Improving Public Accountability and Combating Corruption

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Our aim for improving public accountability

To increase the capacities of public officials and civil society to ensure good governance through:

- improving the legislative framework,
- enhancing existing public accountability mechanisms, and
- promoting best practices in public accountability.
Repression

- Support to the implementation of the Anti Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Law
- Training judges, prosecutors on conducting financial investigations
- Financial investigation training for supervisory bodies (Ministry of Finance and the National Bank of Serbia) as well as their private sector reporting entities.
- Training on investigating tax fraud/tax evasion
Prevention

- **Public Accountability:** The obligation of those entrusted with public resources to be socially and fiscally responsible.

- **Principles:**
  - Rule of law
  - Checks and balances
  - Transparency
  - Efficiency
Tools for prevention

- A strong and independent **State Auditor**
- A proactive **budget inspection unit**
- Parliamentary oversight (**finance committee**)
- Public sector **codes of conduct**
- **Citizens charters**
- A fair and transparent **public procurement system**
VI. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT OFFICE

Manner of Establishment

Article 98

Public Procurement Office is a special organization for performing technical activities in the area of public procurement, providing conditions for economic, efficient and transparent use of public funds for public procurement and promotion of competition and equality of bidders in the public procurement procedure.

The regulations pertaining to the government administration shall apply to the activity and organization of the Public Procurement Office.

Activities

Article 99

The Public Procurement Office shall perform activities that relate to:
1) the participation in drafting the regulations pertaining to the sphere of public procurement;
2) providing consulting services to procuring entities and bidders;
3) monitoring public procurement procedures;
4) submission of requests for the protection of rights in the case of violation of public interest;
5) informing the body in charge of public fund auditing, budget inspection and other bodies competent for the initiation of offence proceedings on irregularities in conducting public procurement procedures and delivering public procurement reports that it has identified in the course of performance of the activities within its competence.
Public Procurement on the local level

- Bidders and contracting entities on the local level must have access to timely and accurate information on public procurement.
- The central authority must reach out to the local level and educate bidders and contracting entities.
Public officials’ assets declarations

ИЗВЕШТАЈ О ИМОВИНИ И ПРИХОДИМА

1. РЕДОВНО ПРИЈАВЉИВАЊЕ ИМОВИНЕ:
   a) приликом ступања на јавну функцију
   b) приликом престања јавне функције

2. ВАНРЕДНО ПРИЈАВЉИВАЊЕ ИМОВИНЕ:
   a) због битних промена у току вријеме функције
   b) због битних промена после престања функције

(захранени односна од страна стопа)

Зашито се подносе: Подношење извештаја о имовини и приходима је законом утврђена обавеза функционера. Извештај је испуњавање обавезе транспарентно вријеме функције и јачање поверености јавности у институцијама државе и носиоца јавних функција.

Када и у ком року се извештај подносе: Редовни извештај о имовини и приходима функционера подноси се у року од 30 дана од дана ступања на функцију за себе, свог супрузника и приликом престања функције (така 1.6. града). Редовни извештај о имовини и приходима подноси се у року од 30 дана од дана престања функције (така 1.6. града).

Ванредно пријављивање имовине функционера вријеме до 31. јануара текуће године са стањем на дан 31. децембра претходне године уколико је вријеме текуће године дотрошено до битних промена у подацима у имовини или је функција престала или је преостала нека друга вријеме у држави.

Функционер који је престао функцију дужан је да извештај о имовини и приходима подноси једном годишње у наредне две године од престања функције (така 1.6. града).

Поштовање података о имовини: На интернет презентацији Агенције обављају се и достављају јавности подаци о плати и другим приходима који се привлаче из буџета и других јавних казначаја, подаци о њиховој сврхи, на непокретним стварима и бројању имовине, подаци о броју и фамилијама, подаци о пословима и приходима, подаци о електронским средставима, подаци о најчињениој регистарској бројевини, подаци о најосећенијем превозу, подаци о размену информација и другим подацима о касненим односима.

КАЗНЕНИ ОДРЕДБЕ (чл.72-74. Закона)

Функционер који не пријави имовину Агенцији или дуго не пријави податке о имовини, казни се лакшим од шест месеци до пет година. Функционер који је осуђен на ову казну престаје јавну функцију и забрањује се са стицањем јавне функције у року од десет година од дате привлачења присуде.

Новчаном казном од 10.000 до 50.000 динара казни се за прекид јавне функције ако пријави имовину након истека рока прописаног Законом.
Political Party Financing

- Strict monitoring of campaign financing and campaign expenditures
- Ensure that local party organs are familiar with legislation and provide their HQ with precise data of using public funds
Integrity Plans

- To identify weak points of an organisation’s operation, its vulnerability and exposed activity that cause risks for corruption.
- A systematic estimation of weakness and vulnerabilities within individual procedures, rules, and organizational processes.
- The adopted Guidelines will be used by at least 3,500 state organs, local governmental bodies, public services and public companies as a basic document for drafting and implementing their individual integrity plans.
Examples of activities on strengthening public accountability and combating corruption at the local level

Civil society organizations, local self government, media outlets and independent agencies at both the central and local levels were given the opportunity to submit project proposals on increasing public accountability and participation mechanisms, and promoting best practices in combating corruption.

The selected projects implemented throughout Serbia deal with transparent budgeting; improving civic participation on the local level; establishing a legal advice center and hotline for witnesses and victims of corruption; strengthening cooperation among local government and NGOs on anti-corruption; improving the monitoring of planning and efficient spending of budgets; as well as support to local anti-corruption councils.
Changing the Statute of Kragujevac and Krusevac cities to reduce the required number of signatures (25% voters) for a Citizen’s Initiative

- Implemented by local NGO Sretenje
- For citizens and CSOs it is nearly impossible to gather 25% of local voters to run a people's initiative. Lowering it to 5% would increase citizen participation in local government and accountability of local government.
- A coalition of local NGOs was created
- A public campaign was run focused on the local government, NGOs, citizens
- Meetings with Mayors and city council persons and the coalition of NGOs were called
- A proposal was sent to the city councils for amending their statutes.
Informed citizen – active participant

- Implemented by the City Administration of Vranje
- The aim is to increase citizens’ involvement in the prevention of corruption in the public sector through increasing the local government’s transparency in the city of Vranje.
- INFOCENTRE brochures distributed throughout the community
- Website "Citizens’ panel", where citizens and visitors can easily and quickly leave their comments, report corruption in the public sector, and pose questions within the jurisdiction of the City Administration
- Creation of an INFOCENTRE help desk in the city hall to receive comments in person.
- Promotion through the media of the "Citizens’ panel"
Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) in Serbia

- Implemented by Transparency Serbia
- **Main project activities:**
  - Toll-free hotline for reporting cases of corruption
  - Free and confidential legal advice and assistance provided to citizens
  - Data collection, case and cluster analysis of evidence
  - Identification of weaknesses in the system which allow corruption to flourish
  - Evidence-based advocacy for structural reform (based on the problems identified during individual cases)
Interruption of Corruption

- Implemented by the **Southern Backa Administrative District**
- The objective of the project is to establish a sustainable network of Local Councils for Security in the Southern Backa district and in this way contribute to improving the quality and efficiency of the local administration to fight corruption.
- Target groups of the project: **Local authorities** in order to provide political support to the project, **Local Councils for security**, CSO, media, general public.
- Promote cooperation among local government, **CSOs**, and the **private sector** in local communities
Improving budgetary procedures at the local level for the purpose of controlled budgetary spending

- Implemented by the local NGO Center for Democratic Activities (Lebane)
- To improve budgetary procedures at the local level by building the capacities of the municipal assemblies of Lebane and Medvedja to increase transparency and citizen inclusion and to reduce corruption, particularly in the area of public procurement.
- Activities:
  1. survey of councilpersons, NGOs
  2. seminars on budget planning and civic participation for local councilpersons
  3. secondary survey to assess improvement
Strengthening Public Accountability on Environmental issues

- Implemented by the local NGO Ecological Association AVALON
- The strategic objective of the project is to improve overall access to information of public interest to Vrsac citizens by encouraging them to directly and actively influence decision makers on risky environmental investments.
- Establishment of a team for monitoring, analysing and cataloguing environmentally risky investments,
- Establishment of an Information/consulting Centre that will lead an informative awareness campaign on environmentally risky investment cases through a website, Facebook group, local TV program.
- Prepare recommendations for the government Action Plan on the Implementation of National Environmental Strategy
Capacity building of Local Anti-corruption Forums for implementing local anti-corruption plans

- Implemented by the national NGO **Bureau for Social Research (BIRODI)** in four local municipalities
- Local Anti-corruption Plans: Coordinated effort among local government, civil society and media to assess current status of corruption, risks for corruption and develop a locally specific anti-corruption plan that is measurable and implementable.
- Workshops for local municipal councilpersons, NGOs, media who members of LAFs on:
  1. what is corruption and anti-corruption
  2. ethical governance and the fight against corruption
  3. research, monitoring and evaluating corruption and the fight against corruption
  4. integrity plans
  5. the media and corruption
  6. public finances
Proactive Budget

- Implemented by the local NGO *Proactiv*
- To establish a *mechanism for efficient budgetary control* of local self-government, local public institutions and public enterprises within the Nisava district.
- **Training** of local media and NGOs
- **Informative campaign** including press conferences, street campaigns, and distributing handbooks on transparent budgeting and how citizens may get involved.
- Round tables open for the public with civil society, media, the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection and local self-government representatives on the budget making and budget expenditure processes.
Locally Accountable

- Implemented by the national NGO Centre for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA)
- Established a network of local NGOs from 10 local communities engaged in accountability monitoring at the local level
- Citizens informed about accountability and transparency issues at the local level (throughout monitoring of local officials’ and institutions’ work, publishing of local accountability analyses)
- Developed recommendations for improved transparency and accountability practices in local officials’ and institutions’ work
- Organizing round tables that promote accountability and transparency in local communities
- Disseminating key recommendations and findings from round tables and sending them to local officials and institutions’ representatives.
Active citizen – active community

- Implemented by the local NGO *Association of returnees Reintegration*

- To increase civic activism and transparency in the town of Novi Pazar by including citizens, local institutions and “national envoys” (MPs from Novi Pazar) in *civic initiatives*

- In this way local civic initiatives are promoted and *national politicians* are held accountable to their constituencies
Thank you.

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