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# QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT FY2022 Q1 AND Q2

## USAID Social Contract Activity in Kosovo

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## QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

FY2022 Q1 and Q2

Contract No. 72016722C00001

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## ACRONYMS

AAK	Alliance for the Future of Kosovo
AC	Advisory Council
AKM	Association of Kosovo Municipalities
ARD	Applied Research Director
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
AR	Approval Request
AT	Assessment Team
ATL	Assessment Team Lead
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
CoP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DI	Democracy International, Inc.
DPI	Development Professionals, Inc.
D+	Democracy Plus
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
F&O	Finance & Operations
FY	Fiscal Year
GOK	Government of Kosovo
GUCs	Grants under Contract
HO	Home Office
HR	Human Resources
IE	Impact Evaluation
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KP	Key Personnel
LDK	Democratic League of Kosovo
LL	Learning Lead
LT	Learning Team
LVV	Self-determination Movement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MELP	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan
MLGA	Ministry of Local Government Administration
MOUs	Memorandums of Understanding
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OD	Organizational Development
OFM	Office of Financial Management
PDK	Democratic Party of Kosovo
PT	Program Team
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
PMU	Program Management Unit
PPAP	Public Participation Action Plan
PPAT	Public Participation Assessment Tool
RFA	Request for Applications
SBS	Social and Behavioral Science
SCA	Social Contract Activity
SGA	Senior Governance Advisor
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

USAID  
USG

United States Agency for International Development  
United States Government

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

<b>Activity Name:</b>	Social Contract Activity
<b>Activity Start Date and End Date:</b>	December 13, 2021 – December 12, 2026
<b>Name of Prime Implementing Partner:</b>	Democracy International, Inc. (DI)
<b>Contract Number:</b>	72016722C00001
<b>Name of Subcontractors/ Sub-awardees:</b>	Development Professionals, Inc. (DPI) Democracy Plus (D+)
<b>Geographic Coverage:</b>	Kosovo Pilot Municipalities: Prishtina, Prizren, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Suvareka/Suha Reka, Obiliq/Oblic
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	December 13, 2021 – March 31, 2022

## INTRODUCTION

With funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Democracy International (DI) is implementing the Social Contract Activity (SCA) in Kosovo from December 13, 2021 to December 12, 2026. This Quarterly Report showcases the progress made during FY2022 Q1 and Q2 of SCA in compliance with section F.6 Reports and Deliverables or Outputs of the contract.

## KOSOVO SOCIAL CONTRACT ACTIVITY BACKGROUND

The USAID/Kosovo Social Contract Activity seeks to introduce sustainable practices for public participation to improve Kosovo citizens' quality of life and strengthen their partnership with the municipal government. SCA encompasses a systems thinking approach to lower behavioral, institutional, and environmental barriers and amplify existing facilitators for public participation while bridging the communication gaps between communities and municipalities. Further, SCA aims to enable municipal officials and community members to collaboratively identify key problems facing their community, craft action plans to address the identified problems, and work side-by-side to implement said plans and improve the existing mechanisms for public participation.

SCA will be implemented in two phases. During Phase 1 in Years 1-3, the team will work with five pilot municipalities and their respective community stakeholders to co-develop, test, and evaluate public participation action plans (PPAPs). During Phase 2 in Years 4 and 5, the team will scale up public participation plan processes and successful practices to an additional 10-14 municipalities while providing limited support to and monitoring of the five pilot municipalities. By the end of Year 5, SCA anticipates that the municipal government officials and community members (1) will have established successful practices for public participation, (2) will be able to collaboratively engage with each other through the strengthened public participation mechanisms and consensus building, and (3) will be able to identify and solve problems in their respective communities as a result.

## IMPLEMENTATION UPDATES

The Work Plan for Year One comprises three components, namely:

- Component 1: Using Evidence to Inform Stakeholder Learning and Activity Management.
- Component 2: Support Municipal Governments in Engaging Communities to Identify and Implement Valuable, Effective and Feasible Public Participation Practices.
- Component 3: Organize and Incentivize Community Groups to Participate in Identifying and Implementing Public Participation Practices.

This quarter, the SCA team made considerable progress in Component I (i.e., established the Advisory Council and held the first meeting, selected the five pilot municipalities, and developed the Public Participation Assessment Work Plan and Tools) and Component II (i.e., partnered with the five pilot municipalities) of SCA. The detailed explanation of achievement in Components I and II—as well as an overview of personnel mobilization, technical start-up, and logistical and administrative start-up—are described below.

## **PERSONNEL MOBILIZATION**

### **Award Kick-Off**

On December 16, DI attended the virtual Social Contract Activity Post-Award Conference with USAID/Kosovo. After DI and USAID gave opening remarks, USAID provided DI with important information on branding and marking, monitoring and evaluation, financial matters, technical administration, and contract administration. DI and USAID had the opportunity to discuss questions on deliverable requirements, distribution of activity materials, the award fee evaluation, and key personnel, among other things.

### **CoP Deployment**

On December 16, 2021, DI submitted a request to USAID for approval of Dr. Silvia Susnjic as SCA Chief of Party (CoP). DI received approval on December 17, 2021, and the CoP arrived in-country on January 11.

### **Operational and Technical Start-Up Trips**

Along with the CoP, DPI's Applied Research Director (ARD) arrived in Kosovo on January 11, 2022. The CoP and ARD met with the Deputy Chief of Party (DCoP) and Senior Governance Advisor (SGA) on January 12 to discuss the mobilization plan, the timeline for drafting the Work Plan for Year 1, and the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (MELP). While members of DI's Home Office (HO) planned to travel to Prishtina to support technical and operational start-up, DI decided to pause non-essential travel amidst the heightened contagion and risk posed by the Omicron variant of COVID-19. However, the DI HO team held regular coordination meetings with the Prishtina team virtually.

### **Staffing**

In mid-December, DI sought and obtained USAID approval to hire the proposed CoP, DCoP, and SGA. In early January, DI hired the three approved Key Personnel staff as interim STTAs while it finalized its in-country registration.

Between January 25 and March 14, DI interviewed and selected its local team members. On January 25, DI HO interviewed two candidates for a Finance & Operations STTA position to support rapid start-up. The team selected Valentina Imeraj, who was then hired as the full-time Finance Manager. During the week of February 21, the team interviewed four candidates for the Communications Program Officer position and selected Nora Siqeca. In early March, the team interviewed six



candidates for the Operations and Administration Officer position and selected Shukran Murseli Hapciu. During the following week of March 11, the team held interviews with eight candidates for the Sr. Governance Officer and Governance Officer and selected Visare Gorani and Arben Kelmendi respectively. In the same period, the team held interviews with six candidates for Sr. Community Engagement Officer and Community Engagement Officer and selected Fatos Mustafa and Yll Valla respectively. During this period, DI also supported its subcontractor DPI to select Visar Zekaj as the Learning Component Lead and Suzana (Zana) Hoxha as the Senior MEL Officer.

The table below presents the status of staff positions as of the end of Q2. All staff have signed employment agreements:

**Table 1: Staff Positions at End of Q2**

Name	Position	STTA Period of Performance	Employment Start Date
Dr. Silvia Susnjic	CoP	N/A	January 4, 2022
Jetmir Bakija	DCoP	January 6 – March 31, 2022	April 1, 2022
Rozafa Ukimeraj	Senior Governance Advisor	January 19, 2022 – March 31, 2022	April 1, 2022
Valentina Imeraj	Finance Manager	February 9 – March 31, 2022	April 1, 2022
Shukran Murseli Hapciu	Senior Operations and Administration Officer	N/A	April 19, 2022
Visare Gorani	Senior Governance Officer	N/A	April 15, 2022
Arben Kelmendi	Governance Officer	N/A	April 15, 2022
Fatos Mustafa	Senior Community Engagement Officer	April 15 – 29, 2022	May 3, 2022
Yll Valla	Community Engagement Officer	N/A	April 16, 2022
Visar Zekaj	Learning Component Lead	N/A	April 15, 2022
Suzana (Zana) Hoxha	Senior MEL Officer	N/A	March 28, 2022

During the work planning process, DI took stock of staffing needs and made adjustments based on the current realities of the project. On February 14, DI requested approval of a revised Offeror's Compensation Plan (Approval Request (AR) 15) to add four DI positions (Prime staff), including a Director of Operations and Global Security, a Director of Program Management, a Program Officer, and a Technical Specialist in Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning. On March 21, DI submitted AR18 to request an additional revised Offeror's Compensation Plan to reflect changes made to the SCA organizational chart to better fit the needs of SCA. The revised organizational chart includes two Governance Officers and two Community Engagement Officers, where one Governance Officer and one Community Engagement Officer will hold a senior role. These changes modify slightly SCA's original organizational chart, which included one Governance Officer, one Community Facilitator, one Program Assistant, and one Grants Manager. Instead, DI proposed to convert the Program Assistant into a Community Engagement Officer and the Grants Officer into a Governance Officer to further

support the Programs Team. Under this model, the Operations and Administration Officer will oversee the Grants Under Contract (GUCs). When drafting the revised compensation plan, DI aligned the senior officer positions with FSN Level 9 and the non-senior officer positions with the FSN Level 7 and updated the job descriptions to match the different levels of experience required for the senior and non-senior positions. USAID approved both requests for a new Offeror’s Compensation Plan.

## **TECHNICAL START-UP**

### **In-Country Kickoff Meeting with USAID**

On January 12, 2022, the team held a kickoff meeting with USAID’s CoR to discuss the mobilization plan, work plan for Year 1, and MELP. The team also informed USAID about the coordination meetings planned with the local subcontractor, D+. In the subsequent weekly meetings with USAID’s CoR, the team discussed the progress of the Work Plan and the grantees proposed to be engaged.

In the discussions about the activities for the Work Plan, USAID and DI decided that SCA would not engage the two proposed grantees, namely the Association of Kosovo Municipalities (AKM) and Levizja FOL, from the beginning of the project as initially intended but would do so once the need for a grantee with a specific Scope of Work is presented. SCA decided that AKM, which was intended to be a grantee to facilitate the dialogue between municipal officials and community representatives in the PPAP process, would be engaged closer to Year 3 during the scale-up period. In the first years of SCA, USAID and DI decided that the project would engage an additional Governance Officer to coordinate work with municipalities more directly. During these work planning discussions, the grant for Levizja FOL was redesigned to focus on incentivizing community actors in engaging in public participation mechanisms and not serve as a watchdog group for municipal performance on public participation, as originally intended. Thus, SCA will revisit the grant for Levizja FOL in the latter portion of Year 1.

### **Revision of Theory of Change**

During this quarter, the SCA team worked to finalize the MELP, which relies heavily on the Theory of Change. The SCA team held several workshops with USAID prior to submitting the Annual Work Plan on March 11, 2022 and the MELP on April 15, 2022 as well as after submission to revise the Theory of Change and build a results framework to better represent the goals of SCA. DI’s MEL Specialist led the process of revising MELP. The follow-on workshops were held on February 7, 9, 18, and 24. The Theory of Change was completed on March 1. The MELP will be submitted in Q3.

### **Coordination Meetings with Organizations**

During Q2, SCA pinpointed and held several meetings with key stakeholders to gain buy-in and promote coordination. The table below outlines the organizations with which the team met, as well as the theme of each meeting.

**Table 2: SCA Team Meetings**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coordination meeting</b>	<b>Theme</b>
UN Habitat Kosovo	January 18, 2022	Seven municipalities in the Mitrovica region, region on engaging communities and municipal governments on issues with/about urban planning “Citizen Participation Plans”

USAID Up-to-Youth Activity	January 18, 2022	Support to youth leaders in nine target municipalities
Helvetas-DEMOS project	January 19, 2022	Municipal governance/Municipal Performance Grant, led jointly with the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA)/e-komuna
USAID Civic Engagement Activity	January 19, 2022	Work with civil society organizations (CSOs) to expand their constituencies/supporting self-sufficiency of CSOs, as well as building and supporting activists around Kosovo
USAID Economic Governance Activity	January 31, 2022	Working with the Central Government and municipalities in Land Registration, and Public Finance Management
Office of the Prime Minister, Office of Strategic Planning	February 15, 2022	Working with the Central Government and municipalities in Land Registration, and Public Finance Management
UNDP	February 16, 2022	City Experiment Fund focused on Prizren, Healthier Kosovo Project (under the Kosovo's Inclusive Growth and Climate Resilience Portfolio) and Regional Programme on Local Democracy in the Western Balkans (ReLOaD)
D+	February 15, 2022	Closing Conference of USAID's Community Collaboration Activity
USAID Citizen Engagement Activity	March 17, 2022	Coordination Group Meeting

## LOGISTICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE START-UP

### Development Professionals, Inc. (DPI)

DPI is the SCA's Project Learning Partner, responsible for coordinating, facilitating, and supervising all applied research and learning activities. DI issued a subcontract to DPI with an effective date of January 1, 2022.

After the ARD's contributions during startup in Kosovo, DI and DPI determined that the ARD had limited availability to support the SCA in the long-term, so DPI hired Dr. Roland Gjoni to serve as the Assessment Team Lead (ATL) responsible for overseeing all phases of the assessment, including developing the Assessment Work Plan inclusive of a detailed methodology section and instruments; supervising the pilot testing of instruments; providing pre-fieldwork trainings to the data collection contractor; directing the Learning Team (LT) in supervising the assessment process; engaging in the quality control process; supervising the process of data entry and verification; and compiling and leading the data analysis and presentation of assessment findings to USAID and the five municipalities. Mr. Visar Zekaj, the Learning Lead (LL) worked in conjunction with Dr. Gjoni in designing and implementing the Assessment. Furthermore, DI's MEL Specialist, Mr. Michael Cowan, provided additional technical expertise on the MELP and the assessment products.

Despite the support of Dr. Gjoni and Mr. Cowan, more dedicated technical leadership in the form of a new ARD is required to train the LL on advanced applied methodologies and to ensure that the MELP appropriately captures the complexities of the project. Initially, DI and DPI were considering Dr. Gjoni for the ARD role but have determined that an individual with a slightly different skill set is

required for the long-term position. As such, DPI will restart its search for a new ARD to support the SCA in the following quarter and will maintain the current team of experts, who are familiar with the project and tools, for the analysis of the assessment data.

### **Democracy Plus (D+)**

Democracy Plus (D+) is the main local partner involved in the learning and implementation components. D+ works on governance issues at the central and local levels and will contribute to the project's sustainability beyond the five years to ensure the work remains locally led. D+ is tasked with building a team of community facilitators in the pilot municipalities to identify, consult, and engage communities during Years 1 through 3 and in the scale up period in Years 4 and 5.

During Q1 and Q2, the SCA team held several meetings with D+. On January 13, the CoP, DCoP, SGA, and DPI's ARD had an opening meeting with D+, discussing the objectives of SCA. On January 18, the SCA team met with D+ and further elaborated on the programmatic activities expected to be implemented during Year 1 and the role of D+ in the learning and implementing components. Following the two introductory meetings, the SCA team drafted D+'s SOW, which was shared with USAID on February 3. DI countersigned D+'s subcontract effective March 1, 2022. On March 30, upon receipt of the approval for the Year 1 Annual Work Plan, the SCA team retreated for half a day of working sessions with D+. During the retreat, the team discussed the activities for Year 1 of SCA, deliverables, roles and expectations, and coordination mechanisms. During the meeting, both parties agreed to hold formal weekly meetings every Wednesday. Additional coordination meetings on specific activities will be held regularly between the DCoP and D+.

### **Procurement**

DI worked to procure an office space, a local law firm, and equipment to set up DI-Kosovo. During the reporting period, the team worked from hotel conference rooms on an interim basis while visiting several long-term office possibilities. The team determined that the furnished office in Arbëria (Kasem Haxhimurati Str., No. 12, Pristina, 10,000, Kosovo) is the most suitable for the SCA needs. As of the end of the quarter, the lease was in the final stage of negotiations, and the team is expected to move to the permanent location at the beginning of April.

On February 9, DI HO hired Rexhepi Zeqiri Zejna LLC to begin assisting DI with its local business registration and the local employment and hiring processes. DI obtained its local business registration on March 16, 2022.

In Q2, DI purchased and configured seven laptops for the first new hires and is in the process of procuring seven more laptops for the rest of the team. In late March, DI issued a RFQ to six health insurance companies. DI also requested, received, and reviewed offers from three local banks.

## **COMPONENT 1: USING EVIDENCE TO INFORM STAKEHOLDER LEARNING AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT**

### **Activity 1.1 Establish Advisory Council**

During this reporting period, the SCA team established the SCA Advisory Council (AC). The AC, chaired by the SGA, serves as a sounding board for collaborative decision making about groups and stakeholders to be targeted. The AC will provide feedback on the assessment findings and proposed municipal interventions for public participation in the five pilot municipalities and will continue providing feedback throughout the life of SCA.

During Q1 and Q2, the team held multiple consultations with D+ and USAID on the composition of the AC. During Month 3, USAID provided concurrence on the final list of AC members. The AC comprises of six members, representing two community activists, one academic, one journalist, one representative from the Ministry of Local Government Administration, and one municipal civil servant. The SCA team approached the proposed members and invited them to the first AC meeting, which is scheduled for Q3. All the proposed members accepted the invitation.

### Activity 1.2 Selecting Five Pilot Municipalities

During this reporting period, the SCA team in consultation with D+ identified the primary criteria for the selection of the five pilot municipalities. The team proposed the initial criteria to account for 1) size of their population; 2) political representation at the Mayoral office; 3) newly elected vs. re-elected mayor; 4) geographical region; 5) rural and urban composition; and 6) multi-ethnic vs. monoethnic composition of the population. The SCA team also considered the donor support received by the municipalities and the MGLA's municipal annual performance rank.

Based on the aforementioned criteria, the team narrowed down the list of municipalities to six:

**Table 3: Pilot Municipality Criteria**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Size of Population</b>	<b>Political Rep. of Mayor</b>	<b>New or Re-elected</b>	<b>Geographic Region</b>	<b>Rural/ Urban</b>	<b>Ethnic Diversity</b>
<b>Prizren</b>	Large	PDK (Democratic Party of Kosovo)	New	South	Urban	Considerable
<b>Gjilan/Gnjilane</b>	Large	LVV (Self-determination Movement)	New	East	Urban	Somewhat
<b>Prishtina</b>	Large	LDK (Democratic League of Kosovo)	New	Central	Urban	Little
<b>Peja/Peć</b>	Large	LDK	Re-elected	West	Urban	Little
<b>Suhareka/Suva Reka</b>	Medium	AAK (Alliance for the Future of Kosovo)	Re-elected	Southwest	Rural	Mono
<b>Obiliq/Obilić</b>	Small	Independent (Switched to LDK)	Re-elected	Central	Rural	Considerable

During the reporting period, the team met with each of the mayors of the abovementioned municipalities to find out about the priorities of the mayors, their level of engagement with communities, and their willingness to expand public participation. It was encouraging to see that all the mayors seemed interested to improve and expand their public participation practices. Based on

these discussions, the team decided to partner with five of the municipalities that best seemed fit for the pilot phase.

The SCA team decided to postpone the selection of Peja due to the considerable amount of donor support in the area of civic engagement. Therefore, five potential pilot municipalities remained, which SCA selected for the purposes of the public participation pilot.

### **Activity 1.3 Develop the Methodology for the Public Participation Assessment**

During this reporting period, the SCA team developed the Public Participation Assessment Work Plan and Tools (Technical Deliverable 1.1.1.) to determine the barriers to public participation at the individual, social, and structural levels as well as identify facilitators and barriers to public participation in five pilot municipalities. DPI as the Learning Partner led this initiative. On February 24, Dr. Roland Gjoni joined the SCA team as DPI's Public Participation ATL. Additional members of the AT are Mr. Visar Zekaj, SCA Learning Lead, Dr. Laura Van Berkel, DI Social and Behavioral Science (SBS) lead; Ms. Roberta Osmani and Mr. Valmir Ismaili from D+ and their staff (including five municipal level facilitators), and a survey firm (to be determined in Q3). The AT is responsible for conducting the desk work and fieldwork utilizing a mixed-methods approach that includes both qualitative and quantitative analysis. On March 10 and 16, the AT held two meetings to discuss the methodology and the tools for municipal-specific assessments. The ATL and the SCA Learning Lead worked together to develop an outline of the methodology. The team subsequently met with USAID to discuss the assessment methodology and development of the public participation assessment tools (PPATs). On March 22, the SCA team held a meeting with D+ to brainstorm the proposed "Interactive Workshops with Communities" in the five pilot municipalities and review the preliminary questionnaire for these Workshops. The team also discussed roles and responsibilities and the type of support D+ would need from SCA. On March 23 and 24, DI, D+, and the AT held a consultative session with USAID on Deliverable 1.1.1. The Assessment Team incorporated the feedback received from these sessions into Deliverable 1.1.1 prior to its submission on March 28. The Technical Deliverable 1.1.1 was submitted to USAID on March 28. As of the end of the quarter, DI awaited USAID's feedback on this technical deliverable.

The final deliverable included a detailed description of the assessment methodology, data collection instruments (Key Informant Interview (KII) protocol, interactive workshop guides, BH Protocol, document review checklist, PEA materials, survey instrument, etc.), and a statement of methodological limitations. The illustrative assessment methodology includes nine sequential and interrelated processes designed to enable the AT to respond fully to each assessment question. The nine sequential interrelated processes, described below, include:

1. Initial consultations with USAID;
2. A desk review;
3. The development of the assessment work plan and tools;
4. Data collection, including:
  - 1) PEA, stakeholder mapping and analysis, and KIIs with a limited number of respondents;
  - 2) Interactive workshops with community groups (previously called “Focus groups with communities” on YI AWP Gantt chart);
  - 3) A Behavioral Harvest with municipal officials; and
  - 4) A household survey in five pilot municipalities;
5. Data analysis;
6. Validation workshops with municipal and community members;
7. The presentation of findings to USAID;
8. The presentation of findings to the Mayors of the five pilot Municipalities and the MLGA; and
9. The presentation of findings to Municipal Officials and community members which will be the first step in the process of developing municipality-specific Public Participation Action Plans (PPAPs).

DPI shared the Scope of Work for the citizen survey with four potential research companies and expects to receive the proposals during the second week of April, making a selection shortly thereafter.

#### **Activity 1.4 Apply the PPAT in Selected Municipalities**

During this quarter, SCA made progress in preparing for subsequent phases of the Public Participation Assessment.

**Desk Review (Ongoing):** The ATL and Learning Lead (LL) are in the process of conducting a focused literature review and desk study, concentrating on the constitutional and legal framework of public participation at the local level; reports of central and local level institutions on the public consultations; reports and studies by USAID and other international organizations and donors; and reports published by non-governmental organizations on the topic of citizen participation, municipal transparency, women, communities and youth engagement in decision-making process at local level. The desk review is intended to provide background information and context for the PEA and generate themes and questions which will be further explored with other research tools. In addition, the desk review helps to generate a stakeholder mapping exercise at the local level which will inform preparations for the Interactive Workshops with citizens and the Behavioral Harvest sessions.

**Stakeholder mapping:** D+, ATL, and the SCA Team have undertaken a rapid stakeholder mapping identifying key formal and informal actors relevant to the public participation process in each of the five selected municipalities. The mapping will also be used as a source to inform the selection process for the interactive workshops for community groups and Behavioral Harvest sessions with municipal officials. Together with the desk review, the mapping document will precede other data collection methods and to will be further enriched as information from field research becomes available.

**Interactive Workshops with Community Groups:** D+, the ATL, and the SCA Team developed and refined the Interactive Workshop Guides this quarter. The guides continued to be revised as of the end of the quarter.

**Behavioral Harvest Sessions with Municipal Officials:** The DI SBS Lead is in the process of refining the Behavior Harvest Guides for the local context. DI has also scheduled a tentative plan for the SBS Lead to travel to Kosovo from May 10-15, 2022.

## **COMPONENT 2: SUPPORT MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS IN ENGAGING COMMUNITIES TO IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT VALUABLE, EFFECTIVE, AND FEASIBLE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PRACTICES**

### **Activity 2.1 Partnering with Pilot Municipalities**

During this reporting period, prior to holding meetings with Mayors, upon MLGA’s request and COR’s concurrence, the team met with the Minister of Local Government Administration and the Acting Secretary of the MLGA to discuss the technical aspects of SCA and potential ways for MLGA to engage in its implementation. The SCA team agreed to present the findings of the Public Participation Assessments to MLGA.

Following the selection of the pool of municipalities deemed suitable for the pilot phase, the SCA leadership team arranged meetings with Mayors of six potential pilot municipalities to gauge their interest and willingness to partner with SCA. During each meeting, the team presented the objectives and key components of the SCA to increase public participation and citizen engagement at the local level, as well as bridge the communication gaps between citizens and municipalities.

On February 23, the team began the visits in Prizren, where they met with Mayor Shaqir Totaj. Mayor Totaj provided the SCA team with an overview of his immediate and long-term plans for the Municipality of Prizren, discussed the challenges and opportunities the municipality faces, and communicated his willingness to cooperate with SCA. Mayor Totaj also presented the municipality’s plans to foster and improve local economic development, tourism (as the main potential of the City of Prizren), education, health, and public services. The mayor expressed his readiness to partner with SCA, voicing his commitment to improve citizens’ participation practices and promote positive change starting with Municipal officials serving as role models to their constituents.

Also on February 23, the SCA team met with the Deputy Mayor of Suhareka/Suva Reka, Ms. Mihrije Suka. The Deputy Mayor presented the municipality’s plans for 2022 and main successes achieved in public investments in the field of education, health, and public services. In terms of citizen participation, the SCA team learned that the Municipality of Suhareka/Suva Reka organizes public meetings in each village during the budgetary planning process, including meetings with women, and the Mayor meets with individual citizens during “weekly open Thursdays.” The Deputy Mayor expressed strong interest in partnering with SCA to further advance citizen participation practices in her municipality.

On February 24, the team met with the Mayor of Peja, Mr. Gazmend Muhaxheri. The Mayor of Peja presented the general municipality plans, as well as municipal practices regarding citizen participation. The Municipality of Peja holds regular structured dialogue with citizens, and communication is channelled through community councils who are elected through a democratic process. The Mayor of Peja showed his interest in partnering with SCA, taking into consideration the good experiences that the Municipality has had with previous USAID projects. However, the Mayor also suggested that in selecting the pilot municipalities, the team take into consideration two other municipalities in the northern region that did not receive as much support from donors.



On February 25, the SCA team met with the Mayor of Gjilan/Gnjilane, Mr. Alban Hyseni. Mr. Hyseni provided the SCA team with an overview of the immediate and long-term plans for the Municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane, including challenges and opportunities the municipality faces and the potential for cooperation with Activity. Mr. Hyseni also presented the main plans regarding transparency and citizen participation in the decision-making process and ideas and activities that the Mayor started



implementing for strengthening communication and citizen participation, such as scheduling individual meetings with citizens each Friday after 4 p.m. Mr. Hyseni also discussed the plan to consult citizens and businesses about Sunday possibly being proclaimed as a day off, as well as his ideas related to tracking mechanisms and increasing transparency in distributing subsidies to local farmers. The mayor expressed his commitment to closely collaborate with SCA should the Municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane be selected to be a part of the pilot phase.

This series of meetings continued in March with the Mayors of Prishtina and Obiliq/Obilić. On March 14, the team held a virtual meeting with the Mayor of Prishtina, Mr. Përparim Rama, and two of his advisors, Emira Hatipi (Advisor on Good Governance) and Bajram Gecaj (Advisor on Safety and Security). The Mayor of Prishtina was very eager to learn about USAID's SCA after the team elaborated on its purpose, approach, and emphasis on social and behavior change to improve public participation practices and increase trust in the municipal government. The mayor elaborated his plans for the next four years and mentioned that public participation is pivotal in implementing his plans, many of which resulted from consultations with citizens during the election campaign. The mayor expressed his willingness to partner with SCA, among other reasons stating the fact that public participation in Prishtina has deteriorated over the course of the years.

On March 18, the team held the meeting with the Mayor of Obiliq/Obilić, Mr. Xhafer Gashi. The mayor presented the main plans regarding citizen participation, achievements that resulted in the improvement of municipal infrastructure, and other issues related to education, health, and municipal public services. The mayor expressed his willingness to partner with SCA expressing his commitment to advance citizens' participation practices and increase the level of interaction between municipality and local citizens.

Upon completion of the meetings, the team decided to partner with the municipalities of Prizren, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Prishtina, Suhareka/Suva Reka, and Obiliq/Obilić (see reporting on Activity 1.2 for more information). Subsequently, the COP sent official letters to the Mayors of the selected municipalities informing them of their selection and next steps in the process. Next quarter, the DCoP and SGA will hold subsequent meetings with the Mayors of the five pilot municipalities to present the five-year plan for the SCA and the expected engagement requirements for the mayors and their teams. In Q3, the SCA team will complete the presentation, and the follow-on meetings have been scheduled to take place from April 12 to 15. SCA aims to sign Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the municipalities after the team presents the assessment findings in July, when the MOUs will be more notable and impactful.

### **Activity 2.2 Support Local Officials in Development of PPAPs**

No activities were planned for this quarter.

### **Activity 2.3 Support Local Institutions in Resolving Community Issues through Action Plan Practices**

No activities were planned for this quarter.

## **COMPONENT 3: ORGANIZE AND INCENTIVIZE COMMUNITY GROUPS TO PARTICIPATE IN IDENTIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PRACTICES**

### **Activity 3.1 Inform and organize communities for engaging institutions in PPAPs**

During this reporting period, the SCA team began preparing to launch a promotion campaign to reinforce the importance of participatory approaches in local decision-making, which will begin by Month 10 of SCA, coinciding with the development of the PPAPs. The Senior Communications Officer began developing the Communication Plan, which includes media campaigns that the team may deploy when presenting the findings of the public participation assessment and prior/during the development of PPAPs.

### **Activity 3.2 Support Communities in Engaging Local Governments in Development of PPAPs**

During this reporting period, D+ began recruiting for five Community Facilitators to be based in each pilot municipality. D+, with the guidance of the SCA Learning Component Lead, drafted municipal profiles for each of the five pilot municipalities to identify key stakeholders in municipal government and among each municipality's local communities. By the end of the Assessment phase, the profiles will evolve into full-fledged stakeholder maps that will serve as the basis for identifying community representatives who will be invited to participate in the PPAPs. The Community Facilitators will support the aim of community participation in drafting PPAPs.

### **Activity 3.3 Support Communities to Be Part of Resolving Issues through PPAPs**

No activities were planned for this quarter.

### **Activity 3.4 Monitor Public Participation Practices and Implementation of PPAPs**

No activities were planned for this quarter.

## **INDICATORS: STATUS OF OVERALL PROJECT PROGRESS**

In future quarters, this section will report on the status of overall project progress per impact indicators as defined in the Work Plan and the performance monitoring plan. SCA will plan to detail implementation achievements against indicators for the quarter along with cumulative achievements.

## **MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING (MEL)**

SCA will utilize performance indicators to measure the results for each Activity component and establish baseline measurements to assess the impact of proposed interventions as well as data sources and collection methods. The final set of indicators will be finalized after the Public Participation Assessment findings and recommendations have been presented to USAID, Mayors, and community members and once the PPAPs have been approved. In addition, a portion of the data generated through the Assessment process will be used to further refine high-level indicators, which will be used as a baseline for tailored interventions. Below please find the initial set of indicators developed with concurrence of USAID COR and A/COR.

### **Improved Quality of Life:**

- **QUALITATIVE INDICATOR – NON-PERFORMANCE:** Extent to which beneficiaries believe that their quality of life has improved over the course of project implementation
  - Source: qualitative data collection process

**Project Goal: Improve the Attitudes and Social Norms Governing Interaction Between Citizens and Municipal Actors**

- Percent of citizens in target municipalities who perceive that their municipal government is [responsive to their needs/acting in good faith/cares about their needs]
  - Source: citizen perception survey
- Percent of municipal actors in target municipalities who believe that citizens engage productively in the representative process
  - Source: survey of municipal actors
- QUALITATIVE INDICATOR: Degree to which the citizens and municipal actors habitually engage in public participation practices that they perceive as effective and feasible
  - Source: qualitative data collection process

**Intermediate Result 1: Empower Municipal Actors to Engage in Collaborative Representation**

- Average number of days between receipt of citizen request and resolution of request
  - Source: Intranet data
- Quality of budgetary hearings and public meetings held by municipal actors in target communities
  - Source: Program staff evaluation

**Intermediate Result 2: Empower Kosovo Citizens to Engage in Collaborative Representation**

- Percent of citizens in under-represented groups in target municipalities who report having communicated a request to a municipal office
  - Source: citizen perception survey
- Indicator on capacity of citizens to articulate and communicate needs to municipal actors
  - Source: TBD
- Indicator on understanding of process (how to participate, where to participate, etc.)
  - Source: citizen perception survey

**REPORTING AND DELIVERABLES**

SCA submitted the following deliverables in Q1 and Q2:

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>Submission date of first draft</b>	<b>Submission date of final draft</b>	<b>Approval Date of Final Version</b>
Mobilization Plan	DECEMBER 27, 2021	DECEMBER 22, 2021	DECEMBER 22, 2021	DECEMBER 23, 2021
Annual Work Plan (Year 1)	JANUARY 31	JANUARY 31	MARCH 11	MARCH 15
Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP)	JANUARY 31	JANUARY 31	TBD	TBD

Grants Under Contracts (GUCs) Manual	FEBRUARY 10	FEBRUARY 10	FEBRUARY 10	FEBRUARY 11
Quarterly Accrual Report	MARCH 23	MARCH 23	TBD	TBD
Weekly Reports	EVERY THURSDAY	EVERY THURSDAY	EVERY THURSDAY	EVERY THURSDAY/ FRIDAY
Technical Deliverable I.I.I. Methodology for the public participation assessment and plan for conducting the assessment in five pilot municipalities using participatory approach/es. Plan for sharing the assessment results with key stakeholders.	MARCH 28	MARCH 28	TBD	TBD

## CHALLENGES AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Challenges during the reporting period include the following:

- At the beginning of this quarter, several members of the in-country SCA team contracted COVID-19. As such, DI requested an extension of the deadline for the Annual Work Plan and made other adjustments as necessary to ensure staff were able to recover. This slowed down start-up activities, but the team was able to get back on track with the hiring of the Finance & Operations STTA.
- The temporary office at Hotel Parliament presented challenges for a collaborative working space. The office was expected to serve a short-term purpose. However, due to the prolonged search for the permanent office and lease negotiations between DI and the leasing company, the team remained in the temporary office through the end of the quarter. Fortunately, DI anticipates that its local staff will occupy the permanent office space by the first week of April 2022.
- The contracting process with D+ posed initial coordination challenges. However, during the COP's first week in country, DI began coordinating with D+ in-person to address the challenges. DI continues to work with D+ according to the updates listed in the Work Plan.
- Difficulty in recruiting adequately qualified candidates for the Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) Officer made additional effort from the LL and ATL necessary to meet project targets. DPI short listed two candidates for CLA Officer. It is anticipated that the CLA Officer will be on board by early May.

## PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

The project looks forward to the following major activities in the upcoming quarter:

**Component One:**

- First meeting of Advisory Council (April 2022)
- Behavioral Harvest Workshops in five pilot municipalities (May – June 2022)
- Interactive Workshops with communities in the five pilot municipalities (May – June 2022)
- A Citizen Survey in the five pilot municipalities (May – June 2022)

**Component Two:**

- Meeting with Mayors and key municipal staff to present the project and expectations (April 2022)

**Component Three:**

- Develop a Communication Plan, including a public information campaign, upon the completion of the data analysis of the Public Participation Action-Oriented Assessment (June 2022)