



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

GOVERNMENT STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

2013 - 2017

Pristina 2013

Content

Executive Summary.....	2
Legal basis	5
Comperative report analysis of cooperation Government - Civil Society in the region	6
Summary of current cooperation Government – Civil Society	7
Benefits of Cooperation Strategy Government – Civil Society	10
The methodology and the process of drafting the Strategy	11
Scope and parties	14
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	16
Strategic objective 1: Ensure strong participation of civil society in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation	16
Strategic objective 2: System of contracting public services to civil society organizations	19
Strategic objective 3: Building system and defined criteria to support financially the CSOs ...	20
Strategic objective 4: Promoting an integrated approach to volunteering development	24
Mechanisms responsible for monitoring the implementation and report of government strategy for cooperation with civil society.....	26

Executive summary

Office of the Prime Minister / Office on Good Governance (OGG / OPM), in close cooperation with CiviKos Platform (hereinafter: CIVIKOS), and with the support and cooperation of Legal Office and Office of Strategic Planning in the Office of the Prime Minister, as well as in continuation of implemented the Law no.04/L-57 on freedom of association in non-governmental organizations 09/2011, and in order to find ways of cooperation, civil society involvement in policy making and support of civil society organizations, have taken the initiative to develop the Government Strategy for cooperation with civil society.

The Government of the Republic of Kosovo, upon drafting this Strategy, is committed to:

- recognize and appreciate the role and work of civil society in building a democratic society;
- Create a supportive and favorable environment for the development of civil society;
- establish the government mechanisms that would enable a structured cooperation between Government and Civil Society;
- clearly define the obligations and responsibilities of each government institution on this cooperation;
- establish monitoring mechanisms for implementation of this Strategy and
- to encourage civil society to implement the principles of good governance within the sector, including promoting a professional and constructive approach towards citizens and government institutions.

Strategic objectives aiming to be achieved within the period 2013-2017 are as follows:

- **Strategic objective 1:** Ensure strong participation of civil society in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation;
- **Strategic objective 2:** System of contracting public services to civil society organizations
- **Strategic objective 3:** Building system and defined criteria to support financially the CSOs
- **Strategic objective 4:** Promoting an integrated approach to volunteering development.

The principles on which this strategic document is built are: good governance, transparency, civil participation in policy-making and accountability before the citizens. As such, this strategy represents the basis of cooperation between the Government and civil society in Kosovo, by obliging the Government of the Republic of Kosovo to strongly be committed in creating favorable conditions for development of civil society sector. On this Strategy will be established a regular and structured communication with civil society sector, partnership and transparency in policy making processes, ensuring at the same time maintaining independence of civil society sector. Also, upon drafting of this Strategy the Government of the Republic of Kosovo confirms commitment and political will to involve citizens in decision-making improve services to citizens through cooperation with civil society and provide financial and non-financial support for the development of civil society sector and proposed projects by this sector.

Basic needs addressed from this Strategy are as follows:

- the need to ensure a comprehensive access and equal opportunities for all civil society organizations in cooperation with the Government, through the establishment of basic rules and mechanisms for cooperation;
- the need to cooperate transparently and based on clear information and in time from both sides, including also the information transparency for public available in the Government, unless it is otherwise provided by law;
- the need to cooperate with civil society sector for development of policies to promote effective dialogue by using a suitable plan for both parties;
- the need to ensure cooperation with the civil society sector on issues that concern each party; and
- the need to create a good environment and partnership between government and civil society.

Basic rules for drafting this strategy are priorities of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo for better public policy, accountability and transparency, greater confidence and increasing public legitimacy.

Legal Basis

In addition to addressing the needs and priorities of the Government, this strategy has been drafted in accordance with a large number of normative acts applicable in the Republic of Kosovo. Most important of them are:

- Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo;
- International agreements and instruments applicable in the Republic of Kosovo;
- Law on Freedom of Association in Non-Governmental Organizations no.04/L-57;
- Law on Access to Public Documents no. 03/L-215
- Law on Local Self-Government and municipal regulations on transparency;
- Regulation No. Rules of Procedures of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo no. 09/2011;
- Guideline for public consultation process;
- Code of good practice for civil participation in decision making process adopted by the Conference of NGOs on 1 November 2009;
- Regulation no.03/2011 for government communication service with the public
- Administrative Instruction no. 02/2012 on procedures, criteria and preparation methodology and adoption of strategic documents and plans for their implementation.

Comparative analysis of cooperation relations Government - Civil Society in the region

The form and nature of cooperation between civil society and government varies from country to country, social environment, economic and political situation in each country separately. However, the situation in Kosovo is comparable with the countries in the region or is comparable with the situation in which other countries have passed in the context of overall development and civil society-government relations.

In terms of constant change and continues development of democratic and circumstances of promoting innovative forms of governance, sustainable drafting of public policy and provision of social service cannot be the exclusive right of political representatives. Government needs competent partners outside government who will help create effective public policies and the implementation of effective interventions for their citizens. In this process, a unique role can be attributed to civil society either in the initiation, organization and comprehensive leadership debates to address the priority needs of citizens or in providing and fulfillment of public services for citizens.

To begin the process of genuine cooperation, the two sectors should recognize joint values, to accept the responsibilities of certain common issues and share their financial resources and human resources in order to achieve common goals. This cooperation will cover the gaps of both sectors but without harming their point of strength.

In most countries of the region and Europe have already been established formal mechanisms that regulate the role of civil society as a genuine partner of the government. In many cases, the role of civil society in the development of internal democracy and European integration process has been essential.

In most countries close cooperation between sectors occurs between specific ministries and CSOs who are working in the fields covered by that ministry. Normally, in this case there is a common interest which for CSOs means bringing the laws and regulations that reflect the needs of their members, while for the ministry shall mean the help that CSOs can contribute in drafting and implementation of national policies.

Sometimes this cooperation is led by a formal advisory body consisting of members from both sectors, such as e.g. Slovak Government Council for Cooperation with CSOs and the Council for Civil Society Development in Croatia, founded in 2002, which consists of 10 government representatives and 14 representatives from civil society and has the mandate to implement the Plan of Cooperation between sectors. These Councils are usually characteristic for centralized forms of cooperation, such as cooperation agreements at governmental level, but may also be tasked with monitoring the implementation of specific cooperation agreements.

Summary of current cooperation Government - Civil Society

Civil society is one of the main pillars of construction and functioning of a democratic society. Civil society organizations shall offer people an alternative way to advance their common interests, channeling different views and securing their interests in decision-making or obtaining various services.

Although traces of the civil society actions in Kosovo exist since before many decades, in its modern sense, initiatives and the first organizations of civil society in Kosovo date from late 80's and early 90's after the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe and the beginning of a new form of political repression in Kosovo and parallel life in Kosovo. These initiatives/organizations were mainly of humanitarian character (providing humanitarian aid, protection of human rights, various civil movements, etc.), which over time took the form of a comprehensive peaceful resistance towards structures of that time.

End of war and NATO intervention as well as the establishment of United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) in 1999 was a turning point for general development of civil society in Kosovo. Due to greater needs for emergency assistance and reconstruction, as well as inter-ethnic reconciliation, civil society transformed its operations and adjusted to new realities and needs, with a greater financial support and technical assistance from international donors.

In relation to the cooperation between public authorities and civil society in this period, it is worth noting that due to the nature of the country's governance, involvement of citizens and civil society in decision-making led by UNMIK was mostly impossible. Moreover, it is often

stated that it was hard for PISG to take part, especially in the initial period of administration of Kosovo by the United Nations. Normally, certain initiatives of civil society managed to push certain issues, but without being able to formalize cooperation between the two sectors. The first official initiative to formalize cooperation was taken just before the declaration of independence, when the Government of Kosovo and CiviKos Platform signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the end of 2007.

Upon declaration of independence in 2008, Kosovo entered a dynamic period of socio-economic and political development. Civil society, following the social development, adjusted to its new role within the overall framework of institution building, dealing more and more with issues of governance and policy making.

First of all, the cooperation between the two sectors was conducted under various bilateral initiatives, but without any sustainable organization and structure. With the advancement of policy-making system through the adoption of new legal regulations, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo has put in place various mechanisms that enable a more structured cooperation with civil society. i.e. Rules of Procedure of the Government of 2011 obliges all ministries to organize public consultations with civil society by providing sufficient time and adequate information to all interested parties. Another problem often encountered that still presents difficulties in cooperation between the two sectors is the method of selection of civil society organizations in various governmental groups and forums. While in Kosovo are already registered over 7,000 NGOs, the government has difficulties in deciding which organizations should be invited to participate in various working groups on specific issues.

In this regard, exclusively by narrow sector issues, the main general areas addressed as problematic by civil society and which have prompted the Government to adopt various normative acts were related to access to documents and official information, involvement of citizens and civil society in policy and legislation, as well as provision of services by civil society organizations. Also as problematic issue was considered financial support of civil society organizations from the budget of the Republic of Kosovo, which was taken without any concrete mechanism to address the specifics of the civil sector.

Moreover, considering that the two sectors have a relatively young age, it is constantly observed lack of capacity for mutual cooperation. While recognizing and understanding the role of civil society by civil servants remains low, civil society continues to have insufficient knowledge about the processes of policy-making and the work of governing bodies. These, as well as many disagreements about various developments in Kosovo, have caused a low level of mutual trust between the two sectors. This strategy will not impact the opinions of any party on various issues of social and political developments and finally it aims materializing the opinions of all parties on specific policy issues through decisions, regulations, laws, etc. Kosovo Government recognizes and accepts the independence of civil society organizations and their right to hold different opinions and to express those views with all allowed legal forms. Also, the Government appreciates the professional and representation potential of civil society organizations in various fields, a potential that offers the Government an added value in drafting and implementation of its policies and the provision of services to citizens.

Regardless of whether the government and civil society organizations interact in cooperatively or critical and confrontational form, this strategy aims this interaction to be formal, transparent and conducted according to rules known in advance and equal for all.

Benefits of Government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society

Government strategy for cooperation with civil society shall bring a large number of benefits to both parties, as well as Kosovar society in general. The main benefit which seems to be achieved can be listed into several levels:

Strategic level – This strategy shall clearly define strategic objectives that are to be achieved within a five year period. As a result of a cooperative and comprehensive these strategic objectives represent a shared vision of the majority of representatives of both sectors in relation to key issues of mutual cooperation.

Political level – Through this strategy, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo for the first time establishes its relationship with civil society within institutional framework, thus ensuring that cooperation and interaction between the two sectors will not be dependent from individual willingness of various government units, but frameworks and opportunities for cooperation will be the same consistently, despite the current availability of various representatives of the two sectors.

Institutional level – This strategy, through concrete measures foreseen in the Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy, assigns to certain governmental units specific obligations which must be met within certain deadlines. Defining responsible institutions for various actions enables the foreseen measures to have a certain address for implementation and accountability. Moreover, specific measures and actions will be taken within a comprehensive framework, which will be coordinated by a single central unit. This would avoid a partial and non standard approach, by increasing the value of each specific action in relation to the overall strategic objectives.

Inclusion and equal opportunities – This strategy, besides addressing many problems so far, is constructed based on experiences and good cooperation between the two sectors. Evaluating these experiences as a successful model, this strategy will enable cooperation between the two sectors to be inclusive from both parties. Knowing the specifics of sectors for more intensive or less intensive cooperation, this strategy enables all civil society organizations to have treatment

and equal access to government institutions, at least in relation to the principles and main mechanisms of cooperation.

Active citizenship – Considering the role of civil society organizations as direct representatives of certain interested groups of citizens, deepening cooperation of the government with this sector will contribute to increase citizen involvement in governance. The challenges that Kosovo is facing in the process of state building and European integration is impossible to be solved without involvement of the whole society. This strategy, recognizing the high human potential located in the civil society sector and individual citizens, enables the Government to create partners outside government who will help create effective public policies and implementation of effective interventions for its own citizens.

The methodology and the process of drafting the Strategy

Drafting such strategy requires a clearly defined methodological approach, which enables the content of document to be the result of an inclusive process where all parties have the opportunity to give their input, but also to define the role and assume their responsibilities. Taking into consideration that the countries of the region and Europe have gone through similar processes in the past, the initiating group has analyzed different experiences and defined methodology of this process in Kosovo.

Approaches of other countries have been different depending on the specifics of the country. Some countries have first prepared the so-called "broad agreement", which defined the principles of cooperation agreed upon by both parties. For the purpose of implementing these principles as the second stage was drafted the "Strategy" to cover certain parts of the broad agreement, for a certain time limit. However, because "broad agreement" requires a longer time to be prepared and clear signatory parties (particularly in relation to civil society), most of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have prepared strategies directly, through which the government has taken unilateral obligations and responsibilities to deepen cooperation with civil society.

In this regard, Kosovo had the opportunity to follow the full process, since previously a "broad agreement" was reached between the two sectors (Memorandum of Cooperation of the

Government of Kosovo with Civil Society represented by Civikos Platform, signed on 09 / 11/2007). Through this Memorandum of Cooperation, Government and representatives of a large number of civil society organizations agreed on the main principles and committed together to implement the Strategy. Since this memorandum is considered to contain all the elements of "Broad Agreements", a joint initiative to develop this strategy is based on the principles set out in the Memorandum.

As a result, in September 2011 with the decision of the Secretary-General of the Office of the Prime Minister, Office on Good Governance in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM / OGG) is mandated to be responsible for drafting the Strategy for cooperation with civil society. OPM / OGG in cooperation with Legal Office of Strategic Planning in the Office of the Prime Minister established the initial group for drafting the Strategy. In this group are included civil society organizations represented by CiviKos Platform, as well as Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) and Kosovo Democratic Institute (KDI) as civil society organizations with experience and expertise to the development of civil society and cooperation between civil society and public authorities. CiviKos platform, within an internal process with member organizations, have identified key issues that should be addressed in relation to cooperation with the Government of Kosovo. Based on this, the initiated group has prepared a working and a comprehensive methodology by both parties. It is worth mentioning that the entire document was drafted pursuant to the methodology defined by Administrative Instruction no.02/2012 on the procedures, criteria and methodology for the preparation and approval of strategy documents and plans for their implementation, their form, procedures and consultations. The initiation and drafting process has gone through the procedures defined by the above mentioned instruction and rules of procedure including the reviewing of the document by the Office for Strategic Planning for a final evaluation and finally the Ministry of Finances in order to define the financial statement.

The main issues which have been found to be necessary and be addressed by the Strategy for cooperation with civil society are:

- Ensure participation of civil society in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation;
- Contracting of public services to civil society organizations;
- Financial and non-financial support of civil society organizations.

Also, recognizing the role and importance of voluntary work in the sector of civil society and wider, volunteering is considered an issue that should be addressed horizontally in the context of this strategy.

Based on experiences and lessons learned from countries that have already gone through this process, in parallel with the broad involvement of civil society organizations, initiating group has estimated a great importance and proper involvement of various ministries and agencies, which will have the main burden of implementing the various measures of the Strategy. This involvement was considered important since the early stages of drafting the Strategy.

Also, to avoid a conversion of Strategy into a wish list which would be difficult feasible, the initiating group has insisted that all participants during various phases of drafting to identify priority issues and set realistic and achievable objectives. This was the reason that, despite the numerous needs, this Strategy to address in the end only three strategic objectives and volunteering as a horizontal objective.

The process of drafting the Strategy has lasted relatively long, but this has been the reason for giving the opportunity for all interested parties to contribute and comment on the work done. For more than a year of work on drafting the document, are organized many meetings and workshops with representatives from multiple organizations of civil society in Kosovo, officials of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, media representatives and representatives of international organizations operating in Kosovo.

The first phase consisted in compiling the first draft of the logical framework of the Strategy. A public consultation process undertaken by OGG / OPM and Platform CiviKos in all regions of the Republic of Kosovo has accumulated specific issues which were then turned into specific strategic objectives. These strategic objectives are met with specific measures and detailed activities to be undertaken to meet strategic objectives. Finally, for each activity was set a deadline for implementation, responsible institution, other supportive institutions and financial resources. Thus, in parallel with the strategy (which is lying on a five-year term), is drafted Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy for a period of three years.

After finalizing the Strategy and Action Plan, both of these documents have gone through public consultation process. During this process, all interested parties had the opportunity to

give their written comments about any part of the strategy, comments which were taken into account in drafting the final version of both documents.

Despite this comprehensive process, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo has foreseen that this strategy, in particular the Action Plan to be reviewed at the end of the second year, by allowing the assessment of achievements and then address the challenges and problems encountered. This review is provided based on highly dynamic developments in Kosovo, but also due to specific characteristics of civil society sector, as a variable sector and constantly developed.

Scope and parties

Government strategy for cooperation with civil society is focused at the central level, namely at the level of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo. However, in accordance with the extent of powers of the Government, various actions envisaged in this strategy are spread throughout the territory of Kosovo. The strategy will be effective for 5 years, including the period 2013-2017, while the Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy includes three year period, respectively until 2015.

Very important element, which reflected in the definition of strategic objectives, concrete measures and actions is the time period covered by this strategy. Limited period of time made participants during drafting of the strategy to identify only those issues which are very important and achievable in a five-year term. Strategic objectives were taken into account for setting realistic goals, especially in dealing with public services and financial support to civil society organizations. Through these strategic objectives is originally intended to create a proper system of addressing these issues, and only then the following actions to be taken that will functionalize the system.

Regarding the scope covered by the strategy, it focuses mainly on horizontal issues that affect the cooperation between the Government and civil society. During many discussions in the drafting stage of this strategy, the parties have raised numerous issues which relate to specific sectors or specific problems of certain regions. A number of such specific issues are included within the horizontal strategic objectives, while other issues left out of this strategy and could

be addressed through policy or sector agreements, which could be drafted between particular groups of civil society organizations and various government departments. Although it addresses general issues, however, this strategy sets out general principles of cooperation which should be applied in the future in specific cases of specific sectors.

Also, it is important to note that concrete actions and measures set out in this Strategy include only those cases which the government has clear jurisdiction, such as drafting policies and laws, determining the general policies of public services, or management funds of the budget of the Republic of Kosovo. Although it is drafted in close cooperation with civil society organizations, this strategy is the government document, and as such it obliges only the Government of the Republic of Kosovo. i.e. internal organization issues of civil society organizations in which the Government has no power, although very important for a genuine cooperation, are not included within the Strategy

However, this does not mean that from this strategy shall benefit only civil society organizations that are represented through CiviKos Platform. All civil society organizations that have an interest to interact with the government are parties that are affected by this strategy. Also, CiviKos platform will not seek to replace the activities of member organizations. The main task in relation to this strategy for CiviKoS Platform, is the promotion and maintenance of mechanisms of cooperation and coordination of the work of member organizations on giving contribution and receiving benefits from these mechanisms. Member organizations, but also others, will continue to perform their work and goals based on their specific needs, by already knowing clear rules of their interaction with public authorities and its own mechanism which would protect and monitor that the rules are applied. As such, CiviKos platform will be called to make proper coordination and pressure to all parties that the actions of this strategy will be implemented.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strategic objective 1: Ensure strong participation of civil society in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation

Democracy lies in the compatibility of citizens to exercise power from their constituents. To ensure this compliance, representative democracy (a model that exists in the Republic of Kosovo) bases itself on a set of formal rules and traditional principles - such as elections and campaigns that accompany them. However, representative democracy is based on continuous inter-action between public authorities and citizens in the period between elections.

Based on the Constitution, the Assembly is the legislative institution of the Republic of Kosovo, which has the power to adopt laws, resolutions and other general acts. However, based on its constitutional mandate, the majority of laws and other acts are proposed by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, which also has executive authority in the implementation of these acts. Considering that policies and laws that are proposed and implemented by the government have a tremendous importance in the regulation of social, economic and political life of Kosovo society, strengthening civil society participation in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation is the first objective of this Strategy.

In the last decade, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo has developed significant experience in policy-making, while in recent years special attention has been paid to the involvement of public in general and civil society organizations, particularly in this process. In this regard, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo in the meeting held on 25.08.2011 approved the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo (Decision no. 04/34; working method and decision-making procedures of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, rules and procedures for drafting legislation and policy recommendations from government and ministries, as well as organizing meetings of the Government and Ministerial Committees work. Through this regulation, for the first time the government has required all its subordinate institutions to publish the content of their proposals for public commenting for all policies, laws and other important acts and will specifically seek comments from non-governmental organizations which are affected significantly by the proposal. Also, from the sponsoring bodies it is "required to provide sufficient information in understandable form by

the public to enable the public to understand the nature and consequences of the proposal, and publicly announce the start of the consultation process and give sufficient time for public and non-governmental organizations to review the recommendations and provide them with proper answers. Moreover, "the results of the consultation process will be reported at the meeting of the Government or Ministerial Commission meeting and will be an integral part of the concept document or explanatory memorandum". Based on this regulation, the Secretary General of the Office of the Prime Minister dated 29/09/2011 has issued a guide for public consultation process in order to help civil servants and civil society organizations to successfully plan and implement a public consultation process to define clear expectations of each other and to avoid misunderstandings that can arise when different institutions or organizations take the initiative and contribute in completely different ways.

Also, on 05.04.2011 was issued Regulation No.03/2011 on Government Communication Service with the Public. This regulation determines the establishment and operation of a coherent and coordinated system to communicate with the public on policies and activities of public institutions. This regulation defines the roles, duties and functions of offices and relevant communication officials and spokespersons in public institutions. Also, this regulation sets out the rules for general communication policy, and government activities to the public.

Even though the advancement of the legal framework has significantly raised the bilateral initiatives to cooperate in drafting policies and laws, however, it can be concluded that it is not yet developed a general culture of consultation, as there are not enough developed capacity needed to implement various techniques to involve citizens and civil society in this process. Furthermore, there is no yet a structured and standardized form to such participation. Although in 2012 was perceived a growing implementation of public consultation methods set out in the Regulation and Guidelines, various government departments still continue to have levels, forms and different mechanisms of civil society involvement in decision-making, while different organizations respond to these initiatives in most different ways. Last, despite involvement of public consultation process in general government system of reporting and monitoring, successful implementation requires mechanisms to create a special system which will coordinate and oversee various aspects of involvement of citizens and civil society.

Planned measures to achieve the objective are:

- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 1.1. drafting / amendment-supplementation of basic legislation / referring CSO involvement in policy development and implementation
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 1.2. Setting standards of CSO involvement in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 1.3. Professional capacity building of civil servants and members of civil society organizations in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 1.4. Establishment of monitoring system and reporting for CSO involvement

Strategic objective 2: System of contracting public services for civil society organizations

Civil society is implementing a wide range of social services and community support activities that were previously performed by the state. In modern societies the demand for new social services is constantly growing and community is constantly looking for diversity of these services. Governments are already being set back from the community processes in order to address local problems through local elections.

Civil society organizations in Kosovo for a long time providing a number of social services for different groups of beneficiaries. While immediately after the war of 1999 were mainly international organizations those that provide necessary social services to citizens, now more and more local organizations are doing so. Examples from different areas such as services for persons with disabilities, shelters for victims of violence or trafficked persons, etc. indicate that civil society organizations in Kosovo can be important participants in the provision of social services. These services extended, whether in the fulfillment of those provided by the state (e.g. health, social welfare) or the provision of services which currently cannot be provided by the state.

However, in different areas in which these services are offered, applied various principles of delegating responsibilities to provide certain services. The method of licensing or funding of certain services is not always properly adjusted, and it often presents obstacles to contracting parties, especially difficulties in receiving quality services from recipients of these services.

In various countries of Europe and beyond apply different models of different services delegated to civil society organizations. German model of support, which encourages community who encounters a problem to address and solve the problem itself; Hungarian normative model specifies that each entity that provides services which are the responsibility of the state (including education, health, and welfare services) and who meets the criteria set by the state should be financed by the government based on the number of clients serves; Competition system of Great Britain and Poland represents the model whereby every time the government wants to provide a service that is listed in the "Schedule of activities for the benefit of the community" she announces an open tender for all entities. CSOs should follow a similar

model to compete with other entities (institutions or private companies) to win the contract on the basis of better services and cheaper offers.

In Kosovo it is not yet developed a genuine debate about the principles and model based on which civil society organizations will provide services that are the obligation of the state. Precisely defining the general principles and model is the main goal of this strategic objective, to be followed upon the completion of necessary legal framework and building necessary monitoring mechanism. Since the extent of potential services that can be provided by civil society is very wide and depending on specific areas applied also specific rules, ministries and organizations covering certain sectors will be encouraged to develop their own specific mechanisms, but always based on the general principles set out in advance.

In this context, Kosovo society can benefit from services that can be provided by civil society through the development of what today is known as the world's social economy that actually represents nonprofit economic activity that can improve the economic, social and environmental community. Social economy can be a vital source of new work, knowledge and skills to new employment avenues. CSOs can be a source of entrepreneurial knowledge in areas where the market economy fails to provide efficient services.

Planned measures to achieve the objective are:

- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 2.1. Drafting the legal framework which regulates procedures of contracting of public services by CSOs and identifies contracting areas
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 2.2. Setting standards and principles for contracting of public services by CSO
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 2.3. Building joint monitoring mechanism of implementation on licensing standards and offered services.

[Strategic objective 3: Building system and defined criteria to support financially the CSOs](#)

Although an important part of the work of civil society is made voluntary, for specific activities required special funds to enable the services delivery, expertise and infrastructure necessary for certain activities. Not having a steady income from a single source, a special characteristic of

civil society is the need to increase funding and use them to implement the mission of the organization.

Since 1999, civil society organizations in Kosovo have had a strong financial support from international donors, which apart from large number of registered NGOs funds through which they have been operating and were very easy to reach. This "flood" of donors has had good and bad sides. A number of civil society organizations have managed to increase their human capacity and financial and become legitimate representative of their membership or professional stable centers of various fields. On the other hand, a large part of the sector remains highly dependent on international funding and shall be activated only when funding is available. Data from year 2011 show that about 80 % of funds for civil society come from international donors which indicate the large dependence on foreign donors. While the role of foreign donors in the development of civil society is irreplaceable, especially by knowing the economic difficulties through which Kosovo has passed immediately after the war and the transition phase, the expected departure of a large number of donors seriously undermine functioning and sustainability of the sector.

In this regard, civil society organizations have already begun to seriously seek alternative sources of funding, which are expected to be mainly local. As key management budget of the Republic of Kosovo, the Government can take a very important role in this regard. Even though in the past, state funding for civil society organizations was not lacking. It is estimated that about 8% of funding for civil society have been received from the budget of the Republic of Kosovo, while there are no accurate statistics on funding for civil society from the governmental level. In almost all European countries, funding from various government mechanisms represents a significant percentage of overall funding of CSOs. In 2003, the percentage of CSO funding from government funds was ranged from 30% in Sweden and Norway to 70% in Ireland and Belgium, while in countries of Central and Eastern Europe from 20% in Slovakia to 40% in the Republic Czech.

However, currently concern remains present on some important aspects regarding how the grant funding, of which relate to the selection criteria and procedures of the beneficiary organizations, reporting and monitoring mechanisms, and most importantly, mechanisms that

would ensure maintaining the independence of the civil society organizations that receive government funding. The current legal frame that defines the use of public money does not sufficiently address the financial specifics of the civil society sector, thus creating serious obstacles in using the potential of the civil society in implementing various governmental programs and projects, as well as the development of the civil society sector in general.

For this reason, it is important that the government provides financial support to the civilian sector, but financial support will make within a transparent system, with predetermined criteria and clear mechanisms for reporting and monitoring. Also, considering that a significant number of civil society organizations have the mission to advance public interest, other sources of public funding should be considered in addition to the budget of the Republic of Kosovo. For example, many countries apply the model of "lottery funds" or "direct orientation certain percentage of taxes" to raise funds for the development of civil society. All these elements need to be treated by analyzing the specifics of Kosovo and building a system that would increase the effectiveness of public funds spent, but also to preserve the independence of action of civil society organizations that receive funding from the government.

Another important aspect is the Public Benefit Status, which exists in Kosovo since 1999, but in recent years has been faced with numerous problems of harmonization between various laws and implementation in practice. Harmonization of obligations and benefits for organizations that enjoy this status would advance the work of public benefit organizations, thus contributing directly in addressing different issues of which benefit marginalized groups, or Kosovo society in general. Parallel to this problem appears the encouragement of private donations and philanthropy, which may represent a source of great interest to civil society. Tax facilities for private donors and companies must be clearly regulated under the fiscal system of the Republic of Kosovo by creating a supportive environment for philanthropy and sponsorship.

In recent years, the proportion of EU funding for civil society is steadily increasing, and it is expected to increase further. However, the European Union's procedures require that part of funds from co-beneficiary organizations, thus making the absorption of EU funds very difficult for Kosovar organizations. Co-financing of EU funds for civil society is one of the issues

addressed by this strategy, along with the involvement of civil society in government mechanisms of donor coordination.

Finally, for civil society organizations it is quite helpful the non-financial support, namely making available to organizations and their activities various resources that are in the possession of public authorities. While most of this practical support is offered by municipal level, this strategy aims to establish the general principles under which public authorities at different levels will support various civil initiatives.

Planned measures to achieve the objective are:

- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 3.1. Legislation reform to implement joint projects
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 3.2. Creating supportive environment for philanthropy and sponsorship
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 3.3. Standardization of public benefit status
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 3.4. Civil society involvement into donor coordination mechanisms
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 3.5. Defining criteria for awarding and implementation of grants from public funds
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 3.6. Defining criteria for non-financial support to CSOs

Strategic objective 4: Promoting an integrated approach to volunteering development

In general and in principle, volunteering is the working practices of people who work for others without being motivated by financial or material benefits. Volunteering is mainly related to an altruistic activity, which intends to promote the highest quality life for people. People also participate in volunteer work and activities to gain new skills without the need of having financial investment of the employer. Volunteering can be in different forms and is practiced by different groups of people. Many volunteers are specifically trained on the area they operate, for example in medicine, education or emergency rescue. Others take part in voluntary work and activities based on need and demand, i.e. Reacting to natural disaster. As such, volunteering is one of the key elements of civil society.

There are two major benefits that volunteering brings. Firstly, economic benefit, since volunteering is an important economic assistance for the society. Activities carried out by volunteers, otherwise it should be financed by the state or private capital. Volunteering creates an added value to the overall economic balance of the state and reduces government spending. But volunteering has also a second dimension, perhaps the most important in terms of positive effects. It helps to create strong and cohesive communities. Volunteering increases the level of trust between people and helps develop norms of reciprocity and solidarity, which are essential for stable communities. Furthermore by assisting in construction of this "social capital", volunteering plays an important role in economic regeneration.

Promotion and application of voluntary work is coordinated action of relevant sectors of society, where the state, civil society, businesses and families are part of it. Kosovo has a bright period of social mobilization (solidarity and volunteering) during the 90's. This practice is not shown stable also in the post-war years. The main causes of this inconsistency are: the new political and social context, belief that the state should be responsible only for social welfare, lack of adequate policies and legislation, and aggressive application of the principles of free market in a post-conflict economy. This degradation of volunteer work has affected in damaging the social capital of Kosovo citizens.

Volunteering is an area which is adjusted with the legislation and state policies of Kosovo. Law on Youth Empowerment and Participation, in general treats youth volunteering, and defines it as "youth activities organized by the respective institution, where young people voluntarily offer their time, work, knowledge, skills without fee or reward, serving the community, for the benefit of society ". This law is limited in treating volunteering only between ages 15-24 years old, by leaving untreated other part of society that represents great potential for voluntary work. Moreover, restrictions in certain sectors make the overall institutional approach to volunteering fragmented and insufficient to develop volunteering work throughout society.

Taking into account the diversity of volunteering, it is almost impossible to suggest universal models for its development through laws and policies, without addressing this issue through a comprehensive debate and based on the detailed information and analysis. What functions in a state, can be counterproductive in another country, with different culture and traditions.

Volunteering is a product of the environment in which it develops and government policies for promotion and volunteering development in one country may not be appropriate for another country.

For this reason, this strategy aims to initially analyze and identify the needs and profile volunteering in Kosovo, and according to this develop the debate and build an adequate system to the specific needs of Kosovo. The principles which will be determined by subsequent legislation and policies will aim to build an integrated system of volunteering, including different areas and institutions that are necessary for development of volunteering potential.

Planned measures to achieve the objective are:

- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 4.1. Identifying the needs and profile of volunteering in Kosovo
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 4.2. Defining principles of the system for an integrated approach towards development of volunteering
- Measure/Strategic sub-objective: 4.3. Building monitoring system and reporting for volunteerism

Mechanisms responsible for monitoring the implementation and reporting of government strategy for cooperation with civil society

Establishing of mechanisms for cooperation between civil society and government and strengthening the dialogue and cooperation between them shall mean the partnership on equal basis and goodwill. Based on this Strategy, the government should develop instruments and structures that will define specific duties and responsibilities of each party in the context of partnership and also to create reporting and monitoring mechanism that will follow the implementation of specific tasks arising from this Strategy.

Office of the Prime Minister / Office on Good Governance, with the help of CiviKos will be responsible for coordinating the whole process of implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan, and to provide an independent approach to monitoring and evaluating the success of implementation of this Strategy will be funded a joint Council with participation of both parties. The mandate of this Council will also include discussion and propose solutions to issues that are not part of this Strategy, but which affect in the cooperation of both parties and concern of each party. The Council will be co-chaired by representatives of CiviKos Platform and representatives from the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, while the Office of the Prime Minister / Office on Good Governance, OGG will serve as Secretariat and will be responsible body for monitoring and reporting on implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan.

The purpose of establishing, organizing, conducting efficient and legitimate responsibilities of the Council, immediately after adoption of this strategy, OPM / OGG with CiviKos Platform will prepare a special regulation which will set rules of procedure, organization, scope, functions of the council and the manner of selection of members.

Also, OPM / OGG with CiviKos Platform and in cooperation with other interested organizations will organize promotional campaigns in order to inform all institutions and civil society on the approval of this Strategy and regarding benefits and obligations arising from this Strategy.

OPM / OGG is obliged to publish the report on annual basis, on implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan and Platform CiviKos and other interested organizations will be invited to regularly monitor and report parallel on the implementation of concrete activities provided with this Strategy. Based on monitoring and reports of both parties, the Council shall be authorized to assess and review the Strategy after a two-year period.