

UNDEF



The United Nations
Democracy Fund

**PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
DEMOCRACY FUND
Contract NO.PD:C0110/10**

EVALUATION REPORT



TRANSTEC
PROJECT
MANAGEMENT

**UDF-KOS-08-265 – Empowering civil society inclusion on
democratic policy-making in Kosovo**

Date: 31 October 2012

Acknowledgements

The evaluators would like to thank all of those who took the time to provide their expertise and insight on civil society participation and inclusion in Kosovo and on the implementation of the *Empowering Civil Society Inclusion on Democratic Policy-Making in Kosovo* project. In particular, Taulant Hoxha of the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF). All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

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.

Authors

This report was written by Sue Nelson and Blerim Vela.

Landis McKellar, the Evaluation Team Leader, provided editorial and methodological advice and quality assurance.

Ms. Aurélie Ferreira was Evaluation Manager and Mr. Eric Tourres Project Director at Transtec.

Table of Contents

- I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1**
- II. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT..... 5**
 - (i) The project and evaluation objectives..... 5
 - (ii) Evaluation methodology..... 5
 - (iii) Development context 6
- III. PROJECT STRATEGY 7**
 - (i) Project approach and strategy..... 7
 - (ii) Logical framework 9
- IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS 10**
 - (i) Relevance..... 10
 - (ii) Effectiveness..... 11
 - (iii) Efficiency..... 13
 - (iv) Impact..... 14
 - (v) Sustainability..... 16
 - (vi) UNDEF added value 17
- V. CONCLUSIONS 18**
- VI. RECOMMENDATIONS 20**
- VII. OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND CLOSING THOUGHTS..... 21**

- VIII. ANNEXES 23**
- ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS:..... 23**
- ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED: 24**
- ANNEX 3: PERSONS INTERVIEWED 25**
- ANNEX 4 : ACRONYMS 26**

I. Executive Summary

(i) Project Data

The *Empowering Civil Society Inclusion on Democratic Policy-Making in Kosovo* project sought to strengthen the capacities of civil society to play an active role in public policy shaping and the law drafting process. Its main objectives were to: 1) build capacity of CSOs to influence policy making; 2) assist CSOs for immediate action on policy shaping; 3) promote debate within civil society on CSO involvement in the public policy and law drafting processes; and 4) increase awareness of government on the enabling environment for participatory democracy. Its intended outcomes were for civil society to become an active, informed and key partner in public policy and law making, able to react instantly on key public policy areas, and with an enabled environment to play this role.

This was a two-year 325,000 USD project with a six month no-cost time extension (1 November 2009 - 30 April 2012). It was implemented by the Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF). Its main activities were to:

- Build CSO capacity through training and workshops on civil society inclusion in the policy process, development of a user-friendly manual and dissemination of European best practices;
- Provide legal assistance, coaching and mentoring for the most active CSOs on key contributions to the policy making process;
- Disseminate information and provide regular space for debate and experience sharing for CSOs and other stakeholders; and
- Raise awareness of main state institutions on the role of CSOs in the processes and on the government role to create an enabling environment for participatory democracy through conferences, trainings, workshops and publications.

(ii) Evaluation Findings

The project was implemented in general as described in the project document. The project activities and objectives were directly **relevant** to the Kosovar context where new institutions and structures for democratic governance were developing and which had an increased demand from civil society and others for more inclusive government policy-making processes. The project targeted the willingness of the government for a more engaged and constructive civil society role in policy development as well as civil society needs for more information and consultation from the outset of these processes. There was a substantial level of interest and participation in the project from both sides. The project's strategy was sound as it built on the work already done by CSOs and government offices, and worked to increase both the demand and supply side for public consultations. It was strategic in that it targeted the key offices within the government that set the standards for these consultations. Risks were adequately identified in the design and managed by the project although the Kosovo-Serb CSOs did not participate in the project as intended.

KCSF's approach of strengthening the first two steps for participation (information and public consultation¹) with government was **effective**. The project met and exceeded most of its intended outputs and ended up working in partnership with the legal offices of the Office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Local Government Administration to improve the flow of

¹ Which is then followed by dialogue and partnership as illustrated in Diagram 1.

² Operational Manual for the UNDEF-funded project evaluations, p. 6.

³ OSCE, 2009 Survey on CSO Advocacy in Parliament, p 18

⁴ UNDP-KOS-07-192. Consortium on Strengthening Civil Society Advocacy in Kosovo, 1 October 2008 - 31 March 2010.

information and quality of public consultations. There was an impressive range of participation from civil society and government, and they worked on a wide range of issues and regulations/legislation. The project continued many of the elements of an earlier UNDEF-funded project implemented by another NGO consortium. In particular it took over its Advisory Group of about 20 NGOs that met to discuss legislative issues targeting the Assembly of Kosovo, and expanded that group to include a wider range of NGOs and issues related to government consultations and policy making. This is where about 90 percent of Kosovo's legislation is drafted. The Advisory Group met regularly and was a useful forum to share information, coordinate efforts, and at times to meet directly with government officials to discuss issues. The training and mentoring done for both national and local CSOs seemed to strengthen their awareness on the need to engage more constructively to government openings for consultation and provide more specific input that could be useful for ministry officials. The work on the government side evolved into a successful partnership with the Legal Office in the Office of the Prime Minister and with the Legal Office at the Ministry of Local Government Administration and resulted in improved government rules for the public consultations of ministries and the executive offices in municipalities.

The project appeared to have been well managed and there was an **efficient** use of the inputs with the main activities focusing directly on achieving the project's objectives. The approach of addressing demand and supply was efficient as well as effective as it built government support for and use of CSO participation at the same time as working to ensure that the CSOs would be able to respond constructively to those openings. The choice of governmental partners was also efficient, as these offices were directly responsible for setting the standards for consultations and ensuring compliance with them in all government and municipal drafting. Two of these officials were used as experts under the project for quality control of the manuals and training. KCSF did not see this as a conflict of interest as they felt this was work outside of the purview of their normal duties. However, their participation did seem to cement the joint nature of the work and its achievements. There also appeared to be ample funds to implement this project although KCSF felt the additional activities done within the budget envelope of USD 300,000 had been made possible through cost-savings, synergies between different KCSF projects and efficient use of their existing office conference space.

It is too soon to determine **impact** for an advocacy project of this nature. However it is likely that this project will have made a significant contribution towards strengthening the role of civil society in public consultations with government. It increased the awareness of CSOs and some government officials on the rationale for public consultation and how CSO input could improve public policies. It also increased the capacity for some CSOs to participate more effectively. It also helped to improve the enabling environment for civil society to play its role in public policy and law making processes through its focus on improving the Government's rules of procedures, and by ensuring that relevant legal officers at the ministerial and municipal levels knew the changed procedures through training and development of the official manual. The revised rules require public consultations at an earlier stage in the process when the drafts are still in their formative stage. This will increase CSO access and ability to make a more substantive contribution. It is not possible to attribute all of these results to the project alone as these government offices and many CSO were already moving in this direction but the project provided a structure and momentum for these efforts and a model for CSO-government collaboration.

As the project worked to change the structure of consultations rather than working on a specific law or case, it should have a widespread impact. The institutionalization of the reforms makes consultations less dependent on the individual good will of a public official. Further consolidation of these reforms is expected with the anticipated adoption of the

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

- The project's focus and activities were **relevant** and important given the **political and democratic context in Kosovo**.
- 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.
- 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.
- The Advisory Group mechanism was extremely useful and provided CSOs and government with **a one-stop shop to get and share information**, discuss issues and obtain consolidated feedback on policies/legislation.
- The project **directly resulted in improved formal structures for public consultations**. These give any CSO the opportunity to participate in policy discussions on any area of interest.
- These results also **reflect the cumulative effects of civil society, international community and government efforts to improve citizen participation in Kosovo**. This project was able to move these gains forward and broaden their base.
- But this work has just begun and **continued engagement is needed to ensure that civil society takes advantage of these new rules**, and that they are consistently implemented by government at the national and municipal levels.

(iv) Recommendations

- For similar projects in the future, the evaluators recommend that **civil society continues its engagement on policy issues**.

- ***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.

- It should also be ***replicated at the municipal level***.

- 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.

- 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.

- The coordination group should ***develop a monitoring and evaluation plan*** to track the status of consultations, the progress made towards implementing the new rules of procedure, and to assure that corrective measures are taken to address any problems encountered.

- The UNDEF-funded project in Kosovo for Round 6 through KID should ensure it incorporates the lessons and best practices of this project for its municipal level Civic Involvement for Transparency and Accountability in Kosovo project (UDF-KOS-11-468).

II. Introduction and development context

(i) The project and evaluation objectives

The Empowering Civil Society Inclusion on Democratic Policy-Making in Kosovo project was a two-year USD 325,000 project implemented by the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF). USD 25,000 was retained by UNDEF for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The project ran from 1 November 2009 to 30 April 2012 which included a six month no-cost time extension. Its main objectives were to: 1) build capacity of CSOs to influence policy making; 2) assist CSOs for immediate action on policy shaping; 3) promote debate within civil society on CSO involvement in the public policy and law drafting processes; and 4) increase awareness of government on the enabling environment for participatory democracy. With these, it intended to help civil society become an active, informed and key partner in public policy and law making, that would be able to react instantly on key public policy areas, and have an enabled environment to play this role.

The evaluation of this project is part of the larger evaluation of the Round 2 UNDEF-funded projects. Its purpose is to “contribute towards a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project which will in turn help UNDEF to develop future project strategies. Evaluations are also to assist stakeholders to determine whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved”.²

(ii) Evaluation methodology

The evaluation took place in August 2012 with the field work in Kosovo done 20 - 24 August, 2012. The evaluation was conducted by Sue Nelson and Blerim Vela, both experts in democratic governance and civic participation. The UNDEF Round 2 evaluations are more qualitative in nature and follow a standard set of evaluation questions that focus on the project’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and any value added from UNDEF-funding (Annex 1). This is to allow meta-analysis for cluster evaluations at a later stage. This report follows that structure. The evaluators reviewed available documentation on the project and on the issue of civic participation in Kosovo (Annex 2). Interviews were held with KCSF, its main CSO and governmental participants, the UN Development Programme, and other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working in the sector. The evaluators interviewed those in Pristina in person, and the remainder by phone, skype, and e-mail (Annex 3).

During the preparatory work, the evaluators identified several issues which they followed up on during the field work in Kosovo. These included:

- **Extent of project impact** as the project seemed to have exceeded its targets and effected policy change, while other organizations reportedly felt structural constraints restricted effective civil society inclusion in Kosovo;
- **Sustainability of the changes made** and if CSOs would be able to continue this active participatory role without the project framework, and if changes on the government side were limited to officials or if there was institutional change;
- **Value of study tours** and how this fed into the project’s activities and results;

² Operational Manual for the UNDEF-funded project evaluations, p. 6.

- **Project timing** and implementing it so shortly after independence, when public institutions and civil society were still adapting to the new reality on the ground and whether this was a factor in the project's apparently successful results; and,
- **Participation by minority groups** and whether Kosovo-Serb CSOs fully participated in the project activities.

In addition, UNDEF asked the evaluation to look at the following:

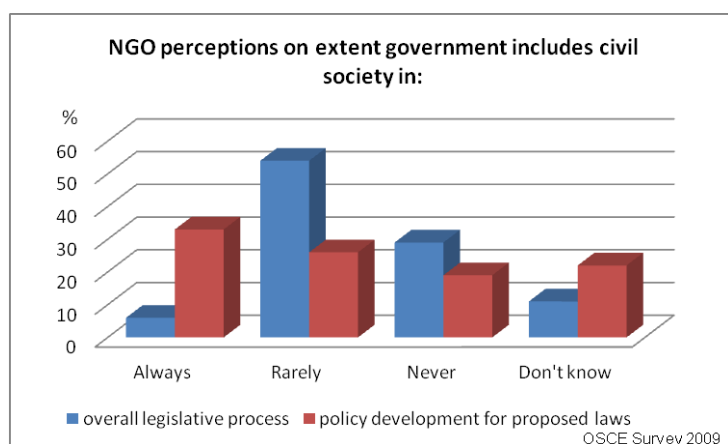
- **On line data base, periodic publications and key publications** on public consultations, CSO-government relationships and final conference report;
- **Collaboration among CSOs** particularly among UNDEF's Round 4 grantees (Balkan Investigative Reporting Network- BIRN, National Democratic Institute - NDI, and the Kosovo Democratic Institute - KDI) and possible ways for collaboration with the UNDEF Round 6 grantee (KDI); and,
- **Government-CSO collaborations** and the factors in KCSF's successful interest in and collaboration from the government side.

(iii) Development context

Kosovo is one of the world's newest countries, having declared independence from Serbia in 2008. It is still in a phase of democratic transition and consolidation. Before independence it underwent almost a decade of international administration led by the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) which held the legislative and executive powers and administration of the judiciary. In accordance with the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement (Ahtisaari Plan), Kosovo adopted a new constitution in 2008 that set up its democratic structures of government under the temporary supervision of an International Civilian Representative. Kosovo is still not recognized by Serbia and parallel institutions have been set up by the Kosovo-Serb minority in the north of Kosovo and in some Serbian enclaves. Kosovo still has a large international presence with both NATO forces and a large European Union (EU) rule of law mission – EULEX Kosovo. It is in its last year of supervised independence.

At independence, the Kosovo Assembly rapidly adopted more than 100 laws. Half of these were prescribed by the Ahtisaari plan and this politically sensitive legislation was passed quickly and without much parliamentary debate or public consultation. Kosovo has a history of centralized leadership and authority and a lack of constructive civil society engagement in the policy and legislative making processes.

Although the new systems brought in under the UN and after independence were more open and required some forms of public consultation, these were rarely implemented as intended. The government's institutional capacity to undertake these consultations was also underdeveloped. An OSCE study on CSO advocacy in the legislative processes found a relatively low level of democratic and legal literacy of civil servants and appointed officials in the ministries and Assembly. It also found that political and government officials tended to reach



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 limited space for civil society development due to the socio-political context. According to recent research done by Democracy For Development, less than 5 percent of NGOs are active. Most NGOs (97 percent) are associations with paid memberships, such as chambers of commerce or professional associations. The remainder are foundations or CSOs where members do not pay fees, such as human rights organizations or recreational clubs. The most active NGOs, in terms of advocacy and lobbying, are the business and professional associations.

III. Project strategy

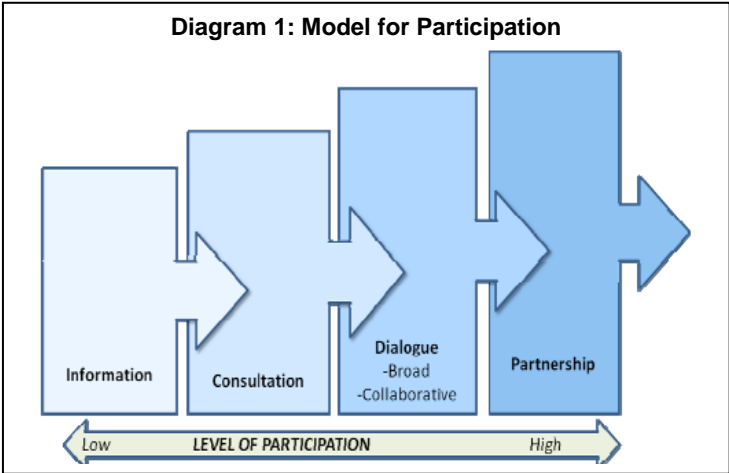
(i) Project approach and strategy

KCSF directly implemented Empowering Civil Society Inclusion on Democratic Policy Making in Kosovo project. It worked primarily at the central level to effect change, but also had some activities at the municipal level. KCSF is a national NGO based in Pristina, Kosovo. It has been active in strengthening civil society in Kosovo since 1999 through capacity building, grant-making, and information sharing. KCSF has recently been integrally involved on issues related to the European integration within the European Union's (EU) Stabilization and Association Process framework for the Western Balkans and undertook the Civicus Civil Society Index for Kosovo in 2011.

With this project, KCSF intended to improve the environment for citizen participation by addressing the consultative processes between the government and CSOs. KCSF felt that the lack of adequate public consultation had resulted in public policies and legislation that did not reflect citizen needs, resulting in citizen apathy and noncompliance. KCSF also used the Council of Europe's approach on public participation which saw the four steps of participation as information, public consultation, dialogue and then partnership (Diagram 1). It felt Kosovo was still at the first two steps and designed this project to strengthen both of them. First by increasing the amount of information available to CSOs on draft policies and legislation, and second to improve the quality of public consultation on both the government and CSO sides. It intended to do this by sharing information through a CSO coordination platform, training of

³ OSCE, 2009 Survey on CSO Advocacy in Parliament, p 18

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 government’s rules of procedures 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-07-192. Consortium on Strengthening Civil Society Advocacy in Kosovo, 1 October 2008 - 31 March 2010.

(ii) Logical framework

Project activities	Intended outcomes	Medium-term impacts	Long-term development objective
BUILDING CSO CAPACITY TO INFLUENCE POLICY MAKING			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study tours for best practices in region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved standards for public consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More regular & improved public consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More responsive policies & legislation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on CSO inclusion in public consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of nature of CSO inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved enabling environment for consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved policy making that reflects citizens' interests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 Training sessions for 120 CSO representative (national/local) & 3 advanced trainings for 50 CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased civil society participation in public policy consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More capable CSOs actively participating in public policy & law making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society a key factor in influencing public policy making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info distributed to 500 people, 150 institutions through online database & 6 periodic bulletins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant information disseminated & debate initiated within CSO sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better informed CSOs actively participating in public policy & law making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and CSO partnerships in policy making
ASSISTING CSOS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION ON POLICY SHAPING			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialized legal consultants for CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs able to react quickly in key public policy areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved quality of CSO contributions to policy making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public policies & legislation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching & mentoring on specific laws/policies at central/local levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More CSOs able to react quickly on proposed legislation/ policies • 1 public policy improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved policies and legislation • More effective CSO advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public policies & legislation
PROMOTING DEBATE WITHIN CSOS ON INVOLEMENT IN PUBLIC POLICY & LAW DRAFTING PROCESS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 meetings of CSOs to discuss issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of CSOs participating in debates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better informed CSOs actively participating in public policy & law making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase citizen participation-inclusion interests in policy making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts round table with 30 reps of government & CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of benefits of inclusion by CSOs and government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better informed CSOs actively participating in public policy & law making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved policy making and policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication on European best practices on relations between government & civil society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved standards for relationships between government & CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better informed CSOs actively participating in public policy & law making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved policy making and policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication on relations between government & civil society in public policy making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved substance of public consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better informed CSOs actively participating in public policy & law making processes • Government more receptive to input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More responsive policies and inclusion of civil society in policy making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final conference on results achieved & ways forward (50 persons) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better informed CSOs actively participating in public policy & law making processes • Government more receptive to input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government-CSO partnerships in policy making developed
RAISING LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AWARENESS ON ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN PROCESSES			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 manuals developed on public consultations for gov't officials (1 national, 1 local) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More substantive role for CSOs in consultation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More responsive public policies and legislation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for parliament, central & local government (1 each) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness on role of civil society in public policy making process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved enabling environment for civil society to fulfil its role in public policy making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved policies & legislation

IV. Evaluation findings

(i) Relevance

The project’s 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 public’s involvement in policy-making. Many of its laws and policies were adopted rapidly in the lead up to and immediate aftermath of independence and with little public consultation. While laws deriving from Ahtisaari package regulated specific rights and provided safeguards to minority groups, especially Kosovo-Serbs, in a post-independent Kosovo, many of the other laws were based on models taken from other systems and were not fully adapted to the Kosovar context or thought through completely. The project addressed the growing demand from civil society to be more fully included in the policy making processes as well as the interest among legal officials on the government side to streamline their legislative and regulatory drafting processes and to be able to benefit from CSO sector expertise for non-sensitive issues. As a result there was a substantial level of interest in the project from both sides.

The project’s strategy was sound. It worked to improve both the demand and supply side of the public consultation issue and targeted efforts at line ministries at the central level where



Roundtable on Code of Good Practice for Citizen’s Participation

many of the national and municipal/local decisions are made. Within these it focused on the legal officers who are responsible for drafting policies/legislation and ensuring government compliance with regulations and legislation. The project focus on improving the government’s rules of procedures was extremely relevant as those rules provide the framework and set the standards for public consultations at the central and local levels. The training provided by the project directly targeted the public consultation aspects of those rules and

demonstrated to legal officers the benefits from working with civil society. While the training for CSOs focused on demonstrating the benefits of working with government to improve legislation.

Risks were adequately identified in the design and managed primarily through KCSF’s good relationship with government. Its executive director had worked previously in a high government in the Office of President of Kosovo and had maintained excellent relations. The project also had adequate funding which enabled it to take advantage of opportunities. The nature of the funding was also seen by KCSF as being flexible enough to be able to adapt its activities to the changing political and security context and needs. With its two pronged approach it was able to continue working with civil society when the government was in transition between elections, and was able to resume work with it once the new government took office. The two-year time frame for project activities was also an asset as many of the project’s activities with the government were suspended from October 2010 to March 2011 because of this. It also takes time to build relationships of trust between CSOs and government and to reform the ways government does business.

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 civil society and from government officials and worked on a wide range of issues and regulations/legislation.

This project continued many of the elements of the earlier UNDEF-funded project through BIRN/NDI/KDI. It took over its CSO Advisory group of 32 CSOs⁵ working on legislative issues and expanded it to about 40-50 CSOs working on relevant topics with the government in addition to the legislature. The Advisory Group met regularly, holding 20 formal sessions. However the Group was dissolved in April 2011 and, according to one NGO, this was due to fallout among its members about the role of the Group in the 2010 elections. KCSF revived and strengthened an earlier mechanism, the Civikos platform, to assure the involvement of CSOs for the remainder of the project. The coordination efforts were appreciated and seen as useful by both CSOs and the government. The government officials also attended some sessions to explain issues and to listen to CSOs. Some of the CSOs that attended these meetings remarked that this was the first time they had seen government officials attend these types of meetings.

Coordination mechanisms are not new among CSOs in Kosovo because of the large donor presence and their efforts to promote coordinated action and avoid duplication of funding. However, previous efforts were said not to have been as effective as this. One of the reasons appears to have been the continuity of funding that allowed the mechanism created under the earlier UNDEF project to grow and continue.



Project participants in Pristina

Thus this project was able to build on the foundations of the Advisory Group and expand it as needed to include the focus for this project. Another reason was that this group had no board. Reportedly in previous efforts, the coordination body appointed a board which then sought funding and ended up becoming another NGO that competed with its members for projects. This group also appeared to have remained above politics serving an impartial role, promoting the principles and structures for public consultation rather than specific causes. This made the mechanism useful for all CSOs regardless of their sector of interest.

⁵ The Advisory Group was created in December 2008 and 32 NGOs sign the memorandum of understanding to participate in the Group. According to project reporting, it held 10 meetings and about 18-25 NGOs attended until the end of the project in March 2010.

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 participation of government in some of the Group sessions increased its effectiveness in shaping policies and draft legislation. The Group also appeared to have worked together on project issues. The manual developed by the project was seen by Group members as a collective product that they felt they had all contributed towards by providing comments and information. One called it the “most serious document produced in Kosovo” believing it to be realistic, objective, fact-based and useful as it included specific steps for government officials to take in their consultations with CSOs.

The project also worked to improve the flow of information between government officials and NGOs. It continued and expanded the type of e-mail system started under the earlier UNDEF project where NGOs were able to receive regular e-mails with information on their sectors of indicated interest, such as upcoming consultations, legislative drafts, and comments from other Advisory Group members. This was also a useful mechanism for the government officials as they could reach most of the relevant CSOs through one e-mail.

PROJECT PRODUCTS

- *Involvement of Civil Society in Public Consultations*. Albanian (February 2010)
- *Training Manual* (for CSOs/Civil Servants (April 2010)
- *Manual on Public Consultations*. Adaptation of training manual for Government in September 2011). Albanian, Serbian/Bosnian, Turkish Revised by project after changes to rules of procedure and published in October 2011.
- *Citizen Participation: Best Practices in the Western Balkans and the European Union*, English, Albanian, Serbian (October 2011)
- *Translation of Council of Europe Code of Good Practice on Citizen Participation* into Albanian (May 2011)
- *We and Them. Citizen Participation in Kosovo*. Albanian, Serbian, English (October 2011)
- Weblink for project and e-mail alerts with information (from March 2010 to April 2011)

Select CSOs also benefited from the legal advice and mentoring provided by the project. Although the selection process was open and done through advertisements published in the local media, KCSF reportedly carefully selected recipients to ensure they were active and credible. This was done mostly at the central level except for the mentoring done with the Kosovo-Bosnian CSOs in Prizren on how to approach municipal officials. Two day trainings were also provided to about 100 CSOs in Prizren, Gjakova, Peja, Gjilan, Ferizaj and Mitrovica on the same concepts of participation as done for the main group in Pristina.

Mentoring for CSOs at the center was effective. This was done on:

- Tax requirements for CSOs to several NGOs.
- Nomination procedures for the selection criteria for CSO members to the National Council for European Integration. This was done for the Presidency of Kosovo (which was the lead of the Council) who selected three CSO representatives to be the first CSOs included in the National Council.
- Analysis of the Law on Local-Self Government for an NGO on the ministerial working group. It received a detailed analysis of the law and concrete proposals to propose.
- Recommendations for two anti-corruption laws (Law Against Organized Crime and Law on Confiscating Illegal Wealth). The project provided a legal expert to KDI to identify the current legal framework for these issues and draft recommendations on

how to address them. Most CSO recommendations were adopted, but not all and KDI is reportedly still advocating for the remaining recommendations.

- Administrative instructions on supporting social and emotional aspects of development in the educational system. The mentor identified issues and made recommendations for an NGO that was part of the National Council of Education and these were adopted by the Ministry of Education.

The project also helped the government to improve and standardize the way it consults with civil society. The project trained legal directors from Kosovo municipalities, as well as most of the directors of legal department from Kosovo government ministries. They were introduced to the legal framework for public consultations in Kosovo, best European practices and practical advice on organizing consultations at the municipal and central levels. In addition, KCSF was able to leverage openings within the Prime Minister's office to support its legal department efforts to reform the government rules for public consultations (see text box). Working with the government to effect structural change was a very effective way to effect change.

Right place. Right time. Right focus.

The head of the Prime Minister's Office's legal department had been working to streamline the government's regulatory and legislative drafting processes and eliminate conflicting and archaic regulations. He thought CSOs should take better advantage of the openings provided to them and provide more substantive input into the policy making processes. He felt this would help reduce the burden of work on the legal officers. As part of this he was updating the Government's rules of procedure. KCSF had similar views and they developed a partnership to help make this happen. This partnership, which included the legal office at the Ministry of Local Administration, was a defining element for this project. It was the right type of assistance at the right time that helped to shape the reforms, speed up the process, train key officials on the new norms and procedures and develop their reference manual.

The KCSF project manager and project coordinator undertook study tours (at times with other experts) to Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Estonia and Latvia to hear firsthand about the public consultation experience in those countries. This was two more trips than originally planned enabled through cost savings in the project budget. The contact and discussions with other CSOs working on the same issues and hearing about their issues and successes was undoubtedly useful. However, the main beneficiaries seemed to be the KCSF project staff and the value of going to all of these places to hold meetings as opposed to arranging virtual meetings or bringing them to Kosovo to address the larger group is unclear. If some would have been brought to Kosovo instead, the larger group of CSOs and government officials working on the process could have benefited directly from their experiences, and the costs would have been roughly the same as for the most part, KCSF seemed to have visited about two organizations per country. In addition, KCSF later hired the International Center for Non-for-profit Law (ICNL) and the European Center for Non-for-profit Law (ECNL) to conduct research and write the project publication on "Citizen Participation. Best Practices in the Western Balkans and European Union". One would have expected the study tours to have been linked to the production of such a manual.

(iii) Efficiency

KCSF was able to implement the project as planned and within budget even though it had expanded the number of activities and persons included in the project. As noted, it felt it had been able to save costs through the use of its own large meeting room for the regular CSO meetings rather than renting a conference room at a hotel, and was able to leverage its

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 focused on achieving the project's objectives and outcomes. The KCSF staff seemed dedicated towards the purpose of the project and technically competent to manage and direct a project of this nature. The political connections of KCSF's 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, and because the project's objectives matched their own department's goals.

The approach of addressing both the demand and supply side of the consultation effort was efficient, as it build government support for and use of CSO participation at the same time as increasing the ability of CSOs to respond to that opening. This produced synergies that made the project more effective than had it worked on only one side or the other. Working in partnership with the legal offices of the Prime Minister's office and in the Ministry of Local Government Administration was also an efficient arrangement. These were the offices that were directly responsible for setting and implementing the framework for public consultations at the national and municipal levels. The project did use these two officials as experts for quality control for training and manual development. KCSF saw these project-funded tasks as outside of their official duties and did not see this as an ethical issue. Some of the other CSOs interviewed were not as sure. As the activities blended together, the exact nature of the paid work is unclear to the evaluators, but it is clear that the partnership developed with these two offices were a key factor in ensuring the successful results achieved by the project. Providing training for the legal officers at the ministerial and municipal levels was also a good investment in improving the enabling environment for civil society participation at all of these levels.

(iv) Impact

It is too soon to determine impact for an advocacy project of this nature, and especially to attribute the results to this project given the collective nature of the efforts and number of different organizations, other donor supported projects and government offices involved in the larger process. KCSF also tended to report on activities and its indicators measured those outputs so only anecdotal information is available for the effect of those changes at the outcome levels. The CSOs also used the coordination platform and openings to enhance the content of different laws, not just to increase civic participation. This expanded the impact of the project into the different public sector areas which was not tracked or captured in project reporting.

It is likely that this project will have made a significant contribution towards strengthening the role of civil society in public consultations on government policies and regulations and thereby strengthening the products of those consultations-- making the policies more relevant and responsive to the needs of Kosovar citizens at the national as well as municipal levels.

Some of the changes and/or impact noted in reporting or during interviews included:

- **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 and partnerships with government because of the mandatory nature of the changes. The evaluators heard of examples of the new rules being implemented and the manual being used by public officials to plan public consultations on different policies. However, there are no mechanisms to monitor implementation of these rules or to assess their efficacy, so the extent of their use is unknown.
- **Improved collaboration between civil society and some legal officers at ministerial and local levels on non-sensitive policies.** This was recently noted in particular with the development of Government's Strategy on Cooperation with Civil Society. This strategy was developed with the active participation of CSOs and is reportedly based on the content of the manual produced by the project. CSOs intend to continue this collaboration on development of its action plan. This strategy was seen by many to be the most important achievement of the project as it will open the consultation process up to other areas. There appears to have been little effect on opening the consultation process on sensitive political and economic policies although they are covered in principle under the new rules of procedure.

This was the first time I had seen government officials from the ministries and Prime Minister's office in an NGO coordination meeting. They were willing to listen to what we had to say. I was astonished. It was informal and everyone felt comfortable giving their opinion on what needed to be changed. These meetings changed attitudes on both sides. We saw each other's problems and capacities and were willing to help each other.

NGO Participant
- **Improved flow of information to CSOs and public from government on the policy issues and decisions.** The use of the Advisory Group and the CiviKos Platform facilitated government distribution of information directly to the interested CSOs. This broadened the number and type of CSOs that received government information directly. At the same time, information on public policies does appear to be readily available from other sources, such as ministry websites. The number of Kosovars accessing that information also appears to be increasingly rapidly. As an example, the Ministry for European Integration had 2,200 pages accessed a month in 2010. By May 2012, it averaged 22,000 pages a month.⁶
- **Increased awareness among legal officers at the national and municipal levels on the new rules of procedures, the mandatory nature of public consultations and the benefits of CSO inclusion.** Training also appears to have resulted in increased capacity among some legal officers at these levels to implement the new regulations. Anecdotal information seems to indicate that some public officials at the national level are using the manual, developed by the project and adopted by the Government, as their official handbook used in their every day work. The extent of its use at the municipal level is unknown.

⁶ Interview with Ministry communications expert. About 30 percent of its users are individuals, with another 25 percent of hits coming from the media. The remainder are from the ministries and other institutions. 70 percent of its users are 24 - 32 years old.

- **Increased awareness among CSOs on the benefits of public consultations and engagement with government and the need to provide constructive comments to improve public policies.** There was increased capacity for some CSOs to approach and advocate with public officials on their issues and causes. This seems to be primarily among the less active CSOs at the center and local level CSOs, as the main CSOs in Pristina have had a decade of donor support and training and were already actively engaged in the advocacy processes, especially at the legislative level.
- **Improved *Law of Freedom of Association in NGOs*** from a project sponsored two-day workshop that assessed the draft clause by clause and lobbied successfully for removal of a restrictive clause on CSO participation. One of the legal officers interviewed commented that the input from CSOs for this draft was greater than that of the legal officers. The project forum also helped with the *Administrative Instructions for the Law on Freedom of Association in NGOs*. These efforts helped ensure a more open enabling environment for CSOs.
- **Removal of unwarranted restrictions on domestic observation of the electoral process** through comments provided on the *Law on General Elections*. This law was hastily revised in the lead up to the early elections in late 2010. CSOs were given a short time to react to draft changes, and the project sponsored a one day workshop which successfully revised the penalties related to observation.
- **Likely to have contributed towards increased transparency and accountability of government operations for the future** through the changes making public consultations and information sharing mandatory and by the improvements suggested by Advocacy Group for the *Administrative Instructions for the Law on access to public documents (freedom of information)*.
- **Likely to have contributed towards more responsive policies at the municipal level for the future** where 95 percent of local level legislation is initiated by mayor's office, and their legal officers, now trained by the project, are responsible for ensuring compliance to the new rules of public consultation. This is expected to result in more public consultation on important long-term planning documents such as the municipal plans which before were done without meaningful citizen consultation. So far the impact is unknown but seemed minimal as of the evaluation date.

(v) **Sustainability**

Many of the improvements made by the project are likely to be sustainable. The focus on systems instead of cases meant it changed the structures for consultation. These changes were institutionalized in the revised rules of procedure which now makes these processes less dependent on an individual public official's good will. These new structures have opened the consultation processes to all of the sector areas and CSOs. These changed structures will help ensure continuity of the consultative processes when a minister or government changes. These reforms will be further consolidated when the Government's Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society is adopted, which will provide the framework for a wider scope of cooperation with citizens and others.

Key legal officials at the national and municipal levels are now trained in the new rules. They have the manual developed by the project as a reference as it was adopted by the Government as its official handbook for public consultations. Public officials are starting to use the manual in their work. For example, the press officer at the Ministry of European

Integration said he used the manual for guidance on sharing the Ministry's information and 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 used 80 percent of them. The training developed by the project has been picked up by the Kosovo Institute for Public Administration which is the government institution mandated to train public servants. This will provide the institutional continuity for the training elements and will ensure the new legal officers that enter public service will be trained on the consultation principles developed by the project.

CSOs are already using the new structures to address the content of legislation and policies. There is still a good will to implement this type of consultative process, and over time this should trickle down to others. CSOs have already developed their proposals to improve the draft *Law on Local Self-Governance* which provides the basis for the operation of municipalities. This bill has been on the legislative agenda for three years but has not been opened for consultation because some of its clauses are linked to the Kosovo-Serb issue in the north of Kosovo, but the CSO proposals/comments are already done and ready for when the bill is brought forward for discussion.

Changed attitudes are likely to remain as long as the process remains constructive. The rules are changed and what remains to be done is to ensure they are implemented. This is already happening with the public officials who are inclined towards inclusive processes, but these are a small percentage of the public officials in Kosovo. It will take continued monitoring and active participation by civil society to keep the process moving across the board.

The Advisory Group has ceased to exist but the Civikos Platform was renewed under the project and is still functioning. It recently elected a head of the board and is still sending out e-mail alerts to CSOs. As an example, the leader of a women's organization told the evaluators that she worked on an initiative to amend the law on gender equality. She received the draft and provided input to the government through the platform as recently as July 2012. However, the Legal Office at the Prime Minister's Office said it had requested additional information from NGOs in August 2010 and had received some participation. But that it had expected more input from them. He said when he questioned the NGOs about why they hadn't participated more fully in the process, they told him that they trusted him to get it right.

(vi) UNDEF added value

KCSF was very appreciative of having a distant donor. It felt donors in Kosovo micromanaged their projects and they appreciated the hands off nature of UNDEF project management which gave KCSF the flexibility it felt it needed to implement the project and have it respond quickly to changes and openings. As a result, they felt this was their project, they owned it completely, and it was not donor driven as they felt many CSO projects were in Kosovo.

V. Conclusions

Based on the evaluation findings, the team concludes:

(i) The project's focus and activities as designed were relevant and important given the political context and democratic developments in Kosovo. Kosovo's recent independence and history of centralized government left it with no consolidated tradition of open and consultative processes in government. This project targeted the government's public policy making processes and making them more open and inclusive which was needed. Relevance and project importance increased exponentially when the project was able to develop a partnership with the key offices of Prime Minister and Ministry of Local Government Administration which set the policies and rules for government collaboration with civil society. Moreover the project enhanced the functioning of the NGO cooperation platform previously established by an earlier UNDEF-funded project. This conclusion follows from findings (i) and (v).

(ii) The project was done at the right time. This was the right time to implement a project of this nature and to be able to make a substantive difference to improve the governmental processes for public consultation. The government sought to address the problem of diminishing public trust in institutions and protracted legal drafting procedures employed by ministries. The key government officials targeted by the project aimed to utilize this opportunity to upgrade and reform parts of the national framework for democratic governance, which included its rules of procedure on public consultations. The senior civil service officers in charge of this process were open and interested in civil society input and KCSF seized the opportunity to assist them in this effort. The project gave this reform effort structure and momentum through its regular CSO meetings, advocacy, training, and partnerships developed with the governmental offices. This conclusion follows from findings (ii) and (iv).

(iii) The approach of working with the demand and supply side of the public consultation process was effective and provided more substantial results than had it only supported one side or the other. The problem of public consultation was not just an issue of the government being more open, but also one of CSOs across the spectrum being able to respond more constructively to offers for consultations and to be able to provide specific suggestions for policy and legislative issues. The project targeted the problems on both sides, and brought them together. This benefited both sides and the effective partnership that developed should serve as a model for future cooperation to be instilled in the government's strategy for cooperation with civil society. This conclusion follows from findings (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v).

(iv) The coordination mechanism created was a useful mechanism to strengthen CSO advocacy and improve its collaboration with and response to government for key public policy discussions. The project continued and expanded the Advocacy Group which gave interested NGOs a regular platform to share information, review key policies, and develop strategies. The Government also found it as an efficient and effective way to reach the main CSOs working in the different sector. As a result it was well

used by both and contributed to the results found for this project. This conclusion follows from findings (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v).

(v) The project helped to improve the structure for public consultations, making it more genuine and institutionalized. The changes to the government's rules of procedure and making consultations mandatory will help NGOs gain access to government policy making for non-sensitive issues for years to come. It improved the enabling environment for civil society participation and will allow them to make a more substantial contribution. This opens the door for eventual discussion of more sensitive political and economic issues. Initial results are more evident at the central level than at the municipal level where change is likely to take longer. This conclusion follows from findings (ii), (iv), and (vi).

(vi) The results achieved by this project are the cumulative effects of many efforts. There have been many efforts undertaken since the end of the war in 1999 to strengthen civil society in Kosovo, develop its watchdog and advocacy roles and promote citizen participation. This KCSF project built on these foundations and joined with key government partners who were moving in the same direction. These combined efforts and cumulative effects helped achieve the project's successful results. This conclusion follows from findings (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v).

(vii) Key to the sustainability the results created under the project is that they were institutionalized. Policy changes were made to the government's rules of procedure which makes public consultation mandatory at all levels of government. The coordination mechanism of a CSO platform gave structure and continuity to CSO efforts and is still continuing through the Civikos platform. Ministries are starting to follow the new rules, and asking for public consultations earlier in the process. Nonetheless, there is still a need to create a monitoring mechanism to address challenges to public consultations. The NGOs are using the structures developed by this project to raise issues on the contents of other policies and legislation. This conclusion follows from findings (iv) and (v).

(viii) Work needs to continue to maintain the momentum for greater civic inclusion and to ensure implementation of the new regulations at both the ministry and municipal levels. This project moved the process forward but the improved structures need to be used by all CSOs and public officials to be effective and to improve the quality of public consultations and content of public policies. Their awareness on the benefits of consultation was raised by the project, but old habits are engrained and it will take time and attention to change, and for policy changes to be applied to more sensitive policy areas. Increased efforts are needed to bring CSOs representing minority groups into these processes. This conclusion follows from findings (iv) and (v).

VI. Recommendations

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

(i) Civil society should continue to build on its engagement and partnerships with government to further improve the public consultation processes. There is still momentum from this process that should not be lost. Future efforts should build on these gains to move the processes forward and help consolidate them. Part of this is making sure that civil society uses the new structures and that their participation in them is productive. Another part is to ensure the new structures are utilized by public officials at both central and municipal levels. As part of this, civil society with government could develop a joint monitoring unit that would track implementation process and report bi-annually. In addition, this element (making sure CSOs/government use the new structures) should be picked up by the Round 6 UNDEF project (UDF-KOS-11-468) with KDI for its activities at the municipal levels. This recommendation follows conclusions (i), (ii), (iii), (v), (vi), (vii) and (viii).

(ii) Programme designs should focus on achieving specific results but be flexible enough so that implementers can take advantage of windows of opportunities to help reach those results, especially in transitional contexts. This can be done by ensuring a solid results framework is developed in the design phase that clearly identifies the main activity areas and their direct contribution towards the achievement of the intended outcomes, but that does not overly prescribe the activities or their implementation modalities. The project budget should also be realistic to the level of proposed activities and outputs as a budget cut too close leaves little room for programmatic flexibility. This recommendation follows from conclusions (i), (ii) and (vi).

(iii) Civil society groups should leverage openings and support agents of change to make meaningful reforms. Partnerships with public officials who want to professionalize their offices or reform their systems offer opportunities to make a systemic change in the way officials and government do business. CSOs should support these openings to deepen and widen them through support to build their professional capacities, strengthen the rules, and promote norms and standards for their operations (all of which were done under this project). This provides a win-win situation for both partners. This recommendation follows from conclusions (i), (ii), (vi) and (viii).

(iv) Continue use of a coordination mechanism to bring CSOs together to promote democratic reforms and consolidation. A coordinated and collective voice of civil society is likely to yield more effective results than individual or disjointed efforts. The type of mechanisms used by the project should continue to focus on strengthening the structures for participation as well as the use of CSOs to improve specific policies. This group should be expanded to include the diverse spectrum of civil society including professional and business associations into their network and efforts on specific advocacy efforts to strengthen them and increase their reach. This mechanism should continue to provide the structure for two-way communications between civil society groups and the government, while at the same time seeks to improve engagement of the public. This mechanism is also appropriate for municipal levels as is intended in the new UNDEF-funded grant to KDI. This recommendation follows from conclusions (iii), (iv) and (vi).

(v) Track the implementation of the reforms made by the project by establishing a joint government - civil society monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the public consultation process. Advocacy and reform projects should have a monitoring and evaluation plan that tracks the status of reforms and challenges faced during implementation. This could be institutionalized by creating a joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism with the office that implemented the changes. This should track the percentage of public offices are using the new rules of procedure for consultations, the number of policies affected and the results of those consultations, which should be jointly assessed every six months. This is a lesson learned that should be taken into consideration by the KDI project in its project design and tracking of its results. This recommendation follows from conclusions (v) and (viii).

(vi) Continue to work with municipal level CSOs to advocate for more inclusive participation at municipal levels. Although Kosovo is a centralized system and the main NGOs at the center are active, municipal government is closer to the level of everyday citizen needs and concerns. The model used by this project at the center level could be replicated at the municipal level in some of Kosovo's main municipalities. This would allow for adaptation of the concept to the local circumstances, including use by groups from the ethnic minorities. The anticipated KDI CSO project is at the municipal level and it should ensure that it maximizes opportunities for citizen participation as part of its monitoring and advocacy processes. This recommendation follows from conclusions (iii), (v), and (viii)

VII. Overall assessment and closing thoughts

This project was effective because it found an opening within government to effect change from the inside and worked in partnership with those reform-minded officials to effect meaningful reform. Both sides were able to deliver on their intentions. Through this project, KCSF was able to deliver the needed expertise and tools to enable these officials to efficiently and effectively make these reforms. KCSF was not alone in its efforts. This project reflected the years of international support to civil society and the government and the combined efforts of participating CSOs to make the policy making processes more inclusive in their individual areas of interest.

The time was also right for this project. As a new nation, Kosovo's regulations and legislation were evolving, getting in early and helping to set the foundations for a more inclusive and participatory governance meant that the project was able to make a substantive and long-term contribution to that development. However, attitudes and long-standing practices take time to change. Kosovo's tradition of centralized decision making and limited tradition of public's involvement in decision-making means it will take time and continued pro-active engagement by civil society to overcome.

This project also showed the usefulness and effectiveness of continuing UNDEF funding from one project to the next in pursuit of the same objectives. Many of the results achieved in this project were because the groundwork for a coordinated advocacy effort working with a government branch had already been done.

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 to discuss CSO and government issues and the findings of the project-sponsored CSO monitoring reports. These municipal level coordination groups should also be linked to the national CiviKos platform in order to share information and generate more widespread support for their advocacy issues and policy proposals. This is especially important in the centralized Kosovar context.

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"> ▪ Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? ▪ Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? ▪ 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?
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent have the project's objectives been reached? ▪ To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not? ▪ Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? ▪ What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?
Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? ▪ Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability? ▪ Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address? ▪ Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? ▪ To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? ▪ Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact? ▪ Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?
UNDEF value added	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc). ▪ Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed:

Civicus and KCSF, Civil Society Index, Analytical Report for Kosovo, Better Governance for Greater Impact, A Call for Citizens, 2011

European Commission, Commission Staff Working Paper, Kosovo 2011 Progress Report, SEC(2011) 1207, October 2011.

KCSF, Agenda for the Experts Roundtable on the Code of Good Practices for Citizen Participation, May 2011

KCSF, Citizen Participation, Best Practices in the Western Balkans and the European Union, October 2011

KCSF, Dyert, Gjysme Te Hapura Apo Gjysme Te Mbyllura? March 2010

KCSF, We and Them, Citizen Participation in Kosovo, October 2011

KCSF, Website: <http://www.kcsfoundation.org/>

OSCE, Civil Society and the Legislative Process in Kosovo, 2007

Republic of Kosovo, Office of the Prime Minister, No. 101/2010, Government Working Group/Advisory Panel, April 2010

Southeast European Times, Government-civil society relations in Kosovo are lacking, 26 July 2012
SETimes.com

http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2012/07/26/feature-03

Southeast European Times, Rapid adoption of laws pose problems for Kosovo's legal system, 18 November 2011, SETimes.com

http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2011/11/18/feature-02

Southeast European Times, Government-civil society relations are lacking, 26/07/2012,
http://setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2012/07/26/feature-03

UDF-KOS-07-192, Consortium on Strengthening Civil Society Advocacy in Kosovo, Project Document, June 2009

UDF-KOS-07-192, Consortium on Strengthening Civil Society Advocacy in Kosovo, Final Report, 30 April 2009

UDF-KOS-07-192, Consortium on Strengthening Civil Society Advocacy in Kosovo, Draft Evaluation Report, June 2010

UDF-KOS-08-265, Empowering Civil Society Inclusion in Democratic Policy-Making in Kosovo, Project Document, September 2009

UDF-KOS-08-265, Empowering Civil Society Inclusion in Democratic Policy-Making in Kosovo, Final Project Narrative Report, May 2012

UDF-KOS-08-265, Empowering Civil Society Inclusion in Democratic Policy-Making in Kosovo, Final Financial Utilization Report, May 2012

Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

19 August 2012	
Arrival, international consultant	
20 August 2012	
Mr. Taulant Hoxha	Project Coordinator, KCSF
Mr. Hajrulla Ceku	Executive Director, EC ma ndryshe
21 August 2012	
Mrs. Lule Demolli	Kosovar Centre for Gender Studies
Mr. Fidan Kalaja	Program Manager, FOL levizja
Mr. Lumni Rama	OSCE technical expert for Assembly of Kosovo
22 August 2012	
Mr. Anton Selitaj	Senior Programme Associate, Governance Unit, UNDP Kosovo
Mr. Flamur Salihu	Head of Communication and information, Ministry of European Integration
Mr. Besim Kajtazi	Director of Legal Office, Office of the Prime Minister
Mrs. Venera Hajrullahu	Executive Director, KCSF
Mr. Agron Maxhuni	Director of Legal Department, Ministry of Local Government Administration
23 August 2012	
Mr. Driton Selmanaj	Program Manager, Kosovo Democratic Institute
Mr. Visar Sutaj	Project Manager, Democracy for Development
Mr. Avni Bytyci	Executive Director, Initiative for Progress
Ms. Mimoza Gojani	Project Consultant, EU Officer, British Embassy
24 August 2012	
Mr. Lutfi Haziri	Member of Parliament, Chairman of the Committee for European Integration
Mr. Krenar Gashi	Institute for Development Policy
Mr. Arben Loshi	European Partnership Focal Point, Assembly of Kosovo
Mr. Jetmir Bakija	Analyst, Democracy for Development

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.