



TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

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Dear Readers

From this edition and on, P-A will publish a new column where will be published articles around the activity of the NPO sector in Albania and around the world. In this articles you will find interesting information, updates, figures, academic opinions etc.

Partners-Albania organised in Vlora a two-days brainstorming meeting on their future activities and areas of intervention.

NEW TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PACKAGES

Private Sector in our focus

The development of a strong and dynamic private sector in Albania in these recent years has shown the necessity of a further qualification for managers and company employees. Based in recent studies, 85% of companies state that they need further personnel qualifications and 74% of them are ready to pay for these qualifications.

Based on these data, Partners-Albania aims to intervene in this sector with qualitative training and technical assistance services. Partners-Albania has prepared a special training package tailored to the private sector needs. This package consists in a series of topics such as: Customer Care and Sales; Communication Skills in Business, Conflict Management and Work Group.

TRAINING PROGRAM

This program is led by requests and is designed to fulfill the needs identified by the companies themselves, in order to increase their chances for success. The content and methodology is based on the international and national experience.

Training courses can be organized on the companies' premises, in our office or in another location chosen by the company. Trainings courses will be intensive. At the end of the program participants will be awarded a certificate of participation.

At the end of this training program your company will be able to have:

More qualified employees, More satisfied clients, More sales, More income, More successful business!

Partners - Albania

Offers services throughout Albanian territory and abroad, all the year, with a very dedicated and well-prepared staff, with a long experience in training provision.

Partners - Albania is the ideal Center to fulfill your training and technical assistance needs; It will raise your staff capacities to successfully face the challenges of the future!

New training package for the NPO sector

Partners-Albania has developed a new training package for the NPO sector which includes three new modules:

- Needs assessment
- Marketing and public relations
- Strategic planning and business plan

As the NPO sector mainly remains donor dependent and funding is continuously diminishing, the sector is increasingly challenged to sustain itself organizationally and financially. Organizations are aware of the difficulties this brings, but have not considered other solutions. Thus, NPO-s are required to have a solid organizational structure, clear strategic plans, income-generating programs or services to sustain a credibility image in the media and public.

A window of opportunity has opened with the passage of the new NPO law. NPO-s are now facing the possibility to engage in income generating activities, but lack experience and capacity to manage this situation at their best.



As the NPO-s acknowledged, and PA evaluated, there is a lot of work to be done in offering training and technical assistance to the sector in this area, there is a perceived need for trained and qualified personnel. PA has designed a program called "It's planning time". This program is designed to help the organizations to develop a business plan or a marketing plan. The program has two main components:

- Training
- Site assistance

The goal of training programs will be to improve participants' knowledge and skills in effective strategic planning, needs assessment marketing and business plan, in order to ensure organizational sustainability and development.

Partners-Albania invites all the NPO-s to be part of this new package.

Continuous Training and Technical Assistance

In the wide variety of its services, from many years to now, Partners-Albania offers not only training but also technical assistance in establishing internal organizational policy and procedures systems.

If you need more information or are interested in Partners-Albania programmes and services, please contact our office .

DGA TRAINING PROGRAM

A "Lobbying" training program was held in Gjirokastra, on June 1-2, 2006

The main goal of the "Lobbying Training Program" was to introduce the NPO members with the basic concepts and skills of lobbying as part of an advocacy campaign, and to stimulate NPO-s to pursue legislative lobbying initiatives.

After the training, one of the participants wrote to the local newspaper Dita Jug:

Partners in an interesting training for the leaders of Southern Albania NPOs

Lobbying, a powerful instrument of change

Partners-Albania, Center for Change and Conflict Management held on 1-2 June 2006, in the city of Gjirokastra a very interesting training program for the NPOs leaders and trainers in south of Albania. The training focus was on Lobbying as a powerful instrument of communication and change.

Participants were representatives from NPOs interested in collaboration and implementation of joint initiatives and awareness campaigns, to influence the policy, law and decision makers on local and central issues. The two trainers coming from Tirana, Shpresa Arbi and Klotilda Tavani, helped build an open and equal communication and debate among the participants, from the beginning of the training until the distribution of certificates. This way of communication, and especially the combination of theoretical axioms with real examples, cases and practical exercises, helped to create great possibilities of knowing and learning the lobbying methods and techniques.

After filling a pre-test form, which aimed to identify the level of knowledge of the participants on the lobbying issues, the first moment where all the participants had the

possibility to express their opinions and knowledge was the definition of "advocacy" concept and the difference between "advocacy" and "lobbying".

The division of the participants on three permanent working groups, presentation of the results after each working session on the small groups and the vice-versa evaluation of the each group work, not only created a appropriate working atmosphere, but helped the participants to exchange the ideas and experiences with each other, and to reconsider their work by improving it.

During this training program, the group aimed to create a conviction on why is important to work together on a certain issue, why we should seek and find strong supporters to our work, why we should find allies and why we should identify and analyze the situation and our opponents. This was done by concentrating on the meaning of lobbying and its advantages in bringing changes and real solution for certain issues. Some of training participants, experienced NPO leaders such as: Niko Mihali, Naxhi Mamani, Raimond Kola, Lindita Luzo, Englantina Gjini, Odise Kofe, etc., brought in the training many interesting examples and practices on influencing the communication with the law makers at the central level and with the decision makers at the local level. By the other hand, improvisation of different role-plays in all the stages of a lobbying process and the game exercises used to stimulate the participants to define issues, created the grounds for active relaxation in function to the assimilation of the training topic.

What was different from the other training programs that often convert into the atmosphere of the humoristic anecdote "grape Raki is made out of grape", was the fact that during the training we worked on

groups for some concrete initiatives, which, even though treated in an embryonic form, in the future days can be activated and materialized in the activities of the regional NPOs. Some of the NPOs leaders, aimed to sketch even real action plans with concrete lobbying objectives, such as lobbying for changes in the electoral law regarding the election of the municipality and commune councils.

A similar initiative was the one of some organizations representatives lobbying for the establishment of four public relations offices in the municipalities of Libohova, Permeti, Kelcyra and Saranda. So, these concrete lobbying initiatives were not only the object of the small group work and aimed to describe all the stages of the training process, but they also determined the strategic lines for concrete actions of the NPOs future activities.

From this training program I personally gained a lot regarding the expertise on these issues, definition of power lines, definition of the priority relationships and classification of the opponents through the lobbying process.

On behalf of the Regional Centre for Media Studies and Training, I thank Partners-Albania, Center for Change and Conflict Management for the seriousness on the organization of this interesting training in Gjirokastra for the NPO leaders of the Southern region.

We should thank the organizers even for the fact that this training program wasn't held in Tirana but in the region where these NPOs operate and where lobbying can be used as a powerful instrument for change and influence of central and local government decisions.

Engjëllush Serjani
President of the Regional Center for Media Studies and Trainings
Gjirokastrë, June 2006

NOSA TRAINING PROGRAM

In the framework of NOSA Program, Partners-Albania conducted a 2-days training on "Financial Management" in Vlora, on May 31 June 1, 2006. Participants were NPO representatives from Vlora and Fier.

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

As we have mentioned in previous editions, the international organization ICMC is working to consolidate an Albanian structure (the NPO "Jeta e Re") to offer services for the population of Këneta area in Durrës, an informal area with a newly arrived population and many problems. Partners Albania was contracted to raise the capacities of this NPO. Since two months P-A is offering training and technical assistance to the NPO. The topics offered during May were "Community Needs Assessment and Reporting" and "Fundraising".

Contracted from the Project team LG/UNDP in Albania, PA delivered a 3-days TOT program in the "Teambuilding, Networking and Coalition Building".

This Training Program was held in Tirana on May 3 - 5, 2006. Participants were selected from the project team and were representatives from NPO sector from different cities.

The main goal of this training program was to increase participant's skills and capacity as trainers on the issues of team building, networking and coalition, the definitions and concepts, the organizational form advantages and disadvantages of both forms of partnership and differences. In addition participants was exposed to a various forms of methodologies of training and also discussed when it is appropriate to use and when it is not.

Partners Center is more and more being considered an important source for human resources capacity building from many national and international agencies. World Vision, an international NPO, contracted Partners Albania to offer training on "Advocacy and Lobbying" and "Leadership and Supervision" for their staff. In the same period, "Center for Population and Development" contracted PA to offer training on "Monitoring and Evaluation" for the organization staff.

Problems and recommendations on the Albanian legal framework for non-for-profit sector

In the framework of the joint activities as part of the Network for Open Society in Albania (NOSA), Open Society Foundation in Albania (OSFA) and Partners-Albania, in cooperation with a Group of Experts in legislation and economy field, are working together since 2005 to analyze the legal framework that regulates the activity of non-for-profit sector in Albania. This analysis will help to improve this legal framework, make the NPOs work easier to find alternative funding sources to the foreign donor funding which is lacking or has substantially decreased, and improve the image of the NPO sector.

The report produced by the Group of Experts was consulted in larger groups of NPO and donor representatives in a series of round tables organized in Tirana, Vlora, Shkodra and Pogradeci, during May-June 2006. The participants discussed problems identified and recommendations made from the Group of Experts, and committed their support and cooperation for the second phase of the project.

After the presentation and discussion phase, the experts came up with concrete proposals for the amendments in the NPO legal framework.

During the second phase that will be implemented in June-December 2006, the experts will draft legal amendments and prepare regulations and procedures that will improve the implementation of NPO law.

Next editions of our newsletter will provide continues information on this initiative.

Presentation of survey findings for Corruption in Albania

Casals & Associates Inc. and IDRA (Institute for Development and Research Alternatives) conducted workshops in different cities, to present the summary of findings of the Corruption in Albania Perception and Experience Survey 2005. The survey was prepared by Casals & Associates Inc. and IDRA through the USAID Rule of Law project.

The main objective of both 2004 and 2005 surveys has been to measure Albanian's perceptions and attitude toward corruption, the changes in public opinion during 2004-2005 and the differences between the 10 major cities.

Partners Albania took the facilitation role in the organization of these workshops, making use of the long experience in the facilitation process, broad network of cooperators and focal points in regions.

Participants in these workshops were representatives from NPO sector, citizens, business and local government etc. Participants brainstormed and presented ideas on involvement of civil society in the fight against corruption and the interaction of all actors in this process.

These activities had wide media coverage.

Organizational Life Stages of a Nonprofit

By Christie Lewis, Nonprofit Resource Center

From infancy to adulthood we experience numerous stages of development. According to Erik Erikson, the father of psychosocial development, humans experience eight stages of development each characterized by a psychological "crisis" which must be remedied before progressing to the next stage. There are numerous correlations between Erikson's human development theory and life stages of a nonprofit organization. In order to grow from the visionary idea to a mature organization reinventing itself through a process of review and renewal, organiza□

Why is this important? Nonprofits vary in size, service and structure but they all go through transitions marked by periods of growth and change. If this model provides you with insights into obstacles your agency may be facing then it can also serve as a tool to create opportunities to learn and grow. If nothing else, it assures you that you're not alone; it's normal for an organization to experience "growing pains." The model is a useful resource, a guide to help you and your agency navigate more strategically in the direction of you vision and mission.

- Stage One- this is the "Aha" stage, where the vision and idea materialize.
- Stage Two- this is the start-up phase, where the social entrepreneurial vision becomes formalized.
- Stage Three- at this stage the organization's foundation has been established and the agency begins to grow and develop its services and programs.
- Stage Four- this phase is characterized by producing results and sustaining the programs, services, and funding.
- Stage Five- some major change or paradigm shift must happen within the organization to push it into this stage, new executive or board leadership or a merger could initiate this phase.

Stages	Governance	Staff Leadership	Programs/Services	Obstacles	Opportunities	Duration of Stage
1. Imagine and inspire	None	Entrepreneurial, visionary founder(s)	Concept stage, informal	Lack of support (financial and public), formalizing to apply for 501 (c) (3) status	Compelling and charismatic visionary leader(s)	0-5 years
2. Found and Frame	Small, working board, homogenous	Autonomous leader, vision driven	Program drives mission, one focused activity	Ability of leaders to lay a structured foundation, reactionary leadership	Excitement and enthusiasm of supporters, charismatic visionary leader	1-2 years
3. Ground and Grow	Expansion of size and profile, less strategic and more reactive	Directive leadership, primary decision-maker, ED may be inaccessible to staff/board yet critical to the organization's functioning	Programs/Services become more refined	Lack of accountability systems, lack of resources resulting in an inability to meet service demands, organizational chaos	New ideas and energy produce enthusiasm, sense of accomplishment	2-5 years
4. Produce and sustain	Board turnover, policy and strategic vision driven board, shared power and authority with ED	A number of managers added to the staff, ED must possess good management and communication skills	Efficient and effective core programs, expansion of services and programs	Control (lack or too much) by leadership, "Founder's syndrome," board unable to assume governing role, conflict between ED and board	Sense of security, new staff and board members introduce ideas, organization is known in the community, adequate resources enable risk taking	7-30 years
5. Review and Renew	Board and staff leadership turnover, written and clearly stated board roles/responsibilities, board recommits to stewardship role	ED is a change agent, experienced and knowledgeable about finances. Departure of Founder	Review, renew, or relinquish existing programs and services; experiment with new outputs, encourages collaborative approaches to service/program delivery	Resistance to change, board micro-manage, high staff turnover, isolation and control	New partners and allies renew organization, collective wisdom from the past, core group of committed staff and board drive the new vision	2-5 years

“Promotion and Dissemination of Best Practices on Participatory Local Governance at Cross- Balkan Level, Among Municipalities of Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro”

In the framework of the project “Promotion and Dissemination of Best Practices on Participatory Local Governance at Cross- Balkan Level, Among Municipalities of Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro”, funded by the Balkan Trust for Democracy and implemented by Partners-Albania, Open – Partners for Development in Macedonia and Training Mediterranean Center in Montenegro, in Struga was organized the joint workshop with the participation of representatives of nine municipalities from Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro.

The meeting was opened by Vesna Atanasova from OPEN, who referred on “Citizen’s involvement in the local governance”. She based her speech on the phrase..... *tell me and I’ll forget, show me and I’ll remember, involve me I’ll understand!*.....emphasizing the importance of citizen’s involvement in local governance and how the communes help and involve their active citizens in local decision-making.

The workshop followed with the presentation of three case studies

from Macedonian municipalities. The first case study was presented by Elen Kachulachka from Berova Municipality. She passed on the participants the experience of their municipality with the Citizen’s Councils and the way these Councils participate in the whole process from drafting, implementation and monitoring of the projects.



The workshop in Struga

The promotion of natural resources and the citizen’s participation in drafting of development strategies and projects was part of the presentation of Marjan Dimoski from Kercova municipality. He brought three examples and explained that the work of Kercova municipality and the one from Elbasani is the same. He emphasized that the way these two municipalities

work is the same, only donors are different. The representative of Kavardaci referred on the local economic development through a cooperation of business community, local government, media and civil society. His presentation was accompanied by photos from the center of Kavardaci town.

The workshop followed with questions from the participants and the presenters gave detailed explanations. At the end of this meeting, Partners – Albania representative, Shpresa Arbi thanked the participants on behalf of Partners Albania Center:

“These meetings are useful for sharing information and experiences, they show that the citizen’s participation is not only an actual issue, but in the same time they help build partnerships. We are close not only geographically but also in the way we think, work, and act. Now we have more friends...Looking forward to meeting all again in September in Montenegro!

Partners-Albania is an Albanian NPO committed to advancing civil society and a culture of change and conflict management in Albania.

Partners-Albania is a member of the Partners for Democratic Change International, a network of Centers in 14 countries, which provide conflict resolution training and services to the civic, NPO, municipal and national government, and business sectors in their countries and worldwide.

PDCI website address is: www.partnersglobal.org

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