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| **Republika e Kosovës**  **Republika Kosova-Republic of Kosovo**  ***Qeveria –Vlada-Government***  *Zyra e Kryeministrit-Ured Premijera-Office of the Prime Minister* |
| Zyra për Qeverisje të Mirë/Kancelarija za Dobro Upravljanje/Office on Good Governance |

Evaluation of the implementation of Government Strategy for cooperation with civil society (2013-2017)

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Table of Contents

[Executive Summary 2](#_Toc501709146)

[1. Introduction to the Study 4](#_Toc501709147)

[1.1. Background 4](#_Toc501709148)

[1.2. Content of the Strategy 5](#_Toc501709149)

[1.3. Evaluation Objectives 6](#_Toc501709150)

[1.4. Methodology 6](#_Toc501709151)

[1.5. Structure of this Report 7](#_Toc501709152)

[2. Evaluation of Effectiveness 8](#_Toc501709153)

[2.1. Implementation of the Objectives and Actions in the Strategy and the Action Plan 8](#_Toc501709154)

[2.2. The Results of the Strategy and Action Plan 8](#_Toc501709155)

[2.2.1 Strategic Objective 1: Civil Society secured and empowered participation in the formulation and implementation of policies and legislation 10](#_Toc501709156)

[2.2.2 Strategic Objective 2: Develop a system of contracting public services to civil society organizations 13](#_Toc501709157)

[2.2.3 Strategic Objective 3: Operating system and defined criteria for financial support for CSOs 16](#_Toc501709158)

[2.2.4 Strategic Objective 4: Empower integrated approach to the development of volunteering 21](#_Toc501709159)

[2.3. The Outcomes and Impact of the Strategy 23](#_Toc501709160)

[3. Evaluation of Efficiency 24](#_Toc501709161)

[3.1 The sufficiency of resources for reaching the objectives of the Strategy and Action Plan 24](#_Toc501709162)

[3.2 The need for additional resources and possible sources of financing 24](#_Toc501709163)

[4. Evaluation of Relevance 25](#_Toc501709164)

[4.1. Relevance of the Strategy in View of Current Needs 25](#_Toc501709165)

[4.2. Relevance of the Strategy in View of EU Accession Requirements 26](#_Toc501709166)

[5. Evaluation of Coherence 27](#_Toc501709167)

[5.1 Coherence with other Government Strategies and Policies 28](#_Toc501709168)

[5.2 Coherence with Developments in the Regional/international Context 28](#_Toc501709169)

[6. Summary of Findings and Recommendations 29](#_Toc501709170)

# Executive Summary

On 5 July 2013, Kosovo Government adopted the first [Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Strategjia_qeveritare_per_bashkepunim_me_shoqerine_civile_drafti_perfundimtar_(2).pdf) (2013-2017), *hereafter referred to as the “Strategy,”* in recognition of the civil society’s role in policymaking and good governance by setting rules for interaction and cooperation. The Strategy aims to bring closer the government and civil society organizations (CSOs) on matters related to public policy and provision of public services. There are four objectives to the Strategy, and they consist of (i) ensuring strong participation of civil society in drafting policies and legislation, (ii) creating a system of contracting public services to CSOs, (iii) setting the financial system and defining the criteria for supporting civil society with public funds, and (iv) promoting an integrated approach for the development of volunteering in the country.

In light of the [Administrative Instruction No. 02/2012](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Draft_Udhezimi_Administrativ_Per_Strategjite_FINAL_2012__2_.pdf) on the Procedures, Criteria and Methodology for the Preparation and Approval of Strategy Documents and Plans for their Implementation, it is required that the implementation of the Strategy is evaluated. This report evaluates the degree of the implementation of the Strategy in terms of outputs, and, to the extent possible, its impact in policy and civil society development.

It intends to represent the extent to which the **strategic objectives** of the Strategy have been attained, by highlighting the areas where progress has been made and those where progress is lagging. In addition, the evaluation aims to provide evidence and lessons learned to support the development of the upcoming Strategy for 2018-2022. The evaluation addresses all aspects of the Strategy, mainly by focusing on nine (9) research questions that relate to the criteria of the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and coherence of the Strategy.

The data collection approach relies on the perspective of the government and civil society stakeholders (i.e. CiviKos Platform). The Council is in charge of monitoring, reporting and evaluating the implementation of the Strategy. The Council is comprised of 29 members representing the government and civil society, and it is chaired by the Office of Prime Minister (OPM), Office on Good Governance (OGG) and CiviKos Platform. OGG is responsible government unit for policy coordination and cooperation with civil society. It represents the Council’s Secretariat and it is in charge of providing administrative and technical support regarding the monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Strategy. CiviKos Platform helps the Secretariat in coordinating joint activities and monitoring the implementation of the Strategy.

The government’s ability to implement the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society (2013-2017) has not been as successful. Initially, the implementation of the Strategy went extremely slow. In 2013-2014, there was **lack of political will** and understanding about the importance of civil society’s involvement in government work. With time, that certainly changed as civil society’s role became more recognized in the policy table. Finally, by 2015 the mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy have been consolidated. However, many activities had to be shifted and readjusted, causing extreme delays to the Strategy. In the meantime, the Council has not exercised a proactive role in shaping public policy and inspire civil society development. To what extent the delays had an effect on the implementation of the Strategy are best explained by the *Monitoring and Reporting Matrix*.

The *Monitoring and Reporting Matrix* constitute a set of progress indicators that has enabled this evaluation to measure the level of implementation of key measures and activities of the Strategy and Actin plan, and to a certain extent their impact on policy and civil society development – in light of four strategic objectives intended for strengthening civil society’s role in (i) policymaking, (ii) service delivery, (iii) public funding, and (iv) volunteering. Accordingly, the overall implementation of the Strategy/Action plan activities has exceeded **73 percent** of the level of progress. The implementation of activities within the objective on the *civil society involvement in policymaking* has reached **90 percent**. The implementation of the Strategy for *establishing a system of contracting of public services for civil society* has reached only **50 percent**. The levels of the implementation of activities have been reported are slightly higher for the objectives or priority areas on *creating a system of public funding of civil society* (**70 percent**) and *promoting an integrated approach for volunteering* (**83 percent**).

However, the measurements set in the *Monitoring and Reporting Matrix* have been contested by many civil society representatives. To their assessment, the system is oriented only activities and not results, and thus fails to reflect the actual impact of the Strategy on strengthening government cooperation with civil society. It has not created solid measures for developing the performance scorecard. The indicators measure only the quantifiable performance statements. Therefore, the use of the *Monitoring and Reporting Matrix* is not a useful tool and must be revisited for the drafting of the Strategy 2018-2022. To provide alternative perspective on achievement of each strategic objective, in this evaluation report a **traffic lights system** of measuring the performance has also been used. It goes beyond an emphasis on delivering outputs described in the *Monitoring Matrix* to a greater focus on outcomes and impacts. Accordingly, less progress has been achieved at the level of strategic objectives from what has been reported in the *Monitoring Matrix* although this cannot be ranked in percentage terms.

Contrary to insufficient support granted by the government for the implementation of the Strategy and in general lack of implementation, the Strategy, at least on paper, is extremely relevant to the country needs and EU accession requirements and coherent with other government policies. The Strategy sets forth the policy structure and cooperation regarding the development of policies and provision of public services. In these priority areas, the four strategic objectives fit together and seem to enforce each other. Civil society development is featured in main policies including the Programme of the Government of Kosovo (2016 – 2021). This program views civil society as an agent for shaping the policy agenda as well as for providing certain public services on behalf of the government and public interest. How civil society evolve with respect to working with the government will ultimately depend on the new Strategy and its actions of fulfilling the strategic goals for 2018-2022.

# 1. Introduction to the Study

This section gives an introduction how and when the Strategy has been adopted and its importance in the context of European Union (EU) accession and political criteria. It also discusses the main mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy including the role and responsibilities of the Council and Secretariat, and of other stakeholders involved. Finally, the introduction goes over the content of the Strategy by explaining the objectives and sub-objectives and mechanism of monitoring and reporting.

## Background

Ever since its declaration of independence in 2008, Kosovo has made European integration the main policy priority. Having made some progress over the past years in this regard – by signing a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) in April 2016 – the country is looking into preparing for the next step of applying for the membership in the European Union (EU) and receive candidate status. From the perspective of SAA, civil society development is an important mean of reaching political, economic and institutional stabilization,[[1]](#footnote-1) and thus come about closer to EU. European Commission (EC) continues to define civil society as an effective catalyst for change, in helping the government improve public policies and services on behalf of the general public interest.

In the past four (4) years, relations between civil society and government **have to a certain extent** improved. [The Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Strategjia_qeveritare_per_bashkepunim_me_shoqerine_civile_drafti_perfundimtar_(2).pdf) (**2013-2017**) has been an instrumental policy tool which has helped in this regard. The Strategy gives a strong base of cooperation between the government and civil society, with the aim of holding the government to account for creating a favorable environment for the development of the civil society sector in the country![[2]](#footnote-2) As a result, civil society has increasingly become more involved in policymaking. The approval of the [Regulation of Minimum Standards for Public Consultation Process](https://zqm.rks-gov.net/Portals/0/Regulation%20on%20minimum%20standards.pdf) (April 2016) and launching of the [Online Platform for Public Consultation](http://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/index.php) (January 2017) depict some of the most successful examples.

In the context of the Strategy’s priorities, in March 2017, OGG in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance (MF) put together and published the [Report on the Public Financial Support for NGOs from the Institutions of the Republic of Kosovo for Years 2015-201](https://zqm.rks-gov.net/Portals/0/Final%20Report%20on%20Funding%20NGOs%20from%20state%20budget_ENG.pdf)6. For many policy analysts and civil society activists this is viewed as a major policy success since information on government funding of civil society has never been made public despite constant civil society pressure. In addition, in June 2017, the Ministry of Finance (MF) has established a transparent and accountable system designed for funding civil society organizations (CSOs) by adopting the [Regulation on the Criteria, Standards and Basic Procedures for Public Funding of NGOs](https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=14831).

The Strategy and the Action Plan have been initially approved by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in **July 2013**,[[3]](#footnote-3) in recognition and appreciation of the role and work of civil society in democracy development. This initiative dates back even earlier, with the first cooperation agreement signed in November 2007.[[4]](#footnote-4) At the outset, due to lack of political will and understanding of the importance of civil society’s role in policy-making, this cooperation has not been as successful – not until OGG-OPM and CiviKos Platform initiated the process of drafting the Strategy in 2012. This policy plan is designed around four (4) priority areas or so called “*strategic objectives*” by involving civil society in (i) policymaking, (ii) contracting for public service delivery, (iii) receiving public funding, and (iv) promoting of volunteerism.[[5]](#footnote-5)

The decision to establish a special **Council** for the Implementation of the Strategy has been taken in April 2, 2014. Not until October of the same year the Council has been functionalized and the Council groups established for monitoring of each strategic objective.[[6]](#footnote-6) In total, the Council has **29 members**, 14 from the government institutions and 15 from civil society sector (*a model in favor of civil society*). Initially, members representing the government were Ministers, but due to lack of their involvement, it was decided that General Secretaries are appointed instead. While the members from the government are appointed by through the Office of Prime Minister (OPM) and specific Ministries, civil society members are nominated by CiviKos through an open and democratic process. The Council is chaired by the General Secretary of OPM, Director of the Office on Good Governance, and Executive Director of CiviKos.

In general, the **Council** is in charge of **monitoring,** evaluating and reporting on the Strategy, discussing and proposing solutions to problems regarding the implementation of the Strategy and beyond, and coming up with additional initiatives for a successful implementation of the Strategy and public policies for civil society development.[[7]](#footnote-7) To date, the Council has managed to draw up its own work plan and set up four **working groups** per objective of the Strategy. These working groups “have been established with the purpose of increasing thematic work dynamics, without the need for continuous engagement of the entire Council.”[[8]](#footnote-8) In addition to the work of the Council, the progress made regarding the implementation of the Strategy is due to the support of the project “*Support to the Implementation of the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society*,” an EU funded project, and the Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF). Both have provided constant support to the Office on Good Governance (OGG) in drafting the regulations, creating the Online Platform, and helping through many other activities or issues of concern.

The Office on Good Governance (OGG) of OPM serves as the Council’s Secretariat, and it is responsible to provide administrative and technical support in terms of monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Strategy.[[9]](#footnote-9) The Secretariat is responsible to call the sessions of the Council. The discussions in the Council are mainly about the achievements and challenges related to implementation of the Strategy, proposals on additional measures according to the needs. The decisions are mainly made with consensus. In case there is no consensus, the decisions are voted,[[10]](#footnote-10) although this has never occurred in practice. OGG according to the mandate has obligation to prepare reports about the implementation of Government Strategy, whereas the Council helps and advices OGG to prepare the reports. With assistance of GIZ, OGG has prepared a monitoring matrix that facilitates gathering of information.[[11]](#footnote-11)

## Content of the Strategy

The structure of the Strategy has been defined according to the Administrative Instruction No. 02/2012 on [Procedures, Criteria and Methodology for the Preparation and Approval of Strategy Documents and Plans for the Implementation](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Draft_Udhezimi_Administrativ_Per_Strategjite_FINAL_2012__2_.pdf). Accordingly, it consists of the following sections as required in Article 9 of the Administrative Instruction: executive summary, methodology, objectives and a recommended course of action to achieving the Strategy’s mission in light of potential constraints (e.g. budget).[[12]](#footnote-12) However, the content of the Strategy does not comply entirely with what is required in the Administrative Instruction. The sections on the **introduction** and **background** are not at all covered in the Strategy.

The sections which are not covered by the Strategy represent several gaps. The introduction section would discuss how the strategy relates to government priorities and define the reasons for initiating the drafting of the Strategy. The background section is not recognized in the Strategy, although it is addressed to some extent when discussing about government and civil society cooperation. However, this section does not at all contain a clear definition of the problem/s being addressed by the Strategy as would the Administrative Instruction require. Identifying the problem is the main goal of this section and discussing how the problem has evolved over time and compares to the countries in the region. In addition, the background section does not rely on an in-depth analysis backed-up by data that has been conducted during the strategy development.

In addition, there are many sections in the Strategy which do not correspond entirely with the Administrative Instruction and are slightly out of proportion. In a short summary, the list of sections covered and not covered in the Strategy in comparison to the Administrative Instruction (AI) is presented as in the following:

* **Executive Summary** – This section covers the list of main objectives and a short summary of the agreed course of action to addressing problems identified in the Strategy. However, the identified problems are not covered in the Strategy as would the AI require.
* **Methodology** – This section covers the list of institutions and involved in drafting the strategy and other stakeholders who have helped in this process. However, this section consists almost three pages in length – far exceeding one page as the maximum limit set by the AI.
* **Objectives** – This section covers four strategic objectives which are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based (SMART). However, this section discusses the objectives in greater length than what is defined in the Administrative Instruction.
* **Alternatives** – This section falls under the strategic objectives. However, the alternatives considered are not well laid out in the Strategy. They are broadly defined without a clear roadmap of how to go about meeting the strategic objectives.
* **Recommendations** – This section is presented in a form of measures and action for each objective. But no costs & benefits and risks are attached to them in the Strategy as it would be required by the Administrative Instruction.

The main issues identified regarding the structure and content of the Strategy should be addressed for the drafting of the Strategy for 2018-2022 according to the requirements set in the Administrative Instruction 02/2012. Due diligence must be exercised when reviewing the structure and content and drafting the new Strategy for setting SMART objectives, actions, and outputs. Many models have been used on how to assess government strategies which could help review the existing Strategy. View the example of the *Government Department Strategies Index Framework* used in New Zealand by clicking [here](http://gdsindexnz.org/).

## 1.3. Evaluation Objectives

This evaluation report highlights the areas where progress has been achieved and areas where progress has not been sufficient (including the reasons for the lack of progress) as far as the implementation of the Strategy. The evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy will help the government:

1. Understand the scale of the implementation of the **Strategy 2013-2017** as well as the Action Plan in terms of outputs, and, to the extent possible, their impact.
2. Initiate the development of the **Strategy 2018-2022** and explore what changes from the previous Strategy would be necessary.

## 1.4. Methodology

The methodology for the assessment of the Strategy consists of evaluation criteria and questions as in the following table.

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| Evaluation Criteria | Evaluation Questions |
| Effectiveness | 1. To what extent have the actions/measures of the Action plan been implemented?  2. What have been the results implemented in relation to the specific objectives?  3. To what extent have the objectives been achieved and what has been their impact? |
| Efficiency | 4. Were sufficient resources allocated throughout for reaching the strategic objectives?  5. What additional resources would be necessary for a more efficient implementation? |
| Relevance | 6. To what extent has the Strategy been relevant in view of current needs in Kosovo?  7. To what extent has the Strategy been relevant in view of EU accession requirements? |
| Coherence | 8. Is the Strategy coherent with other Government strategies and policies?  9. To what extent is the Strategy coherent with developments in the regional context? |

There is a mixed approach in addressing the evaluation questions (desk research – review of the Council Reports, Monitoring and Reporting Matrix, European Commission (EC) Country Reports, Consultations with Stakeholders, and Analysis/Synthesis of Findings).

However, there are some limitations to the evaluation methods that stem from data availability constraints. These include limited availability of baseline measures against which to compare changes in key outcomes over the period covered by the Strategy, the limited availability of systematically collected data relevant to the measurement of some indicators included in the Action Plan (and reported in the Monitoring Matrix), and a time lag in the availability of statistics that cover the whole of the period of the current Strategy. Also, there were time limitations to reach relevant CSO representatives, and very few data available about budget expenditures on Strategy and Action plan implementation. Besides, a three-grade scale of the traffic light assessment system does not leave much room for differentiation and should not be seen in isolation. It requires additional qualitative information.

To address these limitations, the evaluation will attempt to collect the best possible statistical data available, and interpret this in light of the qualitative data to be collected. Using evidence from different sources in this way will provide opportunities to validate the information and assess the weight of evidence. The evaluation approach was based on the recognition that it is very difficult to attribute observed trends and developments in the area of government-civil society cooperation only to the Government Strategy and Action Plan. A range of national, EU and international factors also need to be taken into account. Therefore, the evaluation should also contribute to understanding the contribution that the Strategy and Action Plan made to developments in the are of civil society policy, in combination with other factors. However, all conclusions from the evaluation in relation to questions about the impact of the Strategy are necessarily tentative.

## 1.5. Structure of this Report

The structure of the report is divided in five sections. The first section covers the evaluation of effectiveness of each strategic objective. In this section, the results, outcomes and impacts of the Strategy are discussed. These measures represent the end results in percentage terms based on the Monitoring and Reporting Matrix of the government – of whether the actions taken meet the targeted goals/objectives. The second section discusses whether the implementation of the Strategy has been efficient as far as the level of financial and human resources granted by the government. The third section discusses how the Strategy is applicable to the country needs and EU accession requirements – much of what is reported by the European Commission (EC) in many reports such as the European Union (EU) Progress Report. In the fourth section, a number of policy documents and strategies related to public administration are discussed and how the relate to the Strategy. Finally, in the fifth section, there is a summary of main findings and recommendations to be considered for drafting of the new Strategy.

# 2. Evaluation of Effectiveness

To what extent have the objectives and actions of the Strategy been met and what has been their impact?

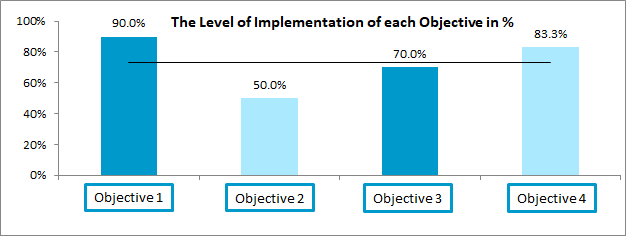
This section gives an overview of the progress reported in the Monitoring Matrix (**last updated in September 2017**) regarding the implementation of the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society (2013-2017). It does so by assessing individual strategic objective and corresponding actions taken to justify the mission of the Strategy. The evaluation analysis is framed from the perspective of the Office on Good Governance (OGG) and its activities organized in joint cooperation with other stakeholders to fulfill strategic objectives. In order to ensure that the progress measured is accurate and validated, additional sources have been consulted, although they are relatively less updated since they consist data about the Strategy only until end of 2016.

## 2.1. Implementation of the Objectives and Actions in the Strategy and the Action Plan

The implementation of the Strategy has reached a total progress rate of just over **73 percent**. Most of the progress has been achieved in 2016 and 2017. Initially, its application started a year later after it came into force,[[13]](#footnote-13) and not until 2015 the Action Plan has been developed, according to which the planned activities of 2013-2014 had to be shifted and readjusted. In late 2014, the Council and Working Groups for each strategic objective have been consolidated. Given the lack of financial and human resources, the Strategy started off the wrong pace but in due course it became more effective, mainly as a result of external support provided by EC funded projects. Detailed information about the progress rate for each individual strategic objective is presented in subsequent sections.

## 2.2. The Results of the Strategy and Action Plan

The Monitoring Matrix gives a summary of the progress made regarding the implementation of the Strategy. Accordingly, while *civil society involvement in policymaking* has reached the objective by **90 percent**, the remaining policy areas fall short in terms of progress. The implementation of the Strategy for *establishing a system of contracting of public services for civil society* has reached only **50 percent**. The levels of the implementation have been reported are slightly higher for the objectives or priority areas on *creating a system of public funding of civil society* (**70 percent**) and *promoting an integrated approach for volunteering* (**83 percent**)! Refer to the figure below for a visual presentation. These percentage terms are contested by the civil society coordinators of the Working Groups. According to them, the levels of the implementation of the Strategy cannot be set in percentage terms since that would limit the measurements only in quantity. If quality and impact in addition to efficiency and other measures are taken into account, these levels would fall far shorter as indicated below.



The levels of the implementation of the Strategy set in the Monitoring Matrix are not based on a representative measurement since they only focus on activities (quantity) and not necessarily on the impact those activities have on the government cooperation with civil society (quality). It is not enough to simply implement the Strategy and assume that successful implementation is equivalent to actual improvements in practice. One must examine the outcomes and impacts of the Strategy. In addition, many of the progress results come from the involvement of individual CSOs, not necessarily through the Secretariat or Council. For instance, the amendment of the Law on Public Procurement allowing for the NGO certificate to be used as an eligible document in public procurement process is a result of direct contribution of few CSOs that were part of the Working Group to change the law.

The *Monitoring Matrix* is extremely technical and not results-oriented. Even the process of designing the Strategy and establishing the *Monitoring Matrix* has been technical and did not undergo a political process which would require greater political will towards strengthening the cooperation between the government and civil society. The progress reported by the *Monitoring Matrix* is measured based on **ordinal data** which refers to data that has some meaningful order, so that the higher values represent more of some feature than the lower values. Each indicator is measured based on a numerical value assigned per action as explained in the following.

*The value zero* ***“0”*** *indicates that the action has been implemented,* ***“0.5”*** *indicates that the action has been partially implemented, and* ***“1”*** *indicates that the action has been implemented.*

The ordinal ranking set in the *Monitoring Matrix* is based on *subjective numeric ratings*. These numbers are subjective estimates ranked by the Secretariat in ways only suitable for quantitative measures. In the case of the Strategy, many of the aspects of its implementation cannot be measured directly. For instance, the action undertaken for launching of the *Online Platform for Public Consultation* does not necessarily mean that civil society and the public at large is consulted in greater lengths and that their input has changed the quality of policies by making them more inclusive and representative of the overall public interest. In this case, it is possible to identify indirect measures or indicators would measure the desired performance of stakeholders when it comes to changing or improving the government cooperation with civil society.

In the following sub-sections, the implementation of the Strategy is measured for each strategic objective based on the Monitoring Matrix. However, if comparing ordinal data versus indicators for the measurement of the performance of the Strategy, the latter approach would indicate lower levels of the implementation of the Strategy in practice. In order to draw a more realistic evaluation of the effectiveness of the Strategy, results indicated from the Monitoring Matrix are further challenged per each objective. In order to validate and challenge the outcomes reported in the Monitoring Matrix, a **traffic light rating system** is used to report on the progress of the Strategy. The efficacy of this tracking system is dependent more on the judgment and integrity of the civil society coordinators. Its purpose is to report on the level of the progress achieved and make it clear when intervention is needed.

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|  | Description | Action |
|  | This objective has deteriorated or has achieved no progress. There are significant issues with the project. | The objective should be escalated to the Council immediately |
|  | This objective is still in progress and has already received some progress. However, the progress reported is behind plan. | The objective should be scheduled for a briefing by the Secretariat |
|  | This objective has either been completed or ongoing but on target. It is performing to the plan. | The objective requires no action to be taken |

The red color indicates that the policies and interventions are at the earliest stage of being analyzed and drafted. The yellow color indicates that the analysis and draft policies and laws have been finished but they have not led to any practical effects. The green color indicates that the policies have been adopted, completed and are being implemented to the fullest extent as expected. The objectives colored in red and yellow are of greater relevance for the remaining implementation of the Strategy and should be considered for the upcoming Strategy 2018-2022.

### 2.2.1 Strategic Objective 1: Civil Society secured and empowered participation in the formulation and implementation of policies and legislation

The implementation of this strategic objective has reached a progress rate of **90 percent** in developing legal grounds for strengthening the participation of civil society in drafting policies and legislation.[[14]](#footnote-14) This strategic objective is by far the most *attainable* if compared to other objectives given the progress made as per the following indicators.

* The standards have been set for inclusion of civil society in drafting public policies and legislation. The [Online Platform/Database on Public Consultation](http://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/) has been designed & launched in January 2017, in which civil society stakeholders and the general public are eligible to register if interested in being consulted for drafting of certain policies or laws.[[15]](#footnote-15) In addition, the [Regulation on Minimal Standards for Public Consultation Process](https://zqm.rks-gov.net/Portals/0/Regulation%20on%20minimum%20standards.pdf) (No. 05/2016) has been adopted in **April 2016**. Initially, the draft regulation has been prepared by the Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) and finally approved by OPM after being subject to a public consultation process and reviewed by the Legal Office of OPM.[[16]](#footnote-16) KCS has initially drafted a legal analysis on minimal standards as a policy proposal. Both the platform and the Regulation have been promoted through the web-site of OGG, social media and outreach activities.
* The capacities of civil servants and civil society representatives have increased in the area of drafting and implementing public policies and legislation. There has been a **needs assessment** conducted prior to designing a training program for civil servants and civil society representatives. The training program consisted of general modules related to the strategic objectives of the Strategy and specific modules covering the Online Platform/Database and Regulation. The training program has been arranged in the **last quarter** of 2016 and **first quarter** of 2017. The training for civil servants has been delivered by the Kosovo Institute for Public Administration (KIPA) and for civil society by the Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF).
* The [Monitoring and Reporting Methodology for Public Consultation](https://zqm.rks-gov.net/sq-al/Documents). Finally, the methodology has been approved in April 2017 and has been put into practice with the purpose of facilitating, coordinating and standardizing the monitoring and reporting mechanisms. The system explains how the monitoring and reporting process works and defines the role and responsibilities of each institution. Reporting templates are attached to the system and have been used by responsible institutions. The implementation of the Online Platform and Regulation on Minimal Standards has been monitored starting the first and second quarter of 2017.

In contrast to ratings of the Monitoring Matrix, the traffic light rating system shows that certain actions must be taken in order to level up to the progress reported by the Secretariat. As shown in the following table, the sub-objectives do not reach a satisfactory level of implementation. Most of the remaining activities re-late to amending/supplementing laws and achieve practical effects of the Regulation and Online Platform.

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|  | Objective | Action |
|  | Drafting/supplementing the basic legislation/referring to CSO involvement in policy development | The legal analysis must be conducted, and necessary changes be made |
|  | Setting standards of CSOs involvement in drafting of policies and legislation | The regulation must be implemented in greater lengths |
|  | Professional capacity building of civil servants and members of CSOs in drafting of policies and legislation | Further capacity building activities should be organized |
|  | Establishment of monitoring system and reporting for CSO involvement | The M&R system has been established and utilized |

**What has not been achieved?** The first sub-objective has not been achieved. The amendment of the existing legislation for strengthening the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in policymaking has not been achieved. There has not a legal analysis conducted, with the exception the analysis of KCSF, for identifying issues and recommendations in strengthening civil society’s role in policymaking that would be ultimately addressed in the new legislation. The remaining sub-objectives are still work in progress. The implementation of the Regulation on setting the criteria and standards for public consultation should be used in greater lengths and on-going activities This will require further capacity-building activities on the importance of civil society’s role in policymaking and know-how on the use of the Regulation and the Online Platform. Eventually, public consultations should be part of the KIPA regular training module.

The technique used in identifying and analyzing the problems within this strategic objective, where different factors, seem to be inter-related is breaken down as a root *cause analysis* as in the following table.

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| **Main Problem**  The participation of CSOs is not enough in formulating policies and legislation. | **1. Direct Cause**  Lack of resources for coordination, monitoring, reporting, and support for the implementation of the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation Process Regulation. | **1.1 Root Cause**  OGG-OPM does not have sufficient human and financial resources to promote the implementation of the Regulation in practice and to ensure the involvement of civil society in decision-making. |
| **1.2 Root Cause**  The Online Public Consultation Platform is not always functional as a result of its ineffective management / maintenance. |
| **2. Direct Cause**  Lack of proactive communication in line Ministries and the capacity of officials to plan, implement and report on minimum standards for public consultation. | **2.1 Root Cause**  Civil servants have insufficient knowledge of the implementation of the Minimum Standards Regulation. |
| **2.2 Root Cause** Ministries do not organize co-ordination activities on the implementation of the Minimum Standards Regulation and managers are not sufficiently informed |
| **2.3 Root Cause**  The state does not have a sustainable system for capacity building of civil servants for public consultations. |
| **2.4 Root Cause**  The state does not give gratitude to CSOs that provide a qualitative contribution to public policy making. |
| **3. Direct Cause**  Lack of awareness of CSOs for participation in public consultations. | **3.1 Root Cause**  OPM-OGG has not organized enough campaigns to raise awareness of the standards, methods and benefits in / out of the public consultation process. |
| **4. Direct Cause**  Lack of CSOs capacity to contribute to the public consultation process. | **4.1 Root Cause** CSOs do not sufficiently understand the cycle of policy making, and as a result they are not prepared to provide input into the policy making process. |
| **4.2 Root Cause** Responsible institutions and other actors do not provide training programs in order to build / capacity building CSOs to contribute to the policy making process. |
| **4.3 Root Cause**  CSOs do not create enough networks, forums, or initiatives for specific topics that will provide and facilitate support in the policy making process. |
| **4.4 Root Cause**  CSOs cannot use various (different) methods for public consultations. |
| **4.5 Root Cause**  The Government / Ministries do not provide grants for CSOs that have the opportunity to assist it in the policy making process. |

For more detailed information extracted directly from the Monitoring Matrix, refer to the following table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MONITORING MATRIX** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Action** | **Progress Indicators** | **Scoring** |
| **Strategic Objective 1: Civil Society secured and empowered participation in the formulation and implementation of policies and legislation** | | |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 1.1: Drafting/supplementing the basic legislation/referring to CSO involvement in policy development and implementation** | |  |
| 1.1.1. Identify the respective laws - drafting, amending or changing | The legislation has been identified for drafting/amending/changing | 0.5 |
| 1.1.2. Address issues identified based on recommendations given the assessment | The legal acts have been drafted for the implementation of the legislation | 0.5 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 1.2: Setting standards of CSOs involvement in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation** | |  |
| 1.2.1. Create the platform which provides information on the profile of CSOs based on their sector | Information on the profile of CSOs (based on the field of work) have been gathered through the research | 1 |
| 1.2.2. Approve the Regulation on Minimal Standards for Public Consultation | The Regulation on Minimal Standards for Public Consultation has been approved | 1 |
| 1.2.3. Promote the Regulation on Minimal Standards for Public Consultation | The Regulation on Minimal Standards for Public Consultation has been promoted | 1 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 1.3: Professional capacity building of civil servants and members of CSOs in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation** | |  |
| 1.3.1. Identify the needs for training of civil servants and representatives of CSOs | The training needs have been identified for civil servants and CSOs | 1 |
| 1.3.2. Prepare training programs on capacity building for civil servants and CSOs | The training programs have been prepared for civil servants and CSOs | 1 |
| 1.3.3. Organize trainings of civil servants and CSO representatives | Trainings have been organized for civil servants and representatives of CSOs | 1 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 1.4: Establishment of monitoring system and reporting for CSO involvement** | |  |
| 1.4.1. Establish the Monitoring mechanism for the application of public consultation standards | The monitoring mechanism has been created for monitoring the application of the standards for public consultations | 1 |
| 1.4.2 Continuous oversight and reporting of CSOs | Regular Monitoring and Reporting on the application of the Regulation | 1 |

### 2.2.2 Strategic Objective 2: Develop a system of contracting public services to civil society organizations

The implementation of this strategic objective has reached a progress rate of **50 percent** in enabling civil society organizations to cover for delivering public services pertaining to social, legal, educational, and health sectors.[[17]](#footnote-17) This strategic objective is by far the least *attainable* if compared to other objectives given the lack of progress made as per the following indicators.

* The joint Working Group for Determining Standards and Principles for Contracting Public Services for CSOs has been established in **May 2015**. The team is comprised of 23 members from government and civil society. In general, the working group has been extremely inactive, with only one meeting organized in October 2015.[[18]](#footnote-18) No working meetings have been organized in 2016 and 2017.[[19]](#footnote-19)
* The legal analysis has been conducted for determining the standards and principles for contracting of public services for CSOs. However, the analysis has not yet been finalized according to the legal and institutional framework for contracting civil society in delivering public services at the local and national level. In the meantime, allowing for the NGO certificate to be used as an eligible document in public procurement process is the only achievement in this regard. This advancement happened while the Law on Public Procurement was amended in **March 2016**.[[20]](#footnote-20) The success to achieving this amendment is owed to KCSF outside the obligations or activities foreseen in the Strategy.
* The sectors and type of services for which CSOs are contracted on behalf of the government have been almost identified. The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW) has finished and sub-mitted a report which lists the sectors and the types of public services for which CSOs are contracted to provide on behalf of the Ministry. OGG is in the process of conducting a more complete analysis which will ultimately identify the sectors covered by all Ministries/institutions where civil society is involved in terms of service delivery.

In contrast to ratings of the Monitoring Matrix, the traffic light rating system shows that certain actions must be taken in order to level up to the progress reported by the Secretariat. As shown in the following table, the sub-objectives reach almost a zero level of progress. Most of the activities relate to the development and implementation of a system for contracting public services to civil society on behalf of the government.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Objective | Action |
|  | Drafting of the legal framework which regulates procedures of contracting of public services | The legal analysis must be finalized & the procedures set for contracting services |
|  | Setting standards and principles for contracting of public services by CSOs | The system of contracting public services must be established and implemented |
|  | Building joint monitoring mechanisms of implementation on licensing, and provided services | The joint mechanisms are established for monitoring of contracts given to CSOs |

**What has not been achieved?** The three sub-objectives have achieved almost zero progress. The Working Group for Determining Standards and Principles for Contracting Public Services has not been as proactive and demanding that OGG prioritize the completion of the analysis for identifying the sectors and types of public services which civil society can cover for the government. Due to the lack of performance of the working group and delays in conducting the analysis, the catalog for listing the sectors and categories of public services which CSOs make for has not been finalized and published. While the general legal framework for service provision is not restrictive, in practice service provision from CSOs is still limited to certain social services, and there are no proper funding, procedures and standards which would create a supportive environment for CSO involvement in service provision. [[21]](#footnote-21)

The technique used in identifying and analyzing the problems within this strategic objective, where different factors, seem to be inter-related is breaken down as a root *cause analysis* as in the following table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Problem**  Underdeveloped and non-transparent practices for contracting public services by CSOs. | **1. Direct Cause**  Lack of awareness of ministries and municipalities about the importance of the legal framework and models available for contracting CSOs regarding the provision of public services. | **1.1 Root Cause**  The state does not prepare and implement training programs and awareness raising activities for ministries and municipalities in the field of contracting CSOs for the provision of public services. |
| **1.2 Root Cause**  Government / Ministries have not organized co-ordination activities between institutions for the possibilities of cooperation and the benefits that may arise from this cooperation in the field of provision of public services. |
| **1.3 Root Cause**  The state did not define the responsibilities of institutions / ministries which should deal with the coordination of the contracting process of CSOs for the provision of public services. |
| **2. Direct Cause**  Lack of needs assessment for the provision of public services by CSOs in different areas. | **2.1 Root Cause**  Ministries and municipalities do not have sufficient human resources to carry out a needs assessment as a basis for programming priorities for contracting public services. |
| **2.2 Root Cause**  The state lacks data on CSOs as public service providers in different areas. |
| **3. Direct Cause**  Lack of national data on CSOs as public service providers in different fields. | **3.1 Root Cause**  The state does not have human and financial resources to develop a CSO monitoring system as a public service provider. |
| **4. Direct Cause**  Lack of standards and procedures for the provision of public services by CSOs. | **4.1 Root Cause**  The state does not have human and financial resources for drafting and implementing standards and procedures for providing public services by CSOs. |

For more detailed information extracted directly from the Monitoring Matrix, refer to the following table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MONITORING MATRIX** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Action** | **Progress Indicators** | **Scoring** |
| **Strategic Objective 2: Develop a system of contracting public services to civil society organizations** | | |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 2.1: Drafting of the legal framework which regulates procedures of contracting of public services** | |  |
| 2.1.1. Continue the work of Working Group for establishing the system of contracting public services for CSOs | Working Group held number of meetings and completed tasks for setting the standards and principles on public contracting | 0.5 |
| 2.1.2. Identify & analyze the legal framework for regulating procedures of contracting public services for CSOs | The legal analysis has been drafted and published on regulating procedures for contracting CSOs to provide public services | 1 |
| 2.1.3. Identify the sectors where CSOs can provide public services | The sectors/fields where CSOs will be able to provide services have been identified | 0.5 |
| 2.1.4 Conduct research on the services which are currently offered by CSOs | The research on the kinds/categories of public services which are provided by CSOs has been conducted | 0.5 |
| 2.1.5. Create e catalog of public services for which CSOs are contracted | The public services for which CSOs can be contracted have been listed in a catalog | 0 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 2.2: Setting standards and principles for contracting of public services by CSOs** | |  |
| No activity has been planned according to the Matrix |  | N/A |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 2.3: Building joint monitoring mechanisms of implementation on licensing, and provided services** | |  |
| No activity has been planned according to the Matrix |  | N/A |

### 2.2.3 Strategic Objective 3: Operating system and defined criteria for financial support for CSOs

The implementation of this strategic objective has reached a progress rate of **70 percent** for establishing a transparent financial system of funding civil society with clear mechanisms of monitoring and reporting.

* The legislation has been reformed with regards to implementation of joint policies and projects of the government and civil society. There has been an analysis conducted that would identify changes required based on which the legislation has been readjusted. Allowing for the NGO certificate to be used as an eligible document in public procurement process is the most important achievement. This advancement happened while the Law on Public Procurement was amended in **March 2016**.[[22]](#footnote-22)
* The initiatives of creating a policy environment conducive to philanthropy and sponsorship have not been as successful. OGG has prepared a draft concept note in cooperation with the Forum for Civic Initiatives (FIQ). This concept note will be used for purposes of changing a sub legal act in the area of philanthropy and sponsorship. However, the concept note has not yet been finalized and adopted by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).
* The Public Beneficiary Status (PBS) has been revised and standardized in the Law of Freedom of Association in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with the aim of expanding the eligibility criteria. PBS’s aim is to provide fiscal and tax exemptions and benefits to CSOs only based on certain conditions, i.e. CSOs organize activities regulated by the Law on behalf of public interest and that they report in yearly basis to the Ministry of Public Administration (MPA). The new policy-making processes have been initiated, with the amendment of the Law on Freedom of Association in NGOs being the most important one. [[23]](#footnote-23) However, the PBS has not been harmonized with other Laws on taxation that would in practice exempt NGOs from certain fiscal liabilities of granted the PBS.

* The donor database has been established as part of the Opening Donor Forum Initiative. The Ministry of European Integration (MEI) has delivered a training program on the use of the database. Civil society participants were equipped with the account that will allow them to access the database.[[24]](#footnote-24) The lack of donor database has been criticized by TACSO. However, there have been attempts to create such a database. The effort of MIE supported by the European Union Office to Kosovo to implement the Aid Management Platform (AMP), as a tool for the government and donors to track and share information related to aid funded activities, has produced a limited success, as no exact data on the amount provided to civil society are available.[[25]](#footnote-25) Above all, the database is not well maintained, and civil society has not been included in donor coordination.
* The standards and criteria for disbursement of public funds to civil society have been assigned. The government has chosen the mix model of funding NGOs according to the decision taken in June 2016.[[26]](#footnote-26) According to this model, the responsibility of funding civil society falls under the institutions, “which have to abide by certain rules and criteria which are unique for each of them.”[[27]](#footnote-27) The mix model has served as the basis for the OPM/OGG and Ministry of Finance to draft and adopt a specific regulation in the subject area.
* Finally, the government has adopted the regulation, according to which it has defined the *criteria, standards and basic procedures* for public funding of NGOs, with the aim of “**establishing a transparent and accountable system**”[[28]](#footnote-28) of funding projects and programs of NGOs, provided that they bring apparent and added social value and improve the quality of life and development in the country. In March 2016, OGG in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance (MF) prepared & published the [Report on the Public Financial Support for NGOs from the Institutions of the Republic of Kosovo for Years 2015-201](https://zqm.rks-gov.net/Portals/0/Final%20Report%20on%20Funding%20NGOs%20from%20state%20budget_ENG.pdf). For many policy analysts and civil society activists this is viewed as a major policy success considering the lack of transparency in the past.

In contrast to ratings of the Monitoring Matrix, the traffic light rating system shows that certain actions must be taken in order to level up to the progress reported by the Secretariat. As shown in the following table, the sub-objectives do not reach a satisfactory level of implementation. Most of the remaining activities re-late to amending/supplementing laws and achieve practical effects of the Regulation and Online Platform.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Objective | Action |
|  | Reforming the legislation to implement joint projects (that would require legal analysis related activities) | The legal analysis must be finalized & the system of contracting services created |
|  | Creating an environment favorable to philanthropy & sponsor-ship | The law is adopted and implemented on philanthropy and sponsorship |
|  | Standardizing of the Public Beneficiary Status (PBS) (in the Law on Freedom of Association of NGOs) | PBS is changed to cover more sectors and beneficiaries from civil society |
|  | Involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in donor coordination mechanisms | The donor database is made available to ensure coordination with civil society |
|  | Defining the criteria for awarding and implementing grants received from public funds | The regulation should put into greater effect and use by institutions |
|  | Defining the criteria for non-financial support to civil society organizations (CSOs) | The new regulation should regulate non-financial support granted to CSOs |

**What has not been achieved?** The sub-objective on defining the criteria for awarding government grants to civil society is perhaps the most attainable. The concept document on philanthropy and sponsorship and the Law on the Freedom of Association in NGOs are half finished and still not approved by the government in order for the Strategy to achieve full success. PBS has already been revised and will cover more civil society sectors for NGOs to be eligible to gain the fiscal/tax benefits guaranteed by PBS provided that they abide by the Law. The donor data – base must be consolidated so that there is exact data on funds provided to civil society. In addition, there must be a policy decision for the government to take charge of creating an automatic co-funding scheme for civil society beneficiaries of grants provided by the European Commission (EC). Despite the fact that the Regulation on Criteria, Standards and Procedures on Public Funding of NGOs has been adopted, there is not yet a legal analysis conducted on how to regulate non-financial support CSOs gains from outside.

The technique used in analzying the problem or complicated issues where all factors seem to be inter-related is breaken down as a *cause and effect analysis* as in the following table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Problem**  The direct and indirect funding of CSOs is not yet functional. | **1. Direct Cause**  Lack of capacities in ministries and municipalities or programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting of public funds for CSOs. | **1.1 Root Cause**  Ministries and municipalities have no knowledge of different forms of financing of the civil society sector. |
| **1.2 Root Cause**  The state has not developed training programs for ministries and municipalities regarding the rules and obligations of CSO funding. |
| **1.3 Root Cause**  Ministries and municipalities do not make effective planning and coordination for CSOs projects funding. |
| **1.4 Root Cause**  Ministries and municipalities do not analyze needs and identify challenges for which CSOs can provide support. |
| **1.5 Root Cause**  The state has failed to develop an adequate financial reporting system for grantees. |
| **1.6 Root Cause**  The Ministry of Finance does not have an online system for publishing detailed data on public funds for CSOs. |
| **2. Direct Cause**  Lack of development of individual and corporate philanthropy. | **2.1 Root Cause**  The state has failed to harmonize and complete the legal framework for regulation of philanthropy. |
| **2.2 Root Cause**  Tax officials are not informed and have no knowledge of local and international practices regarding philanthropy. |
| **2.3 Root Cause**  The state does not have a positive (discourse) approach to civil society regarding the financing of CSOs through philanthropy. |
| **2.4 Root Cause**  The state does not sufficiently understand the role of civil society in implementing programs of public interest and its contribution to the development of the local community. |
| **2.5 Root Cause**  The state has not developed implementing mechanisms for the development of individual and corporate philanthropy. |
| **3. Direct Cause**  The use of state property (local and national) by CSOs is not yet regulated, clarified and transparent. | **3.1 Root Cause**  The state has not set the standards, procedures and criteria for regulating the use of state property. |
| **3.2 Root Cause**  The state has not developed enforcement mechanisms for the use of state property by CSOs. |
| **4. Direct Cause**  The CSOs’ economic activities are limited | **4.1 Root Cause**  The state did not harmonize the tax law with respect to the economic activities of CSOs. |
| **4.2 Root Cause**  The state has not clarified the legal framework for regulating the economic activities of CSOs. |
|  | **5. Direct Cause**  Lack of co-financing system for CSOs for EU funds. | **5.1 Root Cause**  The state has not developed procedures, criteria, and rules for co-financing regulation for European Union (EU) projects. |

For more detailed information extracted directly from the Monitoring Matrix, refer to the following table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MONITORING MATRIX** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Action** | **Progress Indicators** | **Scoring** |
| **Strategic Objective 3: Operating system and defined criteria for financial support for CSOs** | | |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 3.1: Reforming the legislation to implement joint projects (that would require legal analysis related activities)** | |  |
| 3.1.1. Conduct legal analysis of the existing legislation on the implementation of joint projects | The legal analysis on the implementation of joint projects has been conducted | 1 |
| 3.2.2. Adjust the legislation in accordance to the identified needs reported in the legal analysis | The legislation has been adjusted according to the identified needs through the analysis | 1 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 3.2: Creating an environment favorable to philanthropy & sponsor-ship** | |  |
| 3.2.1. Draft and adopt a concept document on philanthropy and sponsorship | The law on philanthropy and sponsorship has been drafted and adopted | 0.5 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 3.3: Standardizing of the Public Beneficiary Status (PBS) (in the Law on Freedom of Association of NGOs** | |  |
| 3.3.1. Harmonize the legislation and the Public Beneficiary Status | The legislation and mechanisms on the Public Beneficiary Status have been harmonized | 0.5 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 3.4: Involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in donor coordination mechanisms** | |  |
| 3.4.1. Open the existing mechanism and donor database for CSOs to use | The donor database has been opened for CSOs to use it | 1 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 3.5: Defining the criteria for awarding and implementing grants received from public funds** | |  |
| 3.5.1. Set the financial support model of funding civil society | The model for financing civil society with public funds has been established | 1 |
| 3.5.2. Publish report on CSO projects funded by the government and report on the actual project results | The report on CSO projects funded by the government and their actual outcomes has been published | 1 |
| 3.5.3. Draft and adopt the Regulation on the Criteria, Standards and Procedures of Funding NGOs | The Regulation on the Criteria, Standards and Procedures of Funding NGOs has been adopted | 1 |
| 3.5.4. Support and co-finance CSO projects for receiving EU funding support for a specific percentage term | CSO projects have been co-funded by a specific percentage | 0 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 3.6: Defining the criteria for non-financial support to civil society organizations (CSOs)** | |  |
| 3.6.1. Conduct a legal analysis of the legislation which regulates non-financial support to CSOs | The legal analysis on how to regulate non-financial support to CSOs has been conducted | 0 |

### 2.2.4 Strategic Objective 4: Empower integrated approach to the development of volunteering

The implementation of this strategic objective has reached a progress rate of **83 percent** as far as promoting an integrated approach for the development of volunteering in the country.

* The joint Working Group for Developing Volunteerism has been established in November 15, 2015. It consists of 28 members in total. While the working group members representing government have been appointed by a government decision, the selection of civil society members has been arranged through the coordinator of the group.[[29]](#footnote-29) This working group has been extremely inactive and has not held meetings after the initial informative meeting.
* The legal analysis and the study on volunteerism have been conducted. They consist of a needs assessment and profile of volunteering. Several activities in a form of workshops and focus groups have been organized which have helped shape these studies. In addition, a policy analysis has been drafted, complementary to the *study on volunteerism*, which will be used to provide a roadmap for drafting a Law on Volunteering. In general, these studies depict local and international perspectives on how to go about regulating, incentivizing and promoting volunteerism in the country.

In contrast to ratings of the Monitoring Matrix, the traffic light rating system shows that certain actions must be taken in order to level up to the progress reported by the Secretariat. As shown in the following table, the sub-objectives reach a very low level of progress. Most of the activities relate to the studies prepared on the legal analysis, country profile and policy paper related to volunteer development.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Objective | Action |
|  | Identifying the needs and profile of volunteering in the country | Working Group review the reports and decide about a roadmap |
|  | Defining principles of the system for an integrated approach towards development of volunteering | The legislation should be adopted for an enabling environment on volunteering |
|  | Creating a monitoring and reporting system on volunteerism | Set up a system to measure progress on volunteer development |

**What has not been achieved?** The first sub-objective represents work still in progress. The Working Group for Developing Volunteerism has not been as proactive. In order for this strategic goal to be attainable, the working group must review and adopt the studies which have been finalized and come up with a decision and roadmap on how to go about drafting and adopting the Law on Volunteering. Depending on the policy or legal developments, there must be a system of monitoring and reporting for developing of volunteering in the country. Besides, strong central policy coordination (ideally from Prime Minister’s Office) with more ownership and proactive approach is needed in order to ensure significant and sustainable progress in this area. For more detailed information extracted directly from the Monitoring Matrix, refer to the following table.

Based on consultations with stakeholders gathered in the Government Working group for drafting the new Strategy, the main problem adressed within this strategic objective is the "lack of volunteering in public benefit programs." The reasons why volunteering has failed to develop are numerous. First, organizers of volunteering, including CSOs and public institutions, face some administrative and legal obstacles to volunteer engagement (for example, volunteering of citizens over the age of 24 is not recognized by the law). Second, standards and capacities are lacking in CSOs for volunteering engagement and management. And thirdly, citizens are not aware of the importance and values of volunteering.

The technique used in identifying and analyzing the problems within this strategic objective, where different factors, seem to be inter-related is breaken down as a root *cause analysis* as in the following table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Problem**  Lack of volunteering in public benefit programs. | **1. Direct Cause**  Volunteer organizers face some administrative and legal obstacles in engaging and retaining volunteers. | **1.1 Root Cause**  The state has not established an integrated legal and institutional framework for increasing volunteer work or volunteering in the country. |
| **1.2 Root Cause**  The state has not developed mechanisms to recognize and promote volunteer work as a goal to improve social welfare. |
| **2. Direct Cause**  Lack of standards for and capacities of CSOs to recruit, engage and manage volunteers. | **2.1 Root Cause**  The state has not developed training programs for capacity building of CSOs in the field of recruitment, engagement and volunteer management. |
| **3. Direct Cause**  Lack of citizen awareness on the opportunities and values ​​of volunteering. | **3.1 Root Cause**  The state and the CSOs have not organized campaigns to raise citizens' awareness of the values ​​of voluntary engagement, as opposed to that of engagement in practice. |

For more detailed information extracted directly from the Monitoring Matrix, refer to the following table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MONITORING MATRIX** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Action** | **Progress Indicators** | **Scoring** |
| **Strategic Objective 4: Empower integrated approach to the development of volunteering** | | |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 4.1: Identifying the needs and profile of volunteering in the country** | |  |
| 4.1.1. Functionalize the inter-sectorial Working Group on volunteerism | The Working Group has been functionalized and regular meetings were held | 1 |
| 4.1.2. Conduct the analysis on the profile of volunteering in the country | The analysis on volunteerism has been conducted | 1 |
| 4.1.3. Implementation of the recommendations reported by the analysis | The recommendations have started to be implemented | 0.5 |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 4.2: Defining principles of the system for an integrated approach towards development of volunteering** | |  |
| No activity has been planned according to the Matrix |  | N/A |
| **Measure/Sub-Objective 4.3: Creating a monitoring and reporting system on volunteerism** | |  |
| No activity has been planned according to the Matrix |  | N/A |

## 2.3. The Outcomes and Impact of the Strategy

*Very difficult to measure –* ***need for better baseline data*** *– list some recommendations for better measuring overall impact of the new Strategy.*

The Strategy is embedded in the country’s overall political, economic, social and cultural context. But to what extent it had an impact in strengthening the cooperation between the government and civil society still is up to a discussion. By definition, the outcomes of the Strategy determine significant changes that lead to the final impact. The most important outcomes which have had the ultimate effect in civil society development include the following:

1. The Online Platform/Database and Regulation on Minimal Standards for Public Consultations have changed the policy discourse with more civil society stakeholders involved in public consultations. In total, **21 percent** of draft laws, concept documents and strategies have been consulted through the Online Platform for the time period of January 1 to August 31, 2017. Taking note of the increased capacities of civil servants and civil society in understanding and using the platform, Ministries have come to realize the importance of reaching out to a larger audience by publishing policies for public consultation. Likewise, civil society have come to understand the need to do more research in order to be more prepared and effective in policymaking.
2. The Regulation on Criteria, Standards and Procedures on Public Funding of NGOs and Report on the Public Financial Support for NGOs have changed the policy discourse. Above all, they helped create a **transparent and accountable system** of funding NGO/CSO projects and programs, which has been inexistent in the past! The regulation and report demonstrate that public institutions (both local and national) must be transparent and held to account when funding civil society projects, provided that they are well planned, implemented and evaluated, for the aim of helping improve the general social wellbeing.

The recent regulations should be recognized as a success. However, in practice, they have not been applied or implemented since they are relatively still new in the policy discourse. For the implementation of the new Strategy, these regulations must take into effect at greater scale. In fact, the reason the sub-objectives evaluated in the previous section did not receive a green light in sections of the traffic lights report is because they have not achieved sufficient progress when it comes to implementation of certain policies and laws in practice.

# 3. Evaluation of Efficiency

To what extent the government has allocated efficient resources for the implementation of the Strategy?

The government’s ability to implement the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society (2013-2017) has not been as successful. Initially, the Strategy has been subject to many delays in implementation. Even though the Strategy has been adopted in July 2013, its application has started a year later, with finally the first Action Plan developed in December 2014.[[30]](#footnote-30) Further deferrals include the consolidation of the Council in October 2014 and establishing mechanisms for monitoring and reporting in 2015. To date, the Council does exercise an adequate role in shaping public policy and inspire civil society development. In particular, the Council lacks methods and forms of consulting and informing CSOs about its work and civil society’s role helping government come up with inclusive policies and provide services on behalf of public interest.

## 3.1 The sufficiency of resources for reaching the objectives of the Strategy and Action Plan

The financial and human resources have been extremely limited for reaching the objectives of the Strategy and Action Plan. The government has never allocated a budget for the implementation of the Strategy.[[31]](#footnote-31) To that effect, most of the activities in this regard relied on external donor support from organizations such as the European Commission (EC), Technical Assistance for CSOs (TACSO), German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), and Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES). In particular, EC’s funded project, “*Support to the Implementation of the Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society*,” has had a significant effect in the last two (2) years as far as fulfilling the objectives of the Strategy.[[32]](#footnote-32) In addition, KCSF has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the government for the implementation of the training modules for CSOs on public consultation and the use of Online Platform.

The annual budget amount required for the implementation of the Strategy’s Work Plan for 2015-2016 was about **250,000-300,000 Euros** (*for each year*). Unfortunately, there are no information on budget allocations with the exception of administrative costs incurred by OGG and other respective institutions.[[33]](#footnote-33) This amount is not sufficient to cover for the expenses of OGG as the Council’s Secretariat, which is not only responsible for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Strategy, but also facilitating the work of the Council in this process. From the perspective of the CiviKos Platform, “for a more successful implementation of the Strategy, the Secretariat has not been supported with enough financial and human resources by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).”[[34]](#footnote-34)

## 3.2 The need for additional resources and possible sources of financing

In the last EC Progress Report (2016), it has been reported that limited budgetary resources and insufficient capacities have undercut incentives to implement the Strategy and continue to cast doubt on the underlying political will to change the *status quo*.[[35]](#footnote-35) In light of insufficient financial resources, OGG in the name of the Council’s Secretariat has not been able to appoint a civil servant – *contrary to assigning senior officers for other strategies or policies* – who will be responsible for coordinating the work of the Council as well as monitoring the implementation of the Strategy.[[36]](#footnote-36) This hinders the performance of the Secretariat to do its job considering the challenge and complexity of dealing with many institutional and civil society stakeholders!

In general, the Council has been engaged to a limited extent in implementation of the Strategy! In the Council meetings, the attendance has been relatively *inadequate*. In most cases, members representing government institutions have often changed, thus prompting challenges in the decision-making process and continuity of the workflow.[[37]](#footnote-37) The government’s involvement in Council meetings and consultations has been extremely low. This, in particular, became a problem in planning and coordinating expected activities assigned to each institution – with most of them refusing to take responsibility and ownership. Likewise, civil society has run short of “dedication and expertise”[[38]](#footnote-38) for the implementation of the Strategy. The working groups established by the CiviKos Platform as *support bodies* for each of the four (4) objectives of the Strategy have been almost inactive.

Lack of donor coordination in the past yeast has also had an efficiency impact. While there have been multi-lateral and bilateral donor support (e.g. European Commission, Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency, Swiss Cooperation, etc.), this has risked funding duplications and overlaps in the absence of close donor coordination. Thus, it is imperative for donor coordination to improve in the near future. As it has been pointed out in the TACSO Needs Assessment Report 2016, Kosovo lacks a comprehensive database of all donors present in Kosovo through projects or funding. There have been initiatives from both the donor community and Kosovar institutions to create such a database but with limited progress. Early this year, TACSO has considered deploying some technical expertise in order to strengthen the co-ordination process by upgrading the current databse. However, no progress has been reported thus far in this regard.

# 4. Evaluation of Relevance

To what extent has the Strategy been relevant in view of country needs and EU accession requirements?

The Strategy itself is relevant in the view of the country needs and EU accession requirements despite the fact that its implementation has not been as successful. In the last EC Progress Report (2016), civil society is viewed as an important agent for democracy development and should be treated as such by the public institutions.[[39]](#footnote-39) It is important to note that the Strategy consists of two important dimensions for recognizing the civil society’s role in (i) policymaking, and (ii) service provisions which correspond to the most pressing country needs and EU accession requirements.

The Strategy sets forth the policy structure and cooperation regarding the development of policies and provision of public services. In these priority areas, the four (4) strategic objectives fit together and seem to enforce each other. Accordingly, civil society is viewed as an important stakeholder for shaping country policies as well as an agent for social and economic change. In this regard, the Strategy has relatively made progress for defining the areas of legal and institutional framework in favor of policy development. How-ever, many of the objectives and priority actions have not been realized at a satisfactory level, particularly those referring to setting the system of contracting public services to CSOs (Objective #2) and promoting an integrated approach for the development of volunteering in the country (Objective #4).

## 4.1. Relevance of the Strategy in View of Current Needs

The country needs policies and a public administration that best represent the interests of its citizens. The government’s role is to fulfill those needs by reaching to other stakeholders such as civil society. From the perspective of the European Commission (EU) in the Progress Report, those needs can be filtered through the **political** and **economic criteria** which largely depend on the government’s performance and conduct. The political criteria require institutional stability in ensuring democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities. The economic criteria require the existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competition and market forces.

The country has achieved minimum progress in meeting the **political criteria**.[[40]](#footnote-40) In the past four (4) years, the executive and legislative branch could not find common ground in representing public interests. Political parties failed to engage in a political dialogue of forming the government in the last two national elections (June 2014 and June 2017). Consequently, both branches could not perform well and failed to be held to account on many issues (e.g. exerting influence and delays in the appointment process of Board Members of independent agencies). In addition, the judicial branch has been deemed inefficient and unaccountable, subject to undue political influence and limited capacities.

In spite of the lack of political will to change the *status quo*, the Strategy has addressed some problems in 2017 of particular relevance to the country needs which have not been noted in the last EC Progress Report. As indicated in the previous sections, civil society is in a relatively better position for drafting and implementation of policies and legislation (**Objective #1**) since Regulation on Minimum Standards for Public Consultation has been adopted and put into use and the Online Platform launched. In addition, the capacities of civil servants and civil society representatives in public policy have slightly improved and finally the Monitoring and Reporting Methodology for Public Consultation approved! These are some of the main policy initiatives which are expected to come into effect at a greater scale in years to come. In practice, they will help the government become more effective, transparent and accountable.

The county has achieved minimal progress in meeting the **economic criteria**.[[41]](#footnote-41) The Strategy recognizes the importance of the non-profit sector in improving the social & economic wellbeing of the country. It defines CSOs as a “source of entrepreneurial knowledge in areas where the market economy fails to provide efficient services.”[[42]](#footnote-42) By engaging CSOs in service delivery, the markets could improve and the government be relieved from a wide range of services with the aim of serving public interest at a more reasonable cost! Unfortunately, this is where the government and civil society have failed the most. The government has not been able to create system of contracting public services to CSOs (**Objective #2**). While there have been some studies in this regard, there are no rules, standards or catalogs on service provisions. Civil society, at the same time, is subject to limited financial and human capacities, which makes it difficult for CSOs to take responsibility and ownership in public service delivery.

## 4.2. Relevance of the Strategy in View of EU Accession Requirements

*Reflect on the EU IPA Guidelines for support to civil society 2014-2020 and its indicators – how is this Strategy responding to EU Guidelines.*

The other criteria for EU accession consist of the administrative and institutional capacity to implement the *acquis* and the ability to take on the obligations of membership. According to the EC Progress Report (2016), there has been some progress in terms of the legislative alignment with the European standards, however, the implementation has been weak.[[43]](#footnote-43) These standards are divided on three categories: (i) internal markets, (ii) sectorial policies, and (iii) justice, freedom and security. They cover a wide range of issues from freedom of movement of goods and capital, competition and public procurement, and education & employment to sectorial policies on agriculture, environment and energy, and transport. The standards on justice, freedom and security cover issues such as migration, organized crime and corruption.

Civil society’s involvement and contribution in drafting policies and legislation in alignment with the *acquis communautaire* is addressed in the Strategy. When it comes to good governance and service delivery, all of the objectives of the Strategy demand institutional independence, transparency, accountability, integrity and the effectiveness from public institutions with the main focus on citizen oriented policy framework and services as required by the **EU Guidelines** for the support to civil society in enlargement countries (2014 – 2020).[[44]](#footnote-44) As stated in the last EC Progress Report (2016), some progress has been made in the area of public procurement and competition and in the fight against corruption.[[45]](#footnote-45) The like of progress has been attributed to CSOs for making substantial contribution not only through their professional efforts in drafting policies and legislation but also through their lobbying, advocacy and outreach activities at the local and national level.

Finally, the Strategy responds to EU Guidelines which focus on creating environment that is conducive to civil society to be effective and accountable.[[46]](#footnote-46) As it has been indicated in the previous section, civil society participation in developing sustainable policies and comprehensive legislation is ensured through the first objective of the Strategy (**Objective #1**). Nonetheless, the Strategy falls short when creating an enabling financial environment in terms of providing favorable tax rules for private donations and philanthropy. Those issues are covered in the Strategy (**Objective #3**) but not addressed *in practice* as described in the previous section on the *evaluation of the effectiveness* section. For instance, nothing has been defined when it comes to philanthropy and sponsorship. In the EC Progress (2016), it has been reported that the legal framework on tax deductions for donations still remains an ambiguous matter.[[47]](#footnote-47) The Public Beneficiary Status (PBS) has already been revised for the amending of the *Law on the Freedom of Association of NGOs*, and it will cover more civil society sectors for NGOs to be eligible to gain the fiscal/tax benefits guaranteed by PBS provided that they abide by the Law.

In addition, the Strategy recognizes the necessity of building capacities of CSOs in compliance with the EU Guidelines. Financial sustainability for enabling CSOs to strengthen their capacities in research, monitoring, advocacy, networking, partnership and active involvement in the policy and law-making process is a priority for the enlargement countries, and it is addressed in the Strategy (**Objective #3**). As the country moves for-ward the accession process, it is required that civil society becomes “less dependent on international donor funding.”[[48]](#footnote-48) Enhancements in membership development and diversified fundraising in the civil society sector from public and private sources of income is an enlargement prerequisite. In this regard, the Strategy has foreseen in its third objective (**Objective #3**) the creation of a financial system and defined criteria for public institutions to provide financial support to CSOs.

This year, there has been progress made as far as setting defining the criteria, standards and procedures for public funding of CSOs with the adaptation of the new Regulation 04/2017. However, there are many challenges ahead of seeking alternative funding not only through government support and incentives, philanthropy and sponsorship, but also by finding means of co-funding CSOs and involving them in coordination at a great extent – on issues the Strategy has fallen short in practice.

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# 5. Evaluation of Coherence

To what extent has the Strategy been coherent with other policies and developments in the region?

The government has expressed commitment **on paper** to further consolidate the relations with civil society. To a great extent, there is a coherence between the Strategy and other government policies. In Kosovo, the process of policy coherence has a potential to create an enabling environment for civil society development. In this case, the Strategy could be used as a policy tool to enhance government and civil society capacities to exploit synergies across different policy sectors. This can only be achieved if there is greater political will to develop a defined and inclusive plan of action to reach strategic objectives of the Strategy. With the last Strategy, this has not been the case. The government, respectively the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), besides not committing financial and human resources to the Strategy, it has not received all the support required to produce a consensual roadmap for the development of the government cooperation with civil society. In particular, the Office of Strategic Planning (OSP) has not been as responsive in ensuring that the Strategy is implemented in compliance with government strategic policies.

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## 5.1 Coherence with other Government Strategies and Policies

*Mention other relevant strategies and reflect on coherence with them. List recommendations for better complementarity – especially regarding better internal communication/coordination among OPM offices.*

The development of civil society remains an important government priority. It is currently featured in main government programmes and strategies including the Programme of the Government of Kosovo (2015-2018).[[49]](#footnote-49) This Program is specific about civil society’s greater involvement in the process of policymaking and transferring of certain responsibilities to civil society to provide public services.[[50]](#footnote-50) The government through this Programme has pledged to create the National Strategy for the Development of Kosovo (2016-2021) for purposes of stimulating economic growth and improving the overall social wellbeing.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Accordingly, the Strategic Planning Office (SPO) of OPM is responsible to monitor the progress of whether NDS goals are achieved through an inclusive dialogue with the private and civil society sector.[[52]](#footnote-52) NDS for the latter refers to the Strategy as a platform for cooperation between the Government and civil society. In the NDS, the government has set the Public Administration Reform (PAR) Strategy as a priority, following which several strategies have been adopted, including the Strategy of Public Administration Modernization (PAM).[[53]](#footnote-53) These strategies are as important in establishing an effective policy framework when it comes to satisfying the reform agenda with the goal of establishing a citizen oriented administration.

In addition, the need for better regulation derives from the Government Strategy for Cooperation with the Civil Society 2013-2017.[[54]](#footnote-54) Effective public consultation between public institutions and stakeholders such as civil society and the business community “is the key to implementing an effective system of policies and legislation.”[[55]](#footnote-55) The Strategy on Better Regulation has been adopted. It focuses on establishing an effective regulatory system, which draws a balance between the costs and economic, environment and social benefits by respecting the principles and procedures of regulatory impact assessment.[[56]](#footnote-56)

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## 5.2 Coherence with Developments in the Regional/international Context

*Mention key challenges all countries in the region are facing and how this Strategy is coherent with other developments/efforts*

The main challenges in the region persist in the “rule of law, fundamental rights, democratic institutions, and **public administration reform**, as well as on the economy, and the elected institutions.”[[57]](#footnote-57) In the view of the EU Enlargement Policy (2016) for countries in Western Balkans, “economic reforms and strengthening of the rule of law produce mutually reinforcing benefits.”[[58]](#footnote-58) In addition, good neighborly relations and regional cooperation are as important for the enlargement and Stabilization and Association processes (*e.g.* Kosovo needs to deepen its engagement in the political dialogue with Serbia).[[59]](#footnote-59) By signing to the SAA, a more efficient policy planning and decision-making process is required as well as improvements in policy development and implementation capacities.[[60]](#footnote-60)

In 2016, EC has highly praised the ratification of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). The SAA entered into force on **April 1, 2016,** and it is designed to give an inclusive framework “for closer political and economic relations between the EU and Kosovo.”[[61]](#footnote-61) From the perspective of SAA, the country is required to commit and contribute in the political, economic and institutional stabilization processes through *appropriate means*, including the development of **civil society and democratization**.[[62]](#footnote-62) In this regard, the objectives of the Strategy are extremely coherent and in content tend to address the most pressing political, economic and institutional issues in the country.

Public administration reform (PAR) is a process that relates more directly to the Strategy. Its importance has been emphasized by EU in the Enlargement Strategy. It depicts that a well-functioning public administration is essential for democratic governance and accountability and determining the quality of service delivery and thus the level of economic growth in the country.[[63]](#footnote-63) Accordingly, a strong civil society is crucial for enhancing accountability and social cohesion, in addition to deepening the understanding and inclusiveness of accession – related reforms.

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# 6. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The Monitoring and Reporting Matrix indicates that the implementation of the Strategy has reached **73 per cent**. Accordingly, the first strategic objective has been the most attainable if compared to other objectives, in which case the level of progress has reached 90 percent. The implementation of the objective on the *civil society involvement in policymaking* has reached **90 percent**. The implementation of the Strategy for *establishing a system of contracting of public services for civil society* has reached only **50 percent**. The levels of the implementation have been reported are slightly higher for the objectives or priority areas on *creating a system of public funding of civil society* (**70 percent**) and *promoting an integrated approach for volunteering* (**83 percent**)!

However, if the level of impact is measured, in terms of how effective the activities for each Objectives have been in practice, less progress could be reported. The heart of the problem is the method used based on indicators that measure only the quantifiable performance of the Strategy. Therefore, the use of the Monitoring and Reporting Matrix is not a sufficient and adequate and must be revisited for the drafting of the Strategy 2018-2022. The new measurement system should consist of a more results-based Monitoring Evaluation System that will not necessarily be set only in percentage terms. This system must also allow for assessment of outcomes and impacts and not only basic outputs.

Based on analysis of key problems and their causes in each priority areas of the Strategy, the following recommendations could be formulated for each strategic objective:

**Strategic objective 1**

* Further efforts should be invested in building the capacities of OPM-OGG for better coordination of the implementation of the Regulation on Minimum Standards for Public Consultations.
* OGG should be more active and effective in managing and maintaining the Online Platform to avoid any technical problems of users not being able to access documents for public consultations.
* More trainings should be organized for increasing the capacities of civil servants on the use of the Regulation on Minimum Standards.
* Ministries should cooperate more and share information responsibly regarding the implementation of the Regulation on Minimum Standards.
* There should a sustainable system in place for the development of the capacities of civil servants in the area of public consultations.
* The state should be more responsive and provide CSOs with meaningful feedback to their contribution in the process of drafting policies.
* Further efforts should be made in organizing public information campaigns to increase the public awareness on the standards, methods and benefits of/from public consultations.
* CSOs should further invest in building their capacities in the area policy-making in order for them to be more prepared in contributing to shaping public policies.
* Responsible institutions and other stakeholders should develop grant schemes for CSOs’ programs focused on creating new training programs for increasing the capacities of CSOs in the area of policymaking.
* CSOs should network more and create joint thematic forums and initiatives on specific issues to help them become a stronger voice in the process of policymaking.
* Diverse methods of public consultations of CSOs should be established in order to allow wider spectrum of CSOs from different parts of the country to have their voice heard in policy making processes

**Strategic objective 2**

* Further efforts should be made of delivering training programs and awareness activities for Ministry and Municipal Officials in the area of contracting CSOs on service provisions.
* The Ministries should coordinate activities for potential cooperation and mutual gains may arise as a result of joint, strategic approach to programming and contracting service provision by CSOs.
* The state should clearly determine competent Ministry or government body responsible for coordinating the process of contracting CSOs for service provisions.
* The Ministries and municipalities should conduct needs assessments as a basis for setting priorities for outsourcing CSOs for service provisions.
* The state should create a database with all necessary information on the CSOs that provide public services and potential CSOs that could become public service providers.
* Further efforts should be invested in designing a system for monitoring the work of CSOs that provide public services.
* Further efforts should be invested for drafting and implementing the standards and procedures of contracting CSOs for service provisions.

**Strategic objective 3**

* Further capacity building activities should be organized to help Ministries and Municipalities under-stand different forms of funding civil society.
* The state should develop a training program to introduce Ministries and Municipalities with standards, criteria and procedures of funding of CSOs’ programs.
* Better coordination and planning should be arranged among Ministries and Municipalities with regards to funding of CSO projects.
* Ministries and Municipalities should identify the needs and challenges in areas where CSOs could provide support.
* The state should design and implement a harmonized reporting system for CSOs to report on their activities which are funded by the government.
* The Ministry of Finance should create an online system for publishing detailed information on the amount of funds disbursed to CSOs.
* The state should complete and consolidate the legal framework of defining and regulating philanthropy.
* Tax officials should be informed and trained regarding the local and international practices of administering tax benefits for individual and corporate philanthropy.
* The state should exercise a more positive approach towards civil society by recognizing the CSO charitable or philanthropic activities.
* The state should understand and recognize the civil society’s role in implementing programs that are of public interest and contributing to local community development.
* The mechanisms should be created for the development of individual and corporate philanthropy.
* The standards, procedures and criteria should be created for regulating the allocation of public property for the use by NGOs, as well as the mechanisms for implementation of the adopted standards.
* The state should consolidate the overall legal framework, including tax legislation, with regards to economic activities of CSOs.
* The procedures, criteria and rules should be set in order to define the mechanisms of co-funding for projects being supported by the European Union.

**Strategic objective 4**

* The state should develop an integrated legal and institutional framework for the development of volunteering in the country.
* The mechanisms should be created for the recognition and promotion of volunteering with the aim of improving social welfare.
* Specific training programs should be designed for increasing the capacities of CSOs in the area of recruitment and management of volunteers.

The process of how to go about drafting the new Strategy must be rely on highest standards of providing information and receiving feedback through conducting consultations and arranging for the participation of civil society in all policy development phases – from the earliest first phase of revisiting and re-defining the strategic objectives and coming up with concrete actions and indicators for their implementation and measurements. Finally, the document must reflect a consensus amongst main government and civil society stakeholders on the steps which must be taken in order to improve the conditions in which the government and civil society work together.

The Secretariat is responsible for drafting the initial draft of the Strategy document in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Government and principles & standards for drafting strategic documents set in the Administrative Instruction. The old and the proposed Strategy for 2018-2022 should stand along as a guide on how to design and construct a results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System. It can be used in conjunction with a workshop organized by the Secretariat entitled, “Designing the Strategy 2018-2022 and Building a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System: A Tool for Government Cooperation with Civil Society.”

Finally, the implementation of such a complex Strategy and Action plan requires very strong central policy coordination and strenghtening human resources of the OGG-OPM, which is recommended to be dealt with as a priority before the start of the implementation of the new Strategy. Namely, OGG as the Secretariat of the Joint Advisory Council for implementing the Strategy, should be provided additional staff to help monitor and report on the implementation of the new Strategy as well as facilitate the work of the Council in this process.

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