

Association
of Kosovo
Municipalities



MUNICIPAL BEST PRACTICE PROGRAM

Council
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ASSOCIATION OF KOSOVO MUNICIPALITIES

Prepared by: Arsim Osmani

St. "Gustav Mayer" No.5
Prishtinë/Prishtina

Tel. 038 245 734
Fax. 038 245 732
info@komunat-ks.net
www.komunat-ks.net



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WHAT IS THE BEST PRACTICE PROGRAM?

Local Self-Governance Best Practice Program is initiated in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the Association of Kosovo Municipalities. The main aim of this program is to select, award and transfer best practices between the municipalities.

The program provides identification of municipalities that have best practices in key fields of their responsibility. Hence, these municipalities will have the support to develop their capacity in order to share their best practices with other municipalities. Municipalities that believe they have developed best practice in certain areas can apply for the status of best practice.

Through the competitive process, the Association of Kosovo Municipalities (AKM), the Steering Committee and the Selection Panel will undertake the selection process or award the winning municipalities with the status of best practice. In the thematic fields, as defined, will be identified one winner. Upon the acceptance of the status of best practice, the Municipality will sign an agreement with the Association of Kosovo Municipalities to disseminate the best practice, innovations and lessons learned in other municipalities.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase of local self-government standards by identifying and recognizing the innovative and best practices in offering services by local administrations;
- Promote the innovations in various fields by the competence of local self-government;
- Promote, along with central authorities' institutions, the need for encouraging and supporting best practices of local self-government management;
- Acknowledge and awarding the best practice in offering service from local administrations in key fields of work;
- Contribute to the creation of strong civil society by promoting a strong, capable and responsible local administration.

WHO IS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM?

Except the Council of Europe (CoE) and Association of Kosovo Municipalities (AKM), part of this program is also the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) as a member of the Steering Committee of the Project and Selection (with the representation of minorities and gender part) established for the need of realization of a successful program.

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Steering Committee - Steering Committee's role is to monitor and evaluate the success of the implementation of "Best Practice Program" as well as to monitor the evaluation and selection of best practice examples. Steering Committee is composed of a representative from the Ministry of Local Self-Government, Council of Europe, Association of Kosovo Municipalities, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Selection Panel - has a central role in setting the criteria for evaluation of best practices in selected fields, does the short list of candidates, visits municipalities that are short-listed and takes the final decision on the best practices. The selection panel is composed of the representatives of AKM Professional Collegia and the Project Manager in the quality of the Local Consultant.

THEMATIC FIELDS

Application for the status of best practice can be presented in three thematic fields:

- 1. Improving Municipal Public Services**
- 2. Facilitate Administrative Procedures**
- 3. Increasing Municipal Revenues**

I. Improving Municipal Public Services

Municipal Public Services are the "pillars" of services that local government provides to its citizens. The manner of provision and their maintenance reflects also at one of the principles of "good management". Examples of best practices can be associated with the activities of the municipality in infrastructure, waste management, water, parks, sewerage, public lighting, emergency interventions, different services in education and health and other activities in this area.

II. Facilitate Administrative Procedures

Issues of administrative procedures provided by the municipality for the needs of citizens are of a different importance in many segments of life and activity of the citizens. Opportunities of municipality that its citizens to be equipped with different documents in easier and efficient manners are great and varied. Examples of good practice in this field can be municipal activities that facilitate procedures to provide the citizen with a documentation starting from personal up to business activities or property issues, urban and cadastral.

III. Increasing Municipal Revenues

Projects, investments of municipal activities depend on the budget, which a part comes to the municipality as a grant from the state budget, and the rest as part of the municipal own revenues. Examples of good practice in this regard can be a concrete commitment of the municipality in increasing various municipal own revenue so that these revenues can be returned to the citizen and the environment where it lives in the form of investment and infrastructure projects.

BEST PRACTICE SELECTION CRITERIA

In order to obtain the Best practice status, the submitted examples should meet the following criteria:

SUCCESS - The practice has been implemented and proves good results. The citizens are familiar with that and their reaction is positive.

TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATION - The steps in the Practice have been well defined and presented in a manner that is understandable to wider public. The citizens have got the opportunity to participate in the process of drafting of the Best Practice, as well as monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the Practice. Local self-government uses several methods for encouraging the active participation of citizens.

RELEVANCE - The objectives of the Practice correspond to the problems related to a specific environment and they have been identified in the Municipal Strategic Plan or some other official documents and the Practice itself contributes to resolving the main problems in the municipality.

APPLICABILITY - The practice can be transferred / implemented in other municipalities.

SUSTAINABILITY - There is sufficient data available regarding the continuation of implementation of the Practice or continuation of the influence of Practice in the future. The long-term effects of the Practice are ensured through clear mechanisms (official documents, changes in the behavior of the citizens...). Financial sustainability is ensured (there are clear and certain sources of finance for the Practice).

HOW THE BEST PRACTICES WILL BE SELECTED?

Association of Kosovo Municipalities will make a list of examples of best practices submitted by municipalities. After this, the Selection Panel will evaluate the received applications and a short list of candidate municipalities. The short list will be up to 15 examples of good practice.

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Members of the Selection Panel (2-3) and the Project Manager will visit the short-listed municipalities. During these visits, municipalities will be required to demonstrate to the Selection Panel their best practice in the relevant thematic area, showing to the Selection Panel their best practice examples. Following the visits to the municipalities, the Selection Panel will select up to 9 practices (up to three in each thematic field). Representatives of the selected municipalities will make their official presentation of their practices at the joint meeting between the Selection Panel and Steering Group. At the meeting, the Selection Panel will have the final decision on the best practice for each thematic field.

AWARDING CEREMONY

Selected examples of best practices will be announced at the Awarding Ceremony. The ceremony will be hosted by the Association of Kosovo Municipalities. At the ceremony will be participating representatives from the central level, the Council of Europe, representatives of all municipalities and other organizations/institutions that have participated in the program and as well as members of the Steering Group. During the ceremony, AKM President along with the Minister of Local Government Administration will officially announce the winners. The ceremony will be held in October 2013.

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION RELATED TO THE BEST PRACTICE

Association of Kosovo Municipalities and winner municipalities will sign an agreement for dissemination of their best practices.

The manner of disseminating information on the best practices, partly will depend on the needs of other municipalities (training, consulting, etc.), but will depend on the capacity of winner municipalities of best practices (seminars, workshops, days of open doors, publications and internet usage, preparation and distribution of promotional materials, newsletters, exhibitions, etc.). Association of Kosovo Municipalities and the Council of Europe will provide assistance in supporting best practices.

“Guideline for Dissemination of Best Practices” will be prepared in cooperation with the Council of Europe, in order to facilitate dissemination and exchange of best practices.

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PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND DEADLINES

The program "Selection of Best Practice in municipalities" will be implemented through the following activities and deadlines:

ACTIVITY	DEADLINE
Conference on Best Practices	October 2012
Submission of application forms by municipalities	November '12- January '13
Pre-selection and preparation of short-list for selection of best practices – meeting with the Selection Panel	February - March
Organization of verifying visits to the selected municipalities for presentation of their best practice and initial evaluation	April - May
Evaluation of practices according to the field from the Selection Panel	June
Presentation of best practices in short-list in front of the Steering Committee/Organization of meetings to hear individual presentation of best practices and to agree on the dissemination of the best practice	June-August
Selection of best practices from the Steering Committee	September
Annual Conference/Ceremony of Awarding Ceremony	October
Preparation of the Guideline of Best Practices for Dissemination	November 2013
Following and monitoring of dissemination	November '13/March '14

HOW TO APPLY?

All municipalities are invited to apply for the status of best practice on those topics that they believe are performing best practice based on the criteria set out in this brochure. All municipalities that are interested in participating in the competition must complete an application form which is an appendix to this booklet, which can be found also on the website of the Association of Kosovo Municipalities www.komunat-ks.net. Moreover, the application form will be sent to all municipalities by AKM.

Application form will be submitted to the Association of Kosovo Municipalities in the following address (St. Gustav Mayer Nr. 5 – 10000 - Prishtina) or through e-mail (info@komunat-ks.net and arsimosmani@komunat-ks.net) no later than 31 January 2013. The application number for one municipality is not limited in the number or in a field. Documents, materials, photos that are used to support the results of best practice will be submitted in the same manner as the application form.

For additional questions regarding the fulfillment of the Application Form, you can contact the Association of Kosovo Municipalities and Local Consultant, Mr. Arsim Osmani, through telephone or e-mail mentioned above.

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APPLICATION FORM FOR THE EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE OF KOSOVO MUNICIPALITIES

Name of the Municipalities:

Brief Information about the Municipality (up to 100 words):

Topic for the application of the good practice example (mark X in the square next to the topic for which the application is submitted):

- Improving Municipal Public Services
- Facilitate Administrative Procedures
- Increasing Municipal Revenues

Name of the good practice example:

Abstract of the good practice example (up to 200 words):

Person in the municipality tasked with implementation/coordination of the project being nominated:

Position in the Municipality:
Contact address:
Telephone:
E-mail:

President of the Municipality

Name and Family name

Seal

Signature

INFORMATION ABOUT THE GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

1. Main problems in the municipality

Describe main problems in the municipality connected to the services/utilities/affairs performed by the local self-government; cite formal documents where stated problems were identified.

2. Description of the problem which was intended to be solved by the good practice example

Describe context, cause(s), time of the occurrence of the problem, which target groups and in which manner they are affected by the existence of the problem

3. Good practice objectives

What did you want to achieve with the good practice example.

4. Initiation and the preparation of the good practice

Who has initiated resolution of the problem (municipality, citizens, donor, non-governmental organization, public company, ...)? Who has developed steps for the implementation of the good practice and in which manner (through the strategy, action plan, project proposal, ...)? Is the good practice based on the general or special strategic plan of the municipality? Why have you decided for this initiative? Who are the users (target group) of the good practice?

5. Realization of the good practice

Describe briefly the good practice. Which activities have been realized during the implementation of the good practice (answer to the key questions relevant for the description of the activity: What did the activity imply? Who managed/realized the activity? How long did the activity last? Where was activity realized?) Did your municipality have a partner in the application of the practice (state body, non-governmental organization, international donor...), if yes state its exact title and the type of the assistance provided (financial, expert, technical...).

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Who has managed the process of the application of the good practice (municipality or the partner)? When have you started the application of the good practice and for how long its implementation lasted? Was the practice fully applied? If not, how much time will it take in order to complete its application? Were there any unexpected problems during the application of the good practice and how have you overcome them?

Which methods for public information and inclusion of citizens in the process of preparation and realization of good practice did you use (meeting, open public debate, mass media, leaflet/ brochure, web site of the municipality, e-mail....).

6. Results of the good practice

Explain how has your good practice influenced resolution of the problem described in the item 2 of this form? Has the good practice impacted the organization of the administration and how? What was the impact of the good practice to the user of services and which users were affected the most? What was the percentage of the population that benefited the most from the good practice, according to your assessment?

Is there an official record of good practice results (who keeps the record and in which manner)?

Explain how has your good practice influenced resolution of main problems of the municipality as described in item 1 of this form?

7. Resources

What are the costs of the realization of the good practice? What financing sources did you use (municipal budget, Republic budget, donors, loans, ..)?

What were all resources required for the application of the good practice (human resources within and outside of the municipality, computers, offices, other equipment)? Has the good practice caused savings to the municipal budget, if yes state which and how much?

Have you and in which manner promoted the good practice (in mass media, on conference, meetings and similar)? Are the citizens of your municipality familiar with your good practice and to what extent are they satisfied? Are other municipalities familiar with your good practice? Has any other municipality applied your good practice example?

8. Sustainability of the good practice

Is the application of the good practice going to be continued, if yes what would be the financing sources? In which manner will good practice produce effects in future? Are there any clear mechanisms that are providing for continuation of the good practice impact in the future (formal documents, changed behaviors of citizens ...)?

9. Support to other municipalities which wish to take over the good practice

Are there any specific preconditions (organization, financial, geographic, ...) that other municipalities would need to meet in order to apply your good practice? What can you offer to other municipalities that wish to take over your example (visits, training, material, expert assistance, advise...)?

10. Lessons learned – recommendations

State your recommendations on what could be done better in repeated implementation of the good practice, what were your main obstacles that you have encountered and what were the lessons learned from the application of the example?

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AKM has the status of an observer in Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe. It is a permanent member of NALAS (Network of Associations of Local Authorities in South-East Europe), member of LOGON network, member of LOGIN network. Member is an Invited Association (similar to the status of an observer) in Committee of Europe for Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and member in ALDA (Association of Local Democracy Agencies).

