



## ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT 2015

*This report presents the projects and activities implemented by the NGO Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture during 2015. In addition, it also outlines the key achievements from 2015.*



---

## PROJECTS

### **Project 1** **Civil Society for Transparent Governance in northern Kosovo** **June 2015 – March 2016**

#### **General:**

*The project “Civil Society for Transparent Governance in northern Kosovo” is implemented from 1 June 2015 until 31 March 2016 and is supported by the British Embassy in Pristina.*

#### **Objectives:**

*The overall objective of the project was to foster good governance at local level in northern Kosovo, through an increased transparency of local self-governments.*

#### **Specific objectives of the project were the following:**

- 1. To train CSOs from northern Kosovo to monitor and report on transparency of local governance and anti-corruption;*
- 2. To establish the Civil Society Transparency Forum, with minimum eight (8) CSOs from northern Kosovo;*
- 3. To convene meetings with stakeholders, including municipal authorities, to obtain views and ideas and establish cooperation;*
- 4. To train representatives of local self-governments and CSOs on transparent governance; and to develop Report on Transparency/Corruption Index;*
- 5. To develop Local Anti-Corruption Plans, which would be presented and included in the agenda of municipal assemblies in northern Kosovo for 2016;*
- 6. To raise awareness on anti-corruption mechanisms and importance of transparent governance, through Public Campaign and Visibility activities.*

#### **Activities:**

*The project activities included the following:*

- 1. Cooperation with the municipalities in northern Kosovo, defined in Memoranda of Cooperation;*
- 2. Empowering public officials at local level and Civil Society representatives on Transparent Governance, through trainings, seminars and conferences with relevant institutions;*
- 3. Cooperation with the Anti-Corruption Agency and the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo, defined through Memoranda of Cooperation;*
- 4. Strengthening networking and cooperation of relevant actors, including institutions at both local and central level, CSOs and media;*
- 5. Public and media campaign to raise the public awareness and knowledge on Transparent Governance at local level.*

*The implementation of this project resulted in two major achievements. Firstly, an Expert Consultant in cooperation with the ACDC Project Team developed the first Action Plan for the Transparent Governance in northern Kosovo, which was shared with the municipal assemblies of North Mitrovica, Zvecan, Zubin Potok and Leposavic municipalities for the review and adoption.*

---

## PROJECTS

Secondly, NGO ACDC signed a memorandum of Cooperation with the Anti-Corruption Agency of Kosovo and become the first NGO in Kosovo to have such memorandum with the Agency. Cooperation with the Agency enabled ACDC to contribute to resolving the problem of municipal assemblies' members from northern Kosovo who failed to declare their assets on time.

Finally, through the project, ACDC also signed a memorandum of Cooperation with the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo, detailing cooperation and joint efforts in improving the transparent governance at local level in northern Kosovo.

### Project 2 Civil Society Rule of Law Initiative in northern Kosovo 1 June 2015 – 30 March 2016

The project will further contribute to building capacities for the development of an effective rule of law system in northern Kosovo by educating graduating law students from northern Kosovo on Kosovo legal system and Kosovo laws. By acquiring practical legal knowledge and skills, graduating law students were trained to engage in a judiciary in northern Kosovo upon graduation or to participate in the activities that foster the rule of law.

Further enhancement of cooperation among K-Albanian and K-Serb law students was achieved through a set of joint trainings and study visits to justice institutions. Cooperation through education created positive relationships among law students and will contribute to the development of Rule of Law in northern Kosovo.

Knowledge on the perspective judicial system in Mitrovica region, which will be established based on the Belgrade-Pristina Agreement on integration of the judiciary, has been raised among population and associations in northern Kosovo, as a result of the robust public and media campaign in all four municipalities in northern Kosovo.

The project sustainability will be ensured through involvement of several stakeholders including young lawyers from northern Kosovo and from Pristina, Law Offices in northern Kosovo, the Kosovo Chamber of Advocates and its Non-Majority Committee. The cooperation will create synergy that will result in the institutionalized cooperation between primarily NGO ACDC, Law Offices and the Kosovo Chamber of Advocates.

As a result of the project, NGO ACDC signed MoU with two Law Offices in North Mitrovica, namely „Pantovic & Vljajic Law Office” and „Dejan A. Vasic Law Office”. In addition, an MoU should be signed between NGO ACDC and the Kosovo Chamber of Advocates/Non-Majority Committee to regulate future cooperation concerning projects with young lawyers in northern Kosovo.

In order to ensure long-term sustainability of the project intervention, NGO ACDC established contacts with the University of Mitrovica Law School to initiate cooperation in the field of practical education of law graduates.

---

## PROJECTS

*Given that the integration of judiciary in northern Kosovo has been advancing, education of young lawyers has been of great importance for the development of the judicial system in northern Kosovo.*

*Project outputs were the following:*

*Output 1: Knowledge on Kosovo's legal system and practical legal skills of 30 young lawyers from northern Kosovo improved.*

*Output 2: Further inclusion of 15 young lawyers from northern Kosovo into Kosovo's legal system through internship programs with Law Offices and both local and international organizations; Increased cooperation with the Kosovo Chamber of Advocates.*

*Output 3: A number of public discussions on the Kosovo Legal System and Brussels Agreement held to raise awareness on importance of effective rule of law system.*

*Project activities included the following:*

- 1. Training program on practical legal skills*
- 2. Public discussions on the justice system in northern Kosovo*
- 3. Conferences on the rule of law issues*
- 4. Mock Trial event*
- 5. Internship program for 15 law graduates from northern Kosovo*

*Two main achievements of the project were: Firstly, several law graduates who participated in the project, and especially in the internship scheme with Law Offices in northern Kosovo continued their cooperation through traineeship agreements with the Law Offices; and secondly, citizens in northern Kosovo become more aware on the process of the integration of the judiciary, which is important for their trust in the justice system.*

**Project 3**  
**Monitoring Judicial Reform in North Kosovo**  
**October 2015 – September 2016**

*NGO Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture – ACDC implemented a one-year project “Monitoring Judicial Reform in North Kosovo” which was financially supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The project's aim was to monitor the implementation of the Brussels Agreement on Judiciary (signed by governments of Kosovo and Serbia in Brussels) and to monitor work of the newly established court in Mitrovica by enhancing participation of citizens and NGO activists from North Kosovo in justice system and enabling citizens and students of the School of Law, University in North Mitrovica, to monitor work performance of the newly established court.*

*Project included several activities including the implementation of the survey in all four municipalities in northern Kosovo, with an aim to collect information on citizens' knowledge of the agreement itself; presentation of the obtained results in each municipality, workshops with students of the School of Law and NGO activists, and regular weekly and monthly visits to the Court to monitor the development of the Court's work and to obtain statistics of court cases, with details on subject matter, ethnicity and municipality of parties. Project also includes writing a mid-term report and final report of the Court Monitoring and presentation of it to the public and media by organizing conferences in each municipality. Final activity of the project was development of a Policy Paper and recommendations for improvements in further work of the Court.*

---

## PROJECTS

### Project 4

*Justice and the People in the North of Kosovo*  
October 2014 – April 2016

*In 2015, NGO ACDC continued the implementation of the project “Justice and the People in the North of Kosovo”, which has commenced in October 2014. NGO ACDC and PILPG began the implementation of the project funded by the US State Department.*

*The Public International Law and Policy Group (PILPG) is a global pro bono law firm that provides legal assistance to states and governments with the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, drafting of post-conflict constitutions. PILPG works with civil society organizations in Kosovo to increase access to, demand for, and respect for justice.*

*The main goal of this project is promoting citizen engagement in local policy making processes in the North, citizen-led advocacy on issues related to community safety and citizen access to justice. The project will be implemented in four municipalities– North Mitrovica, Zvecan, Leposavic, and Zubin Potok.*

*During 2015, ACDC organized focus groups in each of the target municipalities in order to gather information on citizens’ priorities for community’s safety and their opinions on institutions of justice. This information will inform potential openings and focus areas for the project to be sure it corresponds to the needs of citizens.*

*Moreover, ACDC implemented a series of training sessions for members of non-governmental sector and active citizens of Northern Kosovo. Each training group included approximately 15 participants from all four municipalities and these enhanced their skills and knowledge in order to proceed with the implementation of initiatives.*

*Training program was continued through development and implementation of local civic initiatives in all four municipalities in northern Kosovo, aiming to resolve problems and issues identified by action groups in all four municipalities.*

### Project 5

*Increasing awareness and participation of citizens in the judicial system*  
October 2014 – April 2015

*In 2015, ACDC continued the implementation of the project “Increasing awareness and participation of citizens in the judicial system” supported by USAID/ATRC. Project implementation commenced 24 October 2014 and ended on 30 April 2015.*

*The overall objective of the project was to increase awareness and participation of citizens in the judicial system of North Kosovo, through a program that includes cooperation of all stakeholders.*

*Specific objectives of the project were: 1) Monitoring of the work of the Municipal Court in Mitrovica; 2) Strengthening the participation of citizens in the judicial system; 3) Increasing awareness of the importance of participation in the judicial system.*

---

## PROJECTS

*The project included the following activities:*

- 1) Monitoring of the work of the Municipal Court in Mitrovica, drafting reports related to work performance of the court, with appropriate recommendations for its improvement;*
- 2) Study visit to the court for young lawyers and civil society activists in North Kosovo;*
- 3) Meetings with judges, prosecutors and administrative staff of judicial institutions in the Mitrovica region;*
- 4) Public discussions on topics related to the rule of law;*
- 5) Promotional activities, which include presentation in media.*

### **Project 6**

***"Empowerment of female students and active female citizens in launching initiatives to improve their position in the society and creation of local policies"***

***June 2015 – September 2016***

*In June 2015, ACDC started the implementation of the 16-month project "Empowerment of female students and active female citizens in launching initiatives to improve their position in the society and creation of local policies". The project is implemented by NGO Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture and is financially supported by Swiss Cooperation Office Kosovo (SCO-K), i managed by the Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF).*

*The overall objective of the project is strengthened position of women in the northern Kosovo. Results that we aim to achieve through the implementation of this project are:*

- Increased number of women participating in public policy making.*
- Female citizens and female students from northern Kosovo are undertaking initiatives to protect their rights and improving their position in the labor market and in political life.*
- Increased awareness of the citizens and representatives of institutions on the situation of women in the north, as well as the need for protection of rights of women and the inclusion of women in the decision-making process.*

*The project is implemented in all four municipalities in Northern Kosovo (North Mitrovica, Zvecan, Zubin Potok and Leposavic). As result of the projects. Women's groups in each of the four municipalities initiated and implemented civic initiatives aimed resolving local issues identified as problems and also at increasing women participation in creation of local policies and plans of actions.*

### **Project 7**

***Mediation Center Mitrovica***

***February 2013 – December 2016***

*Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture is a partner organization to CSSP Berlin Center for Integrative Mediation in implementation of the project Mediation Center Mitrovica (MCM). MCM was established on March 1st 2013 and it has two offices, one in south Mitrovica and other in north Mitrovica. NGO ACDC had contributed in establishing MCM and also participates in outreach activities that aim to present mediation and its advantages to the citizens and institutions in Mitrovica region. NGO ACDC also assists MCM to establish and maintain contact with local institutions and civil society organizations.*

---

## PROJECTS

MCM offers mediation services to the citizens and legal entities, working on out-of-court mediation and court-referred mediation cases. As alternative dispute resolution mechanism, mediation has many advantages over judicial resolution of a dispute. Those advantages include: time-efficiency (most cases are completed within several days); lower costs (the cost of mediation is significantly lower than the cost of court adjudication); confidentiality (name of the parties and the content of the case remain strictly confidential).

Mediation Center in Mitrovica is a long-term project and it is expected that it will reduce the number of disputes in Mitrovica. Thus, NGO ACDC is proud to be a part of such an important initiative and its advantages to the citizens and institutions in Mitrovica region. NGO ACDC also assists MCM to establish and maintain contact with local institutions and civil society organizations.

**Project 8**  
**Civil Society-Rule of Law in North Kosovo**  
**February 2015 – June 2015**

### *Project overview*

With funding from the United Nation Mission in Kosovo, ACDC implemented a project which aims to increase capacity for the development of an effective rule of law system in northern Kosovo by educating graduating law students and young lawyers from northern Kosovo on practical legal knowledge and skills. By acquiring practical legal knowledge and skills, graduating law students were trained to engage in law practice in northern Kosovo upon graduating. Organizing the mock trial simulations provided an opportunity to law graduates and young lawyers to acquire valuable experience.

Cooperation among K-Albanian and K-Serb students, through education, created positive relationships, which will contribute to the development of Rule of Law in northern Kosovo.

### *Activities*

*Project intervention included the following activities:*

- Practical legal training for law graduates from northern Kosovo. These trainings provided them with practical knowledge and skills, which will be useful for their engagement in legal practice in Kosovo. Students learned through workshops, seminars and simulations of Court proceedings, working with expert legal practitioners. All trainings and workshops were held by prominent lawyers from Mitrovica region, advocates – members of Kosovo Chamber of Advocates.
- Joint trainings for K-Serb and K-Albanian law students. Goal of the training was joint learning and acquiring practical knowledge and skills, and establishing cooperation. Topics of trainings were decided based on the consultations with the participating law graduates.
- Training NGOs on monitoring and reporting on the work of justice institutions. This segment of the project intervention involved minimum 10 Civil Society Organizations per training, which were trained by experts to effectively monitor and report the work of justice institutions.

---

## PROJECTS

- Joint study visits to judicial institutions for K-Serb and K-Albanian law graduates. Goal of the visits was learning and networking with judges and prosecutors. During these study visits, participating law graduates had the opportunity to discuss with judges and prosecutors about their work, challenges and to seek advice for their prospective careers.
- Round table discussions. NGO ACDC organized round-table discussions and promotional activities, in cooperation with the lawyers from Mitrovica region and with Civil Society Organizations, in order to discuss and promote the importance of the effective rule of law. These round table discussions provided valuable information to citizens, civil society activists and other participants on the issues related to the rule of law in northern Kosovo, including the process of the judicial integration.

### Project 9

Monitoring of Kosovo police at the North Mitrovica  
September 2015 – January 2016

Very often we have witnessed situations where the police do not intervene in a timely manner, and thus create distrust among the victims of gender-based violence and the police, as evidenced by research from April 2014. The study states that 96% of women would not report violence to the police because they believe that the police would not have stood up for their cause. The women feel that the police have other priorities, and those that tried to seek help from the same did not receive adequate support. Some of the indicators of inadequate assistance for victims are following the experience of the victims themselves: police late (22% of surveyed victims of gender-based violence); the victims did not know the number of police stations, lack of trust in the relevant institutions (63% of surveyed victims of gender-based violence) and many others.

Based on this research, we came to the conclusion that it is necessary to engage in the process of implementation of the law on domestic violence in order to reduce the number of cases and that the reported cases as soon solved.

Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture is implementing a project funded by the EU and CBM non-governmental organizations with the aim of raising awareness about this problem and to encourage the Kosovo police to actively working on domestic violence cases.

The target groups in this project are all victims of gender-based violence, with special emphasis on women, the Kosovo police in northern Mitrovica, Municipal Court in Mitrovica with a temporary headquarters in Vucitrn, the Center for Social Work in North Mitrovica. The main objective of this project is to achieve a more efficient police work and to build mutual trust between victims of domestic violence and the relevant institutions. Also one of the aims is to establish a sustainable mechanism for solving problems that will be included and the Municipal Court in Mitrovica with temporary residence in Vucitrn, Kosovo police and the Center for Social Work.

During the project will be organized meetings with representatives of the police, courts and social welfare centre. After collecting the results will be organized round table will present the results. The project will be accompanied by a media campaign, which will aim to draw attention to existing problems.

The most important activity will be signing a memorandum of cooperation between the Kosovo Police, the Municipal Court in Mitrovica and Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture - ACDC. Last activity in this project will be a round table on which to present the results obtained during implementation of the project.

---

## PROJECTS

### **Project 10** **Empowering Youth of northern Kosovo at the Labor Market** **October – December 2015**

*Lack of non-formal education in north Kosovo is one of the crucial problems of youth. Many students in the final year of their studies do not know how to write a CV or a motivation letter. Also, when we are talking about job interview or their rights as an unemployed person or employee, there is not enough information about this topic and that is a very big problem. This is very important if we know the situation at labour market where we have a lot of competition. This project seeks to improve and empower students to be prepared for connection to the labour market.*

*Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture – ACDC implemented the project “Empowerment Youth of the northern Kosovo at the Labour Market” which was financially supported by Norwegian Embassy in Pristina and Office for Community Affairs/Office of Prime Minister and NGO Aktiv, with a goal to educate a group of young people in northern Kosovo in order to empower them for entrance at the labour market in Kosovo. Project aimed to empower and educate youth through a series of trainings which will help them to acquire the necessary skills in order to prepare them for further challenges that await them after the studies. The project also included a four week internship, which provided an opportunity to participants to acquire primary work experience.*

*Project activities begun with the selection of 19 participants, who then attended a training program of eight (8) six-hour training sessions held by expert trainers. Training sessions included the following topics: gaining practical skills on writing CV's, Motivation and Cover letter, training on conducting job interview, simulation of job interview, introducing to Labour Market, rights of employees at the workplace and discrimination at work. The final activity was the one-month internship.*

### **Project 11** **Organizational Capacity Building of USAID/AKT CSO grantees** **October 2015 – April 2016**

*NGO Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture in partnership with NGO Media Puls from Leposavic implemented a seven month project “Organizational Capacity Building of USAID/AKT CSO grantees” funded by USAID and Community Development Fund - CDF. The project's aim was to complete assessment of all AKT/LS grantees NGO's and based on that assessment to conduct a series of capacity building sessions which would help these grantees to improve their organizational capacity.*

*Project consisted of two sections. The first one was capacity assessment which was conducted with AKT/LS grantees NGO. This assessment was conducted with seventeen (17) organizations both Serbian and Albanian and throughout Kosovo and it was implemented through an organizational capacity assessment questioner, developed by an expert.*

*Based on the results obtained through this questioner, NGO ACDC implemented a series of capacity building trainings which helped these NGO's to raise their capacity. Also, these grantees were trained on USAID rules and procedures*

---

## PROJECTS

### Project 12 BIG DEAL November 2015 – March 2016

Project was supported by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office in Prishtina, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

*"BIG DEAL: Split Asunder"* is a joint report produced by BIRN Kosovo, Internews Kosova and the Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture (ACDC) of North Mitrovica. The report finds that this six month period has been a time of division within Kosovo society over dialogue, as well as time of growth of negative feelings between the two capitals.

*Main activities:*

- NGO ACDC holds meeting with all relevant factors involved in the negotiating process as well as in the implementation of the Brussels Agreement in the north of Kosovo. The aim of these meetings was to find how far Brussels Agreement has gone with its implementation.
- Producing reports in accordance with findings in partnership with BIRN KOSOVO and Internews Kosovo.
- Presenting reports at conferences Kosovo-wide.

*Conclusion:*

BIG DEAL calls on Prishtina, Belgrade and the European Union to prioritize the so-called 'normalization' process, as most of the accords reached between the sides have not been fully implemented so far.

### Project 13 Increasing Public Awareness of Women's Property Rights in northern Kosovo September 2015 - August 2016

NGO Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture, supported by USAID/ATRC has begun implementing one-year long project "Increasing Public Awareness of Women's Property Rights in Northern Kosovo" as a part of Engagement for Equity Program – E4E. Project Implementation has begun on 1st September 2015 and will last until 31st August 2016.

*Project Objectives:*

The overall objective of the project is to empower women in northern Kosovo through raising awareness on Women's Property Rights and advocacy for the establishment of local mechanisms for ensuring Gender Equality.

*Specific objectives of the project are:*

1. Increasing knowledge and awareness on Gender Equality and Women's Property Rights
2. Monitoring and reporting on the court proceedings involving Women's Property Rights
3. Empowering Women's Caucuses in the municipal assemblies in northern Kosovo, through training program and study visits to CSOs and institutions
4. Advocacy for establishment of Gender Equality Offices and appointment of Gender Equality Officers in the four municipalities in northern Kosovo.

---

## PROJECTS

### *Project Activities:*

*NGO ACDC will organize ten (10) round table discussions with participation of women, women's associations, Civil Society Organizations, representatives of local self-governments, officials of the Agency for Gender Affairs, legal practitioners, judges and academic community. Each round table discussion will involve minimum fifteen (15), participants who will represent different actors and will come from all four municipalities in northern Kosovo, namely North Mitrovica, Zvecan, Zubin Potok and Leposavic*

*NGO ACDC will organize educative media campaign to raise the knowledge and awareness on Gender Equality, with special emphasis on Women's Property Rights. Media campaign will include screening of TV advertisements and broadcasting of radio advertisements, along with the billboards with appropriate messages, which will be posted in all four municipalities*

*In the light of awareness raising campaign on the issue of Gender Equality NGO ACDC will carry on media campaign, with special emphasis on Women's Property Rights. Media campaign will include screening of TV advertisements and broadcasting of radio advertisements, along with the billboards with appropriate messages*

*Street Action that will use for dissemination of promotional material which will be developed within the project, aiming to raise knowledge and awareness on Gender Equality and Women's Property Rights among larger community.*

*NGO ACDC will develop and disseminate promotional material in order to both promote the importance of protection of gender Equality, with special emphasis on Women's Property Rights, and to present the activities and achievement of the project*

*In order to present the achievements of the project and to foster further networking of all relevant stakeholders, including central and local authorities, women's associations, CSOs and media NGO ACDC will organize a one-day closure conference*

*NGO ACDC will conduct regular monitoring of the cases involving Women's Property Rights, through regular weekly visits to the court and meetings with judges and the associated staff. Findings of the court monitoring will be translated into the reports on cases involving Women's Property Rights*

*In order to straighten Women's Caucuses and Civil Society in of North Mitrovica, Zvecan, Zubin Potok and Leposavic municipalities NGO ACDC will organize training for members of Women's Caucus, trainings for Civil Society Organizations, and trainings for Municipal Assembly members*

*The trainings will be focused on legal property rights of women and available legal mechanisms for its protection and promotion.*

*Aiming at acquiring knowledge and experiences from the agencies/organizations active in the field and to foster networking of women's activists and leaders from northern Kosovo with the relevant institutions and organizations in Kosovo NGO ACD will organize Study Visits to Basic Court, Government Agencies and Relevant institutions.*

*Address: Čika Jovina 3, North City Center, North Mitrovica*  
*Contact: 044 539 852 and 064 11 77 871; [office@acdc-kosovo.org](mailto:office@acdc-kosovo.org)*  
*[www.acdc-kosovo.org](http://www.acdc-kosovo.org)*

