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CIVIKOS



**SUMMARY REPORT
OF THE ACTIVITIES
FOR CIVIKOS PLATFORM
2021**



CONTENT

6	LIST OF ACRONYMS
7	INTRODUCTION
9	1. CIVIKOS WORK FACING WITH COVID-19 PANDEMIC
9	1.1 Cooperation with the United Nations Kosovo Team and the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce
9	1.1.1 New Reality (Realiteti i ri) Platform
10	1.1.2 Health Scanning and on-the-job safety and health trainings
11	1.1.3 Recommendations for Kosovo institutions and promotion of mass vaccination
12	1.2 The #NiseMuhabetin project and campaign
14	2. CIVIKOS PLATFORM SECRETARIAT SERVICES FOR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS
14	2.1 Information session: Annual reporting of NGOs to TAK and other tax obligations
15	2.2 Findings of the EU report on Kosovo 2021
16	3. COOPERATION CIVIL SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT
16	3.1 Regular meetings with the Office for Good Governance
16	3.2 Council for cooperation between Government and Civil Society
16	3.2.1 Objective 1: Increasing the participation of civil society in policy-making
17	3.2.2 Objective 2: Improving institutional framework for sustainable Funding of CSO programs and projects in the public interest
17	3.2.3 Objective 3: Developing Policies and Procedures for contracting CSOs for the provision of public services
19	3.2.4 Objective 4: Increasing volunteering in programs of public interest
20	3.2.5 Closing meeting of the Council for Cooperation between Government and Civil Society
20	3.2.6 Framework for improving the implementation of minimum standards for public consultation for the period 2021 - 2025

21	4. ADVOCACY AND COOPERATION WITH PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS
21	4.1 Grant scheme for public procurement monitoring at local level
21	4.2 Facilitate the selection of members from civil society in various public bodies
22	4.3 Cooperation with the Information and Privacy Agency
23	4.4 Memorandum of Understanding between CiviKos, Press Council and Kosovo Prosecutorial Council
23	4.5 Information panel on formalization of workers and tax evasion in Kosovo
24	5. OTHER ACTIVITIES AND COOPERATIONS
24	5.1 Activities within USAID TEAM
24	5.1.1 Workshop on applicable learning in public procurement monitoring
25	5.1.2 Infographics published by beneficiary organizations
26	5.1.3 Capacity building of organizations from the northern region in public procurement monitoring
26	5.1.4 Platform Monitor-Report (Monitoro-Raporto)
27	5.1.5 Recognition of Competence in Public Procurement Monitoring
28	5.2 Addressing NGO challenges and problems with commercial banks in Kosovo
28	5.3 Capacity building of local organizations on human rights advocacy
28	5.3.1 Human rights workshops
29	5.3.2 Establishing Human Rights Hub
29	5.3.3 Conference ‘The Role of Civil Society in Human Rights Advocacy’
30	5.4 CiviKos Cooperation with International Visegrad Fund
31	5.5 Activities within the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE)
31	5.5.1 Focus group
31	5.5.2 Conference
32	5.6 Discussion with Simon Panek, founder of People in Need

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CiviKos	CiviKos Platform
CSO	Civil Society Organization
KCSF	Kosovo Civil Society Foundation
OGG	Office of Good Governance
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
UNKT	United Nations Kosovo Team
MLGA	Ministry of Local Government Administration
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
TEAM	Transparent Effective and Accountable Municipalities
UNKT	UN Kosovo Team
KCC	Kosovo Chamber of Commerce
WHO	World Health Organization
TAK	Tax Administration of Kosovo
EU	European Union
OGG	Office for Good Governance
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
TACSO	Technical Assistance for Civil Society
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
OGP	Open Government Partnership
PQH	Partneriteti për Qeverisje të Hapur
KPC	Kosovo Prosecutorial Council European
ECNL	Center for Not-for-Profit Law
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
IDSCS	‘Societas Civilis’ Institute for Democracy
V4	International Visegrad Fund
COFOE	Conference for Future of Europe
FES	Friedrrieh Ebert Stiftung
PIN	People in Need

INTRODUCTION

The work of the CiviKos Platform during 2021 was focused on implementation of activities aimed at increasing cooperation with member organizations, promoting the work of member organizations, as well as networking between organizations acting at local level with public authorities.

In addition to the membership component, CiviKos has collaboratively worked to strengthen the role of the Council for Cooperation between Government and Civil Society. This efforts of CiviKos was intended to reinvigorate the Council, aiming to energize the work of this mechanism after impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had.

During 2021, CiviKos took a step further by initiating cooperation with private sector through a close partnership with the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce. This cooperation has further expanded CiviKos's mission in order to diversify partners by bringing new stakeholders to the stage and serving as a bridge between the public and private sector.

All the activities below reflect the efforts made by the secretariat to serve member organizations, but also to create an environment as favorable as possible for the functioning of civil society in Kosovo - the latter carried out in close cooperation with member organizations, and civil society representatives part of the Council for Cooperation between Government and Civil Society.

CiviKos appreciates all member organizations for their trust and cooperation, and welcomes new organizations that have joined us, to further strengthen this platform. Appreciation is also to the public authorities who have shown a solid level of cooperation - especially the Office of Good Governance (OGG/OPM). CiviKos is grateful to the donors who have trusted and supported our work, hoping that this cooperation will continue in the coming years.

1. CIVIKOS WORK FACING WITH COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1.1 Cooperation with the United Nations Team in Kosovo and the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce

Since the virus was declared as a pandemic, CiviKos platform had put in place the entire team in support of civil society initiatives in response to the pandemic, and had designed awareness campaigns at a time when the dissemination of credible information for protection against the virus was critical. Following the experience and collaboration that resulted from the #VendoseMasken (PutMask) campaign, CiviKos's COVID-19 related activities were expanded to other sectors and stakeholders. 2021 started with a partnership with the United Nations Team in Kosovo (UN Kosovo Team - UNKT) and the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC), whose main goal was creating a platform of several stakeholders (private sector, local civil society and international organizations), the first of its kind for multilateral cooperation on pandemic management.

1.1.1 New Reality Platform

The multilateral cooperation platform, named Realiteti i ri (New Reality), came in response to the need to disseminate and simplify reliable and up-to-date information on measures against COVID-19, focusing on health and safety in private sector workplace. Beyond this vital information about the pandemic, in one place, the platform provided all the publications and research done about the pandemic and the private sector, information and guidance on financial aid, information from the World Health Organization (WHO) for proper information on COVID-19 Mythbusters, promoting businesses that were trained on workplace health and safety in relation to the virus, and other relevant and up-to-date information. The platform was launched in May 2021.



Photo 1: Partners of New Reality project in launching of the platform

For the CiviKos Platform, this cooperation was the first step in formalizing cooperation with the private sector. Part of the project was also awareness campaign for citizens based on best hygienic practices and social distancing. For this purpose, a video was developed for awareness and infographics about risks of COVID-19 as well as the minimum protective measures to be taken for the safety and health of all. These videos and infographics were then distributed and promoted on various communication channels. The promotion of the partnership and the campaign was an integral part of the action plan all the way until the end of the project, therefore the same branding and material was used and modified for the DokuFest festival, as the project supporters - UNKT, were continuously involved with aspects of public health as part of their work during the pandemic.



Photo 2: Branding of the New Reality Platform

1.1.2 Shnet e Scan and on-the-job safety and health training

As part of the New Reality project, products with QR code Shnet (health) and Scan were designed that connected users directly with the platform and the information that was accessible on it. Shnet e Scan product distribution activities were carried out in cooperation with the Gastronomy Association of Kosovo, in their member businesses in all regions of the country. Furthermore, during June, hybrid trainings were organized for gastronomy businesses on workplace health and safety, focusing on measures and guidelines against COVID-19. To develop the module and facilitate trainings a local licensed trainer for this field was engaged, Mr. Ruzhdi Feka. The partners from the Gastronomy Association, together with the trainer also conducted field visits for the right guidance of businesses for the compliance of their activity with the latest measures, the promotion of the New Reality platform and the distribution of Shnet and Scan products.

Photo 3: Pictures of Shnet and Scan products



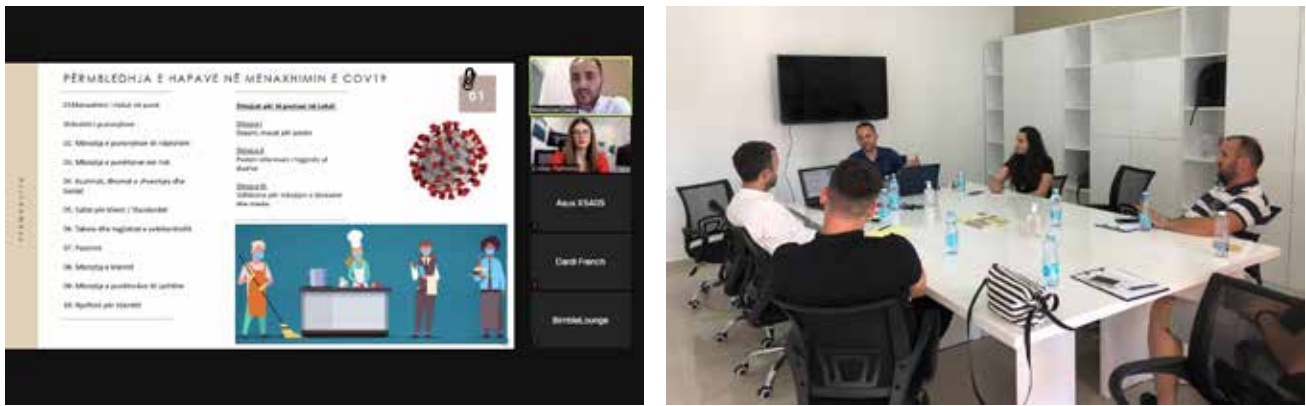


Photo 4: On-the-job health and safety training with gastronomy businesses

1.1.3 Recommendations for Kosovo institutions and promotion of mass vaccination

During August, the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the Civikos Platform held a joint press conference, on which joint recommendations were presented to promote mass vaccination in Kosovo. The recommendations that were developed based on the consultations with business representatives and partners from the civil society during the activities of this project were:

- Removal of bureaucracy in booking appointments to facilitate and simplify access of citizens;
- Enabling vaccination at the nearest center, regardless of the officially registered place of residence;
- Vaccination through mobile teams in businesses, as their economic activity is being hampered by limited hours and meanwhile since unvaccinated and in contact with people, the risk is increasing;
- Mobile vaccination teams for more rural and isolated places, especially those inhabited mainly by communities that generally have less access to accurate information;
- Reorganize the resources of health workers so that vaccination program to continue also over the weekend. This is especially important given that many citizens find it impossible to get vaccinated during working days, especially if they work in other cities away from their registered place of residence;
- Vaccination in the squares of the main centers in the country to achieve figures that coincide with a mass vaccination in the country;
- Collaborate with other countries to ensure that our vaccination passport will be accepted as evidence by those countries, with that remove any obstacles for free movement.



Photo 5: Press conference on joint recommendations

1.2 #NiseMuhabetin project and campaign

CiviKos's work in dealing with the pandemic continued with the subsequent awareness campaign, this time very focused on promoting and increasing vaccination. #NiseMuhabetin project and campaign, developed and implemented by the CiviKos Platform during the period September 2021 - March 2022, was funded by SlovakAid.



Photo 6: #NiseMuhabetin campaign stickers

The project was targeted especially for youth and women groups, who showed stagnation in the increase of vaccination from the circulation of myths and unreliable information about the impact of the vaccine on reproductive health. Therefore, part of the activities and campaign was to design of vaccine Mythbuster brochures, awareness videos with the infectious disease doctor and famous artists known by youth, as well as stickers and other materials promoting vaccination. However, the main activities of this project were field visits with the doctor, organized in cooperation with member organizations of the respective cities.

During these visits, participants had the opportunity to attend a detailed lecture on how the COVID-19 vaccine was produced, how it is accepted by our body, and the importance of using it as the only tool to fight and end the pandemic. Such visit in this format also provided the opportunity for each participant to address their concerns, reservations and questions directly with professionals in the field. In fact, this format was so well received that our local partner organizations who have enabled



Photo 7: Meeting with the doctor in Dragash



Photo 8: Meeting with the doctor in Mitrovica



Photo 9: Meeting with the doctor in Gjakova



Photo 10: Meeting with the doctor in Klina

their implementation had received requests for more of such events from people in their municipality that were interested about such information. As the project was limited in time and finances, only a few cities were targeted for these visits. Namely, the target cities of the project were: Mitrovica, Klina, Gjakova, Dragash and Gjilan.



Photos 11 and 12: Meeting with the doctor in Gjilan

As a concluding activity of this project, a discussion panel was organized, gathering many stakeholders and partners of CiviKos. This discussion covered the reflections of over two years with pandemic by the panelists, sharing of experiences from their respective sector, as well as their recommendations for the continuation of better management of the pandemic. The event took place in hybrid format, with partners and members of the CiviKos Platform as participants.

2. CIVIKOS PLATFORM SECRETARIAT SERVICES FOR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

CiviKos continued to provide information services to member organizations. During 2021, a total of 144 information bulletins were sent, with information relevant to civil society, such as:

- Information about grants;
- Various collaborations with local and international organizations;
- Different training and seminars;
- Information about cooperation between civil society and public authorities.

2.1 Information session: Annual reporting of NGOs to TAK and other tax obligations

CiviKos in cooperation with the Tax Administration of Kosovo (TAK) organized an information session for NGOs on tax obligations for civil society organizations. This meeting was held virtually through the Zoom platform, with about 100 participants from civil society organizations and lecturer Mr. Sami Salihu from TAK. CiviKos also provided translation into Serbian language for organizations led by Serb community living in Kosovo.



Photo 13: Information session through Zoom

2.2 Findings of the EU report on Kosovo 2021

CiviKos Secretariat has summarized in a separate infographic finding of report from the Union European Union (EU) for Kosovo, respectively the main messages for civil society.

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MESAZHET KRYESORE TË RAPORTIT TË PROGRESIT PËR SHOQËRINË CIVILE (SHC) PËR VITIN 2021

TË PËRGJITHSHME
Shoqëria civile (SHC) vazhdon të operojë, në përgjithësi në një mjedis të favorshëm. Luajti një rol të rëndësishëm gjatë pandemisë, veçanërisht në nivel lokal. Më tej, SHC vazhdoi të mbështesë drejtpërdrejt hartimin dhe zbatimin e reformave të lidhura me BE-në.

BASHKËPUNIMI SHOQËRI CIVILE - QEVERI
Qeveria duhet të përmirësojë më tej bashkëpunimin e saj me SHC dhe të rrisë mundësinë e shoqërisë civile për të kontribuar në mënyrë domethënëse në zhvillimin e politikave publike. Ka pasur progres të kufizuar të strategjisë së qeverisë për bashkëpunim me shoqërinë civile (2019-2023) dhe planit të saj të veprimit – me burime të kufizuara njerëzore dhe financiare për implementim, si dhe varësi të lartë nga bashkëfinancimi i donatorëve.

KONSULTIMET PUBLIKE
Konsultimet publike për aktet e qeverisë vazhdojnë të lansohen rregullisht nga ministrinë. Megjithatë, raporti vjetor i qeverisë tregon se disa ministri nuk po organizojnë konsultime në përputhje me rregulloren përkatëse. Konsultimet në komuna janë integruar në Platformën Online për konsultim publik, por zbatimimi është ende në fillim. Nevojiten iniciativat ndërgjegjësuese për të inkurajuar qytetarët që të marrin pjesë në proceset konsultative.

FONDET PUBLIKE
Pavarësisht disa përmirësimeve, është e nevojshme të rritet më tepër transparencja e financimit publik të OSHC-ve. Informacioni bazë rreth financimit duhet të plotësohet me të dhëna për projektet dhe sektorët e financiar. Një rishikim i rregullores aktuale të financimit publik për OJQ-të për të adresuar pengesat kryesore të identifikuara gjatë tre viteve të para të zbatimit duhet të fillojë në vitin 2021.

RRETH LIGJEVE ME RËNDËSI PËR SHC
Të sigurohet që Ligji për Parandalimin e Pastrimit të Parave dhe Financimit të Terrorizmit të mos vendosë kufizime të panevojshme në qëndrueshmërinë financiare të OSHC-ve me rrezik të ulët. Një vlerësim i përditësuar i rrezikut sektorial të shoqërisë civile mbetet i nevojshëm për të lejuar një qasje fleksibël ndaj OSHC-ve me rrezik më të ulët. Legjislacioni për zbatimin e Ligjit të 2019-ës për Lirinë e Asociimit në OJQ-të ende duhet të miratohet, në mënyrë që të lehtësohet procesi i regjistrimit të organizatave. Legjislacioni për përjashtimin nga taksat dhe procedurat administrative përkatëse duhet të harmonizohen.

VULLNETARIZMI
Mjedisi mundësues për vullnetarizmin duhet të përmirësohet, duke përfshirë vendosjen e një kornize të përshtatshme legjislativ të përafuar me standardet ndërkombëtare. Burimet financiare për programet e vullnetarizmit të të rinjve duhet të ndahen, duke marrë parasysh kërkesën dhe disponueshmërinë.

**Mesazhet kryesore të të gjeturave të Raportit të Progresi për vitin 2021 në lidhje me me sektorin e shoqërisë civile janë përkthyer dhe përshtatur nga Sekretariati i Platformës CiviKos dhe nuk është përkthim zyrtar i Komisionit Evropian.*

Photo 14: Infographic “Main messages of the progress report for CS, 2021

3. COOPERATION BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY

3.1 Regular meetings with the Office of Good Governance

Together with the Office of Good Governance/Office of the Prime Minister (OGG/OPM), CiviKos continued to lead the process of cooperation between Civil Society and Government. Respectively, the implementation of the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2019 - 2023, being coordinated with regular meetings and sharing information.

3.2 Council for Cooperation between Government and Civil Society

Council for cooperation between Government and Civil Society is the main mechanism that coordinates the process of government cooperation with civil society. The Council has a total of 29 members, out of which 15 members are elected democratically by civil society themselves through the voting process by Civikos Platform, and 14 members are directly appointed by the government.

Following the voluntary departure of three members of civil society from the Council, the CiviKos Secretariat has facilitated the process of selecting new members of civil society in the Council.

The three newly elected members of the Council are:

- Qendrim Hoxha from the NGO Leadership Development Association Balkan;
- Vlorian Molliqaj from the NGO Action for Mothers and Children; and
- Rinor Krasniqi from the NGO Jeta Rinore.



Photo 15: Meetings with the Office of Good Governance

3.2.1 Objective 1: Increasing the participation of civil society in policy-making

CiviKos, in coordination with the Office of Good Governance, organized regular meetings throughout the year with members of the working group on the first objective of the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society. This working group was coordinated by Mr. Dren Puka from KCSF.



Photo 16: Meeting with the working group for Objective 1 of the Strategy

3.2.2 Objective 2: Improving institutional framework for sustainable funding of CSO programs and projects in the public interest

At the meeting of the second working group of the Council for Cooperation between Civil Society and Government, the achievements and challenges in implementation related to this strategic objective and the plan for the implementation of the remaining activities were discussed. These meetings were coordinated by Mr. Art Jashari.



Photo 17: Meeting with the working group for Objective 2 of the Strategy

3.2.3 Objective 3: Development of practices and procedures for contracting CSOs for the provision of public services



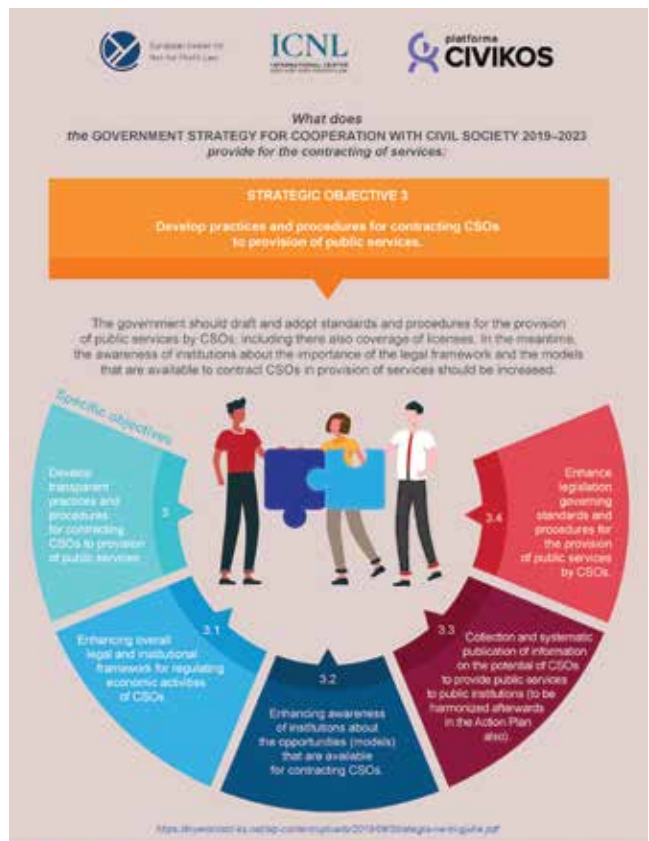
Photo 18: Meeting with the working group for Objective 3 of the Strategy

The third working group, coordinated by Mrs. Adile Shaqiri, held regular meetings to implement the plan for the third strategic objective. In support of the work of this group, CiviKos prepared several informative infographics about contracting services in Kosovo, opportunities and models.



Sweden Sverige "This infographic is wholly financed by the Government of Sweden. The Government of Sweden does not necessarily share the opinions here within expressed. The author bears the sole responsibility for the content."

Photo 19: Infographics "Services provided by civil society organizations in Kosovo" http://www.civikos.net/repository/docs/Infografika_3_english-01_787518.jpg



Sweden Sverige "This infographic is wholly financed by the Government of Sweden. The Government of Sweden does not necessarily share the opinions here within expressed. The author bears the sole responsibility for the content."

Photo 20: Infographics "What does the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2019-2023 provide for the contracting of services" http://www.civikos.net/repository/docs/Infografika_2_english-01_51469.jpg



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Photo 21: Infographics "Types of public financing in Kosovo" http://www.civikos.net/repository/docs/Infografika_4_english-01_25945.jpg



Sweden Sverige "This infographic is wholly financed by the Government of Sweden. The Government of Sweden does not necessarily share the opinions here within expressed. The author bears the sole responsibility for the content."

Photo 22: Infographic "Legal framework for contracting of services" http://www.civikos.net/repository/docs/Infografika_1-01_118921.jpg

3.2.4 Objective 4: Increasing volunteering in programs of public interest

The meetings of the fourth group of the Government Strategy were organized under the coordination of Mrs. Abetare Gojani from IPKO Foundation. During these meetings the achievements and challenges in the implementation of this strategic objective were evaluated, as well as the plan for the implementation of the remaining activities.



Photo 23: Meeting with the working group for Objective 4 of the Government Strategy



Photo 24: Photo during the meeting with the coordinators of the working teams of the Council for Cooperation between Civil Society and Government, and TACSO in Kosovo



Photo 25: Photo during the meeting with the coordinators of the working teams of the Council for Cooperation between Civil Society and Government, and TACSO in Kosovo

3.2.5 Concluding meeting of the Council for Cooperation Civil Society and Government

On December 23, the final meeting of the Council for Cooperation Civil Society and Government was held. During the meeting the working groups presented the achievements and challenges for the four objectives of the strategy as well as the plans for the full implementation of these objectives. The COVID-19 pandemic as well as the frequent changes of governments in Kosovo were considered as the main challenges for implementing the strategy.



Photo 26: Concluding meeting of the Council for Cooperation Civil Society and Government

3.2.6 Framework for improving the implementation of minimum standards for public consultation for the period 2021 - 2025

On November 5, 2021, the Office of Good Governance/Office of the Prime Minister, at a joint roundtable with civil society and coordinating public consultation structures at central and local levels, launched the «Framework for Improving the Implementation of Minimum Standards for Public Consultation for the period 2021 - 2025». From this framework, recommendations have been generated on how institutions should improve the implementation of minimum standards for public involvement in its work. The preparation and publication of this framework was made possible with the support of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

4. ADVOCACY AND COOPERATION WITH PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

4.1 Grant scheme for public procurement monitoring at local level

On January 19, as part of USAID Project for Transparent, Effective, and Accountable Municipalities, CiviKos met with representatives of the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA). In this meeting it was discussed about the possibility of creating a grant scheme for civil society organizations that monitor public procurement at the local level. The establishment of this scheme is of particular importance to local organizations, as it would ensure sustainability for them even after the end of USAID activity.



Photo 27: Meeting with representatives of MLGA

4.2 Facilitate the selection of members of civil society in different public bodies

CiviKos also continued with advocacy meetings with the Ministry of Local Government Administration on other issues relevant to civil society. In April 2021, in a joint meeting with the MLGA, CiviKos addressed the issue of selecting members of civil society in public bodies operating within the MLGA.



Photo 28: Meetings between CiviKos and MLGA

In July 2021, the CiviKos Secretariat, at the request of the Ministry of Local Government Administration, facilitated the selection of a civil society member to the Audit Committee, using CiviKos procedures according to its rules of procedure. The Audit Committee is an independent, advisory body for MLGA

leadership and support for internal auditors established in accordance with Law no. 06/L-021 on internal control of public finances, Chapter III, Article 20.

In August 2021, at the request of the Office of Good Governance/Office of the Prime Minister, CiviKos facilitated the selection of a civil society representative in Recruitment Panel of Local Team Members for Compact Agreement Development. This is a team established by eight specialists in various fields and aims to facilitate the procedures for reaching a Compact agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). 'Compact' is one of two grants donated by the MCC to developing countries. This grant is won in occasion of reaching a Compact agreement, an agreement which defines the projects in which the won amount will be invested, the obligations of both parties towards the realization of these projects and the obligations that the parties have for each other.

During the same month, CiviKos, at the request of the Ministry of Local Government Administration, facilitated the selection of civil society members to the National Coordinating Committee of the Open Government Partnership - OGP, in Kosovo. OGP is an international mechanism which aims to promote good governance, open and transparent governance, e-government, accountability, fight against corruption and increase the efficiency of public services. In this context, for the Republic of Kosovo it is of great importance preparation and membership in this organization. To become a member, the National Coordinating Committee must draft the National Action Plan 2022 - 2024. The National Coordinating Committee is consisted of public institutions, civil society (with a majority of members), business sector, as well as relevant local and international organizations and institutions.

4.3 Cooperation with the Information and Privacy Agency

CiviKos, together with member organizations INPO, EC Ma Ndryshe, KCIC, YMCA Kosovo, Community Building Mitrovica (CBM), and Syri Vizionit, have facilitated the process of organizing the celebration of the International Day for Universal Access to Information. The initiative is called 'Now Easier', which is marked with activities in all municipalities of Kosovo.

During August, CiviKos continued meetings with the Commissioner of the Information and Privacy Agency, Mrs. Krenare Sogojeva Dermaku, to intensify cooperation in order to promote the implementation of the Law on Personal Data Protection, address the lack of access to NGOs to public information by public institutions, and establish a system for monitoring the implementation of the Law for Access to Public Documents.



Photo 29: Meeting with the Commissioner of the Information and Privacy Agency

4.4 Memorandum of Understanding between CiviKos, Press Council and the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council

On June 28, CiviKos and the Kosovo Press Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council (KPC), with the aim of establishing standard procedures for civil society and the media to submit cases to the State Prosecutor's Office.

The Memorandum, prepared with the assistance of USAID's Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities, provides the opportunity to establish standard procedures for submitting identified cases and involving KPC in provision of feedback that enables organizations of civil society and the media to follow (observe) submitted cases.



Photo 30: Moments from signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between CiviKos, The Press Council and the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council

4.5 Information panel on formalization of employees and tax evasion in Kosovo

The Tax Administration of Kosovo in cooperation with the CiviKos Platform, have organized an information panel on formalization of employees and tax evasion within the latest TAK project for informal employment. This discussion panel contributed to raising awareness, expanding the debate on this topic, and improving the situation through multilateral cooperation. This discussion was led by Ms. Donika Emini - Executive Director, CiviKos Platform.

5. OTHER ACTIVITIES AND COOPERATIONS

5.1.1 Workshop on applicable learning in public procurement monitoring

During 2021, as part of USAID’s Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities (USAID TEAM) activity, workshops on applicable training were provided to support local organizations in monitoring public procurement activities. Experts engaged by CiviKos have assisted local organizations throughout the entire process of monitoring procurement activities in their respective municipalities. The workshops were offered to local organizations from seven regions of Kosovo: Prishtina, Prizren, Peja, South Mitrovica, North Mitrovica, Gjilan and Ferizaj.



Photo 31: Presentation of the report by local organizations of Prizren region in monitoring public procurement activities



Photo 32: Workshop of local organizations in the Peja region for monitoring of public procurement activities

5.1.2 Infographics published by beneficiary organizations

During February and March, civil society organizations published findings reports in form of infographics on contracts which they monitored in their municipalities. The findings published by the beneficiary organizations were as follows:

Photo 33: Reports of civil society organizations published in Infographics





5.1.3 Capacity building of organizations from the northern region in public procurement monitoring

During August 2021, the CiviKos Platform within USAID TEAM, provided two-day training for civil society organizations from North Mitrovica, Zvecan, Leposavic and Zubin Potok. The training and distributed materials focused on monitoring public procurement at the local level as well as cooperation with the media in exposing irregularities in procurement process.



Photo 34: During the training for civil society organizations from North Mitrovica

5.1.4 Platform Monitor-Report (Monitoro-Raporto)

www.monitoro-raporto.net

On June 9, the CiviKos Platform within USAID TEAM, through a hybrid event launched the Monitor-Report platform. This platform, developed by CiviKos, aims to serve as a focal point for local level organizations, as well as for all those who are actively working or intend to work in future on public procurement monitoring. Monitor-Report will be a common space for local organizations to publish their reports, find relevant materials for public procurement monitoring, as well as provide networking opportunities with various organizations.



Foto 35: Prezantimi i platformës Monitoro-Raporto

5.1.5 Recognition of Competence in Public Procurement Monitoring

CiviKos Platform concluded its four-year partnership with USAID for Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities with a certification ceremony. Equipped with certificates recognizing competency in public procurement monitoring were all representatives of local organizations that had benefited from workshops on applicable training in public procurement monitoring. However, in addition, the opportunity of certification was offered to other representatives of civil society organizations and individuals from all regions of Kosovo, who have expressed interest in benefiting from the certification process for recognition of competence in monitoring public procurement. For the latter, one-day training was provided and they underwent the pre-certification testing process.

The distribution of certificates was done by Mrs. Aferdita Mekuli, USAID Activity Director for Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities and Mr. Dardan Kryeziu, Project Director at CiviKos Platform. The ceremony was also enabled to be attended virtually through the Zoom platform for beneficiaries who could not be physically present.



Photo 36- 37: Certification for individuals from all regions of Kosovo - Day 1 and 2



Photo 38: Certification ceremony

5.2 Addressing NGO challenges and issues with commercial banks in Kosovo

The cooperation with the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL) also continued through 2021, aiming to advocate for the challenges of NGOs in banking services with relevant institutions in Kosovo, such as the Central Bank of Kosovo and the Association of Banks in Kosovo.

On November 10, CiviKos organized the next meeting with relevant stakeholders on NGO's access to banking services and their impact on the work of NGOs. This meeting brought together representatives from the Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo, the Financial Intelligence Unit, the Kosovo Banking Association, as well as the NGO community to share experiences regarding banking de-risk and finding solutions to facilitate NGO access to banking services.

The substantive part of the meeting was covered by Mr. Dren Puka (KCSF), who presented the impact of barriers that banks apply to NGOs in the work of civil society organizations in Kosovo, as well as the need to improve the legal framework in Kosovo and practices to facilitate the access of NGOs to banking services. The financial exclusion of NGOs is a global phenomenon and the denial of access to civil society to financial services affects a range of human rights.



Photo 39: Certification ceremony

5.3 Capacity building of local organizations on human rights advocacy

In February 2021, CiviKos launched the project 'You Cannot Be What You Cannot See', funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) through the Community Development Fund (CDF).

This project has contributed to the empowerment of local level organizations and community-based initiatives through multidimensional activities, such as workshops on applicable human rights education, the provision of advocacy and communication mechanisms, and networking opportunities with other organizations working on human rights issues.

5.3.1 Human rights workshops

Human rights workshops were offered in two series for community-based organizations in the municipalities of Dragash, Klina and Kamenica. These series of workshops, trained by Mr. Hilmi Jashari, have covered topics about addressing human rights violations, advocacy, and building strategies of local organizations to promote human rights with local institutions.



Photo 40: Workshop in Kamenica



Photo 41: Workshop in Dragash



Photo 42: Workshop in Klina



Photo 43: Workshop in Klina

Visual summary of the workshops within the project 'You Cannot Be What You Cannot See'



Photo 44: Summary I



Photo 45: Summary I I

5.3.2 Establishing Human Rights Hub

As part of this project, the CiviKos Platform provided a special space on the CiviKos website by creating the Human Rights Hub. Various human rights materials have been provided in this space and it will be maintained and updated by CiviKos.

5.3.3 Conference 'The Role of Civil Society in Human Rights Advocacy'

On September 3, the CiviKos Platform in cooperation with the Office of Good Governance/Office of the Prime Minister, organized a joint conference on the role of civil society in promoting and advocating for human rights. This conference also marked the conclusion of this project. Keynote speaker in this

conference was Ms. Emilia Rexhepi, Deputy Prime Minister of Kosovo, having a political activity that includes human rights issues.

Due to measures against COVID-19 at the time, the number of conference participants was limited, and the conference was organized in a hybrid format to enable input from other stakeholders and interested parties.



Photo 46: Conference 'The Role of Civil Society in Human Rights Advocacy'

5.4 CiviKos Cooperation with International Visegrad Fund

CiviKos Platform organized the first round of the study visit by researchers and experts of the International Visegrad Fund Group (V4). This visit was made enabled within the framework of the Cooperation Instrument for Research Institutes of the Western Balkans - THINK BALKANS, funded by the International Visegrad Fund, and implemented by the Institute for Democracy 'Societas Civilis' - Skopje (IDSCS).

During this round of visits, experts had the opportunity to meet with officials from the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, representatives of the Assembly of Kosovo and political parties, and officials of EU institutions and foreign diplomatic missions in Kosovo.



Photo 47: Researchers and experts of the International Group Visegrad Fund (V4), in Prishtina

5.5 Activities within the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE)

5.5.1 Focus group

In collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and other organizations, CiviKos gathered representatives of civil society, European policy institutions and the centers of the Western Balkans, to discuss the future and vision of Europe from the perspective of the Western Balkans in focus group format. Participants shared their views on many topics related mainly to European governance and the Balkans.

This initiative aimed to include the Western Balkans in the contribution and reflection of the future of Europe, the inputs of which were included in the Western Balkans report prepared by the FES and will be presented in Brussels, Paris and Vienna.



Photo 48: Focus group in Prishtina

5.5.2 Conference

The data from the previous focus group and the cooperation of the partners that enabled it, were elaborated in more details at the conference 'Western Balkans Discuss the Future of Europe', organized by CiviKos. The discussion was opened by the Head of the EU Office in Kosovo, Mr. Tomas Szunyog.



Photo 49: Conference 'Western Balkans Discusses about Europe's Future'

5.6 Discussion with Simon Panek, founder of People in Need

CiviKos Platform and People in Need Kosovo (PIN), organized a discussion with Mr. Simon Panek, CEO and co-founder of People in Need. Mr. Panek shared with the audience his personal experience from many years of activism and his impressions of the importance of determination in achieving the mission and community representation for NGOs.



Photo 50: During the discussion with Mr. Simon Panek



