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**CITIZENS ENGAGED IN
THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF
ALBANIA (CESEDA)**

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FINAL REPORT

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**Submitted to USAID/Albania by
World Learning Inc.
1015 15th Street, NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20005 USA
Phone: 1-202-408-5420; Fax: 1-202-408-5397
Jennifer Whatley, Program Manager**

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conducted through the USAID Global Development Alliance with funding provided by USAID Albania and World Learning private funds, the Communities Engaged in Social and Economic Development Project (CESEDA) was initiated to expand participation of rural and poor communities in implementation and revision of the National Strategy for Social and Economic Development (NSSED). The project two year project was conducted by World Learning in partnership with the Institute for Development Research and Alternatives.

CESEDA included three major components community empowerment, government policy feedback, media-based public awareness. The project worked in four rural communes¹ in central Albania: Baldushk Commune, Golem Commune, Gose Commune, and Petrele Commune.

Nearly 2,500 residents of these communes participated directly in the project through report card meetings, meetings with commune officials, and project work groups. These citizens held 99 meetings with local government officials and completed 58 projects designed to improve government services that they themselves had identified as priorities. In addition, CESEDA linked rural citizens with national level government through regular reports as well as group meetings. To raise awareness about the NSSED, CESEDA commissioned a documentary which was then aired on television.

CESEDA resulted in improved roads, bridges, health clinics and schools as well as a change in mentality among the citizens who participated.

This report covers project activities over the life of the project, July 18, 2003 to July 31, 2005, and also provides a more in depth look at activities in the project's final operational quarter.

II. BACKGROUND

During the communist period, Albania was the most isolated country in Europe. With rare exceptions, such as political leaders or athletes competing in international events, Albanians were not permitted to travel outside their borders and rarely had contact with those from other countries. Government was highly centralized and citizen participation was not permitted.

Today Albania remains one of Europe's poorest countries. In 2001, the Albanian Government launched the National Strategy for Social and Economic Development (NSSED). The NSSED is aimed at encouraging significant economic growth and reducing poverty by the year 2015 as well as expanding enrollment in basic and

¹ Communes are a division of local government found in rural areas. Communes consist of several villages which in turn are composed of several individual neighborhoods.

secondary education and decreasing mortality rates. At the same time, the process of decentralizing government was placing responsibility for many services key to reaching NSSSED goals in the hands of local governments.

The CESEDA project was designed to give the country's poorest citizens, the rural poor, a voice in implementing the NSSSED. To do this the project aimed to break both expectations among citizens that they had no role in government policy making, and encourage citizens to look beyond the central government for solutions to local problems.

III. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A. Objectives and Strategy

CESEDA directly supported USAID/Albania SO 2.1, "Increased Involvement of Civil Society in Economic and Political Decision-Making." CESEDA's **primary objective** was to help Albania develop mechanisms to support direct citizen involvement with local governments in rural, impoverished and under-served communities on issues, policies and programs related to implementation of the NSSSED. The project's **second objective** was the development of more accountable and transparent governmental processes and institutions, to allow Albania's local and central governments to focus resources and services on the intended beneficiaries of the NSSSED who had been, thus far, largely unengaged in its development or initial implementation.

The project included three major components:

- Community Empowerment
- Government Policy Feedback
- Media-based Public Awareness.

B. Partners and Implementers

Supported by USAID/Albania through the US Agency for International Development Global Development Alliance with matching funds from an anonymous private donor to World Learning, the CESEDA project was implemented by World Learning in conjunction with an Albanian think tank, the Institute for Development and Research Alternatives (IDRA).

World Learning served as lead implementer for the project and brought its international experience working with grassroots citizens' advocacy and with specific initiatives to involve citizens in the PRSP process. Through a subgrant from World Learning, IDRA provided advice, knowledge of the Albanian context, and employed CESEDA's lead coordinator, field coordinators, and drivers.

IV. PROJECT START-UP AND STAFFING

World Learning located office space in the same building as the IDRA office, allowing easy communication between the two project partners. Workplan development was a collaborative effort involving CESEDA Director Barbara Coe, IDRA Executive Director Auron Pasha, and World Learning Home Office staff, as well as CESEDA Lead Coordinator Elona Boce once she joined the project.

From the project's outset the CESEDA Director and IDRA Executive Director met with donors, partners, collaborators, and other interested parties to establish linkages, to talk about CESEDA and to establish procedures for working together. These included Eric Richardson and Susana Cullufi of USAID, the Coordinator for the NSSED, the Deputy for the Ministry of Local Government, NDI Civic Forum Director and Sr. Program Managers, the Country Director for the Urban Institute Local Government Reform Project (also involving Report Cards), the Country Director for Carter Center, (focused on Civil Society building), the Director of Peace Corps Albania, OSCE Country Director, head of the Commune Association (and newly-elected head of Baldushk Commune), and others.

A. Selection of Communities

World Learning originally envisioned working in communities in which the NDI Civic Forum had worked and with the Engaged Citizens trained by NDI, thus maximizing both the results and the use of USAID resources. CESEDA began work in four communes (Baldushk, Golem, Petrele, and Synej) suggested by NDI as places that should be considered. In response to concerns later raised by NDI that citizens of Synej might become confused by the presence of another organization working on civil society development, CESEDA voluntarily withdrew from that Commune and moved to the Commune of Gose.

B. Staffing

CESEDA staff consisted of the director, lead coordinator, a finance/office manager, eight field coordinators (FCs), and two drivers. The CESEDA director and finance/office manager were employed directly by World Learning while other project staff were employed by IDRA. All staff, however, reported programmatically to the CESEDA director.

Once target Communes were identified, the CESEDA team hired FCs able to engage citizens in those communities. Each Commune was assigned a team of two FCs – one male and one female to encourage both men and women to participate in the project. FCs either had experience as coordinators in rural areas in Albania or had complementary backgrounds such as teaching. Several resided in villages in the target Communes and others generally had family or other ties to the Communes in which they worked.

World Learning's Home Office team including a Program Manager, the Director of Civil Society and Social Change Programs, the Senior Advisor for Democracy and

Governance, the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, and the Field Finance Coordinator visited the project to provide technical assistance and project oversight. As is described in this report, IDRA's Executive Director provided key advice and guidance as well.

C. Staff Training and Team Building

Staff training and team building was a key component of the project. From October 27 through November 4, 2003, CESEDA conducted an initial orientation for FCs to familiarize them with the project, the NSSED, and expectations for their work, as well as to build a solid project team. Topics included the NSSED and associates initiatives, Local Government, Community Empowerment, Facilitation Skills, and Report Card Development. The training also included a day-long field experience to give FCs hands-on experience with the project's techniques and a session to strategize and organize for immediately going to the field to begin the report card process

FCs then meet in Tirana weekly or bi-weekly for follow-on training sessions. These included sessions to reinforce using CESEDA methodology as well as awareness raising sessions in which FCs or outside speakers informed the CESEDA team about topics related to local development.

World Learning's Home Office Field Finance Coordinator also conducted a site visit to train the CESEDA's finance/office manager so that the project would comply with USAID and World Learning regulations.

V. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

A. Community Empowerment

Community empowerment was the centerpiece of the CESEDA project. The goal of the community empowerment was to help citizens identify local government services that they believed were top priorities for improvement, communicate these priorities to local government officials, and work with local government to see these services improved. After identifying target communes and hiring and training staff, the community empowerment work began in earnest in November 2003.

Field Coordinators played the key role in this process by helping citizens to identifying community priorities, and providing training and encouragement so that citizens could engage local government, and plan and implement community projects.

1. Preliminary Planning

FCs first met with Village Elders and the Commune Head, explaining the goals and process of CESEDA. Then FCs, with the assistance of local formal and informal leaders, convened neighborhood groups so that they could directly inform citizens about the project. Information meetings often included a Community Mapping exercise through

which FCs and citizens both gathered and disseminated information about their village and commune. If the neighborhood was remote and if participants in the information meeting seemed ready to proceed, FCs sometimes combined this meeting with the report card meetings described below.

During this planning phase and throughout the project, FCs developed Commune and Village Profiles for all the entities with which they would work, describing conditions including social and economic factors, significant events and changes, and progress made. These Profiles were based on their own observation of conditions, coupled with conversations with leaders and citizens. Profiles helped FCs both to understand and to provide information to citizens about their community.

2. Report Cards

Next, FCs facilitated neighborhood level meetings at which citizens developed report cards to assess the services and conditions that the participants considered most important to discuss. Field Coordinators conducted several report cards in each village to allow better citizen participation. Neighborhoods within villages were often spread out making it difficult to travel to a central place for a meeting. In addition, FCs often held women only report card meetings to encourage women's participation in the process.

Report cards were prepared by group consensus rather than by individuals to encourage citizens to interact and work together to identify priorities. This helped lay the groundwork for the group projects that followed. FCs asked citizens to list local government services, identify their three priorities for improvement and then to evaluate components of those services on a scale of "very bad" to "very good". The following example is an English translation of a report card prepared in a neighborhood in Gosë Commune.

Report Card: Gosë Vogel 1

List of services	List of priorities
Road	School
Electricity	Road
Health service	Kindergarten
Education/school	
Potable water	
Irrigation/drainage system	
Law enforcement	
Social assistance	
Kindergarten	
Agricultural services	
Service of commune administration	
Cultural activity services	
Agricultural products' market	

Evaluation of service 1

Service: School					
Service	Very bad	Bad	Medium	Good	Very good
<i>Attributes</i>					
Building status in general	X				
Staff service					X
Inside status of building		X			
Location			X		
Fencing	X				
Community willingness to contribute					X

The village school is located in the old center of the village. This is too far for some of the families that have built new houses away from the center.

Villagers maintain that fencing is also another important issue for the school.

Several farm animals enter the garden and ruin it. During rainy weather the school floods because of lack of drainage ditches that control water.

Villagers have contributed for fencing the school but it is not sufficient.

Evaluation of service 2

Service: Road					
<i>Service</i>	<i>Very bad</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very good</i>
<i>Attributes</i>					
Surface quality			X		
Drainage ditches	X				
Maintenance	X				

The road quality is medium but lack of maintenance has created damage in several parts of the road. Villagers maintain too that the drainage ditches cause flooding in rainy times because they are filled in with dirt.

Evaluation of service 3

Service: Kindergarten					
<i>Service</i>	<i>Very bad</i>	<i>Bad</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very good</i>
<i>Attributes</i>					
Building conditions	X				
Interest of parents for kindergarten service					X
Staff service					X

Actually, in Gosë Vogël village there is no kindergarten. Close to the school building there is another building which villagers want to use as a kindergarten. Number of children who need this service is high, because the parents are working all day. At the same time, staff with relevant education is available too. The issue is however dependent on the Education Director of the Region, while the commune officials can also help with lobbying for this priority.

The Field Coordinators then consolidated the report cards from the various neighborhoods and returned to the groups to present a consolidated village level report card. Though all male and all female groups normally agreed on priorities, when there were differences, FCs noted this in the consolidated report card. When presenting the consolidated report cards to village groups, FCs discussed next steps -- the citizens first taking the report card results to the Commune officials, the Head and/or Council, then planning for and taking action to address one or more priorities.

In the final stages of the project, FCs returned to some villages to conduct second round report cards in order to measure changes in citizen priorities.

3. Engaging Local Government

FCs encouraged citizens to arrange meetings with the Commune Head or Commune Council and attended the meetings along with citizens. The meetings were aimed at presenting citizen priorities, soliciting feedback from elected and appointed officials, and also hearing about Commune priorities and plans. FCs then helped citizens to work with local officials to find ways for collaboration on community improvement, and also identify what projects citizens might themselves undertake in the near or more distant future.

4. Action Planning and Improving Services

Afterwards FCs facilitated a work group meeting (normally including participants from each neighborhood in the village) using a results model to plan how to address one or more priorities that they wanted to tackle first. In this results model, the work group participants first developed a vision of where they wanted the village to be, that is, the desired results. Then they described the current condition relevant to those desired results, making sure to indicate the resources that are available for the achievement of the desired results. Then they indicated actions that could be taken to achieve the desired results, considering the difference between the desired results and the current conditions and resources.

Additional training in community organizing, communicating their message, running meetings, planning and grant management was provided to active village groups, including grant winners (see below). The training focused on small groups from a few villages, rather than with individuals only, because groups are more likely to be able to effect change and engage other residents by reinforcing each other's efforts in their villages.

5. Grants

During the second year of the project, World Learning included a small grants element with village groups. The grants, from a few hundred dollars to \$5,000, with a total fund of \$21,736, were given to 7 villages to enhance community activity by encouraging and

rewarding active communities with demonstrated commitment to their futures. A competitive process was used to select winners from proposals submitted by communities that had participated in the Report Card process, with communities matching grant funds with at least 20 percent contributions of labor and/or funds. Most provided a larger percentage. Each of the projects responded to a community need identified through report card meetings. They were:

- *Road Construction Baldushk Commune, Zelaj/ Mustafakoç Villages* – New roads constructed through two grants allow communication between three neighborhoods, help children get to school and help farmers get to the agricultural market.
- *Bridge Construction Golem Commune, Kanaparaj Village* -- The new bridge allows communication among three villages and helps children get to school. Without the bridge children have to use a longer road which requires 2-3 hours to reach the school.
- *Bridge Construction, Baldushk Commune, Balaxhias Village* -- The new bridge allows communication between four villages, transportation of products to the agricultural market, and helps children get to school. Previously children travelled 1-2 hours to reach the school.
- *Sewage System Construction, Petrelë Commune, Shytaj Village*—Resulted in improved sanitary conditions.
- *Green Space Reconstruction, Gosë Commune, Gosë Fermë Village* – Citizens created a public area open to all to gather and relax.
- *Cemetery Reconstruction, Gosë Commune, Kërçukaj Village* – Citizens cleaned up the area, rebuilt the fence, and improved the road inside the cemetery.

In addition, several citizen groups completed projects without funding from CESEDA.

6. Village Festivals

CESEDA teamed with the USAID/World Learning Participant Training (PTP) Program to introduce villagers to the concept of village festivals. In mid 2004, eleven villagers and two CESEDA field coordinators attended a PTP training in Bulgaria where they learned about village income generation including village festivals.

In November 2004, a citizen group in Agonas village, Golem Commune organized the “Vedeni” Festival, honoring a variety of melon produced in the area. This was the first activity of this kind in the village. The Parliament Member and the Commune Head both attended the event. The festival included promotion of some products from the area, a children’s song and poetry contest, traditional dancing and games.

On December 26, 2004 CESEDA helped residents of Baldushk Commune to organize a “Turkey Day” Festival which highlighted the areas local products and crafts including locally raised turkeys and locally grown olives. The festival was widely publicized and attracted participants from Tirana and other cities, interested in purchasing turkeys before the New Year’s holiday. The festival was covered by some Tirana based media organizations.

B. Government Policy Feedback

To give rural citizen a voice in policymaking, CESEDA linked them with both local and national level government officials with key roles in NSSSED implementation.

1. Commune Governments

As described in the previous section, CESEDA linked citizens with Commune leaders by encouraging them to take report card results directly to the Commune Head or Commune Councils.

In February 2004 in Baldushk and Petrelë, CESEDA organized open community-wide meetings with key local government officials so that citizens could better understand the budget process and give input as to where they believed limited Commune funds should be applied. The Commune Head as well as 75 elders and residents, representing all 14 villages in the Commune, attended the Baldushk meeting. In Petrelë, the Commune Finance Manager along with 82 elders and residents attended. Both meetings included presentations, question and answer periods, and CESEDA led exercises in which citizens identified priorities. The Baldushk meeting was followed the next month by another open meeting with the entire Commune Council to approve the budget.

2. National Government

Each quarter the CESEDA Director and IDRA Executive Director presented results of the report card and planning processes through meetings and reports to NSSSED Directorate Coordinator Adrian Civici, as well as to other key institutions such as the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Councils. In 2004 CESEDA staff presented its model for citizen engagement at a conference entitled “Integration of Regional Development Strategies with NSSSED through enhancing the participatory process,” in May 2004 organized by the Secretariat.

CESEDA also organized meetings between citizens in the target Communes and national government representatives. In Spring 2004, following the Baldushk transparent budget meetings, CESEDA organized an open meeting including 75 citizens the Minister of Agriculture, the Ministry deputies and a Parliament member in which the national level officials described their work to date in Baldushk, future plans including recently

approved World Bank initiatives, and steps citizens could take to benefit. Several journalists also attended.

In early 2005, CESEDA organized meetings among people from the four Communes and representatives of the central government ministries most relevant to the priorities citizens had identified. Attendees included the Monitoring and Evaluation heads from the Ministries of Local Government and Decentralization, Health, and Transport, as well as three of the most active residents from each of the four Communes. CESEDA first presented a summary of priorities that had been identified through report card meetings. Then the Ministry representatives explained their ministry's responsibilities and budget process as relates to the NSSED, and offered advice as to how citizens could better address priorities.

C. Media-Based Public Awareness

CESEDA sought to raise public awareness about the NSSED and the role that citizens could play in its implementation. Several CESEDA sponsored events received media coverage including the transparent budget meetings, village festivals, and final celebration.

After a competitive bid process, CESEDA contracted with Vision Plus to produce a documentary illustrating the effects of poverty in one of the CESEDA communes and the impact that citizen input and action had on alleviating poverty. Under the guidance of the CESEDA Lead Coordinator, Vision Plus photographed and interviewed villagers and officials. After the initial draft of the documentary was deemed inadequate for the project's needs, CESEDA staff prepared a more detailed scenario as a guide to the narrative and assisted the technicians at Vision Plus to complete the narrative and montage. The documentary was completed in June 2005 and at project's end was being aired on the Vision Plus television channel.

CESEDA also sought to raise awareness about the role that citizens can play in social and economic development by sponsoring an essay contest, with small prizes awarded to winners. It was thought that the contest would generate public interest in the theme and raise awareness. CESEDA initially attempted the contest with university students then with village residents. Entrants were asked to submit essays that addressed social and economic development in rural areas of Albania, focusing on what residents can do and have done to work with each other and with their local officials toward improvement. Despite publicizing the contest with fliers, no essays were submitted. CESEDA then aimed the contest at villager high school students. Several essays were received and the students who submitted the top three were honored at the CESEDA celebration in June 2005 (see end of project activities and closeout below).

D. Final Quarter Activities

From April 1 until the project completely closed in July, CESEDA staff completed ongoing work in the four target Communes, finalized the documentary, and continued

outreach to national level policy makers. In addition, CESEDA conducted new activities including a pilot program in Eastern Albania, evaluation activities, and a final event highlighting the successes of citizen action. Please see the attachments to this report for more complete descriptions of many of these activities.

1. Diber Pilot Activity

In June 2005, CESEDA partnered with the Dutch organization SNV and the Albanian organization Delfini (the Association of Rural Development and Collaboration in the Dibër region) to introduce CESEDA techniques to citizen groups in this region. SNV maintains an office in the city of Peshkopi and has operated in the region since 1996 building capacities of the local organizations with the focus at the dialogue between local government and civil society. Delfini was created by a group of village activists in 2003 and has gained an extensive experience in the community development field since.

Over an eight day period CESEDA's lead coordinator and two field coordinators: trained SNV and Delfini staff, representatives from local NGOs, local government representatives, and village residents in CESEDA techniques; teamed with Delfini and SNV staff members to conduct report card meetings and citizen training in two villages; consolidated report card results; and facilitated meetings with Commune leaders to present village priorities.

On Thursday and Friday of the first week, following the day-long training, the three CESEDA staff each partnered with a newly trained representative from Delfini or SNV and conducted community mapping exercises followed by report card meetings in Staravec and Dohoshisht villages. Drawing on lessons learned from CESEDA's work in other communes, the teams conducted separate report card meetings with men and women in each village to encourage active participation from women in the process.

A total of 26 citizens participated in report card meetings in Staravec village – 18 men and 8 women. The groups listed potable water, trash and sewage systems, village roads, and health service as their priority areas, with women giving higher priority to health service and men giving higher priority to roads. In Dohoshisht village a total of 23 citizens participated in the two report card meetings, 9 men and 14 women. These groups listed potable water, the environment, irrigation system and education as their priorities. The women's group in particular noted the need for improvements in the school so that children did not have to go to the city for their education. At the end of the report card meetings, participants chose representatives from among themselves to carry their priorities to the Commune head. The CESEDA/Delfini/SNV teams consolidated village report cards over the weekend in preparation for the Monday meetings with the Head of Tomin Commune.

Villagers from Dohoshisht meet with the Commune Head first. A member of the group, the school head, presented the priorities to the Commune Head and the Commune Head in turn told them about the actions that he had taken to lobby for services like potable water as well as Commune plans for improving the sewage system in Varend

neighborhood. The commune head mentioned the availability of some funds of the Water Supply Enterprise for improving the potable water condition in Dohoshisht. During the meeting with Staravec villagers, the Commune Head shared his concerns about the village and the plans for investments in 2005. He announced a grant fund for improvement of potable water, sewage system and several village roads, almost all of the priorities presented by citizens. The group expressed the village willingness and readiness to contribute to improving these priorities.

Immediately following these meetings with the Commune Head, the coordinator teams began action planning with the village groups. Staravec villagers chose to focus first on improving the potable water system. Their desired end result by the end of September 2005 was a new potable water system with water distributed to all families of the village. Currently the water quality is good but the water quantity is low and the distribution pipes are deteriorated. Resources for achieving this included a grant fund available from the commune and the labor that villagers could voluntarily contribute. The villagers formulated the action steps needed for achieving a good water system, planning to organize an open meeting in the village in order to discuss it, and choose a working group that will be to prepare a detailed work plan and a project with the assistance of an expert in the field.

The action planning group from Dohoshisht also chose the potable water system as their priority. Good quality water distributed on a regular schedule to the village houses was the desired end result for the group to be completed by 2005. The group's plan for achieving this goal was to create a working group, work with relevant structures of government, prepare a project proposal with the assistance of experts from the commune or in the community, construct the system with contributions from the community, and celebrate the achievement. During the planning they identified stakeholders in the process and discussed how to engage them.

The goal in Diber was to deliver tools to a local organization (Delfini) so that it could encourage greater citizen participation in local government decision making. CESEDA did this by training Delfini members in these tools and actively involving them in the subsequent demonstration runs in the two villages. The Delfini members participated in contacting the village formal and informal leaders, creating village groups, and facilitating meetings. They also had a facilitation role in the meeting of citizens with the commune head demonstrating very good facilitating skills and ability to keep the discussion focused and goal-oriented. Though the time in Diber was short, there was evidence that citizens were already more active as a result of their participation in the CESEDA process. As a citizen of Dohoshisht put it in the planning meeting "We are very thankful to you for making possible for us to start thinking on our village. These priorities need to be followed step by step, persistently, as can be easily left behind. We learned some things and we believe that with the help of the commune, we will soon achieve."

Please see Attachment A for a complete report on this activity.

2. Focus Groups & Interviews

World Learning contracted with a Tirana based research organization, the Center for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), to conduct a series of interviews and focus groups in Baldushk, Golem, Gose, and Petrele Communes in June and July. Though CESEDA regularly tracked the concrete results of citizen action, World Learning wanted to gauge the intangible aspects of the project including CESEDA's impact on citizen thinking and expectations. Because citizens might be reluctant to give anything other than positive feedback to CESEDA staff that they had worked closely with, World Learning hired an independent organization to obtain feedback.

CESS conducted interviews and focus groups in eight villages, two in each commune. Those interviewed included commune heads, advisors, and employees, as well as village heads and citizens. Focus groups were conducted with citizens who had participated in the project. At least one women-only focus group was conducted in each commune to ensure gender balance. In addition to more unstructured feedback, focus groups were also asked to provide group feedback as to whether they had seen change in four specific areas during the project. These areas were a) people's ability to organize commune members for citizen action, b) people's trust in approaching the government and generating a response, c) new leadership networks within the commune/village, and d) citizen action related new events within communes due to report card experience.

All focus groups noted either "some change" or "strong change" in each of the specific areas. Participants were most likely to note "strong change" in "citizen action related new events within communes due to report card experience" (6 of 8 groups). Feedback from interviews and focus groups was very positive. Participants pointed to greater trust between citizens and local government, the successful completion of projects, and a feeling of citizen empowerment among other benefits. Several participants, however, expressed concern that outside support and funding was still needed for citizens to identify and act on priorities.

Feedback from the focus groups and interviews included:

A Gose Commune participant: "The awareness of the community is expressed also in the pressure that we put on the council of the commune. In our commune the council was divided politically ... it couldn't get together even for the enactment of the budget or the enactment of the 'economic aid' that would be distributed to the poor families. We sent a petition to the president, the prime minister, and to the minister of the local government. This made it possible for the council of the commune to be gathered and to take the appropriate decisions. This was for us a big event that showed the strength of the community."

The head of the village of Gose: "The CESEDA project helped even in the direction of the transparency that we should have with the community. For all the spending that we made we saved all the documents, which were placed on the windows of a shop at the

center of the village. Anyone could see them. We made such things to convince the residents that there were no abusive usages with the collected funds and that they were used accordingly. “

Participant from the village of Golem “Previously, the chairman of the commune did not participate in the meeting of the community; whereas during the development of the CESEDA project, he not only came in several of the meetings of the community, but he also took part in our discussions regarding our problems.”

Interview with a resident of Shytaj Village, Petrele Commune: “We thought that the commune knew all about our problems, therefore it was unnecessary to present them. The CESEDA project affected the change on these mentalities. In all the meetings we held, the women discussed as the men did and were also involved extensively in the making the project happen. We understood that when we cooperate with each other, our voice is strengthened and heard. By relying on the experience from the CESEDA project we have discussed with the commune regarding the pavement of the road and the construction of an elementary school. “

Interview with a teacher, Fushas Village, Baldushk Commune: “I do not see the significance of the CESEDA project simply on economic terms, meaning in the construction of a bridge or the pavement of rural road. The CESEDA project by organizing a network of women empowered and taught us how to work in a team. This was an education to us. I see such a thing even in the new ideas that we discussed with the women. Every time we come up with an idea we gather to discuss it. First it is a small group, meaning the network of the women created by CESEDA. But when we see that the idea could be actualized, then we expand the discussion to the women of the village.”

Interview with a resident of Fushas Village: “Today whoever passes walks over that bridge and says: ‘this was done by the women of the village of Fushas in cooperation with the CESEDA project’. Now we think of building an artisan center where the women of the village could be employed. To make possible this idea we have begun the discussions with a narrow circle. When we are going to have a much clear idea we will discuss it with all the women of the village. Beside this we think of realizing a project for the potable water and the organized sale of the agricultural products in the market.”

3. Team Reflection Workshop

In order to capture knowledge and lessons learned from the project, World Learning Home Office staff joined the CESEDA team for a day-long workshop on June 27 lead by Preeti Shroff-Mehta, World Learning’s Director of Civil Society and Social Change Programs. Other participants were: Barbara Coe, CESEDA Chief of Party; Elona Boce, CESEDA Lead Coordinator; Auron Pasha, IDRA Executive Director; Bruna Dapi, Field

Coordinator, Baldushk Commune; Lumtor Vrapit, Field Coordinator, Baldushk Commune; Nexhi Byku, Field Coordinator, Gosë Commune; Elton Jorgji, Field Coordinator, Gosë Commune; Dritan Sinakoli, Field Coordinator, Petrela Commune; Anila Terziu, CESEDA Office and Finance Manager; Jennifer Whatley, Program Manager, World Learning DC; and Chris Saenger, Associate Program Manager, World Learning DC.

Participants discussed the highlights and strengths of the project. These included breaking the mentality that government does not need citizen input, holding open budget meetings and village festivals, and villagers completing 58 local projects to improve priorities identified through report card meetings. Participants also cited the good working relationship between World Learning and IDRA and CESEDA's ability to revise and adapt tactics as the project developed.

Suggestions for improving future projects included: better integrating media relations with other project components; obtaining more input and collaboration from potential partners in the proposal development process; establishing clearer expectations early on with others working on similar initiatives (e.g. CESEDA and NDI led citizen participation projects) to avoid tensions in implementing projects; and conducting an early project planning and strategy meeting in country involving Home Office, Field Staff, and all implementing partners.

4. CESEDA Celebration

On June 21 CESEDA held a reception to mark the end of the project and celebrate the impact that citizen input can have on the NSSD. Speakers included a representative from the NSSD Directorate, a citizen active in the CESEDA process, the Director of Delfini, the CESEDA Director, World Learning's Senior Vice-President, and the USAID Mission Director. During the ceremony, CESEDA also presented awards to the essay contest winners. Citizens from each of the four Communes who had been active in the CESEDA process attended. The CESEDA produced video was shown during the reception that followed. The event was covered on the next days evening news broadcast.

5. Office Close-out

The CESEDA Director left the country in early July. World Learning's DC based Program Manager along with the project's Finance/Office Manager ensured that property was disposed off, final bills paid, and the office closed. After consulting with the CTO and submitting plans to the CTO and Agreement Officer, World Learning distributed office equipment, furniture and supplies to IDRA, the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation, and World Learning's Fostering Religious Harmony in Albania Project.

VI. RESULTS AND IMPACT

CESEDA supported USAID/Albania Intermediate Result (IR) 2.1.1 “Citizen Participation in Public Discussions on Key Governance Issues Increased” and Sub IR 1.1 “Improved citizen awareness and participation in Community Democratic Processes.”

From the beginning of the project through June 2005, CESEDA field coordinators facilitated a total of 400 meetings including 171 Report Card processes (plus 55 second round Report Cards, thus 226 in total) in 47 communities (villages) with 2472 village residents participating directly (at the neighborhood level). From November 2003 through June 2005 citizen groups from 44 villages took the village report cards to discuss with their local officials. In addition to these meetings, they had 55 meetings with officials to advocate for priorities.

Note: the cumulative data include Tomin Commune in Dibër Qark where CESEDA conducted a demonstration project in June 2005.

A. Indicator: Citizens Participating in CESEDA Are Advocating and Collaborating with Government to Promote Their Priorities and to Seek Improved Government Responsibility and Accountability

CESEDA far exceeded the target of 50 meetings between citizens and commune officials to discuss priorities identified during the report card meetings. Nearly twice as many meetings were held, 99 in all.

Table 1
Citizens’ Meetings With Local Government
November 2003 through June 2005

Commune	CRC Meetings	Other Advocacy Meetings	Total
Baldushk	11	10	21
Golem	10	19	29
Gosë	7	5	12
Petrelë	12	19	31
Synej	2	2	4
Tomin	2	—	2
Total	44	55	99

Table 2
Citizens' Meetings With Local Government
By Quarter

Commune	Quarter I	Quarter II	Quarter III	Quarter IV	Quarter V	Quarter VI	Quarter VII	Total
Baldushk	0	2	6	3	5	4	1	21
Golem	0	0	13	3	8	2	3	29
Gosë	0	0	3	4	2	2	1	12
Petrelë	0	3	6	9	5	7	1	31
Synej	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Tomin							2	2
TOTAL	0	9	28	19	20	15	8	99

B. Indicator: Citizens Participating in the Report Card Process

CESEDA exceeded by nearly 25% the target of 2,000 adult citizens participating in report card meetings in which priorities were identified. A total of 2,472 men and women participated in report card meetings during the life of the project. In the four communes with which CESEDA worked long-term, more than 8% of the total commune populations participated directly in report card meetings.

Table 3
Participants In Report Card Process
November 2003 through June 2005

Commune	Citizens Participating	
	Total No.	Female %
Baldushk	453	40
Golem	472	24
Gosë	490	30
Petrelë	929	53
Synej	74	31
Tomin	54	40
TOTAL	2472	40

TABLE 4
IMPACT OF REPORT CARD PROCESS IN ALL COMMUNES
November 2003 - June 2005²

Village	Female	Male	Total	Commune population	Percentage of village population covered in RC
Baldushk	183	270	453	5776	7.8
Golem	114	358	472	9613	4.9
Gosë	146	344	490	6460	7.6
Petrelë	491	438	929	6382	14.6
Total	934	1410	2344	28231	8.3

TABLE 7
CESEDA MEETINGS
November 2003 through June 2005

Meeting type	Informative	RC	CRC	Plan	RC2	Total
Baldushk	8	32	6	18	12	76
Golem	9	41	2	13	19	84
Gosë	27	33	3	9	9	81
Petrelë	40	56	1	16	15	128
Synej	4	5	10	5	0	24
Tomin	1	4	0	2	0	7
Total	89	171	22	63	55	400

C. Indicator: Meetings Among CESEDA Participating Citizens, CESEDA Staff, and Staff of the National Strategy for Social and Economic Development in Albania and of Government Ministries to Discuss Priorities for Poverty Reduction and Development

CESEDA met the goal of one meeting per quarter. In addition to quarterly meetings between the CESEDA Director and the NSSED Directorate, CESEDA organized meetings between commune residents and national level officials as described earlier in this report.

² Synej and Tomin are not included here because CESEDA worked only a short time in those Communes. Also, total population figures here include children. The percentage of the adult population reached is therefore significantly higher.

VII. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The following describes some of the major challenges CESEDA experienced in motivating action in villages. CESEDA managed to break through some rigid beliefs and skepticism, building civil society capacity to stimulate activity in many of the villages in which it worked.

A. *Stimulating participation*

This was the first time for many citizens in these communes to participate in a project where they could talk about what matters to them and identify ways to improve the situation. Information meetings, especially when they included a Community Mapping process, were an effective way to lay the ground work for active participation in the subsequent Report Card meetings. The Report Card process itself was a non-threatening process that people found enjoyable; they welcomed the chance to express their opinions about government.

To attract participants, CESEDA scheduled meetings at times and in places convenient for village residents. Since planting and harvesting were especially difficult times to organize, group meetings were often held during lunchtime. Holding meetings early in the morning, late in the day when men return from work in Tirana, or as they leave the mosque on Fridays also worked well. CESEDA found schools, health clinics and other public institutions in the area to be good places for meetings. Often CESEDA held meetings in bars and shops and, in good weather, outside, sticking the flip charts on a vehicle, walls or trees.

The level of activity varies considerably among communities. Most groups, however, participated in the entire CESEDA process: evaluating services, taking the report card to the government officials, planning actions and ultimately implementing plans for improvement. The most active groups required the least from Field Coordinators, since the task of organizing was successfully delegated to participants who themselves informed and engaged other people in the process and progressed in plan implementation.

The more active groups were more well-informed about government roles and procedures. Although citizens benefit by searching out such information themselves, they do have a head start when the information is provided in early informative meetings. To help with this, CESEDA developed some additional tools including a map illustrating the various roads that citizens can use to link with government. Providing more information early on, especially about local government roles and operations, gives citizens a more comprehensive understanding of reality.

B. *Gender Balance*

Achieving adequate participation of women was more difficult, especially in Golem and Gose Communes where societal norms are particularly rigid. Women in these communities are expected to stay home and not be seen in public even in shops. They lack places to meet; Society frowns upon their meeting in coffee bars along with the men,

many villages lack other public meeting places (such as schools or health clinics), and women are reluctant to meet in private homes. Women are also busy doing most of the physical labor of the family and thus have less free time than men. In addition, both men and women normally see involvement with government as men's work, and believe that women going to the commune will not be taken seriously.

CESEDA responded by creating women-only report card groups, sometimes facilitated only by female coordinators (from the outset each Field Coordinator team consisted of a man and a woman). Field Coordinators also identified meeting places such as the schools or the clinics (if available) or held meetings outside. Involving women in the meetings with Commune officials remained an ongoing challenge for the program.

C. Linking with government

Linking with commune officials and collaborating for change was also a new experience for most. After identifying priorities during report card meetings, participants were often reluctant to take the next step of taking these priorities to the Commune government. Field Coordinators were often told that the Commune leader already knew villagers problems. In response CESEDA Field Coordinators stressed the benefits of discussing priorities with Commune leaders and provided training to village residents to prepare them for the meetings.

D. Clear thinking

Helping participants think clearly in each phase was a challenge. In the Report Card process, they often misunderstood what was meant by components of a service or condition, sometimes mixing major components with small parts. Clear thinking was even more essential in the Action Planning phase; the goals or desired end results that people initially name are often superficial. These usually change, however, as the conversation deepens. As one example, people often name a new or renovated school as a primary desired end result, a challenging and expensive goal. To focus thinking, Field Coordinators were trained in specific planning tools so that they could help groups flesh out exactly what it is they hope for. With these planning tools the group was often able to redefine their desired end result. This process also encouraged communities to recognize resources available, like the presence of a school in a neighboring community that the construction of a road could access, not just focus on the negative aspects of the current conditions.

VIII. SUCCESS STORIES

One measure of CESEDA's success for are the improved roads, new bridges, health clinics, and other service improvements that have a direct role in reducing poverty in the areas in which CESEDA worked. In total, citizens completed 58 projects to improve priorities identified through report card meetings. Some were completed with CESEDA small grant assistance, some with Commune or National government funding, and some only through donated labor or money from citizens themselves.

Success stories have been included in the project's quarterly reports. A few are highlighted here.

Baldushk Commune – With a grant from CESEDA and donated labor from the community, Balaxhias village constructed a bridge that links their village with the rest of the commune. Before building the bridge villagers had to ford a creek in order to reach the nearest road, something not possible when waters were high. After building the bridge, a member of the work group then went on her own volition to the Commune and received a promise that it would add edging to make the bridge safer. Residents of Koçaj village also identified a new bridge as a priority and discussed this with commune officials. The Commune provided funds and the bridge was successfully completed.

Golem Commune -- The Commune completed the main road of Golem Center, a priority identified by nearly half of the Golem Commune groups. In finalizing the 2005 Project Budget, Golem commune officials changed infrastructure priorities based on citizens' input from the report cards.

Gosë Commune -- Citizens in Gosë Fermë village built a new park in the village center using a grant from CESEDA and donated labor from village residents. In Gosë e Vogël, citizens repaired the school fence and the school's water pipes using funds allocated by the Commune government and their own donated labor.

Petrela Commune -- Citizens in Daias organized to improve the condition of the village health clinic. The group met with the Commune officials and also wrote a proposal for reconstructing the clinic. This priority was included in the Commune agenda and as CESEDA ended work on the clinic was scheduled to begin shortly.

ATTACHMENT A

Communities Engaged in Social and Economic Development of Albania Project in Dibër Region June 2005

Introduction

The purpose of the eight-day mission of CESEDA Project in Dibër region was to transfer the experience and tools for community mobilizing and change to the local civil society organizations. The team was composed of the lead coordinator and two field coordinators. The mission started June 7 and ended June 15.

Local partner

CESEDA collaborated with SNV, a Dutch organization operating in Dibër since 1996 for building capacities of the local organizations with the focus at the dialogue between local government and civil society.

For transferring experience and implementing Dibër activities, CESEDA cooperated with Delfini, the Association of Rural Development and Collaboration in the Dibër region. The Association was created by a group of village activists in 2003 and has gained an extensive experience in the community development field. As a result of mobilizing village groups, the Association has several examples of village priorities improvement.

We created two teams composed of one CESEDA member and one Delfini member. The team of Staravec village was Lumtor Vrap, CESEDA field coordinator and Halil Goleci, the Delfini association head. The team of Dohoshisht village was Elton Jorgji, CESEDA field coordinator and Qemal Manja, Delfini association member. For groups of village women, we created a team of female moderators (CESEDA lead coordinator and SNV civil society junior advisor Almira Xhembulla).

Location

With the proposal of SNV, the work concentrated in two villages of a commune near Peshkopi city: Staravec and Dohoshisht. At a donor day for Dibër region in Burrel, CESEDA team had previo met and discussed with the commune head of Tomin the idea of transferring the experience to Dibër region.

Implemented activities

- Tue, June 7 Travel
Introductory meeting with Delfini and SNV staff
Preparation for workshop
- Wed, June 8 Workshop
Meeting with Delfini staff and village leaders
- Thur, June 9 Meeting with Tomin Commune head, Shaziman Manja
Debriefing with SNV and Delfini staff
Community mapping meeting with men, Staravec village
Community mapping and Report Card meeting with men, Dohoshisht village
- Fri, June 10 Debriefing with SNV and Delfini staff
Report Card meeting with women, Dohoshisht village
Report Card meeting with men, Staravec village
Report Card meeting with women, Staravec village
- Sat, June 11 Consolidation of Report Cards
Report writing
- Sun, June 12 Visit to Rapdishtë village
- Mon, June 13 Meeting citizens – commune head
Debriefing with SNV and Delfini staff
Planning meeting, Staravec village
Planning meeting, Dohoshisht village
- Tue, June 14 Consolidation of data
Mission report writing
- Wed, June 15 Debriefing workshop, CESEDA, Delfini and SNV
Lessons learned and next steps
Travel

Detailed description of the activities and process

The “Community Mobilizing for Change” Workshop, June 8

The purpose of the workshop was to deliver the CESEDA tools for community mobilizing. The topics of the workshop were community mapping, report card development and citizen planning for action. The training involved hands on techniques

like examples of community mapping, report card and planning, pair work, group work and group discussions.

Participants in the workshop were local civil society organizations like Delfini, women and children organizations, forest associations, rural development forums, village and local government representatives, and SNV staff.

Discovery process in Staravec village

The community mapping process was the first tool of getting to know the villages. Village representatives participated in the workshop and were informed about the goal and process of CESEDA. They helped with getting people together in the groups the next days.

Staravec is a very old village, as the archeological discovery of churches and cemeteries shows. It has 160 families and about 1000 inhabitants. People live with incomes from working the land (main products are corn, potato, white beans) and growing animals. The village also has forests of cherry and hazelnut trees. The village gets the water from springs of Kalaja e Dodës in Korabi Mountain (the highest in Albania). The elementary school of the village was constructed recently and is located in center of the village, close to the mosque, which is recent too. The village has also several small shops and bars going on.

The teams of CESEDA, Delfini and SNV established two groups (one of men and one of women, based on the assumption that it would had been difficult to have mixed groups) of 18 men and 8 women.

Priority services for Staravec village

Group participants pointed out as priority services of potable water, the trash and sewage system, village roads and health service. Although the water sources have sufficient water and of a good quality, the quantity that the village gets is low, because of the deteriorated condition of the water deposit and distribution system. Another reason for little water is the illegal interventions of villagers to get water from the main distribution system. Village participants maintain that this is also a result of the poor management of distribution.

About 20 families of Staravec have voluntarily worked to build the sewage system. However, the sewage system condition in the other part of the village is extremely poor. Sewage flo into the road, in some cases close to drinking water taps being therefore a health hazard. At the same time, trash is worrisome, blocking the drainage ditches of the village roads. Women particularly maintain the indifference of the villagers towards the situation, while men maintain that they would be willing to contribute to change it.

Roads were a priority for the men's group of Staravec. Roads are narrow, muddy and stony which makes difficult the transport in the cold season. As mentioned above, ditches

along the road are blocked by trash, while sewage causes erosion of the surface. Villagers indicate that they never organized to maintain the road and that up to now their initiatives to maintain it were only individual and sporadic.

Women on the other side pointed out the health service as a priority for their lives, especially children and old people. The village has a nurse that is very available for them, but she offers the service in houses. Women are worried for the emergency cases when they need to go to the Peshkopi city in order to get help. They think that a health clinic is necessary for the village.

Meeting of Staravec villagers with Tomin Commune

At the end of the Report Card meeting, the participants group chose four representatives that who met Monday morning, June 13, with the commune head and presented the village priorities. The commune head shared his concerns about the village and the plans for investments in 2005. A grant fund of 900 thousand lekë will be used for improvement of potable water, sewage system and several village roads, which was almost all of the priorities presented by citizens. The group expressed the village willingness and readiness to give the contribution for improving these priorities.

Action planning in Staravec village

A few hours after the meeting with the commune head, the villagers group met for making the plan on a priority of their choice. They chose the potable water system. Their desired end result for September 2005 was a new potable water system with water distributed to all families of the village. Currently the water quality is good but the water quantity is low and the distribution pipes are deteriorated. Also, as part of the current reality is the fund of 300 thousand lekë available from the commune grant and the work that villagers can voluntarily contribute. The villagers formulated the action steps needed for achieving a good water system. The group will organize an open meeting in the village in order to discuss it. Then the village will choose a working group whose tasks will be to prepare a detailed work plan and a project with the assistance of an expert in the field. The village will contribute with work and monitoring of the work. They want the potable water system to be finished and the result to be celebrated by September 2005.

Discovery process in Dohoshisht village

Dohoshisht is located near to Peshkopi city. It has 423 families and about 1300 inhabitants. A water stream called Përroi i Dohoshishtit divides the village in two parts. Villagers tell a story that hundreds of years ago, the river was just a narrow line of water and men sat on each side, smoked and chatted. Dohoshisht inhabitants mainly grow corn, alfalfa and animals. The village has several fruit forests like cherries, hazelnuts, apples, pears and plums. The village elementary school is currently being rehabilitated with

funds of the Ministry of Education and Science. The team of CESEDA, Delfini and SNV organized two groups (one of men and one of women for the same reason as in Staravec village) of 9 men and 14 women.

Priority services for Dohoshisht village

Priority services in Dohoshisht village were potable water, environment, irrigation system and education. The potable water quantity is low especially for half of the village neighborhoods. Villagers maintain that illegal interventions or several family water pumps impede the water to reach every family in the village. Some of them are displeased with the water schedule management. The water deposit is deteriorated, while the distribution system is good.

Environmental concerns for Dohoshisht are high because of sewage management and trash. According to citizens, sewage system in Varend neighborhood is in poor condition, while in other parts of the village the pipes are good. However, all village sewage - and Peshkopi city sewage - ends up at the water stream (river) therefore polluting it and the fields around, causing disease to the plants. Families throw their trash in inappropriate places, thus creating another health hazard for the village life. Group participants explained it with lack of trash collection places. According to men, villagers are very indifferent to these issues, while women believe that people are willing to contribute for improving the situation. However, both women and men maintain that organization is weak and that is the reason for the situation to deteriorate.

Although Dohoshisht has good irrigation water sources, the distribution system is poor because of the blocked ditches. Villagers maintain that they have made several attempts to maintain it and that they are still willing to contribute for improving it.

Education service was pointed out by the women's group as a priority. Some participants expressed the need to encourage the talented children in order to keep them in the village school, rather than letting them go to city schools. The school has no labs and other supplies needed for the teaching process. The condition of toilets is also very bad. Teachers maintain that parent's involvement is very low, while parents maintain that the teaching quality has decreased and that some teachers have poor capacities.

Meeting of Dohoshisht villagers with Tomin Commune

The representative group from Dohoshisht was in fact the first to meet with the commune head on Monday, June 13 as they were very punctual. Originally, the meeting with the commune head was planned for both villages simultaneously. A member of the group, the school head, presented the priorities to the commune head. In turn, the Commune head shared with the group the actions that he had taken for lobbying for services like potable water and the plans of the commune for improving the sewage system in Varend neighborhood. The citizens and the commune head discussed the issue of the potable

water condition. The commune head mentioned the availability of some funds of the Water Supply Enterprise for improving the potable water condition in Dohoshisht.

Action planning in Dohoshisht village

A small group of villagers of Dohoshisht met for planning for a priority of their choice. The group chose the potable water system, although they were in doubt of the relevance of the priority as the Commune was not clear about the next steps to take. However, the team encouraged them to go ahead and choose it, as it is a priority and a true desired end result of the villagers. Good quality water distributed on a regular schedule to the village houses was the desired end result for the group to be completed by 2005. Currently, only half of the village gets some water, which is however of a bad quality. The distribution system in the entire village is deteriorated. The community has contributed with some maintenance, but the situation needs an organized intervention from both the government, community and donor agencies. The group described as the main actions towards the desired end result creation of a working group, collaboration with the relevant structures of government, preparation of a project proposal with the assistance of experts from the commune or in the community, construction of the system with the contribution of the community and celebration of the achievement. During the planning meeting, the group entered the discussion on the stakeholders involved in the process. This was a good moment for introducing the situation analysis tool, where they listed all available stakeholders and rated their attitude, force, interest and willingness in the process of improving the priority. This gave a deeper insight on the factors that influence the situation and helps identify the steps to work with those stakeholders that have high power but low interest or willingness to be involved.

Results

The results of the work of CESEDA, Delfini and SNV teams are obvious more in qualitative terms than quantitative. The goal was to deliver the tools to the local organization Delfini in order for the process to be sustainable. This was achieved through a direct involvement of the Delfini team in the process and application of the tools in the field. The Delfini members actively participated in contacting the village formal and informal leaders, creating village groups, and facilitating meetings. They also had a facilitation role in the meeting of citizens with the commune head demonstrating very good facilitating skills and ability to keep the discussion focused and goal-oriented.

Part of the process like logistic arrangements, selection of partners, participants in the workshop and communities was because of the SNV role. Members of SNV participated in the meetings with village groups as observers, sometimes taking a facilitation role (as in the women's groups). The SNV team for civil society had a supportive role in the process and participated in the debriefing sessions held after each meeting or activity of the group.

Beyond the goal of transferring the tools to Delfini Association, CESEDA achieved in Dibër some more of the primary goal of the project: to make the citizens active through working on their own and with the government to bring community change. Four groups of citizens from two villages participated in the process, evaluating priorities, meeting with officials and planning for action on a priority service. As a citizen of Dohoshisht put it in the planning meeting “We are very thankful to you for making possible for us to start thinking on our village. These priorities need to be followed step by step, persistently, as can be easily left behind. We learned some things and we believe that with the help of the commune, we will soon achieve.”