

**ФОНДАЦИЈА
ЗА РАЗВОЈ НА
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**LOCAL
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
FOUNDATION**

Narrative Report for 2016

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION STIP

The Local Community Development Foundation — Stip is a nongovernmental organization founded in 2006. LCDF is the successor to the NGO Support Center — Stip.

Mission:

Enhanced citizen engagement and participation in the policy-making and implementation processes.

Vision:

LCDF is leader organization; team oriented with strengthened human capacities, financially stable, nationally recognizable and established as meaningful partner on international projects.

Strategic Goals:

- Enhanced democratization and development and consolidation of civil society;
- Strengthened participation of young people in society;
- Enhanced local economic development;
- Improvement of local policies and strengthening the process of decentralization through active participation of citizens;

The annual program of LCDF is supported by Civica Mobilitas

In 2016 LCDF conducted the following projects and activities:

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St. Sremski Front b.b (kindergarten "Soncogledi")
Phone: +389 32 383 116 e-mail: info@frlz.org.mk
www.frlz.mk



- **Increased Transparency of Local Funds for Civic Associations** (21.01.2015 – 31.05.2016)

Project Partners

- Center for Sustainable Community Development — Debar
- Center for Community Development — Kichevo
- Youth Cultural Center — Bitola

Objective: General objective for the project is to increase the transparency and accountability of Local Self-Government when allocating resources and funds from municipal budgets to associations.

Specific Objectives:

- Develop methodologies for the distribution of funds and resources to associations from municipal budgets in eight municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia;
- Prepare guides for the development of criteria and procedures to promote the good practices when distributing funds to associations from municipalities;
- Encourage more active engagement from civil society to improve practices by local self-governing units to support associations.

Activities:

1. Prepared and adopted methodologies for the transfer of funds from the municipal budget;
 - 1.1 Workshops for the preparation of methodologies for financing associations with funds from the municipal budget;
 - 1.2 Advocated for the adoption of prepared methodologies;
2. Promotion of project results;
 - 2.1 Publication of results;
 - 2.2 Press conference
3. Coordinated meetings with partner organizations

Results

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- Increased transparency, responsiveness, and responsibility in Local Self-Governance Units when dealing with public funds;
- Developed methodologies for the distribution of funds from municipal budgets to support associations;
- Improved process for evaluating, monitoring, and reporting, implemented projects and activities of associations that received support from Local Self-Governing Units;
- Established and increased communication and cooperation between associations and Local Self-Governing Units for the joint development of solutions;
- Prepared a manual for the exchange of practices and experiences which will serve other municipalities and associations to develop methodologies for the allocation of resources to associations from municipal budgets

Total Budget: 40.000,00 USD

Project was financed by USAID project to support civil society organizations.

➤ **Strengthening Participatory Democracy** (15.12.2015 – 15.08.2017)

Project Partners

- Agency for Local Development – Struga
- Center for Sustainable Community Development — Debar
- Period of implementation: 19 months

Objective: Contribute to the institutionalization of sustainable mechanisms to consult citizens in the development of public policy at the local level.

Specific Objectives:

- To create an analysis of the efficiency of current practices and mechanisms for the inclusion of citizens in policy making at the local level;
- To encourage discussions between all stakeholders at the local level (local self government, citizen organizations, and the business sector);
- To stimulate the sharing and adoption of good practices and mechanisms to further incorporate citizens into the policy making process at the local level, and strengthen citizens relationship with Local self-Government Units;
- To institutionalize stakeholder and citizen consultations with Local Self-Government Units in the development of local public policy.

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- Target Group: Citizen organizations in the Republic of Macedonia, all municipalities (including the city of Skopje), Local Self-Government Units, the Ministry of Local Self-Government, and citizens in the Republic of Macedonia.

Activities:

1. Analysis of current practices for the consultation of citizens in the process of adopting policies at the local level, and their effectiveness;
2. Regional debates;
3. Working groups for the consolidation and creation of recommendations for the consultation of citizens with Local Self-Governing Units on local policy making;
4. Policy Brief;
5. Lobbying and advocacy to relevant institutions for the acceptance, incorporation, and implementation of our recommendations;
6. Final conference

Total Budget: 91.027,59 EUR

Project was financed by the European Union, through the program for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

➤ **Get Trained, Get Support, Get a Job**

Project Partners

- Center for Trade and Industry – Rodoni, Greece
- Agency for Economic Development – Kostinbrod, Bulgaria
- Textile Trade Association and Textile Cluster – Stip, Macedonia

Period of Implementation: 20 Months

Objective: Integrating women from ethnic minorities into the labor market.

Specific Objectives:

- To conduct professional trainings to increase employability for women from ethnic minorities;
- To conduct individual consultations with participating women;
- To develop sustainable employment opportunities.

Activities:

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1. Conduct informal meetings to evaluate the skills of women from ethnic minorities;
2. Establishment of selection criteria for training participants – the project's future beneficiaries;
3. Training for trainers;
4. Theoretical and practical trainings for the ending beneficiaries;
5. Individual consultations and advice for each ending beneficiary, adjusted to their individual needs;
6. Info-Days for the ending participants to network with potential employers;
7. Activities to raise public awareness and promote results (delivered through press conferences, communications with the media, and written materials).

Total Budget: 83.638,45EUR

The project was financed by the European Union, through the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Macedonia, sector for central financing and contracting.

➤ **Debate Club** (January 2016-December 2016)

The Debate Club has operated within the framework of the Local Development Foundation –Stip since 2008. With support from LCDF the Debate Club has held weekly practice meetings facilitated by club members who know the debating format and have experience debating.

Objective: To increase youths' understanding of local politics and current events, and develop their critical thinking skills.

Activities:

1. Lectures and practice debates held for local youth, at no cost;
2. Organized public debates for club members on topics relevant to the community;
3. Youth participation in local, regional, and national debate tournaments.

Project financed with funds from the Local Community Development Foundation – Stip.

➤ **Regional Office of the National Youth Council of Macedonia – For the Eastern Region** (January-December 2016)

The Local Community Development Foundation served as the regional office for the National Youth Council of Macedonia for the East and Southeastern Planning Regions. The objective of this activity is to implement and promote the activities and work of the National Youth Council of Macedonia.

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Activities:

1. Implemented meetings to gather the needs and problems of local youth;
2. Organized public events;
3. Created policies and documents on the local needs of youth;
4. Consulted with youth organizations from the region, and across the Republic of Macedonia;
5. Promotional activities for the National Youth Council of Macedonia.

Results:

- Implemented meetings to identify problems facing youth in the region;
- Organized five public debates on topics related to youth policies and youth civic engagement;
- Organized soft skills trainings for youth from the region;
- Included 150 youth from the Eastern Region of the Republic of Macedonia.

Activities were financed with funds from the National Youth Council of Macedonia.

- **Parking is a life standard too** (01.05.2015 – 20.06.2016)

Objective: Increase the involvement of citizens in local policy making.

Short-term Objectives:

- To mobilize the wider public in addressing identified needs and problems;
- To prepare policy briefs;
- To encourage the general public and NGOs to work with local municipalities to become more transparent in their management of public funds.

Activities:

1. Petitioned and mobilized local citizens about their desire to abolish paid-parking in the city-center;
2. Held press conferences at the start of the project, during implementation, and after completing the petition;
3. Held public debate;
4. Composed policy brief.

Results:

- Increased transparency with regard to municipal management of public funds;

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- Mobilize the citizenry to affect local problems;
- Encouraged public debate to identify alternative solutions to the traffic and congestion problems in the city center.

Budget: 2.000,00 EUR

Project was financed by the European Union, through the program "Support for Strengthening the Sustainable Development of an Active Societies" Conducted by Foundation Metampress and MCET

➤ **Save the Park in the 8mi Noemvri Neighborhood**

The project to save the park in the 8mi Novemvri neighborhood in Stip was initiated by an informal citizens group after the Municipality of Stip decided to sell the park's land. The objective of the project was to mobilize citizens, promote transparency within the Municipality, and encourage citizen consultations when significant decisions are being made by the Municipality. More than 500 young people participated in the project activities.

Objective: Increase the inclusion of citizens in the Municipality's decision making process in decision which hold significance to the citizenry.

Activities:

1. Contacted the Constitutional Court and place a complaint to the State Inspectorate for Local Law and Criminal Charges and Public Prosecutors Office, Stip;
2. Held a debate and exhibition titled, "The Spirit of the Park";
3. Held the multimedia event "Games without Borders" to save the park;
4. Organized a 5k run and walk;
5. Created info-stands about the park, and citizens rights;
6. Participated in TV debates;
7. Created a video campaign for social media networks.

Results:

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- Petition with over 400 signatures;
- Mobilized 900 citizens from the neighborhood to work to save the park, and increase transparency at the municipal level.

Budget: 400.000,00 MKD

Project was financed by Civica Mobilitas

➤ **FisCast: Cost Benefit Analysis "Subsidized Employment of Young People Under 29"**

In the structure of the project FisCast, LCDF, along with the Association Center for Strategies and Development – Prilep, completed an analysis on the costs and benefits of implementing a government measure to subsidize the employment of young people (29 years and younger). To complete the analysis we were granted access to information from the Employment Agency of the Republic of Macedonia.

Activities:

1. Training about how to complete cost – benefit analyses;
2. Prepared a cost – benefit analysis about the government subsidized employment of young people under 29.

Results:

- Strengthened the capacity to complete cost – benefit analyses;
- Completed a **cost – benefit analysis about the government subsidized employment of young people under 29.**

Budget: 180.000,00 MKD

Project was financed with funds from FinanceThink

➤ **Culture for Citizen Changes (January-July 2016)**

"Culture for Citizen Changes" was organized by the Faculty of Labor, in cooperation with the Local Community Development Foundation – Stip, Free City Square – Skopje, the Center for Contemporary Art – Skopje, and Locomotive – the Center for New Initiatives in Arts and

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Culture – Skopje. The project focused on the concept that culture and art can stimulate and publicize social change in a positive way.

Activities:

1. Artistic performances and displays;
2. 'Childrens Corner' and English class for children;
3. Organized replicable activities and programs;
4. Textile meetings;
5. Workshop titled "Human Rights of Textile Workers".

Results:

- Opened the Cultural Art Center "Textile" -- designed to promote and protect the human rights of textile workers.

Project was financed through FOOM, a USAID program for civil society

- **Project and Budget Forums in the Municipalities of Centar, Strumica, and Struga**
(24.06.2016 – 31.12.2016)

Within the structure of this project on Budget Forums in the municipalities of Centar, Strumica and Struga, we organized one project forum and two budget forums in each municipality. For the project forum citizens had the ability to identify priority programs for the project and each municipality. In the budget forums we discussed how projects are financed from project funds. About 900 citizens participated in the forums, and three projects were selected for funding -- one in each municipality, and one that targeted a priority program.

Activities:

1. One project forum session held in each municipality – Centar, Strumica, and Struga;
2. Two budgeting forum sessions held in each municipality – Centar, Strumica, and Struga.

Results:

- Realization of citizen forums in Centar, Strumica, and Struga;

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- Selected three projects to be supported through the "Municipality by the Measure of Citizens" concept;
- Realization of two budget forum sessions in each municipality – Centar, Strumica, and Struga;
- 174 project ideas created – 79 have been accepted;
- Priority development programs established in Centar, Strumica, and Struga;
- 730 citizens participated in the project and in establishing new priorities for their municipalities.

Budget: 16.600,00USD

Project financed by the Open Society Foundation – Macedonia

➤ **Accountability towards Community** (October 2016)

The Local Community Development Foundation – Stip, together with the Open Society Foundation – Macedonia, organized public discussions on the topic "Reporting to the Community".

Objective: To show the current trends in transparency practices carried out by local authorities, and to increase citizens' knowledge of their ability and rights to access information.

The event was presented to citizens and CSOs with the hope of increasing transparency and accountability in municipalities (with a focus on the municipalities of Stip, Cheshinovo-Obleshevo, Strumica, Debar, Centar Zupa, Bitola, Novaci, Kichevo and Plasnica), and to share research and recommendations to improve the current situation. In this project we also discussed challenges related to decentralization in local government.

This project was financed by the Open Society Foundation – Macedonia, through a USAID program for civil society.

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