



**LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY
FOR CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SERBIA
L D A C S S**

ACTIVITY REPORT
May 2007 - October 2008

Prepared by the Delegate Sasa Marinkov and Assistant to the delegate Maja Uscumlic

LDA: Central and Southern Serbia

Address: Obrenoviceva 28, 18000 Nis, Serbia
Tel: +381 18 523853,
Fax: +381 18 523853

E-mail: LDACSS@aldaintranet.org LDANIS@ptt.rs

Website: www.ldacss.org

Delegate: Sasa MARINKOV
Assistant to the delegate: Maja USCUMLIC

Activities of LDACSS

1. Youth: the right direction

Supported by European Commission thru YOUTH IN ACTION programme

Activities of LDACSS within this three years long project consisted of:

- Participation of LDACSS associates, in two information seminars, in Thessaloniki, Greece (during June 2007) and in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina (during October 2007).
- In order to establish Info Point in LDACSS office within this project, these young people have designed organized and evaluated survey. The aim of this survey was to find out, which expectations young people in Nis have for such an information point (November 2007)
- At the same time we used this survey to select 15 people that could possibly become youth ambassadors for the project "Youth – The right direction" (December 2007).
- Establishing Youth Info Point in the premises of LDACSS (December 2007)
- Organizing a training for Peer to peer educators in Nis (May 2008) and participation of two youth activists to the training for Peer to peer educators held in Georgia (June 2008)
- Participation in Youth crossing fair (June 2008)

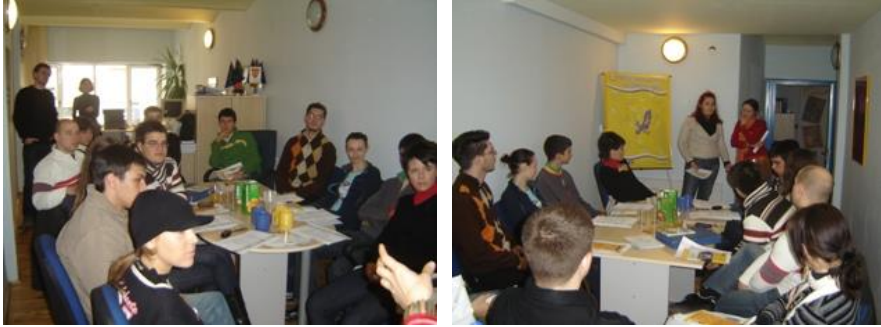
Results:

- Four young people, LDACSS youth leaders, trained on project drafting, setting up informational points, networking and Youth in action programme.
- Research paper on the needs of youth in Nis, basis for the programme of Youth Info Point
- Data base of young people interested in the activities of Info point
- Formed and active group of 20 young activists
- 15 young activists - peer educators

Possibilities:

LDACSS team developed further the idea of Youth Info Point into the idea of a Youth Centre. The City of Nis got interested and became involved as the official partner on the project of establishing Youth Centre on the city level. We submitted this project to the Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia and obtained funding.

Further possibilities include involvement of LDACSS European partners into the activities of Youth Centre thru exchange of knowledge, experience and good practice in the field of youth issues.



2. Microcredit scheme for start-up activities for young entrepreneurs in South East Europe

Supported by Norwegian Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Council of Europe Bank and Intesa SanPaolo

The aim of this project is to promote a long-lasting and sustainable local economic development in South East Europe by creating a favorable micro credit line and thus providing young entrepreneurs with necessary help for starting up or further developing their own businesses.

Activities:

- analysis of micro credit market in Serbia (2007)
- defining micro credit product in cooperation with local partner Banca Intesa Belgrade (2007)
- meetings with local stakeholders in Nis and Kragujevac (2008)
- Signing official agreement on cooperation between Banca Intesa Belgrade and LDACSS (2008)
- Disbursement of microcredit line (2008)

Results:

- Defined specific microcredit product for local market
- Secured local stakeholders as partners on the project

Possibilities:

Involvement of LDACSS European partners into the activities of this project thru exchange of knowledge, experience and good practice in the field of work with young entrepreneurs (trainings, seminars and conferences...study visits)

3. Together – the Balkans in Europe, Europe in the Balkan

Supported by the European Commission through CARDS Regional Media Support Programme

The aim of the project “Together: the Balkans in Europe, Europe in the Balkans” was to improve the quality of journalism in South East Europe and to foster co-productions between the different countries/entities in the region. This was achieved with the help of three renowned and well-experienced ARTE journalists (Strasbourg) who accompanied four young journalists from FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo in the production of four 20-minute documentaries.

Activities in 2007 included:

- Field research, filming and production of four documentaries on environmental issues around the Ohrid Lake, the role of dance in Serbia and Kosovo, the Resolution 1325 between Serbia and Kosovo and culinary issues and nationalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This was accomplished during the months of May, Jun and July.
- Postproduction, including the production of different language versions of all the documentaries (Serbian, Albanian, French and English) took place during the months of September, October and November.
- The final conference within this project was held in Brussels, Belgium on 7th December. The documentaries were shown in the presence of the producers and representatives of the European institutions.

Results:

- Four young journalists and their associates from the Balkans trained in cross-cultural approach in reporting and multicultural production
- Four documentaries produced and screened on local TV stations and International film festivals
- Established network between young journalists from the Balkans



4. Local Economic Development in the Balkans

Supported by French Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

During 2007 LDACSS has been implementing, in cooperation with local partners, two projects of local economic development within frame of this programme, one in Leskovac and the other in Kraljevo:

4.1 Project: "CBC Inc. – First step to socio-economic cohesion"

Main aim of the project was installation of two centers for support to the business sector in Serbia (Leskovac) and Bulgaria (Pernik). Target group consisted of entrepreneurs,

SME. Established centers will provide target group with consulting services, as well as logistics and mediation for crediting, organization of common approach to domestic and international fairs, common approach to EU market.

Results:

- Comprehensive database of the companies from the border regions, with more than 300 companies in it, divided by the branches and production assortments.
- Opened Centre for business support of SME in respective region with educated councilors
- Created common web site for two CBC centers (Leskovac and Pernik).
- Publication "Economic potentials of two border regions".
- International conference and fair expo (with 250 people who took participation in the International conference, over 400 visitors of the fair, 90 representatives of the companies took participation in the fair, participation of the General Consul of Republic of Bulgaria, and representatives of State institutions – Ministries and development Agencies)

This project is also financially supported thru the European Agency for Reconstruction and local partner was NGO Educational Centre – Leskovac.

4.2 Project: "The Road of the Water"

The aim of this project was to foster local economic development of the five rural communities of the Municipality of Kraljevo thru associating and establishing territorial pact of public and private sector stakeholders of those communities. Project activities were designed to contribute to the development in three fields: management of the territorial resources, responsible rural tourism and biological agriculture.

Activities:

- Territorial analysis
- Promotional events in the country and abroad
- Local and international promotion – Territorial marketing pilot initiative

Results:

- Official tourist guide of the area
- Establishing of private sector consortium of responsible tourism
- Networking with Balkan and international responsible tourism entities.

Partners of LDACSS on this project were Tavolo Trentino con Kraljevo, Italy and Municipality of Kraljevo.

This project is also financially supported by Tavolo Trentino con la Serbia.

5. The campaign “Stop domestic violence against women”

Supported by Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Council of Europe

Local campaign as a support to the campaign of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, “Stop domestic violence against women”.

Activities:

- The public round table “Fight domestic violence against women”
- Exhibition of promo materials from previous local and national campaigns of different organizations on domestic and violence against women issues
- Disbursement of campaign materials to the citizens of Nis

Results:

- Networking between local stakeholders dealing with domestic violence
- Raised awareness in general public on the problem of domestic violence



Special representative from the Council of Europe office in Belgrade, different representatives of police force, jurisdiction office and other relevant institutions, local self-government, Commission for gender equality and equal possibilities, City Hall in Nis, as well as representatives from all women NGOs in city of Nis answered on the invitation for the participation on this event.

The Round table represented specific forum of all relevant subjects in the city, which had chance to present their ideas, exchange experiences, speak about their expectations and accomplish constructive agreements for further work.



6. Raise awareness on waste management through education and implementation of selective compilation of cardboard and pet waste

Supported by Canton Geneva, City of Geneva and the city of Suresnes

The aim of this project is strengthening public awareness on waste and its adequate treatment and initiating of waste selective separation process. Activities in 2007 included preparation phase for starting up with the implementation of the project which will last 30 months.

Activities:

- Research
- Preparation and producing the promotional materials
- Preparation and producing the education materials
- Purchase of containers
- Placement of containers
- Training for professors
- Workshop for schools and kindergartens
- Promotional activities

Results

- A network of local stakeholders involved with project
- Trained team of professors
- 40 containers for paper and 57 containers for PET have been delivered

Possibilities:

At this phase it is too early to suspect the possible project follow up and involvement of other organization or institutions. However, there are several ideas that could contribute to the project sustainability and give added value to the project and are as follows:

- Exchange of good practice with international partners
- Printing a collection of best ideas on how the environmental topics could be implemented in school curriculum within specific subjects. This issue has been raised during the seminar on 30th September
- Organization of joint events at least once a year, with the support of the local authorities and with schools, kindergartens and local communities such as “one day cleaning events”.
- Both Utility companies are planning to establish long term cooperation with schools and kindergartens.
- Inclusion of Red Cross volunteers for educational and informative campaign with elderly people.

7. The Balkan in Europe

Supported by the Polish Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Activities:

- Coordinating networking between local NGOs
- Selecting 15 young activists
- Team building
- Study visit to Krakow, Poland

Results:

Thanks to the cross border cooperation between LDACSS and NGO International Initiatives Bureau, 15 young people took part in the study visit/seminar in Krakow, Poland during the month of September.

During the ten days of the visit participants had chance to visit numerous non governmental organizations in Krakow which resulted in establishing new contacts and future cooperation. Participants were also introduced with the processes of EU integration, as well as transition process that Poland has already passed thru and Serbia is passing at the moment, which provided them with the possibility to use experiences of others and to put them into practice in their own countries.



8. Take a Walk on the Ritual Side

Supported by the European Commission thru YOUTH IN ACTION programme
Partner leader: Cooperative O.R.So., Torino, Italy

Ten days youth exchange/seminar was realized during the month of December within the framework of the program "Youth in Action". This exchange gave the opportunity to six highly motivated young people from LDACSS Youth Centre to compare cultural characteristics, religions with their peers from Italy, Lithuania and Croatia. This was also the opportunity for them to reflect on the importance of tolerance and mutual understanding.



9. Co.Ar.Pa - Agriculture Cooperatives on Equal Opportunities

Supported by EU thru Adriatic New Neighborhood Programme" INTERREG/ CARDS-PHARE

Partner leader: Comunita Montana Valle Rovereto, Italy

Main aim of this project is to support the social and economic integration of women by improving their education, qualification and training mainly in the manual sector.

Activities:

- 3 Steering committees
- Territorial analysis of the City of Nis (November 2007)
- Research on the position of women in the process of globalization and transition in Serbia and Nis area (December 2007)
- Interviews with women entrepreneurs/ handcrafts (December 2007)
- Training for women entrepreneurs on enterprise management and organizational process, productive process, market, strategic and operative marketing, budget, the management control and to write business plans (May 2008)
- Study visit to Italian entrepreneurs (May 2008)
- Final event (June 2008)

Results:

- Document on women entrepreneurship in Nis area, position of women in the society and obstacles that they have in having their own businesses.
- 15 women trained
- Established contacts and exchanged experience between women from Nis and Italian entrepreneurs active in the field of handcrafts

Designed joint trademark for handcraft products

10. Conference “ NGOs and civil society: promoters of democracy and active citizenship”

Supported by the Council of Europe

With the support of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe, the Directorate General of Democracy and Political Affairs of the Council of Europe in co-operation with the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE) and Civic Initiatives Network (Belgrade), LDACSS organized this international conference during the month of November.

Activities:

- Two day conference with participation from 88 people representing Serbian civil society associations and members of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe

Results:

- Networking and exchange of knowledge, experiences between Serbian NGOs and the INGOs enjoying participatory status with the Council of Europe
- Official document of recommendations for the Serbian Government on the issues of the legislation on NGOs, relations between NGOs and public authorities at local and national levels, the question of youth participation in policy making, citizenship and human rights education in national school curriculum and combating violence against women including domestic violence.



11. Periferija

Supported by Autonomous Province of Trento, Italy and Municipality Kraljevo, Serbia

The aim of this project was to promote cultural, artistic and civil growth of young people of the three territories (Rovereto, Kraljevo and Nis), to contribute to the process of dismantling of stereotypes, through a cultural and artistic exchange of young people and to create new spaces of young cultural and artistic expression within the respective communities.

Activities in 2007 included call for young photographers between 18-30 years old, both from Serbia and Trentino. Theme of the call was suburb/periferija in the widest sense of the word. The work of 8 photographers from Serbia and 8 from Trento were chosen as the most interesting and they took part in the international exchange. One itinerant exposition of best photos was organized in November in the National Museum of Kraljevo and the other in December in Rovereto, Italy.

12. Kolibri - project of decentralized cooperation between the cities of Suresnes and Kragujevac

Supported by the City of Suresnes and French Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The project itself was a follow up on previously realized project of support of the City of Suresnes to the kindergarten "Kolibri" and included reconstruction and opening kindergarten's playground yard to the benefit of the whole community, especially Roma community present in the surrounding area. This way project supported the process of social integration of Roma in the activities of "Kolibri" kindergarten and preschool system in general.

LDACSS was involved with the screening of present status of the project and the process of further following the project activities which included study visit to the City of Suresnes' Department for City politics and social cohesion, planning the program of open playground yard, organizing evaluation visit of Suresnes' city expert for social cohesion to Kragujevac and securing final reports from the City of Kragujevac.

13. Institutional support of the City of Suresnes to the City of Kragujevac in defining city social policies

Supported by the City of Suresnes and French Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Workshop for the officials in Local Government and Social policy Department of the City of Kragujevac, with an expert from Suresnes and coordination by LDA expert (third month of the project)
- Selecting and forming a group of relevant local stakeholders dealing with the protection of preschool children in the City of Kragujevac (third month of the project)

- Workshops for the Group for social cohesion – protection of preschool children in the City of Kragujevac (fourth month of the project)
- Forming a comprehensive computer database on preschool children in the City of Kragujevac (fifth till seventh month of the project)
- Study visit to Suresnes (ninth month of the project)
- Working meetings of the Group for social cohesion – protection of preschool children in the City of Kragujevac (ninth till twelfth month of the project)

14. Youth Centre

Supported by the Serbian Ministry of Youth and Sport

This project aims at strengthening youth activism in local community thru organized activities of Youth Centre within LDACSS.

Activities so far:

- Participation in trainings for youth workers organized by the Ministry
- Developing visual identity
- Promotional activities
- First in series of round tables with local authorities
- First round of trainings for strengthening group of peer educators
- Voluntary activity: decorating the centre
- Equipping the premises

Activities to be realized

- Second round of trainings for peer educators
- Third round of trainings for peer educators
- Second and third round table with local authorities
- Days of the right direction: workshops on professional orientation in secondary schools
- Voluntary activity: festival of stereotypes
- Developing new project proposals that will be supported by the Ministry

Possibilities:

Since this is a project LDACSS is realizing in partnership with the City of Nis there are a lot of possibilities for LDACSS international partners to become involved, from exchange of good practice and knowledge to developing various joint new initiatives.

Annex II: Strategic paper of Youth Centre



15. Together toward local strategic paper for youth

Supported by the Serbian Ministry of Youth and Sport

Project aims at contributing to establishing functional cooperation of youth organizations, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders while working on the proposal of local action plan and local strategy for youth.

Activities:

- Forming a data base of youth organizations and institutions dealing with youth in Nis area
- Collecting and presenting activity reports from all organizations and institutions involved
- Discussing collected data on series of round tables
- Drafting a proposal of Local strategy paper for youth
- Planning follow up of the project

Results:

- Establishing functional network of youth organizations, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders dealing with youth
- Study paper on the needs of youth in Nis area
- Recommendations for the Local strategy paper for youth

Possibilities:

International partners could give valuable contribution thru presenting their experience in this area.



16. Strengthening partner network - Partner meeting 2007

Supported by LDACSS partners and Stability Pact, Office in Thessaloniki

This year's LDACSS Partner Meeting was held on 25th May in the City of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The meeting was organized by LDACSS in cooperation with our leading partner, the City of Suresnes – France and ALDA with the support from the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe– Office in Thessaloniki.

The meeting was the opportunity for LDACSS national and international partners to get acquainted with LDACSS activities since last partner meeting as well as with the activities planned for this year. We seized this opportunity to encourage closer future trans-border cooperation within our international partner network thru projects of mutual interest. Concrete agreements on future cooperation were the main outcome of this meeting.