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**Project**  
**"Further Development of Civil Dialogue Between Serbia and Kosovo"**  
**Workshop in Presevo**

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**Topic 1: Introduction of Mandatory Gender Budgeting**

**Goal:**

To assess the realistic potential of the local budget to accept recommendations and support the work of the Gender Equality Commission by fostering its activities.

**Opportunities:**

- The local budget of Presevo municipality has not consistently funded programs aimed at strengthening the socio-economic position of women, institutional framework activities, or political emancipation.
- The gradual introduction of gender-responsive budgeting is not planned for 2025 due to limitations in the local budget's financial structure.
- The needs of the Gender Equality Commission will be financed in line with its planned activities.

**Value Chain:**

- The lack of continuous support from the local budget for women's activism, both through institutional frameworks and special programs for economic and political emancipation, delays the implementation of strategic and reform objectives. High levels of discrimination against women persist, regardless of education level, age, or geographic location.
- Women constitute only 30% of council members, meeting the legal minimum.
- The exclusion of women from the economic sphere is further exacerbated by a lack of adequate new job opportunities.
- Discrimination against women is particularly evident in rural areas, with no targeted support for their economic emancipation.
- Traditional attitudes towards women's roles remain a significant limiting factor for faster emancipation.

**Process Management:**

- Development strategies for the local community and action plans should systematically plan for the needs of women, incorporating surveys and aligning budget planning accordingly.

- Provide stronger financial and logistical support to the Gender Equality Commission and organize more educational workshops for its members to encourage greater activity.
- Support women in both urban and rural areas.
- Include logistical support from departments responsible for the community development strategy in the support process.

#### **Challenges and Limitations:**

- A portion of the female population in Presevo is aware of the need to change patriarchal attitudes toward women's roles.
- Initiatives to change the dominant perception of women's roles exist, but the lack of political and systemic support slows the process.
- A lack of access to information about systemic support opportunities, coupled with limited Serbian language proficiency, hinders communication with potential partners and opportunities.

#### **Sustainability:**

- Strategic documents of the Republic of Serbia mandate increased support for women's emancipation, and the Budget System Law introduces gender-responsive budgeting. These provide a foundation for sustaining this program. However, underdeveloped local communities highlight budget limitations and uncertainties regarding the proportion of the budget to be allocated for this purpose.

#### **Social Cohesion:**

- Women's emancipation requires an adequate legal framework, which exists.
- Its implementation demands continuous institutional engagement and political will to realize strategic objectives.

#### **Recommendation:**

Increase allocations from the local budget to stimulate women's activism and address their issues through the existing institutional framework, aligning them with national budget plans and the Gender Equality Strategy. Accelerate the process of introducing gender-responsive budgeting.

**Topic 2:** Securing Budget Funding for the Stability of Youth Offices. Youth offices must be trained to engage in project preparation to secure funding for youth activities, whether through projects financed by various ministries or donors.

**Goal:** Determine the status of the Youth Office, the existence of planning documents, and identify limitations in its planning and activities.

#### **Process Management:**

- The Youth Office operates within the Cabinet of the Municipal President.
- A Local Action Plan for Youth does not exist.

- During the annual budget process, a special decision is made to finance the Youth Office's work.
- The office employs two collaborators responsible for organizational tasks.
- The Chief of Staff coordinates communication between the Municipal President and the Youth Office.
- Frequent political changes at the local, national, and regional levels negatively impact the realization of strategic youth policy objectives.

#### **Value Chain:**

- Presevo municipality has one of the highest youth demographics in Serbia.
- This demographic potential is strategically positive but requires careful channeling and direction.
- The social and economic inclusion of youth in the existing state system is low and inadequate.
- A lack of new job opportunities, non-recognition of diplomas obtained in Kosovo, and limited Serbian language proficiency lead many young people to seek work abroad.
- Migration results in a continuous decrease in the working-age population.

#### **Challenges and Limitations:**

- The Youth Office's status within the Municipal President's Cabinet offers advantages, as negotiation and direction processes are dynamic.
- However, this setup risks a narrow circle of political allies influencing the office's work.
- Frequent changes in local political power disrupt the engagement of office collaborators, undermining the quality and continuity of its activities.
- Younger generations are ready to overcome the historical burdens of southern Serbia, but the political context created by older generations remains an obstacle.
- The political landscape in Presevo is becoming younger, though the critical mass necessary for greater involvement in decision-making has not been achieved.
- Adequate education programs must focus on developing young leaders.
- The Youth Office's limited budget is insufficient to establish an Innovation Center where Presevo's youth could acquire skills in modern technologies.

#### **Success Story:**

The Youth Office plans to overcome youth exclusion in Presevo through future activities. It aims to establish intensive cooperation with regional youth, particularly with those in northern Vojvodina.

#### **Recommendation:**

Given the absence of legal provisions regarding the institutional status of Youth Offices within the state system, efforts should ensure minimal influence from narrow political groups. Concurrently, provide continuous financial support from the local budget to fund the office's operations and activities fully. Ensure

municipal departments responsible for youth-related issues—employment, education, healthcare, and family status—provide comprehensive support.





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