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# LOCAL IMPACT ON GLOBAL CHANGES

## - Sustainable Development Goals in our Communities



Localisation of the 2030 Agenda  
Public Finance Reform – 2030 Agenda project in Serbia



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# LOCAL IMPACT ON GLOBAL CHANGES – Sustainable Development Goals in our Communities

## Localisation of the 2030 Agenda Public Finance Reform – 2030 Agenda project in Serbia

**The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** represent a global strategy of the United Nations adopted at a summit held in 2015 as the resolution – Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 2030 Agenda is a universal strategy and the signatory states are expected to mobilise all resources so that the goals are realised within the arranged deadline. The Agenda encompasses 17 objectives in three dimensions – economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. It is also based on three key values: respect for human rights, respect for the principle of “Leave no one behind” and gender equality.

The Republic of Serbia has been involved both through the work of the state institutions and the civil sector in the process of creation of these goals, and now, like other UN member states it is implementing them in cooperation with its partners.

Public Finance Reform - 2030 Agenda, which is supported by the governments of Switzerland and Germany and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, is one of the most significant projects adding to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This project is specific in that it focuses on localisation of sustainable development goals.

**The main objective of the localisation of the 2030 Agenda** within the Public Finance Reform - 2030 Agenda project is to strengthen the capacity of local self-governments and other local stakeholders for the implementation and localisation of the 2030 Agenda, based on multisectoral collaboration and exchange. It also feeds into the “SDGs for ALL” Platform’s efforts<sup>1</sup> to facilitate a broad social dialogue at the local level on local development priorities aligned with SDGs and the creation of umbrella local development plan documents.

Localisation of the 2030 Agenda is carried out through support to the key partner institutions in the field of localisation of the sustainable development goals, as well as directly by the GIZ project team. The 2030 Agenda localisation is complementary to the “SDGs for ALL” Platform on the local level and builds on the results and processes within this Platform.

**Thematic units** of the localisation component of the 2030 Agenda are the following:

- Support to the Prime Minister’s Cabinet (the team in charge of the 2030 Agenda implementation)
- Support to The Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia
- Trainings and capacity building for local self-governments and other actors in the local community
- Support to local communities through the Fund for Sustainable Local Development

**In this publication, we briefly present the most significant results of these actors, the lessons learned and the changes that were achieved during the work on this project, convinced that the insights, motivation, actions and results will encourage other local governments, communities and organisations to work together on the localisation of the 2030 Agenda.**

<sup>1</sup> [www.sdgs4all.rs](http://www.sdgs4all.rs)

# Support from the national level to the localisation of the sustainable development goals

The Government of the Republic of Serbia followed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda as a global strategy that relates to all people of the world by establishing an intersectoral group whose aim was to connect ministries, policies and actions of the government towards the implementation of sustainable development goals, first through national policies, and then through action at the local level.

Since 2016, the intersectoral body has been led by Prof. Dr. Slavica Đukić Dejanović, firstly as the Minister without portfolio, and in the last assembly of the government as the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on the issue of sustainable development goals.

*“When we first formed the group, we realised that we had a serious problem, that we do not understand the objectives... we started out with sustainability... I remember that we did research with Demostat and saw that only 9% of the population of Serbia partially understood what is meant by the term sustainable development... you can think about sustainability, coherence, those are some terms, which should be implemented in life...”*

*Prof. Dr. S. Đukić Dejanović*

Very early on, GIZ became one of the key partners in the implementation of the SDGs. What changed at the very beginning was the understanding that the goals need to be implemented at the same time at the national and local level, that we should learn lessons from failing to implement millennium goals as the sole responsibility of the government itself without integration into national strategies and local policies, and when it comes to the 2030 Agenda's implementation, a wider cooperation should be achieved with the civil sector, academic community and economy.

*“GIZ took part in the process of understanding that the national and local levels need to be done parallelly... on the national level,*

*which was animated through the work of the intersectoral group which employed both the academic community and the Serbian chamber of commerce, to see what the priorities of the state are, to create a voluntary national report, to make it visible on the international level that our goals are similar and that we are working on them. The voluntary national report is not a document to be read, it is a process... GIZ gathered experts who worked a lot on it... from the social sphere, economic sphere, environmental sphere... what is perhaps the most important thing is that GIZ gave an enormous contribution so that the NGO sector could contribute to the government's endeavours, that is, it contributed in such a way that the government accepted the NGO sector, it realised that it cannot do this on its own...”*

*Slavica Đukić Dejanović, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on the 2030 Agenda*

Apart from the creation of the first voluntary national report on the implementation of the sustainable development goals (Serbia – VNR Report 2019), which was a huge step for Serbia, the work was continued as the integration in the planning system through the efforts of the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia, but also through cooperation with other ministries, first and foremost the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue and cooperation with the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities. However, the most significant results according to the Cabinet's opinion are those achieved in the local communities.

The Prime Minister's Cabinet, with the support of GIZ, organised a series of round tables in the municipalities of Surdulica, Žitorađa, Vladičin Han, Golubac and Mali Zvornik, where challenges were discussed which these municipalities are faced with when coming up with and creating their development strategies and documents. All relevant institutions and organisations from these municipalities were invited to these round tables since the key idea was to promote the cooperation of all local actors on creating development strategies and documents. It was concluded that one of the greatest obstacles these environments are faced with is the lack of adequately trained people who would work on new documents, programmes and projects. What was

recognised as one of the possible solutions, apart from the necessary support from the national level, was regional cooperation, firstly inter-municipal, as well as the one within the same region. Regions and neighbouring municipalities often share similar problems (sometimes even the same, which is the case with environmental issues) and similar contexts, so the mutual exchange of experience and connecting people who would work on mutual projects, could provide significant support to the least developed or underdeveloped municipalities.



The very fact that the least developed municipalities were included in the programme proves that the principle of “Leave no one behind” was not overseen. In addition, during the meetings and the dialogue it was highlighted that municipalities should develop their capacity to respond to the needs of all its citizens.

*“We started from the idea of mapping the problems and ascertaining if there are a lot of those who have got a fair chance to be at the far end of the matter and not be included in development projects... but who among them is the most endangered... well it has to be that old lady who lives alone and who has had only two pairs of shoes her entire life, or those Roma people who are still marrying as minors and have lots of children or those citizens who do not want to get vaccinated, or the uneducated... traffic accidents happen here all the time; pregnant women, children, elderly have no place to rest, no parks, we don't have a place for the most vulnerable groups where they could sit and relax...”*

*Prof. Dr. Slavica Đukić Dejanović*

What the Prime Minister's Cabinet has seen as the short-term result of this project is that municipalities are motivated and eager to create their own plans; the medium-term result

would be their implementation, and a long-term one an innovative way of thinking and the lessons learned.

Some of the lessons learned are that the cooperation with the civil sector is necessary in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and in that sense, cooperation with the Platform for Sustainable Development is seen and perceived as beneficial in multiple ways. This cooperation with the Platform is also seen as a good model which could be repeated in certain regions of Serbia. Similar to the platform of civil society organisations implementing the 2030 Agenda on the national level, it is suggested to provide support to the regional platforms of civil society organisations which would carry out the regional diversity project even more adequately (for Vojvodina, south of Serbia, central part, Belgrade, etc).

The academic community and economic sector do cooperate when cooperation is initiated. The lesson learned is that it depends on the government institutions to what extent this cooperation will develop, and new actors should be invited to join in all the time, taking into account the present-day context (for example, during refugee crisis, we should cooperate more with the Red Cross and organisations providing support to Ukrainian refugees in Serbia).

**The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue** was not a direct partner on this project, but it followed in great detail the realisation of the project and took part in most activities implemented at both national and local levels. As part of its authority, this Ministry started working on the implementation of SDGs by sending out questionnaires to all municipalities, which helped them gain an insight into the municipalities' understanding of the 2030 Agenda and the capacity they have for the implementation of the sustainable development goals. Additionally, within its regular activities, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue regularly visits municipalities, monitors their work which is in the Ministry's domain and also provides support.

*“Our experience tells us that the cooperation with the local level was excellent and that those people need the support... we inform them and we talk to them... in 60-70 percent of municipalities we have met people willing to learn... you know what is nice, when we went*

*there for the second time, they were literally 'reciting stuff from our first time there'... decision-makers will not always cooperate. However, we do not need presidents of municipalities, but people who want to work, to do what is needed... our experience is excellent, this method of visiting people and talking to them actually works..."*

*Gordana Čomić, Minister of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue*

As one of the most important contributions to the project, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue sees the incentive to dialogue and cooperation, mainly between organisations of civil society and the institutions, and then also intermunicipal and regional cooperation.

*"In my view, every project that facilitates routine cooperation between the civil sector and the government is successful. In this case, GIZ initiated the Platform, which was crucial. It was GIZ who enabled the dialogue to take place... we could not do at this time what GIZ did due to the lack of cooperation between the government and the civil sector... but we could do miracles if there was more cooperation."*

*Gordana Čomić, Minister of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue*

The minister realises that in continuing the project it would be important to work on establishing and appointing a coordinator for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the local level, but also a focal point within the ministries at the national level. At the local level these people should follow the implementation of the plans for development in their municipalities, but also be informed about what is happening in this domain in other municipalities, regions and on the national level. Their appointment would also mean continuous dedication of municipalities to these issues. At the national level, focal points should also provide the information flow and stronger interministerial cooperation, which is at the moment lacking and insufficient. It is also important not to turn this into an additional job for these people, but to specify everything, provide job descriptions and funds in the budget for these positions.

In addition, it is suggested to abandon the work through pilot municipalities in the future, and instead task all municipalities in Serbia with the implementation of the Agenda through development plans (which is also legally binding through the Law on the Planning System), and to provide them with support throughout and from different levels. What the Ministry has also recognised in its work is that the role of the region should be strengthened and that it is possible to create educational programmes and programmes for cooperation for regional heads of municipalities, based on those created by the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities for municipalities and municipal decision-makers.

*"It is excellent that the project included pilot municipalities... one can spot a huge difference between municipalities which took part in the project, completed trainings and those that did not... The Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia can play an even bigger role, through providing directions and instructions to all municipalities on how to localise sustainable development goals... municipalities need 'a cookbook' that shows clear steps to the municipalities and shows them what to do. A programme should be created for the heads of the regions, they were elected, political functions, are a small group and can create an excellent impact..."*

*Nada Lazić, Special Advisor for the Sustainable Development Goals within Ministry*





The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue also intends to initiate the inclusion of the principle 'Leave no one behind' in the draft of every part of the economic development plan of Serbia, and to make that principle an integral part of all strategic documents as it is expected that every strategic document has a gender perspective. In addition, they see a great potential for incorporating the economic dimension into all future 2030 Agenda activities.

*"We want to include the 'Leave no one behind' principle in the plan for the economic development of Serbia; I want every part of the economic plan of Serbia to contain names of all those who have not been left behind, who have not been forgotten as this is the spirit of the sustainable development"*

*Gordana Čomić, Minister of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue*



# The Public Policy Secretariat

## – support for local self-governments

The Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia is the most important body in the country dealing with public policies. The Public Policy Secretariat<sup>2</sup> provides analytical support to the planning of strategic objectives and monitoring of the impact of the Government public policies. The Secretariat is also a crucial body through which the reform of the planning system is implemented. It oversees the usability of various planning documents, follows the processes of their creation and making, implementation and realisation. Additionally, the Public Policy Secretariat is the key body which provides expert methodological assistance to local self-government units in the creation and making of their planning documents, and follows their creation and realisation.

As part of the project Localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Public Policy Secretariat received a grant for the first time from a partner organisation, which it used to support local self-governments in developing their own local plans for development. The city of Užice and the municipality of Sremski Karlovci developed their own plans with the support of the Public Policy Secretariat.

*“It was extremely important to us that we go through this experience as well, that our partners and our beneficiaries go through this experience, that we find ourselves, so to speak, in our ‘funder’s shoes’, the position of those who provide support to others, to see and experience what it is like from our perspective... we are thankful to GIZ for this experience, since this is not an easy manner of cooperation. When we first started out, we couldn’t have this type of cooperation, now we can and we want to... it is an additional value which we obtained with this project...”*

*Jelena Mujčinović, Head of the Department for EU integration, international cooperation and project management*

An end-of-project conference was held, at which mayors and municipal representatives presented the results of the project together with their teams.

It is important to remember that local self-governments are responsible for creating and adopting plans every seven to ten years, and the change accomplished this way enables them to plan for the future. Both the city of Užice and the municipality of Sremski Karlovci have carried out extensive consultations with citizens, analysed data, and drafted documents in this regard.

As regards the long-term effects of the project, it has strengthened the capacities of the Public Policy Secretariat – the key institution in the country responsible for implementing a planned reform of the system.

*“The idea was that local self-governments obtain instructions from the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia, which is the body with the planning function, to get 100% methodological support, consulting support... since the main role of the Public Policy Secretariat and the whole planning reform is to make decisions based on the factual information now, that is, to reach data, to analyse the data and in light of the challenges existing in the community create measures aligned with the data, which will enhance the citizens’ living standard...”*

*Svetlana Aksentijević, Head of the Department for Economic Analysis of Public Policy Secretariat*



The final event of the project for mentoring in the local planning process, June 2022

<sup>2</sup> The Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia  
<https://rsjp.gov.rs/cir/o-nama/>

*“GIZ supported the elaboration of recommendations for the creation of local development plans, and the recommendations were immediately connected with the sustainable development goals, and that apart from the 2030 Agenda analysis was the first step where the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia positioned itself as someone who insists on SDGs; a short-term result is that we achieved a model of cooperation which only we can improve, analyse, update in accordance with our ambitions and strategic thinking; viewed long-term, the Public Policy Secretariat is positioned as someone who within the 2030 Agenda is a significant actor, and the public, and first and foremost those who create public policy know that they have to orient themselves towards sustainable development.”*

*Darinka Radojević, Head of the Department for Public Policy Planning Support*

A significant change brought about by the project is participatory planning and a wide ranging consultative process (more than 300 people in Užice were involved in this process), with all relevant actors, especially the civil society. The Secretariat intends to repeat similar processes with other municipalities which are at the moment in the middle of the planning process (around 30 development plans are a part of this process at the moment).

A key factor in the successful realisation of the project Localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals is the cooperation with the “SDGs for ALL” Platform, which gathers civil society organisations and provides the Public Policy Secretariat with additional information on what is happening in certain regions of the country, opens up new questions and offers additional support in the form of research, analysis, dialogue and panels. As part of this cooperation, the Platform played a crucial role in selecting pilot municipalities and providing support to certain municipalities and towns through the analysis of public policies and the collection of data.

The basis that the Public Policy Secretariat developed with GIZ connects SDGs with the clusters, that is, with negotiating chapters. Therefore, this aspect and the review by the Secretariat is very important for the implementation of the development objectives. In the creation of the Economic Reform Programme, special attention is given to connecting the sustainable development goals with the structural reforms and the budget of the Republic of Serbia.

The principle of ‘Leave no one behind’ is systematically integrated through the obligation of all actors of public policies to create the analysis of the public policy effects, through which they have to show what type of effects this change is producing in the society, and which target groups are especially influenced; in case of negative effects and risks, special measures have to be proposed in order to mitigate or avoid the negative effects and risks.

*“Now, we are at the beginning, since not all policies have been encompassed on all levels, neither did all local self-governments create and adopt their planning documents, so that a little less attention is given to the analysis of effects, since they are making attempt and exerting efforts to produce a document, and to meet the methodology, structure, process; we will certainly perform analysis when the first cycle of planning is completed, we will ascertain what needs to be improved; at the moment we are working on a new regulation in order to improve the understanding of those needs, to understand the needs of minority groups; so that we as the Public Policy Secretariat have that mechanism for the introduction of the principle and our role is crucial for this implementation...”*

*Darinka Radivojević, Head of the Department for Public Policy Planning Support*

Experience in working with the Public Policy Secretariat has shown that in some policies (social policy, gender equality, anti-discrimination, etc.) the actors of public policies find it easier to adhere to this principle, while for other policies, they need support and more tools with which (just like with the gender equality test) we could recognise the kind of influence a specific public policy has on certain groups of citizens.

*“I’d like to say that when the process of consultations begins, from the earliest stage of the preparation of the documents of public policy and that it lasts during the entire process of the creation of public policies... it is given much attention now... and we invite people to share their opinion with us... on our website we have a section for citizens, where they can express their opinion... people still don’t know about this... it should be promoted better... and GIZ can help out with the promotion even more... it is also a ‘Leave no one behind’ principle. We cannot fulfil all wishes, but we can listen to certain groups, those in greatest need...”*

*Dijana Ilić Zogović, Assistant Director,  
Public Policy Secretariat.*

Following the creation of the development plans by the Secretariat, the next step should be the operationalisation of the long-term plans through the creation of the midterm planning documents and it is logical that this should happen first in the city of Užice and Sremski Karlovci, as pilot municipalities. Apart from that, the Public Policy Secretariat performs analyses for national planning documents. A draft of a national plan for the development of the country is anticipated – it should direct all actors of public policies towards the sustainable development.





## The city of Užice – planning development for all our citizens

The city of Užice, with the support of the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia and GIZ, started working on the creation of the Local Development Plan in May last year. What has made this process somewhat different is the very approach to the creation of this document. As opposed to the previous practice, where the experts created a plan in consultation with local actors, the city made a decision to make the planning process completely led by the local government, with maximum engagement of the local administration, all local actors and a broader participation of citizens.

*“The dilemma was whether to take the bull by the horns and deal with the situation in which we all initiate planning or to employ an agency to do it for us... decision-makers, the mayor, the city assembly president, the city council, in the end we all came to the conclusion that it is us who should be doing this... first and foremost, it should be done by people who would also one day execute this development plan, secondly, no one knows our town as we do, as people who work here every day in the executive power branch, face the challenges of managing the town operationally on daily*

*basis... and this is how we entered the procedure... perhaps a bit unaware of what awaits us in the process...”*

*Branislav Mitrović, President of the City Assembly*

In this process, the town needed assistance from external experts, so that a big part was played by the support provided by the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia and experts for planning the Secretariat employed to help with the requirements of the development planning in Užice. Snežana Selaković, an external expert, at the same time is very well acquainted with the context of the city of Užice, a fact which besides her expert knowledge and experience played a significant part in the planning process.

Nevertheless, essential and the most significant segment of the process, according to the president of Užice city council, who also coordinated the creation of the plan, are consultations. The process of consultations during the planning was organised in a wide manner: firstly, during the planning process, eighteen working groups were formed (and one more for coordination) comprising representatives of institutions, local government, all local bodies and councils, economy, civil sector, local community.

Subsequently, the City designed a subpage dedicated to the process of planning, where the citizens were notified and informed in detail about the process, featuring all documents created in the course of the planning process.



Through the system of unified billing, the citizens of Užice, 24,000 of them, received a leaflet notifying them that the city was in the process of creating the Local Development Plan until 2030 and inviting them to take part in the process. With the help of the 48 system, which in Užice functions as a system for informing the local self-government about the problems in the city, the citizens could send their questions and comments, give proposals on the draft document and priorities and aims set.

A draft plan and invitation to take part in the process was also sent to over 400 addresses of the local interested parties: all NGOs in the city, businessmen, economic institutions, and other significant institutions in the city. The media played a large part in informing the citizens through specially organised press conferences as well, and also through numerous reports on the very process.

A partner forum was organised through which local actors, first and foremost NGOs, could take part in the process of planning, and a major contribution was given by the Regional Development Agency, which provided support and expertise throughout the planning process. The first working group meetings did not go as expected, participants needed time to gain a thorough understanding of the process they were a part of and what was expected from them. However, in the second part of the process, when the consultant joined in, and the participants had already gone through several training sessions (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia's training on the use of



DevInfo database and The Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia's training on the use of analytical service), the process was sped up, became more serious, and a serious discussion on the suggested priorities, measures and objectives developed.

**A crucial aspect of the process was that all actors, first and foremost decision-makers, were invited to share their vision of urban development and to answer the question, 'How do I see Užice in 2030?', instead of only solving problems and being reactive as has been the case up until now.**

**Describe the city's situation regarding social security, education, technology, traffic, and environmental protection in that year. Is it a 'smart city', and for whom is it developing?**

*"I told them, you are not only operatives, you are not supposed to put out the fire, patch the holes... you are visionaries, I asked them, 'How do you see the city of Užice in 2030...' then they paused, contemplated the question, some of them could not see themselves in that role... so they took time to think it over... where are we in the domains of energy, environmental protection... then the city council members, decision-makers realised that some people have a greater understanding of the matter than them, that they should listen to those people... we opened a box so that we, motivated people, could think outside the box, think differently... I dare say this might be the biggest milestone of the document, which made us think outside the box..."*

*Branislav Mitrović, Coordinator of the Planning Process and the President of the Užice City Assembly*

*"The moment when we were told that we needed to picture our town, everybody started thinking hard... how do we envision our town in 8 years... for example, the group for traffic... within the canyon of the river Đetinja, bicycle lanes... things like that which in the given moment, no one would think of... so that it was very important that people from different sectors were taking part in the process and sharing their suggestions..."*

*A working group member*

The town is still in the process and in a stage of consultations, enough time was allocated to

citizens to comment. Both praise and criticism are arriving from various actors, also “criticism and suggestions from political opponents”, various associations and citizens’ groups. For the first time in the town’s history, the Council and the Committee for gender equality were included in all working groups, and opinions of representatives of these bodies are carefully considered. The principle of “Leave no one behind” is applied through extensive consultations with associations of people with disabilities; the representatives of Roma community are included in the work of the working groups, and a special process of consultations is organised in rural local communities in order to reach rural populations and understand their needs. In rural environments, a question of the sewage system was opened, as well as questions of transportation, ambulance, clinics and kindergartens in rural areas, but also those of garbage collection, wastewater processing, environmental protection. Special emphasis was placed on road infrastructure which is a priority for people in rural

environments. Data which shows demographic specifics of some part of the town (for example, youth leaving villages, and retired people returning to rural environments) was analysed, and a special effort was made to include youth in this process through student parliaments and their organisations.

*“This is the first time that the council and the committee for gender equality have been included in the process of creating a planning document, and this is extremely good... we had the possibility at the very beginning to state what the problem was... we did not wait for the document to be finished and then comment on it... all members were active, offered their opinions and comments... it was literally expected from us, from the team for gender equality to approve it, to check if everything is fine... that has never happened, never been the case before...”*

*Tijana Milošević, gender focal point in city administration*



### **The success of the planning process in the city of Užice was motivated and enhanced by several essential factors:**

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*Clearly committed decision-makers to engage in such extensive planning process which will first and foremost set out a vision of the city’s development (the beginning of planning was decided by the city council, the head of the team for planning is the mayor, all council members and council bodies take part in the process, while the president of the city council coordinates everything with dedication and clear vision)*
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*Dedicated leadership and coordination of the entire process (the council president attended each meeting held, got acquainted with the work of all working groups, had faith in the significance of planning, motivated other members of the working groups to take active part in the process... “I have never seen such a dedicated official”.*
- 

*Expert knowledge and support from the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia (members of the working group had enormous trust in the expert who worked with them and who with her dedication and expertise added energy to the whole process); the key difference in relation to the previous planning is the 2018 Law on the Planning System and cooperation with the PPSRS, which provided an insight into innovative planning tools*
- 

*Readiness to think outside the box and accept criticism and different opinions “Through the planning process, we discovered many things, e.g our human resources structure is not satisfactory, our organisational structure is also not very good... we opened the topic of smart cities, who here is dealing with the topic, and if we know anyone who would work on it, as well as what is expected in the era of digital transformation – this process of planning opened our eyes...”*
- 

*High dedication of members of the working groups, the head of the department, that is, the local institutions’ representatives who took part in the work of the groups, provided data on time and debated the priorities*
- 

*Development of the civil sector and criticising public in the city without which it would not have been possible to accomplish and have a public discussion, as well as huge inclusion and participation of the media in the entire process*
- 

*GIZ’s support to the process, without which we would not have such a consultative process, nor the participation of all actors who gave their contribution: “the document would have been done... in what manner, you would have seen on the website...”*

Based on the whole process, which is yet to be finalised with the document's adoption, the short-term, mid-term and long-term change for the town is first and foremost the changed way of thinking. In other words, although the process was demanding and lasted longer than a year, the adoption of the planned document is still a short-term result. A mid-term result is related to the fact that the town has a document on the basis of which it can plan all its future activities and its own budget – mid-term objectives will be established on the basis of priorities from this document, and based on them, the new budget will be created.



*“The very process has led to the situation that people started to think in a different algorithm, and that we need to plan... in 2012 we had a good document, the Strategy of Sustainable Development... we have not found anything at all, no written proof of anyone monitoring the development of the situation... as soon as 2013, some investments were made on something outside of the plan... I think that this is the first time that some serious planning is being done (although I welcome and support the fact that the state passed the Law on planning)... today we can safely say that we have strategic thinking... at the collective meeting at the mayor's, we are discussing, not*

*about this year, but in three years' time... in a way, it is already being planned what we will be doing, the document is quoted... I can feel it on the inside that people have started thinking differently...”*

As per the actors, the key change took place when the decision-makers realised that the city would develop in accordance with the planned document and that the future of the city depends on the plan we would create. The priorities, as well as objectives and indicators set will facilitate the plan's realisation, and also the creation of the operative annual action plans in various domains. What is also another huge benefit from the whole process is that members of the working groups and various actors realised the interconnectedness of all topics, the significance of getting acquainted with the situation in other areas and perceiving the development of the community as a whole.

*“It seems banal, what does health have to do with urban planning and agriculture... when we followed other groups and listened to them, then we drew ideas and in the end, we made a health plan differently from what we had envisaged at the beginning... it meant a lot that I participated in meetings of other groups... so one person should be a member of several groups and stay informed... in the end, we got the essence...”*



# Capacity building of the local self-governments for planning in accordance with SDGs – Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities

The Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) is one of the crucial GIZ partners in the SDGs localisation programme. Their role in this project involved building capacities of local administrations through trainings and education of employees in local self-governments, that is, more accurately, it referred to coming up with and creating education programmes whose aim is to advance and improve knowledge and skills of the local self-governments when it comes to the localisation of the sustainable development goals.

The SCTM's task was to create a proposal for an education programme which would be considered by the National Academy for Public Administration as an enhancement to the programme of professional training for local self-governments. The proposal for the education programme was created in cooperation with GIZ, and afterwards a training was organised through which this education was piloted. A part of the training also referred to the mapping of social groups in the community according to the methodology which was also developed within one of GIZ's programmes.<sup>3</sup>

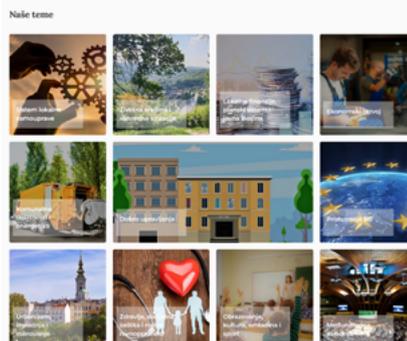
The programme itself is not an independent implementer of the education, but rather a part of a wider series of educational trainings regarding local, midterm and strategic planning. A part of these trainings is programme budgeting as well.

The training which was piloted as part of the project for the localisation of SDGs, was highly interactive, since within its scope and with GIZ support, a tool was created which precisely sets the path of prioritising the sustainable development goals (a set of cards is used which enables us to select, not only the objective and subobjective, but also values, activities, mechanisms which are used to

accomplish objectives; additionally, challenges which can be understood in two different ways are determined – that is, understood in a positive and negative manner – and also those that the group chooses itself are added as well). For this tool to be used, it is necessary for the group to reach an agreement, a consensus is obligatory when it comes to the selection of the objectives, however there are also individual activities based on which it can be concluded how actors in the community are communicating. The tool resembles a social game and is very interesting, although the first part of the training is a general one, on planning, legal obligations, relation with programme budget, significance of reporting through which processes and activities of the local self-government are connected. Through reporting and documents which the local self-governments produce, connections and references with SDGs should be created, and the training enables them to understand that this is not difficult and has multiple benefits for the work they do on a daily basis.

Target groups at the pilot training were the employees of the local self-government, firstly and primarily those in charge of development planning, coordination, programme budgeting, and then in agreement with GIZ, people from the civil sector were also invited to join. It is important that as many people as possible from various domains take part in a planning process, and that everyone, in their own domain, give their contribution.

*„The success of the training lies in the fact that it also has a practical character, it keeps you focused and attentive, but also it is unpretentious, we do not insist on the fact that the localisation of the objectives is a separate process, it is not something they should do as a separate authority, but they should adjust it to their regular domain of authority, planning, coordination of policies and politics, budgeting... and the training enables them to perceive and*



<sup>3</sup> <https://nemackasaradnja.rs/giz/>

*realise these connections... and, when they do the reporting afterwards, of all the things they did, they can explain what kind of contribution it provided to an objective or subobjective of the sustainable development... and if someone asks them to write a voluntary report on the use of the objectives, that they are able to perform that... therefore, the main contribution is to shed light on the 2030 Agenda from different angles and to fit in the existing work and streams..."*

*Milena Radomirović, Programme Director for the Planning System and Public Finances, SCTM*

Short-term results of this training and the process of accreditation of trainings which ensues, is certainly to build and increase capacities of employees in the local self-government so that they can plan and report in accordance with the national planning obligations, but also with SDGs, and in the end to recognise that it is not actually about an additional obligation of the local self-governments, but that it is a part of their ongoing obligations and authority.

As regards medium-term goals, the trainings should enhance the making and creation of the mid-term plans, but also the process of reporting.

*"If we get first reports on the implementation of the plans and sustainable development goals, and if we point to the connection with the goals... it would be a specific result which in two, or three years' time could motivate someone to do voluntary reporting for the Agenda and certainly to contribute to national reporting..."*

*Milena Radomirović, Programme Director for the Planning System and Public Finances*

In the long run, the trainings (medium-term and long-term) could contribute to the regional connection between municipalities, bearing in mind that some of the municipalities share a context and have similar priorities.

*"Concerning medium-term accomplishments it is important that more was spoken about the topic of connecting of the region, about topics which are also a priority in neighbouring municipalities (we still cannot talk about regional cooperation since the law on local self-governments does not recognise it, inter-municipal*

*cooperation does exist)... these trainings were firstly envisaged and meant for colleagues of different regional units, so we had a situation that some of the neighbouring municipalities have similar or same problems, out of which similar planning, objectives and perhaps mutual action ensue... so that it is perhaps to be expected that the voluntary reports are made on inter-municipal level... when it comes to long-term influence and effects, it is certainly the connecting of indicators which on the local level are monitored through a number of documents, not only through local development plans which most certainly are crucial, but also those planned documents which are of a lower significance in relation to the development plan, for example, in the domain of plans for social protection programmes, plans for the protection of environment, etc. Now all of this can be connected and measurable, because if we have something coming out of the planning documents, then we have an adequate starting point and a basis for measuring that change."*

*Mirjana Komnenović, Head of the Department for Social and Health Protection, SCTM*

**"Leave no one behind"**, as the crucial value of the sustainable development goals, was treated through this training as a "horizontal topic", just like gender equality or environmental issues. This means that these topics are insisted upon at each segment of the training and in each stage of the creation and making of objectives, plans and reporting, as well as that it is then connected with gender budgeting and other tools developed by the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia.

*"It is important that there is openness for considering other thematic domains, and not only social protection as the key domain when it comes to development objectives, but that it is understood that there vulnerable groups are cared for in each and every sector and that they need to be taken into account and considered in each domain... thus, the expectation is that in the future a person working in the local self-government in one sector will not be tied only to one significant public policy, but that they will have to monitor and follow what is happening in other segments, as well... this entails support to local self-governments to follow these changes in an intersectoral*

*manner, but also to clearly recognise what is done in particular policies in order to recognise and acknowledge the citizens' needs.”*

*Mirjana Komnenović, Head of the Department for Social and Health Protection, SCTM*

These trainings should be only a part of the support to local self-governments in the localisation of the sustainable development goals. What is clearly recognised is that the local self-governments have different capacities, that we have a significant number of underdeveloped/undeveloped municipalities, and that we need a very realistic approach towards what the municipalities can do and fulfil on their own, and find out in which domains they need support (not only in terms of trainings, but also regular consultations, more intensive cooperation both with the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities and other municipalities, regional agencies, mutual planning, affirmative measures, subsidies, visits, and the like).

Additionally, for the creation of this training, but also in the overall work on the localisation of the objectives of the sustainable development, the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities has a continuous cooperation with the “SDGs for ALL” Platform<sup>4</sup>, certain civil society organisations which work as part of the Platform and The Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia.

Cooperation with GIZ enabled that this process, and the very training, is created in a more innovative manner with stronger connections with other actors in the process and both on the national and local level and that learned lessons are implemented in each step that followed.



<sup>4</sup> [www.sdgs4all.rs](http://www.sdgs4all.rs)

# Sustainable development goals for improving the position of Roma in Belgrade

At the beginning of the 2022, the City of Belgrade, for the first time in its history, adopted the 2022-2032 Strategy for social inclusion of Roma people on the territory of the city of Belgrade. Roma people in Belgrade are the most dominant national minority (as per the last census), but also one of the communities faced with the most challenges and obstacles to the realisation and practice of their rights. This strategic document was created in a participatory process led by the Secretariat for Social Welfare of the city of Belgrade, and the representatives of the civil sector, Roma associations' representatives and professional associations' representatives (pedagogic assistants' associations, health mediators' associations, Roma coordinators' associations) from all city secretariats, key city institutions as well as international organisations' representatives working on the improvement of the Roma community's position in Belgrade, took part in the work of the working group. The whole process was supported by the German and Swiss governments through the project Public Finance Reform – 2030 Agenda, and for the first time, the SDGs have been integrated in one strategic document of the City of Belgrade.



**With a special objective of the Strategy in the domain of social welfare: “The improvement of the accessibility of Roma people to the rights and social welfare services”, as well as special measures within this objective, contributes to the following SDG targets:**

**SDG 1.3** – implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable,

**SDG 2.1** – end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round,

**SDG 5.2** – eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls, including trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation,

**SDG 5.3** – eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage,

**SDG 16.2** – end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children,

**SDG 16.9** – provide legal identity, including free birth registrations

The success of this process was guaranteed by the clear determination of the city government and its wish to deal with this issue, however, especially important was the dedicated leadership of the City Secretariat for Social Welfare and their secretaries with their team. The Strategy was drawn upon the methodology of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, and especially significant was the obligation to create and adopt strategies with the collection of all relevant data available at that moment to the city government, as well as to hear the voices of those the strategy refers and relates to. The creation of the strategy was preceded by the discussion within the working groups, the focus groups with specific Roma population members and a public discussion.

*“Was it a successful process: the very fact that for the first time we have a strategy on the city level means a lot and the very strategy means a lot as well, since it has much data entered in all Belgrade municipalities; now we have had an open call from the City Secretariat for Social Welfare and then the organisations called upon the objectives and the measures from the Strategy; this is the first time that we have a document we can refer to and call upon and based on which we could obtain projects from the City... for the first time this year Bibija Association entered the competition and we called upon the measures against child marriage and we are implementing it in 6 Roma settlements in 3 local self-governments... this is a huge change.”*

*Slavica Vasić, founder of the Bibija Association and a member of the working group for employment*

What the actors of this process highlight as the success factor is the support by the consultants for strategic planning, the consultant for Roma inclusion and the expert for the budget, all of them provided through its projects by GIZ.

*“The consultants were incredible. Not only their knowledge, but also their personal level of involvement, they were indispensable.”*

*Slavica Vasić, Bibija Association*

*“A success factor is first and foremost the very City Secretariat for Social Welfare: my strongest impression is how big a job the Secretariat has done... I was not expecting that... they pulled the process with all their*

*strength and power. Since we did not have sufficient data connected to the education, to Roma children, they created a special questionnaire they sent to all schools, they collected data, processed and analysed it, and the consultant received only the summary in terms of data needed. They did a major job. They were extremely dedicated to this work. We had a consultant for strategic planning, a consultant for Roma inclusion, and an expert in programme budgeting. They were all following the process and made sure that everything was done according to the law, and also followed good practice. The additional factor to the success is that everything was well budgeted.”*

*Marina Babović, a working group member and GIZ representative*



sreda, 13. jul 2022.

### **Predstavljena prva usvojena Strategija za socijalno uključivanje Roma i Romkinja u Beogradu**



Grad Beograd u saradnji sa Nemačkom organizacijom za međunarodnu saradnju u okviru programa „Inkluzija Roma i drugih marginalizovanih grupa u Srbiji“, koji sprovodi Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) u saradnji sa predstavljena je prva Strategija za socijalno uključivanje Roma i Romkinja na teritoriji grada Beograda za period od 2022. do 2032. godine.

Strategija pokriva pet prioriternih oblasti obrazovanje, stanovanje, zapošljavanje, zdravlje i socijalnu zaštitu.

The very process of creating the Strategy was followed by a number of challenges, such as the lack of data, the election campaign, short deadlines, and inadequate activity of all city secretariats. A part of the response to these challenges was also a decision to regulate adequate research of the problem or create mechanisms for the collection of some data detected as missing, and to do this through the strategy’s objectives and measures. All these limits at the same time represented also the obstacles to the application of the principle of “Leave no one behind”, which is key in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



*“I don’t think that we have managed to apply the principle of “Leave no one behind”... I am not certain whether any document here succeeded in reaching everyone... we tried to encompass and include all those categories... Roma people – men and women – youth and elderly, financial social aid beneficiaries, LGBT population among Roma people... however, data is missing... in some areas, data are yet to be collected in order to be able to plan later...since it is an 11 year strategy...”*

*Marina Babović, a working group member and GIZ representative*

*“I am not sure if we have seen all groups of people within the Roma community... we have seen women, people over 65 years of age, but I am not sure that we have seen everyone... when it comes to LGBT people, we still need to do the mapping... what we are left with as the lesson learned is that we need to dive deeper into the differences existing in the community... this is something we also lack on the national level as well...”*

*Slavica Vasić, Bibija Association*

A short-term benefit of this process is, without a doubt, the creation of this strategic document which is at the moment seen as the most significant in the domain of Roma inclusion in Serbia. On the medium-term level, the implementation of the Strategy is expected through the creation of the action plan and the creation of the mechanism for Roma inclusion. Additionally, what is expected is the animation of the wider group of actors, since in the very process it was recognised that economy is missing and that without connecting with the economic development objectives of the city, social inclusion cannot provide and yield desired results.

A long-term change of this strategy – which will be implemented in the City of Belgrade in the next ten years – is most certainly the full integration of all Roma community members (both women and men) into the society.

# Sustainable Local Development Fund for the localisation of the 2030 Agenda

With the aim to raise awareness on the 2030 Agenda among local self-governments and civil society organisations (CSOs), the acceleration of the implementation of SDGs, as well as the presentation of the results, as part of the Public Finance Reform – Agenda 2030 Project, the Sustainable Local Development Fund was established with an aim to help local actors face real development problems.

A leading reason for the creation of the fund is that gathering local actors and providing them with adequate financial assistance (local subsidies) will increase motivation for cooperation and implementation of SDGs-linked innovative ideas in practice. In light of the fact that local actors already possess specific knowledge and capacities, the fund enabled them to bring together their resources in order to initiate and implement innovative ideas that could contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda.





## „Clean environment – healthy people” Knjaževac and Pirot

The Timok Club from Knjaževac, in partnership with the municipality of Knjaževac, the city of Pirot and the Pirog Association from Pirot, with the help of the Sustainable Development Fund, realised a project which had two different components and was implemented in two separate municipalities. In Knjaževac, through this project, they educated citizens on the importance of selecting and recycling waste with the support of municipal institutions, while in Pirot the public health policies were in focus, as well as the creation of the revision of the Public Health Plan of the city of Pirot.

Although these are neighbouring Stara planina municipalities, they differ very much in their structures and capacities. Pirot has the status of a city and is experienced in the implementation of various local policies, while Knjaževac is a smaller, underdeveloped municipality faced with multiple challenges.

The city of Pirot, in cooperation with the Timok Club from Knjaževac and Pirog Association from Pirot, worked on the Public Health Plan.

The city has a public health policy adopted in 2019, and lasting until 2026, but the action plan for the implementation of the policy expired after a three-year period. The idea was to adopt a new action plan, but also revise the general document after evaluating the previous plan and the citizens' attitudes bearing in mind the new context (after the COVID-19 crisis).

What marked this process and differed from 2019, was the participation of citizens, that is, a more intense participation of the civil sector.

*“In 2019, we did a Public Health Plan ourselves, and the principal body was the Council for Public Health of the City of Pirot. What is a good thing right now is the fact that the civil sector took part and got involved in the very dynamics of work (the setting of deadlines, and the like), and with the exchange of experience, so that, taught by the civil sector experience, we implemented some priorities in the Local Action Plan (LAP), that is, the Timok Club and Pirog Association, meaning that with the newly created circumstances of cooperation we identified domains of action where we could improve public health; We have 9 domains, which is more in relation to the previous LAP and one can clearly see the benefits of this cooperation – this LAP is much better, it has been improved.”*

*Bojan Randelović, a city council member for non-commercial activities of the city of Pirot*



The civil sector representatives first took part in the evaluation of the success of the previous Local Action Plan, and then got engaged in the working groups on the creation of the new plan.

*“We had a meeting with citizens and we held public debate to see which objectives from the previous LAP had been realised, what the city had realised. I think that this LAP is most probably the only one realised over 80%, this is the first time that this has been achieved; this means that the previous LAP plan was realistically set.”*

*Milija Todorov, Pirgos Association*

In the creation of the new document, a questionnaire was done in order to examine the citizens' needs. The proposals of non-governmental organisations were discussed, those living in rural areas had their own priorities referring to the village water supply system, waste disposal, sewage system, roads. The citizens had other priorities.

*“Public health does not only refer to the ordinary protection of health, but also to the concern of the whole community about its health. What is being done on the waste disposal is very important for the health, as much as the prevention which we lack since the health system cannot work on the prevention on its own. We did a questionnaire with our fellow citizens, and they directed our attention to the fact that we should care more about the ecology and the environment (the environmental consciousness has progressed in people) and somehow it is the youth who were dissatisfied with the cultural content, which is not surprising, bearing in mind that we are into our third year of the pandemic... we paid attention to that, so we set some new goals and objectives...”*

*dr Milena Dimitrijević, President of the City Assembly of Pirot and the Council for Public Health*

The lessons learned for all the actors in the process are that cooperation is necessary in all stages of both the creation and implementation of public policies and that local communities should create their own policies in accordance with their own needs. The city of Pirot has shown on its own example how the cycles of the public policies change and that it is important to have continuity in their implementation.

*“When the city of Pirot evaluated and revised the previous public health action plan, it showed that it was not just a piece of paper standing in a drawer, since its objectives were achieved rather impressively.”*

*Snežana Pavković, Timok Club*

Additionally, after the entire process, it was clear which groups of citizens were involved, and which needed to be encouraged. While “Leave no one behind” is applied in cooperation with the civil sector, there is a clear lack of inclusion and involvement for certain groups of citizens, especially in rural areas.

Knjaževac Municipality used this project to establish new practices for waste disposal. In cooperation with the Public Utility Company Standard in Knjaževac, a total of 21 new containers for separate collection of waste were purchased through the project, and placed in key spots in the town.



*“The Timok Club recognised that in Knjaževac there is a problem with waste disposal, as it is the case in the majority of municipalities in Serbia. Through this project, a cooperation with the city of Pirot was announced, a city which has a sanitary landfill, and we do not have one. We dispose of our waste at a town dump, and it is not a sanitary landfill, it is literally a town dump, whose capacity was used up a long time ago. However, the contemporary living lifestyle considerably increases the quantity of waste... It turned out that the*

*existing number of containers is not sufficient; a few years ago, in order to decrease waste, we started a selective collection of waste, but only for PET packaging; it turned out to be a good move, since this is how we manage to collect 10-11 tons of PET packaging and the citizens adopt the habit of selecting and separating PET packaging, exclusively that and nothing else. As part of this project, the municipality of Knjaževac received 21 containers for metal, glass and PET packaging, and the idea came to life immediately.”*

*A representative from Standard Public Utility Company from Knjaževac*

The Timok Club together with its partners recognised that it was not only sufficient to place new containers, it was also important to educate citizens and promote sound behaviour. The lesson learned from this is that working with children (especially the youngest) is an excellent way to reach out to families and communities.

Therefore, workshops were held in kindergartens, in preschool groups. For example, children’s birthday celebrations were simulated, after which the kids collected and separated waste, etc. Additionally, three short films were made and dubbed aiming to teach children about the importance of environmental protection. The children also received biodegradable pencils containing seeds which they could plant after the workshops.

*“Children are educated from the youngest age in order to raise their ecological awareness. The kids found this experience enjoyable as it was age-appropriate and provided through the activities they are used to. Parents were overjoyed, they loved every cooperation and we will endeavour to organise similar activities in the future and thus develop ecological consciousness in children. What was different from everyday work in the kindergarten are new methods (the birthday celebration workshop), and the short films, the biodegradable pencils... this is a small community and if the containers are placed in the kindergarten first, the parents will see them and will talk about it... the children will describe to their family members how it is done...”*

*Sonja Gocić, teacher at Bajka kindergarten*

The containers in the town were placed in cooperation with the public utility company and the Directorate for Development, so that they would be in places which are most frequented in terms of the number of citizens, but also convenient for utility services which dispose of the waste.

In Knjaževac, the cooperation of various stakeholders is the key to the success of a project. What proves to be important is the introduction of new actors such as the economy, which is a huge polluter, but it can also provide many solutions (private waste disposers and the like) and quick solutions to systemic problems ( building of dams, connecting with other neighbouring municipalities, and the like). Additionally, through this project it is also confirmed that citizens need more education, information and support for using the already existing systems in the town.

*“Generally, people would like to have clean environment as it is the case in Slovenia, but when we tell them about the model of waste disposal and how much it costs, then they oppose the idea and give comments; they lack education... it is obvious... they are not satisfied with the calculation of the disposal and driving off of the municipal waste... various topics... and when we started talking about how it is charged, why were you not present when we talked about that as citizens, why didn’t you react, they responded that they had not known that they could take part in the discussion and influence the decision...”*

*Snežana Pavković, Timok Club*





## „It's better when it's sustainable" Bor

The Association of Young Researchers Bor, in cooperation with the local NGOs, carried out a project whose aim was to inform the citizens about the sustainable development goals and motivate them to become active in the local community in the process of their realisation.

The citizens were at first informed about the 2030 Agenda and about the possibilities of them as individuals to undertake activities in the implementation of the sustainable development goals within their social communities. The organisation created brochures and leaflets which were handed out to citizens and organised a media campaign through the social media and local media. Afterwards, a research on the attitudes of citizens was executed through an online questionnaire and forms that were completed in person. Based on the citizens' attitudes, an initiative was started for the review of local public policy documents – from the highest city document, the City Development Plan, over sector documents -

the Environmental Protection Plan, to the very specific documents for air protection, waste management, etc. Talks with citizens and decision makers were also organised through the project.

*“The questionnaire has shown that for citizens it is rather abstract when you say sustainable development goals, and when you say clean water for example, then it is clear; when you say sustainable community you should also explain that a little bit, but when you mention environmental protection, then it is all clear... we wanted to translate the objectives from the UN formulations into a living language... for example, what SDG 11 means for Bor, clean air, it is a key issue for Bor... waste management, recycling, but not only of the municipal waste... we are surrounded with that mining waste far more than municipal waste, that for Bor is a more serious and bigger problem... so that we tried to transfer the goals to the local context, and then we realised through the research and the questionnaire that citizens recognise what the key problem is and what needs to be solved...”*

*Dragan Randelović, President of the Association of Young Researchers Bor*

A large part of the project was related to the participation and activism of children and young people in raising environmental awareness. A series of workshops were held, 75 peer educators were trained, trips were organised, and short films were made on the topic of environmental protection, which were then distributed through social networks and web portals aimed at young people. The workshops were realised in cooperation with two primary schools and the Technical School from Bor.

*“Sustainable development is a way to survive and be economically satisfied and socially settled... and we do not have such an approach in schools, on the contrary, everything is separated in sectors... As a biology teacher, I talk about pollution and protection, a civic education teacher will talk about the social moments, children can hardly understand these things except through activities such as these... which are carried out outside school and in cooperation with NGOs; they cannot easily get the complete picture about the community... we took them on a field trip so they could see what can be done here, and what can be done there... so they could feel the environment...”*

**Nataša Randelović, Association of Young Researchers Bor**

During the implementation of the project, special care was taken to include all citizens from different backgrounds, of different ages and needs, all in accordance with the principle of “Leave no one behind”. A third of those surveyed live in the rural area of the city of Bor, and the citizens of this area had the opportunity to fill out the questionnaire and when visiting the association.

*“As for the children, we tried to have all groups represented, both girls and boys and children from rural areas. Bor is a multinational environment, it includes different ethnic groups, and whenever we do schools of ecology, we always try to include all children and we have been very successful so far...”*

**Nataša Randelović, Association of Young Researchers Bor**



What is the biggest lesson learned is that citizens, especially youth understand well the sustainable development goals when they are communicated clearly and that the most important role of the civil society organisations on the one hand, is to translate the goals to the language people can understand, and on the other to motivate and encourage local self-government to work on those.

*“For me the sustainable development goals are perhaps guidelines which lead us to accepting them as part of our behaviour... at the moment they are symbols, signs, a warning, which means that later we should change our approach towards nature when it comes to ecological objectives, but other objectives as well. We should change our approach so that global empathy develops... for now I see them as directions, guidelines which lead us towards global empathy towards nature, towards people, towards the environment as a whole...”*

**Milena, teacher at the Technical Secondary School in Bor**

*“An illustration should be given to people... you get up in the morning, leave the house, the sound of the wind refreshes you, without smoke, smog without anything... then you go to a brook, wash your face, freshen up... then you take your children to the mountain, find another brook rippling, you sit down to sort out*



*your thoughts ... and there is no wild dump along the road, and everything you take with you, you bring back ... you leave no waste. Then you watch the beech leaves and feel elevated by its scents and freshness... the sustainable development goals should be presented like this, in a simple and clear manner, not as a policy against smoke and smog in Bor, but simply, what the nature that we are fighting for looks like."*

Vukosav Antonijević, Village Association Bor

What this experience has shown is that there is capacity for the community to deal with even the most complex topic, such as sustainable development, but also that a condition that precedes this is partnership with all organisations, institutions, and local self-government, which on its own does not have the capacity to motivate and initiate all the topics. Moreover, a clear lesson learned is that a more significant participation of the economy sector is missing from the picture.

It was also learned that the participation of citizens is a sine qua non, and that a special role here is played by the NGOs in animating the citizens in their communities. Additionally, NGOs should, as well as local self-governments, know well the new methodology of creating planning documents.

*"In the NGO sector we need to learn the technology... we have created advocacy campaigns... but our campaigns in this moment are taking one direction, and the processes of ascertaining public policy led by the state are taking a different course...we end our campaign, and nothing happens... we do not have the campaign, and they are making some decisions... those processes need to be happening at the same time and we have to be involved in them from the beginning... we as an NGO with our wish to do it, and a state on the other hand has to be ready to include us..."*

Dragan Randelović, Association of Young Researchers Bor

Such projects enable the actors to understand that they have to think about all the local policies and practice in a different manner and to actually see sustainable development as a synthesis of the economic, social and ecological development, and not like up until now, to polarise topics in public discourse and pose a question if one is in favour of economy or ecology. The project has also shown that younger generations, if an adequate approach is created for them, understand the issues perfectly.

**Za realizaciju ciljeva održivog razvoja kroz nove javne politike grada Bora neophodno obezbediti sledeće uslove:**

1. Novi razvojni dokumenti moraju imati i posebno razrađenu metodologiju praćenja i evaluacije njihove realizacije, kako bi se osiguralo redovno podnošenje i razmatranje izveštaja o realizaciji, uz obavezno učešće javnosti u procesu njihovog donošenja i realizacije.
2. Između dokumentata lokalne javne politike kao i nacionalnih javnih politika, potrebno je uspostaviti jasnu hijerarhijsku vezu kako bi se izbeglo preklapanje ili ostavljanje praznina.
3. Definirati sve potrebne finansijske uslove (sredstva države, stranih donatora i kreditora, budžet grada, sredstva privrede, posebno strateških partnera i vlasnika u nosećoj privrednoj grani rudarstva i metalurgije, javno-privatna partnerstva, sredstva građana i dr.).
4. Obezbediti institucionalne uslove (reformisana i kadrovski ojačana javna uprava – državna i lokalna, osposobljena javna preduzeća, posebna radna tela koja će pratiti realizaciju Plana razvoja, Plana zaštite životne sredine i drugih planova) koji su neophodni za realizaciju postavljenih ciljeva i zadataka.
5. U pripremu i realizaciju ovih dokumenata uključiti što više civilni sektor u širem smislu – pre svega naučne i stručne institucije, obrazovne institucije, organizacije civilnog društva, medije kako bi se povećao stepen kompetentnosti dokumenata i aktivnosti na njihovoj realizaciji, podigla informisanost i motivisanost svih učesnika a posebno građana i najšire javnosti u gradu.

**Životna sredina igra ogromnu ulogu u ispunjavanju naših osnovnih potreba za održanjem života. S druge strane, naša je dužnost da brinemo o životnoj sredini kako bi buduće generacije mogle da zadovolje svoje potrebe.**

**Učini ono što je u tvojoj moći**

- Iskaži svoje potrebe, probleme i predloge za rešenja na putu ka održivom razvoju.
- Koristi prilike za grantove i subvencije koje daju država, lokalna samouprava i organizacije kako bi svoje domaćinstvo pretvorilo u održivo.
- Promeni svoje navike i daj svoj lični doprinos održivom razvoju.

**ŽIVI ODRŽIVO!**

**Bolja je OdrŽivo**

Srbija se obavezala da svoje politike uskladi sa ciljevima održivog razvoja sadržanim u dokumentu Agenda 2030. Ona sadrži 17 ciljeva održivog razvoja koji prevashodno treba da doprinesu smanjenju siromaštva, nejednakosti i nepravde, da utiču na uzroke i minimalizuju posledice klimatskih promena. Ove ciljeve potrebno je uneti u nacionalni i lokalne programe razvoja.

Incijativa Društva mladih istraživača Bor „Bolje je OdrŽivo“ realizuje se u okviru projekta „Reforma javnih finansija – Agenda 2030“ koji podržavaju vlada Švajcarske i Nemačka, a implementira GIZ. Nemačka organizacija za međunarodnu saradnju.

Stavovi izneti u tekstu ne odražavaju nužno zvanične stavove vlade Švajcarske i Nemačke, kao i GIZa.

<http://mlbor.rs/>

1. NAŠA ŽIVOTNA SREDINA 2. ČISTO I ODŽIVNO ENERGIJE 3. KLIMATSKA AKCIJA 4. ODRŽIVI GRADOVI I ODRŽIVI SREĆNI ŽIVOTI 5. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 6. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 7. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 8. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 9. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 10. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 11. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 12. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 13. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 14. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 15. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 16. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE 17. ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE I ODRŽIVI POSLOVANJE

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## „Citizens and local self-governments together towards sustainable development goals“ Sombor and Požega

The Sombor Educational Centre in cooperation with the Citizens' Alliance for Social Inclusion in Požega are implementing a project aimed at providing support to local self-governments in creating planning documents pertaining to the sustainable development goals.

In Sombor, the Educational Centre in cooperation with the city of Sombor and all relevant institutions worked on the creation of the Environmental Protection Plan, while GASI in Požega supported the local self-government in the creation of the Public Health Plan.

On both sides, the process was evaluated as successful since a high level of citizens' participation was achieved. Representatives of the civil society organisations took part in working groups and at the same time motivated citizens and organised focus groups. In both places, a questionnaire was

used to research the general population's needs. Organisations of people with disabilities were especially included, special care was taken to recognise the needs of citizens of rural areas, and data acquired was analysed from a gender perspective.

*“For us this has been a successful project since we gained the first plan document of this kind and scope. When it comes to Sombor, there are social plans, monitoring programmes, some operative documents, which cannot be called planning documents, so this is the first coherent document concerning environmental protection. There were parts in the Sustainable Development Plan of the city, but it was all very modest, mostly some basic parts and the problems in the town. I am satisfied, I find it that planning is the basis of an activity, planning comes first, and then everything else.”*

*Siniša Borota, Deputy Mayor for Urbanism and Environmental Protection of the City of Sombor*

What has for both sides been a novelty in the process is the real participation and a wider discussion with different relevant actors. The problem of the environment has been viewed in a wider context, as the topic of all interested parties, not only of the local self-government (which has only one employee to deal with this topic) and as a layered problem whose solution requires adjusting various policies, institutions and a community.

It also has been recognised as the lesson learned, that there is capacity in the community to solve this problem when all the actors connect, and especially that there is capacity in the civil sector which is seen also as the connection with the citizens, as support in the process of planning and as the source of expertise. Besides this, the lesson learned is that the institution professionals should be included as much as possible, and that a one-year deadline is adequate for creating the plan.

*“The city of Sombor is often taken as an example of good practice, since it has professionals who are interested in working and who think outside of the box. Siniša (Deputy Mayor for urbanism and environmental protection to the Mayor of the City of Sombor), was one of the factors of success, but we learned that it is a good thing that executive directors are not working group members, but only provide support to their own people so that they could work.”*

*Ružica Rakinić, Sombor Educational Centre*

*“A short-term benefit for local self-governments is the document itself. For a medium-term goal it is important the municipality has a document, since according to the Law on the Planning System, each item in the budget has to be covered for in the plans. A long-term benefit is the fact that is visible that the civil sector has the capacity to help local self-governments. I have been saying this for years. The civil sector is relevant for certain topics, it can push the story, it can act as a motivator, and this is a topic which is above politics...”*

*Goran Đukić, GASI*



Through this project, a cooperation between the two different local self-governments (from different regions, differing in status, number of inhabitants, administration capacities, etc.), and civil society organisations was enabled. This is an additional quality, since local self-governments often are not able to see how similar problems are dealt with in other environments and inter-municipal cooperation is still not a constant and standard practice. All actors agree that citizens in their environments, find the topic of environmental protection, as well as health, very important, but they also recognise that it is about the implementation of SDGs.



*“When you read the goals (SDGs), it sounds like a Miss World Competition – I am for world peace... Those are ideals of how we want the world to function and it remains on that level. We from local environments, when we think about this Agenda, we realise that many of our activities are based on that Agenda – unconsciously. That is a problem. Often the state does some things, but it does not think about the Agenda, does not take it into account. Local strategies, then national, international documents, and finally goals – it is a sort of vertical line, the widest framework based on which we act, sometimes consciously like now, but most of the time unconsciously.”*

*Goran Đukić, GASI Požega*

*Goran Đukić, GASI Požega*

What is the success of this project for all actors is the creation of documents that will enable organised action, collection of donor funds, connection with civil society and other communities, in order to solve systemic problems.

## „The first step towards a clean and resilient community” Sombor

The Foundation of the Veljko Petrović Gymnasium in cooperation with the Humanisation Association and the city of Sombor, implemented the project whose aim was to equip primary and secondary school with better knowledge of waste recycling and motivate them to take up the practice, while increasing their understanding of environmental protection in general.



The first part of the project included a series of educational workshops titled The Green Lesson, which were created by the project team. The Education Department of the city of Sombor announced a call for the participation of schools in the project. The workshops were held in 12 schools (instead of the planned 10, the number was increased due to the increase in the interest for the workshops) from the city and rural areas, and somewhat fewer than 200 boys and girls attended the workshops. The programme was adjusted to the different ages of children, since the workshops were held both in primary and secondary schools. The realisation of the project has shown that little is known about the sustainable development objectives, and that both children and teachers need to be educated. Some of them had already been informed through individual engagement of teachers.

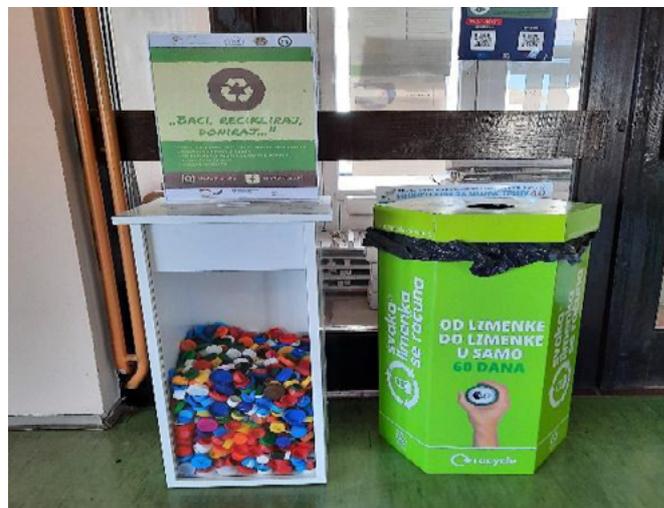
Schools were invited to collect aluminium cans and plastic caps as part of the contest “Throw away, recycle, donate...” that greatly contributed to the success of this project. The

competition was announced in the community, the criteria were determined in advance, as well as the way in which proportionally (according to the number of students) it will be calculated which school collected the most recycled material. A school from the rural surrounding won, and the winners were announced at the final conference held under the auspices of the city of Sombor.

This activity has mobilised the whole community, especially in the rural environments where families, neighbours, local salesmen, all took part in collecting cans and bottle caps.

*“In rural environments the victory of the school is perceived as the victory of the whole place. From a town school one representative comes, but from a village school, a teacher, a caretaker, a child, a grandmother, a grandfather, all of them come and it is the real picture, showing that everyone cares and that everyone in the community celebrates the victory.”*

*Slađana Vlatković, Veljko Petrović Gymnasium Foundation*



*“A very important pilot project, the first of its kind... the competition part was excellent, the results were measured proportionately, so that it was shown that the villages fared better, a village school won though many schools took part. We are very interested not only in the practical aspect, but also to make sure the project continues in its entirety. They succeeded in animating high school students, which is not an easy task, they really did their best...”*

*Siniša Borota, Deputy Mayor for Urbanism and Environmental Protection of the city of Sombor*



## MANIFEST ZAVRŠNE KONFERENCIJE

Inicijative „Prvi korak ka čistoj i otpornoj lokalnoj zajednici“

1. Ostvareni rezultati Inicijative „Prvi korak ka čistoj i otpornoj lokalnoj zajednici“ potvrđuju primenljivost edukativnih i takmičarskih sadržaja za implementaciju poruka Agende 2030 UN-a i većine Ciljeva Održivog Razvoja, od ukupno 17 u našoj lokalnoj zajednici.

2. U takmičarskom delu je prikupljeno 1.608 kg čepova i 660 kg aluminijumskih limenki, što ukazuje da korišćeni model prikupljanja ove dve vrste otpadnog materijala za reciklažu poseduje samoodrživ karakter.

3. Zadržavanje humanitarnog obeležja Inicijative ostvarivo je uključivanjem i podrškom većeg broja lokalnih institucija, organizacija i privrednih subjekata.

4. Realizovane aktivnosti Inicijative „Prvi korak ka čistoj i otpornoj lokalnoj zajednici“ trebaju poslužiti za kreiranje sveobuhvatnog modela prikupljanja sekundarnih sirovina na teritoriji Grada Sombora u narednom periodu od 01.10.2022-30.09.2023. Najznačajnim ciljem novokreiranog modela se nameće pronalaženje i primena neophodnih uslova za učestvovanje svih škola sa teritorije Grada Sombora u prikupljanju otpadnog ambalažnog materijala za reciklažu.

5. Fondacija Gimnazije „Veljko Petrović“ Sombor i UG „Humanizacija“ izražavaju svoju spremnost da u saradnji sa Kancelarijom za lokalni ekonomski razvoj Grada Sombora izrade zajednički predlog modela prikupljanja sekundarnih sirovina na teritoriji Grada Sombora.

6. Zajednički predlog modela prikupljanja sekundarnih sirovina na teritoriji Grada Sombora „Sombor – naša čista i otporna lokalna zajednica“ uputiće se Gradskom veću radi razmatranja i usvajanja istog na prvoj septembarskoj sednici.

*Janina Bjurman*

*Čista zemlja Sogor*



Manifest je usvojen i potpisan u Somboru, 17. juna 2022. godine

At a final conference which was attended by representatives of all relevant institutions, the best collectors were awarded, and all teachers who took part in the programme were given thank you notes. At the very end of the conference, a working document was presented – a Manifesto, which represents an agreement of all interested parties for further work and development of the recycling model in the city of Sombor.

It was agreed to continue the cooperation, and to discuss with the city officials models for further cooperation, in order to implement similar activities the following year, and to turn the competition into a tradition. All the actors in the programme evaluated the project as highly successful and as the initiative which with the lessons learned (dynamics, better coordination of certain actors, etc.) should become a regular event in Sombor.



## Lessons learned through social mapping in Zaječar

“Leave no one behind (LNOB) is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It represents the unequivocal commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and of humanity as a whole.” *UN SDG – Universal values*

One of the key values of SDGs is “Leave no one behind” principle. Therefore, development and progress are possible only if they are intended for all citizens, and if public policy is designed to meet the needs of all citizens, specifically vulnerable groups.

U cilju praćenja sprovođenja Ciljeva održivog razvoja (agenda 2030) Grad Zaječar u saradnji sa Centrom za socijalni rad, Centrom za trudnice, roditelje i klince iz Zaječara, kao i projektom Švajcarske i Nemačke razvojne saradnje „Reforma javnih finansija – Agenda 2030“, koji implementira Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, saradnici socijalno mapiranje na teritoriji Grada Zaječara.

**Cilj istraživanja je da se ustanove potrebe i problemi sa kojima se suočavaju odabrane grupe građana.**

**KATEGORIJE MAPIRANJA:**

- Samohrani roditelji
- Domaćinstva sa osobom sa invaliditetom
- Mladi (do 26 god.) iz hraniteljskih porodica

AKO PRIPADATE NAVEDENIM KATEGORIJAMA JAVITE SE:

 [udruzenjetrk@gmail.com](mailto:udruzenjetrk@gmail.com)  
0628377352 0641344173

ANKETE SU ANONIMNE!




5 UN SDGs Universal values  
<https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind>

6 An abbreviation LNOB is often used, stemming from the saying “Leave no one behind”.

The method developed in Serbia with the help of GIZ for determining the needs of various vulnerable groups within the local community is the so-called social mapping. In Zaječar, through cooperation with the Centre for Pregnant Women, Parents and Children (abbrev. in Serbian - TRK), Social Work Centre and local self-government, with the support of GIZ, this method was used to define the needs of single parents, people with disabilities, and youth becoming independent and no longer being the Social Work Centre beneficiaries. The idea was to use the collected data on the position of these vulnerable groups as entry data for the municipality of Zaječar local plan for development.

In cooperation with the expert and using GIZ methodology of mapping the needs of social groups, a questionnaire was created for the research and study of these needs, and cooperation with the Social Work Centre and local NGOs was agreed upon and arranged in order to reach citizens who belong to these vulnerable groups. However, the mapping process was far more challenging and more difficult than expected.

The research started during the COVID-19 crisis, so that a part of the communication was conducted online, which in advance made the communicating of the key actors more difficult. The communication with the Social Work Centre's beneficiaries, due to the protection of personal data, required a written consent from each of the beneficiaries, which posed a huge and insurmountable challenge for the Centre due to its limited resources. Not even the communication with the disabled people's organisations yielded expected results, first and foremost due to the enormous distrust these organisations' beneficiaries have of the institutions, organisations and initiatives. Field work was exacerbated by the lack of communication and coordination between the local organisations and institutions. Thus the process of data collection lasted longer than planned, the plan for collecting data was altered several times, however the Centre for Pregnant Women, Parents and Children still managed to collect data related to people with disabilities and single parents.

As a result of the collected data, it has become increasingly apparent that this mapping is essential, as a lot of people with disabilities face multiple challenges. Single

parents are living in extreme poverty, far below the poverty line, with a significantly lower likelihood of utilising benefits, and their situation can be considered to be that of "absolute deprivation". More significant is the high risk of transgenerational poverty, i.e., those who come from poor families will also stay poor.

*"Mums from urban environments we managed to reach out to, cannot afford anything for themselves, or their children... the poverty is horrifying..."*

*Mirjana Ognjanović, a GIZ expert on social mapping*

Apart from the achieved results and the mapped needs of these groups, a myriad of lessons was learned in the process. The first and, perhaps, the most significant lesson learned is that reaching out to people is the biggest challenge. Even when they are already registered by the institutions and are members of organisations, this does not mean that people would be prepared to speak about their needs. Additionally, there are many of those who are invisible in administrative data.

*"It is a sensitive issue of how to reach those who are invisible... in that sense it is not simple... the thing is that it is difficult to reach interviewees... GIZ developed methodology, we have social mapping projects... we need to work much more on ways of reaching those people... this requires a lot of time... it needs to be planned long-term and field work needs to be included... coronavirus and the situation with it also posed a problem... people were afraid of contact... people also did not want to respond as distrust is widespread... it was very important to me that I as a researcher take part in this, see data, but also understand the challenge..."*

*Mirjana Ognjanović, a GIZ expert on social mapping*

An important lesson is that all actors on the local level need to be coordinated clearly. Therefore, we have recommended the formation of a consortium of local actors (interested parties), composed of representatives from the municipality/city, social work centre, GIZ, and representatives of the research team/organisation. This consortium could also include, depending on the target group, representatives of other institutions on the local

level (from the domains of education, health-care, etc.) and organisations. The role of the consortium or another body for coordination, would first and foremost be, to be aware of strengths and weaknesses of its own institutions, to follow all stages of the research and to promptly react to newly formed situations and problems. Considering the fact that it involves “difficult-to-reach, marginalised or hidden populations”, each stage in mapping should be carefully planned. It is essential to obtain consent from the interviewees registered in social work centres, and prior to that, motivate them to take part in the research.

The existing methodology is focused on the traditional research methods. In recent years, various methods for researching hidden, excluded, marginal and not easily accessible populations have been developed (capture-recapture, combining of the quantitative and qualitative methods, crowdsourcing, network analysis, the use of new technologies, etc...). Furthermore, it was apparent that the local self-government, when considering social policy, primarily focuses on the work of the Social Work Centre, which has limited capacity. As a result, civil society organisations (CSOs) should be more involved in decision-making processes on a local scale, the mechanisms of cooperation should be strengthened, as well as the local self-government should be helped to develop more social services.

As a special challenge, ethical questions have also arisen. It was also challenging to “discover” and motivate interviewees to respond to the research and in those activities one should be especially careful, since it is ethically wrong to promise interviewees benefits from their participation, and not fulfil them.

One of the reasons for a poor response of the interviewees during the mapping process in Zaječar, are their previous experiences, that is, their betrayed expectations. In that sense, it is required to make an effort and include some recommendations in local initiatives and make sure that they have effect, that is, to make interviewees realise they have benefits from the research in which they take part.

A lesson learned and what is also one of the expected results of the very process is the understanding that the local self-government has to rely upon and cooperate with civil society organisations, and that only in cooperation of all local actors can useful progress be made for all citizens. As a result of the challenges following this planning process, actors who participated believe it is a crucial method, and if they can master and overcome initial obstacles, this could lead to a gradual shift in community awareness and development toward a general benefit for all.

*“If this mapping could function well, it would result in a connection between institutions, increased awareness of target groups, people in target groups would be seen and acknowledged, recognised, as people who are cared for... and then when we get the community acquainted with these target groups, in the end we might have a situation where people not facing problems know their neighbour down the street is a single mother, has a child with disabilities... that after all those actions we undertook, including campaigns which we created and ran, citizens would know how to approach this woman... because, it’s not just that people got alienated and that everyone is mean to everyone else, but also those who are empathic and who would like to help, don’t know how... in that sense, we would get a more open attitude and relationship... and a different behaviour in people.”*

Saša Tašić, TRK Zaječar

7 Absolute deprivation – a life in multidimensional poverty or below the minimally accepted standards of security, income, public services, infrastructure or welfare.

# Localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals – lessons learned

**Strong and clear political leadership** is necessary for the successful and participatory creation and implementation of public policies. A successful project was realised in municipalities where a clear decision was taken that new plan documents were needed and new approaches were taken to creating these documents; in addition, those environments with individuals who were highly dedicated to the process and coordinated it themselves were particularly successful.

**Cooperation with the civil sector** in all environments was recognised as the condition sine qua non. The civil sector has played a multiple role. In some environments it was the initiator and the motivator of change, it motivated the creation of new plan documents or new actions; in all environments it took part in the work (it often provided technical support) and offered necessary expertise and in all environments it was a necessary link with citizens' voices.

**Horizontal cooperation of various actors in the community** is a necessary factor for sustainable development, according to all actors; a significant change can only be achieved when all actors are coordinated, know who is doing what, and are guided by the mutual vision created by the plan.

**Citizens need to be encouraged and motivated to participate** in various ways: questionnaires, focus groups, discussions on municipality premises, visits to their associations and organising public discussions. The experience has shown that participation increases when citizens feel their voices are respected.

**Sustainable development is a complex topic, it requires a holistic approach and it is no longer possible to solve problems with separate sector policies.** For local self-governments organised in the current manner, with a small number of employees and a highly bureaucratic environment in which employees hold narrowly defined positions, this represents a major challenge; this is why cooperation is necessary, as well as a different way of organising work within local self-governments and within municipal public institutions.

**National policies are an important precondition for the application of the 2030 Agenda, but it is possible to work in the local environment on their implementation and even when there is no umbrella national document.** The passing of the Law on the Planning System is a major step forward since it obliges local self-governments to adopt long-term planning documents in cooperation with the community. The local self-governments have set guidelines and practices in some areas, while plans are being developed for the first time in others (environmental protection and public health). It has been shown that local self-governments can create realistic and relevant plans for their surrounding area when they have a good connection with the civil sector and support from the civil sector.

# Sustainable Development Goals – Guide & Inspiration



*"I got acquainted with the aims very early on and I knew by heart the indicators since I am employed at the regional agency... however, I had never had the opportunity to take part in the localisation of the sustainable development goals until we started working on a local plan for the development of the city of Užice... it seems as a small step, but on the other hand, you realise that by fulfilling local aims and objectives, you exert global influence... however minor it may sound, if all of us as individuals give our contribution to the aims of sustainable development, the global ones will be fulfilled... because it seemed to me that we as the local self-government of 78.000 residents cannot contribute to the global cause, but on the other hand, you can see that it is very, very achievable..."*

**Teodora, Regional Development Agency, Užice**

*"My view of goals is that they are an organised system that tells us what to do in order to live well and to make sure future generations also live well, so that we can make them a model for future behaviour."*

**Dr Milena Dimitrijević, President of the Pirot City Assembly**

*"It is important that the goals last for more than a certain period of time, even decades... Their goal is to create an environment that is equal in every respect, economic, social, and cultural... To provide a good living environment for our people, so that they feel the need not to leave the country after completing a university education, but to return and remain here after graduation, start families here... It is definitely a way that should stand the test of time and not expire before a certain date."*

**Tijana Milošević, gender equality focal point in Užice administration**

*"I see sustainable development as increased empathy, trust and solidarity... that is sustainable development in my opinion... Regardless of what the goals, targets and indicators are... I don't see that the development is possible if we don't understand that there is another human being who also has needs and has the right to a good life... if we do not show solidarity and do not act in solidarity, if we do not know how to help a mother with her baby pram, hold the door for someone... we can't reach and achieve that with projects; if each and everyone of us individually does not realise in what way life is sustainable... that resources are not endless... that we have to connect with others..."*

**Saša Tašić, TRK Zaječar**

*"Goals as a mechanism, as a tool, as a guide to future good development... as searching for a measure between industrialisation and nature conservation... we cannot say that we will not have a single factory by 2030... Searching for balance is necessary. Unfortunately, it is completely impossible at this time... this is why we need goals..."*

**Branislav Mitrović, President of the Užice City Assembly**

*"The sustainable development goals for me are the vision of the global community, where the world should be in a few years time. We can teach people what they are, but they themselves will not work on it... that is why we should translate them into reality, and then implement them together, in partnership, in cooperation..... sustainable development goals do not belong to any structure, neither to the government nor the NGO sector, but to everyone, to all of us..."*

**Dragan Ranđelović, Association of Young Researchers Bor**



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