this information to advocate on specific issues.

For more information, contact kdi.kosova@gmail.com



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Civil Society Discusses Effective Partnerships for Human Security and Sustainable Development at UN 59th Annual NGO Conference

More than 2,500 representatives of NGOs and other civil society activists from more than 90 countries gathered at United Nations Headquarters in New York to discuss the unfinished business of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. They met from 6 to 8 September at the annual three-day gathering, organized by the UN Department of Public Information in partnership

with associated NGOs. The conference focused on Effective Partnerships for Human Security and Sustainable Development.

As an annual meeting of NGOs, civil society and the private sector with UN representatives, the conference provided a forum for networking and exchange of best-practices on relevant issues.

It has supported strategic partnership-building by in-

viting representatives of member states to engage in dialogues with conference participants. This year it provided a policy-building forum for NGO collaboration with the UN.

A website dedicated to the conference is available at <http://2006.undpingoconference.org>.

Source: UN Department of Public Information



New UN Guidelines Put Civil Society on the World's Economic Map

Early results from the adoption of new United Nations reporting guidelines reveal that the worldwide nonprofit sector is far larger and more dynamic than previously recognized, a Johns Hopkins University professor reported on Sept. 6 at the 59th Annual UN NGO Conference.

Issued in 2003, the new UN Handbook on Nonprofit

Institutions in the System of National Accounts calls on national statistical agencies to document explicitly the size and economic importance of civil society, philanthropy, and volunteering for the first time, and countries are responding energetically to this call, professor Lester Salamon said. Salamon is director of the Center for Civil Society Stu-

dies at the Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, which developed the Handbook in collaboration with the UN Statistics Division and is now spearheading implementation efforts.

"Thanks to new data, nonprofit organizations are gaining new visibility and credibility around the world," Salamon said.

The UN Nonprofit Handbook Project

The UN Nonprofit Handbook Project seeks to improve the treatment of nonprofit, or civil society, organizations in national economic statistics. A major barrier to improved understanding of the nonprofit sector is the lack of basic statistics on the scope, structure, financing, and activities of this set of organizations.

National economic statistics do not now count the work of most volunteers. This makes it difficult to gain a comprehensive view of the scale and contributions of nonprofit organizations.

For further information on the UN Nonprofit Institutions Handbook and on the results of implementation to date, visit <http://www.jhu.edu/ccss/unhandbook>.

Source: Center for Civil Society Studies at the Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies