

Decentralization is a complex process, narrowly linked with the endeavours made by Republic of Macedonia for its EU integration with the ultimate goal of improvement of the services for the citizens, and thus, leading to improvement of the living standard.

A modern, European type of local self-government requires skills and competent governance in the municipalities. The acceptance of the new standards and values in the functioning of the local self-government, new organizational culture, strengthened capacities of the administration through knowledge and skills advancement is a step towards efficient and effective meeting of the needs and interests of the citizens.

The professionalization of the local self-government, through acquisition of new knowledge and skills, represents an imperative for the successful implementation of decentralization and efficiency of the local self-government.

The national and regional institutions/organizations, wherein ZELS and ADKOM belong, as mechanisms for coordination, networking, lobbying and advocacy for their constituents-members (local self-government units and public utility enterprises), have the key role in the success of the decentralization processes.

The main role of the two national organizations is to be a step in front of the decentralization processes, to create and lead the changes to which they are exposed and which are implemented by their members.

The strengthening of the institutional and governing capacity of ZELS and ADKOM is one of the more important factors in provision of long-term and sustainable development of the communities.

The overall goal of the project is improved services to the citizens in the communities.

The objective of the project was the preparedness of the Association of the Units of Local

Self-Government (ZELS) and the Association of the Providers of Utility Services (ADKOM) for continuous practice of innovative models and modernization.

Target group of the project consisted of members of ZELS and ADKOM: municipalities, communities and public utility enterprises (PUEs).

ZELS organized a workshop for structural and technical capacity building, in Ohrid, October 6-8th 2007, wherein 13 members from the expert staff from ZELS took part. At the workshop trainings were realized on: strategies for lobbying and campaigns, management of improved services of ZELS, development of partnership with the NGOs at the local level as a factor for implementation of projects of local significance, development of PR skills, model of IT assistance to municipalities. The results from the workshop are revision of the Strategic Plan of ZELS 2006-2011 and prepared Action Plan of ZELS for 2008. The second activity of ZELS was participation of the advisor-coordinator for public relations, Ms. Vesna Arsovska-Dinkovska at the London Public Relations School of the McCann-Erickson Group in Skopje, from November 5th 2007 to December 18th 2007.

The preparation of a project (formulation) for joint procurement of vehicles for all PUEs in Macedonia served as a basis in the discussions that ADKOM, as the national representative of the PUEs, held with the Ministry of Transport and Connections and other relevant institutions, regarding the possibility for support to the realization of the planned procurement. A questionnaire for collection of data on the conditions, requirements and priorities of the PUEs regarding the mechanical and technical equipment was sent to all PUEs.

The processed and analyzed data were the basis for the work of the two-day workshop for formulation of the project, in Ohrid, October 8-9th 2007, wherein 19 participants from PUEs, members of ADKOM, participated. At the workshop, the initial working version of the project was drafted, with subsequent two one-day workshops in Skopje, wherein a working group consisting of 5 members completed the working version and presented a project proposal. The project will be fully completed after the legal dilemmas on ADKOM, as the holder of the project, will have been removed. The process of preparations and formulations of the project were supported by the consultancy delivered by Dimce Mitreski, Head of Development Department and Miodrag Kolic, Project Assistant/Trainer in the Development Department.

The time period for implementation of the project was August 27th – December 27th 2007.

Direct expenditure of the project amounted to 380,287.00 MKD. All funds were provided by EED from Germany (www.eed.de).