

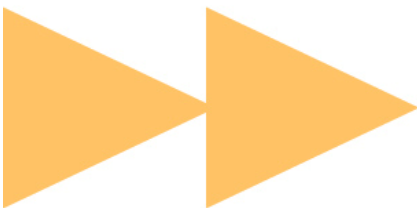


European Partnership with Municipalities Programme

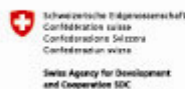
The Fifth EU PROGRES Steering Committee

Sjenica, 26 October, 2011

Minutes



Programme funded by EU



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



Implementing Partner



Programme funded by EU



Implementing Partner



European Partnership with Municipalities Programme

I Agenda

1. Welcome and introduction speeches
2. Approval of the minutes of the previous Steering Committee
3. Summary presentation of the Quarterly Report July-September 2011
4. Overview of EU-PROGRES implementation
5. Presentation of requests for funding commitments
6. Voting
7. Other business

II Minutes

Agenda item 1: Welcome and introduction speeches

- Welcome from **Dejan Gojković**, the Head of Sector for Monitoring and Evaluation from the **Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO)**, who chaired the meeting.
- Welcome from the **host**, Muriz Turković, the **Mayor of Sjenica**. Turković thanked EU PROGRES for good cooperation, mentioning two projects in particular: water pumps in Sjenica and the Pešter Development Centre, an initiative of significant importance given agricultural potentials of the municipality.
- Fatiha Serour, **Regional Director for Europe and Middle East, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** welcomed the participants and gave a brief overview of EU PROGRES implementing organisation which has offices across the Middle East and Europe and diverse group of experiences brought together under one roof. She was impressed that EU PROGRES managed to gather relevant development stakeholders which was very rare and in this line of work.

Agenda item 2: Approval of the minutes of the previous Steering Committee

The Programme Steering Committee voting members unanimously approved the minutes of the Annual Steering Committee meeting.

Agenda item 3: Summary presentation of the Quarterly Report July-September 2011

- **Graeme Tyndall, EU PROGRES Manager** initiated discussion about the Programme, especially in terms of identifying and discussing problems and implementation bottlenecks rather than ignoring them. These related to the lack of planning and technical documentation and, the reality that EU PROGRES, over the past few weeks has insisted that municipalities meet certain standards in the execution of approved grant contracts because all were accountable to the European tax-payers who fund the programme. EU PROGRES wanted to help the municipalities to prepare for the European Union (EU) accession, and in that regard developing capacity of



Programme funded by EU



Implementing Partner



Implementing Partner



European Partnership with Municipalities Programme

municipalities to implement, monitor, and evaluate projects was crucial. This firm approach was not the issue of liking but of an obligation by all Partners to deliver the Programme.

The building season was lost even though some projects were approved in February. Losing another building season could not be afforded. As an example many local projects but also larger ones like the Pešter project are not going very well. The Pešter facility has to be built by June 2012 in order to create conditions for the Czech Government to support it. On a bright side, Leskovac Green Zone project is on target.

Finally, Tyndall announced the mission of EU monitoring expert for early November and if Partners had any issues, positive or negative, about the way the Programme is being implemented than that is the time to raise them.

Agenda item 4: Overview of PROGRES implementation

- **Gojković** stated that everybody needed to demonstrate maximum commitment to the Programme. Municipalities had to take into consideration the level of preparedness of proposals before submitting them.
- **Jasmina Ilić, EU PROGRES Component 3 Manager**, provided an update on infrastructure projects and technical documentation through statistical overview of current activities (Power Point presentation is available in the Attachment 1).
- **Ana Stanković, Project Manager, the Delegation of the European Union (DEU)**, requested an analysis of project by project, in order to identify obstacles to particular interventions.

The SC reviewed the status of projects that were experiencing significant delays, including the following:

- **Raška Recycling Yard: Dragiša Ilić, the President of the municipality** explained that the project was overdue because the Ministry of Environment Mining and Spatial Planning (MoEMSP) did not approve location initially suggested for the yard. At present, Raška and MoEMSP were considering two options for the location. Ilić also thought that there should be more meetings at higher level whose purpose would be to mitigate the potential problems instead of waiting SC meetings to discuss them.
- **Ana Stanković** said that in case it was deemed necessary, DEU would send letters to ministries to ask they address obstacles impeding implementation of particular projects;
- **Nova Varoš Recycling Yard: Slaviša Purić, the President of the municipality**, explained that Nova Varoš had been putting intensive efforts over the past months to resolve the issue of location for the recycling yard. It managed to fulfil complex legal procedures in order to obtain the right to purchase identified plot of land. In the meantime the new Law on Public Property has been adopted and it enabled the Municipality to purchase the land and made all previous work vain. Still, it is expected that the MoEMSP and Eco Fund would at their next Steering Committee consider provision of financial assistance to Nova Varoš for the purchase of land. Purić thanked EU PROGRES and its predecessor programme PRO for efforts supporting building of municipal capacities. He also thought that things could have been done more efficiently if the cooperation was closer and more intense.



European Partnership with Municipalities Programme

- **Blace school toilet reconstruction: Radoje Krstović, the President** of the municipality explained that the delay in reconstruction was caused because the Ministry of Education (MoE), another funding contributor, had specific procurement rules. The satisfactory solution was found with the EU PROGRES, the municipality transferred its co-funding afterwards and the tendering package was being finalised. Krstović added that the construction season restrictions would not affect implementation of the project, since all the works are to be done indoors. Krstović confirmed that Blace gave up the second approved infrastructure project.
- **Vesna Jakovljević**, President of Kuršumlija said that the Municipality had limited capacities to develop technical documentation and this was a major obstacle to more efficient work. She proposed forming a joint project preparation bureau for Toplica District as a possible solution.
- **Nikola Bulajić, Member of Prokuplje Municipal Council**, provided an update on two approved projects. Tender procedure for the construction of the plateau in front of the Health Centre was complete and the bids were evaluated. The Cleaning of the Straževačka River project experienced administrative problems and the Municipality needed time to solve ownership issues.
- **Žitorada** representative was not present. Jasmina Ilić confirmed that the problems were solved in the meantime.
- **Ana Stanković**, in conclusion, requested from EU PROGRES to update the table that included all projects and submit it to DEU in early November, with information on delays and current status of each project (preliminary submission at Attachment 2). She advised EU PROGRES to provide additional technical support and experts for the development of project proposals and technical documentation to municipalities that expressed need for it.
- **Graeme Tyndall** confirmed that there were three full time and five part time engineers currently at disposal and if any municipality needed assistance in ensuring their technical documentation is up to standards then it should not hesitate to ask it.
- **Jasmina Ilić** also presented the status of inter-municipal projects: Leskovac Green Zone was on target; with regard to Pešter Development Centre Project, EU PROGRES established closer cooperation with SEDA than predicted by the Programme methodology, but this was the only way to speed up activities; regarding the Kopaonik Water and Waste Water Project, the roles of projects stakeholders have been clarified: Serbia Waters will manage the project on behalf of the Raška Public Utility Company while the National Park Kopaonik is a partner; EU PROGRES and MoEMSP, after months long delay, provisionally agreed content of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that would provide framework for cooperation. Graeme Tyndall, however, said that in addition to the MoU it was necessary for the MoEMSP to formally commit funding in order for EU PROGRES to financially support technical design for Banjica Landfill; within efforts to support establishment of regional landfill Meteris, EU-PROGRES provided grant to Bujanovac for preparation of technical documentation for the main design of solid waste transfer station.



Programme funded by EU



Implementing Partner



European Partnership with Municipalities Programme

- Purić heard for the first time that there were uncertainties regarding EU PROGRES and MoEMSP support to the Banjica Landfill. He said that the MoEMSP confirmed their interest for the project and urged the partner municipalities to adopt the legal framework and documents before the projects can commence.
- Dobrivoje Stančić, **EU PROGRES Component 2 Manager**, presented activities regarding citizens' assistance centres, general and detailed regulation plans and informed the SC that support to design of DRP for Vlasotince was withdrawn following a formal request by municipality.
- Ilić and Stančić summarised that that main reason for project delays were long duration of preparation of tender packages, due to poor quality of cadastre maps and developed technical documentation. In addition, due to inability of local self-governments to plan funding of projects, there were delays in the payments of municipal contributions. Ilić, however, concluded that municipalities mainly addressed delays – preparation of tender packages and payment of their financial contributions for projects are mostly now completed.
- **Biljana Kerić, EU PROGRES Citizens Involvement Fund Administrator**, provided overview of implementation of forty small community based projects. These projects encountered similar problems as local and regional infrastructure projects but only a small proportion will need extension into 2012.
- **Nadia Bohli, Deputy Country Director of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)** was pleased to confirm that the SDC approved 1.5 million Euros for the Extension Agreement making the overall Swiss contribution to EU PROGRES is 2.5 million Euros primarily supporting Programme good governance efforts. Bohli praised CIF project introducing e-government in Sjenica and expressed regret that the budgetary hearings activity would not take place this year.

Agenda item 5: Presentation of requests for funding commitments

- Dušan Čukić presented the following projects for approval:
 1. Projects prepared by Vranje and Prokuplje Business Incubator Centres: up to 67,500 EUR
 2. Support to local tax administrations: up to 85,500 EUR
 3. Local infrastructure projects for Crna Trava, Medveđa, Vranje, Preševo and Ivanjica, selected as best in the second call for proposals: 457,463 EUR
- Srđan Šušulić, the President of Vlasotince Municipality wanted to know more details about the construction of local sewerage system in Crna Trava, especially whether the waste water would be channelled directly into the river. He expressed concern that this project would have a negative impact on the environment in Vlasotince and asked reconsideration of this project.
- Tyndall provided assurances that EU PROGRES would not sign grant contract before addressing questions and fully examining concerns raised by Vlasotince Mayor



Programme funded by EU



Implementing Partner



European Partnership with Municipalities Programme

- Meho Mahmutović, the Mayor of Novi Pazar, wanted to know why the project for the installation of heating system in the new sports hall was not recommended for funding. He thought this project deserved highest score, knowing that Novi Pazar was the youngest city in Europe. Mahmutović also claimed that the project met technical conditions, including issuing of necessary permits. He added he would not accept EU PROGRES arguments, no matter what they may be.
- Jasmina Ilić confirmed that Novi Pazar project was put on the reserve list. The project was not recommended because Novi Pazar failed to provide proof that the building works were completed.
- Mahmutović said it was illogical to request proof for completed works when they were ongoing.
- Fatiha Serour commented that this particular project was discussed earlier in a meeting with the Novi Pazar Mayor. She suggested staging of another separate meeting regarding this issue, as it was agreed before the SC.
- Galip Beqiri, the President of the Albanian National Minority Council and Shaip Kamberi, the President of Bujanovac Municipality wanted to know the status of Bujanovac project, which was submitted to EU PROGRES twice in response to calls. The second application was improved in line with suggestions provided by EU PROGRES after the first call, but the project was again not recommended. They expressed concern that the project was refused for political reasons.
- Dušan Čukić explained that project was not in compliance with Programme priorities as well as that other recommended projects, such as the ones providing employment had stronger impact.
- Dejan Gojković and Graeme Tyndall provided assurances that the projects were not selected on political grounds. Tyndall added that the resources were limited and insufficient to address all the needs of the area.

Agenda item 6: Voting

- The SC voting members tentatively adopted the QR and gave the opportunity for additional commenting in the coming seven days.
- The SC voting members unanimously approved funding of all presented motions.

Agenda item 7: Any other business

- Aleksandar Radosavljević, the Special Advisor **of the Ministry of Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Public Administration and Local Self Government** announced the pending adoption of the Law on Local Self Government Employees which will commence the process of addressing the capacities of LSG, including project management.
- Ana Stanković invited all eligible municipalities to submit applications in response to the call for proposals for Cross Border Cooperation programme. The deadline for Montenegro was 14 November and for Bosnia and Herzegovina 5 December.



Programme funded by EU



Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC



Implementing Partner



European Partnership with Municipalities Programme

- Darko Tomić, President of Trgovište Municipality, proposed to host the next SC. The proposal was accepted.

List of participants

Nr.	Name	Organisation	Position
1.	Ana Stanković	The Delegation of the European Union	Project Manager
2.	Nadia Bohli	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	Deputy Country Director
3.	Petar Vasilev	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	National Project Officer
4.	Fatiha Serour	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	Regional Director for Europe and Middle East
5.	Dejan Gojković	Serbian European Integration Office	The Head of Sector for Monitoring and Evaluation
6.	Aleksandar Radosavljević	Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Public Administration and Local Self Government	Special Advisor
7.	Šemsudin Kučević	The Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas	Deputy Director
8.	Sandra Hadžagić	The Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas	The Head of Projects Development Section
9.	Galip Beqiri	Albanian National Minority Council	President
10.	Meho Mahmutović	City of Novi Pazar	Mayor
11.	Milomir Zorić	Ivanjica Municipality	Deputy Mayor
12.	Lazar Rvović	Priboj Municipality	Mayor
13.	Dragiša Ilić	Raška Municipality	Mayor
14.	Muriz Turković	Sjenica Municipality	Mayor
15.	Hasim Čalaković Aljović	Tutin Municipality	Local Economic Development Office
16.	Radoje Krstović	Blace Municipality	Mayor
17.	Jovica Ćurčić	Blace Municipality	Vice-President of the Assembly
18.	Nikola Bulajić	Prokuplje Municipality	Executive Council member
19.	Zoran Dimitrijević	Prokuplje Municipality	Mayor Assistant
20.	Vesna Jakovljević	Kuršumljija municipality	Mayor
21.	Dejan Jovanović	Kuršumljija Municipality	The Head of Department for Local Economic Development
22.	Milorad Mladenović	City of Leskovac	Mayor Assistant
23.	Dragoslav Anđelković	Bojnik Municipality	Head of Municipal Administration
24.	Mića Stanković	Lebane Municipality	Mayor
25.	Slobodan Drašković	Medveđa Municipality	Mayor
26.	Srđan Šušulić	Vlasotince Municipality	Mayor

The Programme is funded by the European Union, the Government of Switzerland and the Government of Serbia and is implemented by UNOPS, in partnership with 25 municipalities of the South and South West Serbia.

www.progresprogram.org



Programme funded by EU



Implementing Partner



European Partnership with Municipalities Programme

27.	Jasmina Stanojković	Surdulica Municipality	Head of Municipal Administration
28.	Dejan Nikolić	Vladičin Han Municipality	Mayor Assistant
29.	Milan Vučković	Vladičin Han Municipality	Municipal Council
30.	Boban Stanković	City of Vranje	Mayor Assistant
31.	Shaip Kamberi	Bujanovac Municipality	Mayor
32.	Darko Tomić	Trgovište Municipality	Mayor
33.	Saša Stevanović	Trgovište Municipality	Mayor Assistant
34.	Džemil Huseinović	SEDA	IT Administrator
35.	Almir Šaćirović	SEDA	Financial manager
36.	Zibija Šarenkapić	DamaD	President
37.	Indira Kuburović	Sandžački ćilim	President
38.	Sedat Vrcić	Flores	Executive Director
39.	Esmir Gracić	Flores	Head of IT Sector
40.	Aleksandar Iljenko	USAID	Novi Pazar Office Manager
41.	Klaus Richter	MSP IPA 2007	Team Leader
42.	Graeme Tyndall	EU PROGRES	Programme Manager
43.	Dušan Čukić	EU PROGRES	Technical Programme Specialist
44.	Dobrivoje Stančić	EU PROGRES	Component 2 Manager
45.	Jasmina Ilić	EU PROGRES	Component 3 Manager
46.	Dragan Mladenović	EU PROGRES	Component 1 Manager
47.	Marko Vujačić	EU PROGRES	Communications Officer
48.	Nermin Hasanović	EU PROGRES	Head of South West Serbia Office

The Programme is funded by the European Union, the Government of Switzerland and the Government of Serbia and is implemented by UNOPS, in partnership with 25 municipalities of the South and South West Serbia.

www.progresprogram.org