

CBM Newsletter, January - April 2016

Sensitization Meeting With Women Start-Ups Participants



On 4th of February, following the trainings for 100 women on Financial Management; Business Planning; Mobilization of Funds; Marketing and Sales within “Supportive business environment for women start-ups in North and South Mitrovicë/a” that aimed to mobilize and empower them with knowledge, guidance and support on starting and developing start-up business and this way to achieve

economic independence and be a catalyst on increasing economic development on the community where they live, Community Building Mitrovica organized sensitization meeting with the participants of the project where around 70 women from both North and South Mitrovica participated.

The aim of this session was to inform the participants about the future steps and events related to this project, and to provide them with data regarding the application process for business plan. The project coordinator Mr. Dzemil Huseinovic and project assistant Mr. Milos Golubovic of “Supportive business environment for women start-ups in North and South Mitrovicë/a” - informed the audience about the upcoming activities of this project and answered to the different questions and unclearness related the applying procedures for business plan, selection criteria, mentorship platform, etc.

Project “Supportive business environment for women start-ups in North and South Mitrovicë/a” is funded by European Union Office in Kosovo, co-financed by Mitrovica South Municipality and MOTT Foundation. This project is implemented by Community Building Mitrovica in partnership with D&G Solutions.

Access Program Students Attended Workshop on "Public Speaking"

On February 11, English Access Microscholarship Program students attended a three day workshop on "Public speaking" organized by Youth Council of the U.S. Embassy in Kosovo.

This activity was a great experience for the participants as they also had the chance to interact with U.S.



Ambassador Greg Delawie in the one of the sessions. Ambassador Delawie urged the students to use their skills and raise their voices to bring their communities closer together. This workshop aimed to empower the participants on presenting, pursuing the audience and in general aimed to inform them about different factors related to the public speaking.

The Work for MRMT Strategic Planning Document Continued



Within the project “Civil Society is watching you: demand for accountability and transparency on local level” in mid-February Community Building Mitrovica organized workshop for the continuation of the strategic planning for Mitrovica Region Monitoring Team (MRMT). During this meeting with the members of MRMT, that are also representatives of different NGOs from Mitrovica

Region was discussed about the objectives of this strategic document. This activity is continuation of the two day workshop for the creation of Strategy planning document of MRMT that was held in August 2015. “Civil Society is watching you: demand for accountability and transparency on local level” is a EU funded project managed by European Union Office and co-financed by Austrian Development Agency, The Netherlands Embassy in Pristina and Mott Foundation

Closed Round Table for the Monitoring Report of Mitrovica South Municipality Assembly for the period April – June 2015



On 24th of February under project “Civil Society is watching you: demand for accountability and transparency on local level” CBM organized closed round table with civil society and local institutions representatives. The Mayor of the Mitrovica South Municipality Mr. Agim Bahtiri and the chairman of the

Assembly Mr. Bislim Imeri, while the round table was moderated by Valdete Idrizi, a known activist and executive director of the CiviKos Platform. This meeting was held for the publication of the Monitoring Report of Mitrovica South Assembly for the period April – June 2015. In this period the implementation was conducted during the ‘on the job training’, by the members of Mitrovica Regional Monitoring Team under the guidance of CBM.

Some of the findings from the monitoring work that were presented in this round table are:

- Mitrovica South Municipal Assembly is collaborative, welcomes citizen and civil society initiatives in which regard meetings are set easily and also suggestions of CSOs are mainly taken into account;
- From the meetings held it was noted that offices operating within the Mitrovica South Municipal Assembly have stumble in understanding the legislation that regulates this cooperation and collaboration with CSOs;
- Mitrovica South Municipal Assembly informs citizens about the activities and public meetings, but the used communication channels have failed to attract the attention and interest of the people to be present at meetings of the Municipal Assembly.
- Work Regulations of the Mitrovica South Municipal Assembly clearly define the role of Chairperson, but often this role it has been not carried out successfully, therefore the Assembly session often were not managed properly ;
- Work Regulations of Mitrovica South Municipal Assembly define the ways of discussion based on the agenda of the session, often, Assembly members have not respected this regulation by discussing also topics out the agenda;
- Mitrovica South Municipal Assembly Members are often unprepared for the topics discussed, is noticed that they do not preliminarily read the respective material;
- Discussions in Mitrovica South Municipal Assembly are more extended in the political field rather than for good governance and planning of the public policies in the interests of citizens;

Mitrovica South Mayor Mr. Bahtiri mentioned that the findings from this report will improve the work of the both legislative and executive bodies in order to make the Municipality work more efficient. He promised that work will be done to avoid mistakes in order to carry process on and to be more accountable and transparent. The round table proceeded with discussion where the participants had the chance to openly share their opinion and give input regarding the monitoring report.



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Appreciation for CBM



In February Community Building Mitrovica received appreciation certificate by Mitrovica South Municipality Mayor Mr. Agim Bahtiri handed to the representative of CBM an appreciation, as a form of gratitude for the positive impact of the project “Supportive business environment for women start-ups in North and South Mitrovicë/a” in empowering women and

contributing to the economic development, and in general for the good cooperation which has led to productive results. More on the following link:

<http://kk.rks-gov.net/mitrovica/News/Lajmet/Mirenjohje-per-biznesmenet-dhe-fermeret-me-te-mire.aspx>

CBM Published “Our Matters” Project Report



On the first day of March, Community Building Mitrovica organized round table for the publication of “Our Matters” project report. In this closing event of “Our Matters” was presented the publication with the findings and recommendations related to the projects that 13 NGOs from both South and North Mitrovica

implemented which are object of concern and interest of the citizens. As the main finding of the report was presented the need for increasing of the public participation in annual planning and budgeting of public policies. Florentina Hajdari Hajra good governance program manager in CBM, emphasized the need for the continuation this project since has addressed the main needs and problems of the citizens through public debates, street actions and other activities on the two-year period of its implementation. Mr. Agim Bahtiri Mayor of the Mitrovica South Municipality, present in this round table welcomed all the recommendations of the report and expressed his commitment to work towards the issues raised in the report, while Mr. Bahtiri also mentioned cooperation with CBM as good example of collaboration of civil society with local institutions.

Danijela Tomasovic from ACDC and Erzen Isufi from Lëvizja Koha, two of thirteen NGOs part of "Our Matters" spoke for the projects they implemented. NGO ACDC addressed the problem of alcohol abuse among young population in traffic and aimed to promote communication with the police force and other institutions in order to reduce the negative effects of this issue. Lëvizja Koha organized several advocacy activities regarding the lack of public toilets issue, and the implementation of the law on smoking control in South Mitrovica.

"Our matters" aims to increase public participation in decision making process through public debates and street actions, is implemented by Community Building Mitrovica and funded by PAX for PEACE.

Please find the report on the following link: <http://goo.gl/qVuQBW>

CBM AND 7 Arte organized the Conference "Challenges of Culture in Mitrovica"



In cooperation with Community Building Mitrovica, NGO 7 Arte one of the grantees under the project "Civil Society is watching you: demand for accountability and transparency on local level" organized conference entitled "Challenges of Culture in Mitrovica". This activity was result of the research 7 Arte conducted as one

of the beneficiaries of these grants. Finding of this research presented was: lack of cultural activities in the city of Mitrovica. Mr. Tafil Peci, Director of Culture Youth and Sports Department in Mitrovica South mentioned the cuts on the budget for this Department as the main cause for the lack of cultural activities. Some of the recommendations that emerged from this conference were: the need for more dialogue between cultural institutions and non-governmental organizations dealing with culture, the creation of a comprehensive strategy of action for culture, investigation of cultural heritage in Mitrovica South and commitment from local institution to meet the needs of professional staff that will work in cultural institutions.

Different activities within Access Program



In March Access Program students started with joint regular classes. This was great opportunity for students from both North and South to continue building their friendship and also not only share knowledge with each other, but absorb more from their two professors.

On 14th as part of Community Activities, Access Program students from Mitrovica North dedicated

their time for a special cause - they visited pupils with special needs and had joint activities. Pupils were positively surprised with the visit, enjoyed the prepared activities for them and welcomed students to visit them in the future.

The English Access Microscholarship Program is supported from U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and implemented by Community Building Mitrovica.



"Justice without reconciliation - War crimes and trials in Europe since 1945"

Within the program "Justice without reconciliation" second part of the seminar cycle was held in France from 6 -12 March. Six participants from Kosovo joined their counterparts from France, Germany and Serbia to discover, analyze and discuss the role of War Crime Trials and their judicial, political and societal implications in the 20th century. The seminar



included field visits, presentations of and discussion with experts, group discussion and working groups.

The overall aim of the program is to explore and discuss the question of war crimes and war crime trials in the four countries, and especially their role in postwar-reconciliation processes. The project is organized by: French - German Youth Office (FGYO Paris/Berlin), Community Building Mitrovica(Kosovo) , Humanitarian Law Center(Kosovo), Youth Initiative for Human Rights Serbia, Altea France(France), Max-Mannheimer Studienzentrums Dachau(Germany)

Joint reaction of Civil Society Organizations in Mitrovica condemning sexual harassment on minor

Through joint reaction Community Building Mitrovica and other NGOs from Mitrovica Region condemned sexual harassment towards a juvenile, where as the key suspect was Bekim Muja, member of Mitrovica South Municipality Assembly.

Below find the joint reaction for opinion and media:

Based on information of the Kosovo Police in Mitrovica region, on March 9 2016 it's suspected that a sexual assault happened on a 13 year girl from Vaganica, pupil in the primary school "Skenderbeu". After interviewing the victim, Mitrovica South Municipality Assembly member Bekim Muja was identified as the main suspect. With the order of the competent prosecutor, the suspect was prohibited in detention for 48 hours, while the Court in Mitrovica appointed detention for 30 days.

Civil Society Organizations appreciate the effective operation of competent organs in this case, while also encourage them to work intensively in order for the final verdict be taken as soon as possible.

It's very concerning issue the fact that 48.5% of Kosovars experience sexual harassment, of which 64.1 % women and children. Knowing that these acts cause long-term trauma, often unrecoverable, society as a whole has to be mobilized to condemn this ugly phenomenon.

Training on Business Plan Writing

Community Building Mitrovica and NGO "D&G Solutions" during March started with the second phase of the 5 training modules on: Introduction to entrepreneurship and leadership; Business planning; Commercial regulations; Marketing; Business managements; Business running challenges; QMS (quality management system)



- in the framework of the project Business Accelerator Facility of Municipalities in the North of Kosovo. The first training for non - majority community living in Mitrovica North was held in the BAF premises on the topic of Business Plan writing. Other activities within this project include: assessment of Northern Municipalities of Kosovo economic situation, sub-granting and promotional campaign for start-up businesses derivate of this project, etc.

The overall objective of the project is to support socio-economic development and creation of positive economic setup in Municipalities in the North of Kosovo, strengthen local businesses

and investment opportunities, and so to boost up local employment opportunities. The specific



project is to initiate and support the development of business accelerator facility (BAF), to increase the entrepreneurship potential of the Northern Municipalities of Kosovo, and to contribute to labor-market integration of women and youth. Business Accelerator Facility of Municipalities in the North of Kosovo is an EU Funded Project Managed by the European Union Office in Kosovo and co-funded by Spark.

NGO “Prehja” supported by CBM, published monitoring report for Skenderaj Municipality



NGO Women Center “Prehja” one of the grantees within the project “Civil Society is watching you: demand for accountability and transparency on local level” published monitoring report for Skenderaj Municipality with theme “Increase of transparency in Skenderaj Municipal Assembly and monitoring of the communal budget”. In the round table organized for this publication participated: vice-principal of the Skenderaj Municipality Mr.Fadil Nura, chairman of the Skenderaj Municipality Mr.Ismet Salihu, executive director of CiviKos platform Ms.Valdete Idrizi, members of the Municipal Assembly and other representatives of different political parties, civil society and media. This open debate was held as result of the five month monitoring process of the Skenderaj local institutions by NGO “Prehja”, under the guidance of Community Building Mitrovica.

Good Governance Program Manager in CBM Ms.Florentina Hajdari Hajra opened the round table by briefly presenting the project “Civil Society is watching you: demand for accountability and transparency on local level” and the monitoring report completed by “Prehja”. Following Mr.Milazim Mustafaj from NGO “Prehja” informed the audience more in details about the working process and findings of the report. As main issues addressed in the report presented by Mr.Mustafaj were: lack of connection of several villages with sewage and water supply system, lack of transparency by local institutions especially when it comes to the access of Municipality official documents, etc. But as mentioned from the NGO “Prehja” representative there has been improvements and progress.

"I agree with the fact that there are still villages that are not connected with the sewage and water supply system but the Municipality is working in that direction, while when it comes to the access in the official documents only one from seven requests for access was disregarded" said Mr. Fadil Nura, vice-principal of the Skenderaj Municipality. Nevertheless Vice-Mayor welcomed the recommendations included in the monitoring report although as he said, would like the report to be more detailed.

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CBM organized Public Debates regarding Monitoring Reports



In late March, Community Building Mitrovica in cooperation with grantees NGO Lëvizja KOHA and Santa Marija within the project “Civil Society is watching you” organized public debates regarding monitoring process of Mitrovica South Municipal Assembly, Education Department and Culture Youth Sports Department within Mitrovica South Municipality entitled “The Situation of Education

and Youth in Mitrovica”, respectively on the monitoring process of Zvečan Municipality Culture Youth and Sports Department entitled ‘Mladi na delu, mladi na čelu’.

In these public debates high representatives of local institutions participated.

In the framework of “Youth is monitoring you” Mr. Erzen Isufi representative of Lëvizja KOHA as main concern when it comes to the Education Department mentioned budget cuts for this year, while one of the achievements in this Department is safety enhancement in primary and high schools. From the monitoring of the Culture, Youth and Sports Department amongst the other issues as main need was mentioned recognition of the voluntary work. Directors of these both monitored Departments of Mitrovica South mentioned above mainly agreed with the findings introduced, and welcomed the recommendations.

While Ms Jelena Kasalović representative of Santa Marija as main issue when it comes to the department within Zvečan Municipality monitored were finances and how much money is actually invested for youth issues in this Municipality.

These round tables were organized under the project “Civil Society is watching you: demand for accountability and transparency on local level”, an EU funded project managed by European Union Office and co-financed by Austrian Development Agency, The Netherlands Embassy in Pristina and MOTT Foundation, while implemented by Community Building Mitrovica and Center for Resources Youth and Media Coalition.



Activist Lab Mitrovica



In cooperation with PAX and Butterfly Works from Netherlands, Community Building Mitrovica organized Activist Lab Mitrovica. For four days from 1 - 4 April, activists from North and South Mitrovica under the facilitation of the organizational team joined forces and worked on creative concrete ideas and public campaigns that as main focus had the development of the bridge zone including the

riverfronts and adjacent commercial and residential areas on both sides of the Ibar / Ibri. Part of this Lab were also Jens Aerts, expert in the Urban Planning and Development, and Rami Maksoud member of Activist Lab Beirut, Lebanon.

In the fourth day of the Lab, activists presented their creative work and prototypes in an open exhibition in the premises of the International Business Collage Mitrovica (North branch) on the topic of urban development and public engagement of the bridge zone. The event was broadcast live on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqJSWDqARGI&feature=youtu.be>. On the following link, you may find the outcomes of the Activist Lab photo-walk around the bridge zone:

<https://nl.pinterest.com/activisthive/activist-lab-mitrovica-urban-development-public-en/>

Study visit within the project: "Promoting employment of the youth through social partnership and cooperation"



Within the project "Promoting employment of the youth through social partnership and cooperation" the 4th study visit was organized in Vranje and Bujanoc, Serbia with participants from local institutions, civil society and business background. Topic of the seminar was The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Socially Responsible Economy, while participants visited various

institutions and businesses as: Municipality of Bujanoc in which occasion had meeting with the Mayor of the Municipality, winery Aleksic, shoe factory Geox, etc.

Project goal is to connect local self-governments, business sector and civil society organizations from 6 cities/municipalities (Nis, Vranje, Leskovac, Mitrovica, Peja and Prizren) in dealing with youth employment through exchange of creative new ideas and best practices, as well as implementation of social dialogue and cooperation mechanisms on local level.

"Civil Society is watching you" project grantee NGO Mundësia published Monitoring Report

In mid-April as part of the project "Civil Society is watching you: demand for accountability and transparency on local level" grantee NGO Mundësia published the monitoring report of Mitrovica South Assembly, Committee for Politics and Finances, and Office for Gender Equality. The project "Monitoring the Implementation of Gender Equality Law", which lasted from October 2015 to March 2016, was implemented by Mundësia and



supported by CBM. Vetone Veliu from Community Building Mitrovica presented the project "Civil society is watching you" that aims to increase transparency and accountability of local institutions. Hasime Tahiri – Hasani director of Mundësia said that the project has achieved its objectives, not only in surveillance of the municipal officials but also in creating bridges between local institutions and women's groups especially from different rural areas. The overall objective of this project funded by "My need , My decision" grant scheme was protection of gender equality as a fundamental factor for the democratic development of Kosovo society and promotion of equal opportunity for participation of women and men in all areas of social life.

Grant Opening Session and Certification Ceremony within Women Start-Ups



On 18th of April, Community Building Mitrovica organized Grant Opening Session and Certification Ceremony in the framework of the project “Supportive business environment for Women Start-ups in North and South Mitrovicë/a”. Present in this event were the women that have participated in trainings organized by CBM within the project, Director of Agriculture and Rural Development Department

of Mitrovica South Municipality Mr. Nasuf Aliu and representatives of the media. The aim of this activity was to present grant scheme for the project participants.

The scheme will provide grant support in material from 2.500 up to 7.500 Euro for 30 women. In this event was presented also Mentors Platform. Namely all women participants will be supported through mentorship program during the business plan writing but also in the implementation phase. Every participant can apply with one business plan, and consequently be beneficiary of one grant. The application period will be open until May 18, 2016. In this occasion the participants of the trainings organized within the project “Supportive business environment for Women Start-ups in North and South Mitrovicë/a” were handed with Certificates.



This event was held both in Mitrovica South and North, respectively in the premises of RDA and EU Info Point.

Project “Supportive Business Environment for Women Start-ups in North and South Mitrovicë/a” is funded by European Union Office in Kosovo, co-financed by Mitrovica South Municipality and MOTT Foundation. This project is implemented by Community Building Mitrovica in partnership with D&G Solutions.

CBM Joined Earth Day Celebrations

Community Building Mitrovica joined Earth Day celebrations that take place on April 22 each year. Access Program students jointly with Kindergarten “Gëzimi Ynë” staff and children in Mitrovica South planted flowers, while Access students in North planted flowers at the School for kids with special needs. This initiative was realized within community services conducted under Access Program, and in this occasion the aim of this symbolic activity was to make significant impact for cleaner and healthier environment, but also to encourage people to be more environmentally friendly. Students and kids spent great time together by planting the flowers and



watering them at the Kindergarten's yard, while present in this activity was also the Director of Education Department in Mitrovica South Municipality Mr. Pajazit Hajzeri and Director of Inspection Mr. Naim Hajra. Whereas Access students in North made sure to create a pleasant environment with their work in planting flowers at the special school and brought attention to importance of care for earth.

The English Access Microscholarship Program is supported from U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and implemented by Community Building Mitrovica.



CBM organizes study visit in Macedonia



From 20 to 23rd of April, a group of 14 civil society activists from Mitrovica were part of a study visit in Gostivar, Macedonia. The purpose of the study visit was to get an inside glimpse of the work of local institutions and civil society organizations and their cooperation. Civil Society representatives had an opportunity to share the challenges and tools to improve the work and implement those tools and

mechanisms in their own municipalities with peers from Macedonia. They met representatives from municipalities Gostivar, Vrapciste and Bogovina and NGOs Help, Youth Empowerment Platform, Red Cross, ADI among others, and got an insight how the cooperation works. Besides good governance field, participants were eager to know more about the way of living in mixed municipalities and compare it to their own cities.

This study visit was part of the capacity building for local CSOs for monitoring, lobbying and advocacy, within the project 'My need, my decision' implemented by CBM in partnership with CRYM. Funded by European Union Office in Kosovo and co-funded by Netherlands Embassy in Prishtina, Austrian Development Agency and Mott Foundation.



The importance of Transitional Justice for our society

In cooperation with Community Building Mitrovica, Humanitarian Law Center-Kosovo organized workshop with the topic of transitional justice. Young people from South and North Mitrovica participated in this activity. Mr. Bekim Blakaj, head of HLC-Kosovo, gave a presentation regarding the last conflict that happened in Kosovo and informed the participants for different initiatives



regarding data collection of the victims such as Kosovo Memory Book. Mr. Blakaj continued with the explanation of the transitional justice and its main pillars, as well as the process of Dealing with Past. During the discussion, it was agreed that the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms is crucial for the development of the societies that went through conflict. The aim of this workshop was to raise awareness of the youth who are often misinformed by a politicized version of history and promote the importance of Transitional Justice.

The implementation of laws by Mitrovica South, Vushtrri and Skenderaj Municipality

On 29th of April, Community Building Mitrovica and GAP Institute organized the conference entitled "The implementation of Laws by Municipalities" where the findings of a research realized by GAP Institute were presented. This research was conducted in 31 Municipalities with the main focus on the law implementation level, the coordination between central and local level and the problems in the



implementation of laws. Mitrovica South Municipality Mayor Mr. Agim Bahtiri, Vice-Mayor Mr. Safet Kamberi, legal representative of Vushtrri Municipality and other representatives of local institutions, civil society and media participated. Mr. Bekim Salihu from GAP Institute presented the results of this research, that aimed measurement of the level of law implementation by local institutions on the in the field of public services, urban planning, administration, inspection and health. Mitrovica South Municipality Mayor Mr. Agim Bahtiri congratulated the organizers for the research and the organization of the conference, while Deputy Mayor Mr. Safet Kamberi in his word emphasized that Mitrovica South Municipality stands good with the the implementation of laws, although there can be obstacles of political nature. As disturbing fact mentioned during the discussion was misunderstanding and uncertainty that Municipalities have in relation to laws that should be implemented at local level. According to the analysis of GAP Institute, in Kosovo averagely one law is changed every 34 months.

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