

2010 – YEAR OF ENLARGEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS



2010 was one of the most active and most successful years in the six-year-long operations of the Center for Civil Communications. Besides expanding our nation-wide activities, we also enlarged our operations for enhancement of local transparency, responsibility and accountability.

Through direct monitoring of proceedings and in-depth analysis and research of all relevant factors and stakeholders, we detected numerous problems and weaknesses in the implementation of public procurements in the country, developing about 40 specific measures and recommendations for overcoming of weaknesses.

One of our crucial recommendations has become part of the amendments to the Law on Public Procurements, whereas several crucial remarks for implementation of the public procurements' process were noted and became part of the European Union recommendations for improvement of this field in Macedonia. We implemented comprehensive research in four municipalities, which resulted in about fifty specific recommendations to municipalities for enhancement of transparency, responsibility and accountability of the local administration. Twenty journalists from national and local media were trained for reporting on public procurements. The U.S. Department of State cited the main conclusion from our in-depth research on the way in which Macedonian media report on corruption in its annual report on the respect of human rights in

countries worldwide. In the course of 2010, Macedonian media published a total of 153 texts on the results of our activities. In addition, we published and distributed seven publications from our research in the course of the year and 12 issues of the Anti-Corruption Monthly.

Monitoring of public procurements (2008-2011)

The project analyses the implementation of the public procurements' system in the country from the aspect of transparency, competitiveness, equal treatment of economic operators, non-discrimination, legality, economy, efficiency, effective and rational use of budget funds, insistence on getting the best offer under the most favorable terms, as well as accountability on spent funds through public procurements. A total of 160 randomly selected procedures on public procurements are monitored through: direct monitoring of the bids' opening, in-depth interviews with all bidders, as well as bodies that schedule procurements and collection of information from the Electronic System for Public Procurements and all other institutions engaged in the process. Monitoring results are published quarterly, including remarks on the implementation of public procurements and recommendations over enhancement of the public procurements' process.





The following activities were implemented in the course of 2010, with the achievement of the following results:

- Implementation of detailed direct monitoring of 160 public procurement procedures at a national and local level;
- Detection of weaknesses in the implementation of public procurement process in the country;
- The key findings, along with the recommendations on overcoming weaknesses have been published in four quarterly reports;
- Results have been presented to the wider public through series of press conferences and two large debates, including more than 100 representatives from all stakeholders in the process;
- Twenty journalists from national and local media were trained on investigating and reporting public procurements in Macedonia.
- Series of debates in each of the municipalities, involving a total of 105 representatives of local communities, including presentation of results from the research, detecting the possible ways to improve the situation;
- A total of 44 recommendations on enhancement of operations were developed and submitted to each municipality on the basis of the research;
- Special working teams for implementation of recommendations were established in each municipality, including a total of 24 members, who were approved personally by the mayors;
- Six workshops on implementation of recommendations were held, involving 77 municipal representatives;
- Civil center for collection of complaints, proposals and suggestions from citizens, aimed at enhancing the work of local self-government were opened in each municipality, in the framework of the local NGOs;
- The working teams implemented 60% of recommendations by December-end;
- Four debates were held, involving 56 representatives of local communities, aimed at summing up results from the improvement of procedures for transparency, accountability, responsibility, informing of citizens and their participation in the local decision-making process;
- A Book of Practices and Recommendations was developed and published, including knowledge from all prior activities, i.e. experiences from the field, legal framework, recommendations for enhancement, and models to follow.

USAID project for transparent governance (2009-2012)

The project develops mechanisms for increase of transparency, accountability and responsibility of local self-governments in Macedonia, urging the increased participation of citizens and the local business community in the local decision-making process, as well as exchange of best practices and experiences among municipalities in the country. It is a three-year-long project, implemented in partnership with non-governmental organizations NGO Info-Center from Skopje and EHO from Stip, funded by USAID Macedonia.

During 2010, the following project activities were implemented in municipalities Stip, Strumica, Vinica and Sveti Nikole:

- Weaknesses in current work of municipalities through comprehensive research of citizens, NGOs, business sector and local self-governments are detected;



2011 PROGRAM

Operations and activities to be implemented in 2011 completely originate from the three-year strategic plan of the CCC for period 2010-2012, whereas implementation of the program and results from the activities are monitored and measured through an annual monitoring and evaluation plan.

Index on rationality in spending public money

The goal of the index is to enhance the public pressure on competent institutions in increasing the control of public funds' spending, as well as enhance the system of public procurements in Macedonia through reduction of the current wide room of misuse. This is an entirely new instrument introduced in Macedonia, aimed at measuring the rationality in spending public funds and revealing misuse in public procurements through comparative display of prices at which central and local state institutions purchase the same products, services or contracting. Data on the purchasing of certain same type of product or service by institutions is acquired through direct monitoring of public procurement bids' opening and obtaining of information through the use of Law on Access to Public Information. A minimum of 5 public procurement items are quarterly selected, creating a display of prices among 5 to 10 institutions, meaning that the monitoring will annually encompass up to 200 public procurement procedures.



Analysis of municipalities' relation towards public procurements

The objective is to detect weaknesses and anomalies, derive recommendations and guidelines for improvement of the process and implementation of the public procurement procedures by local authorities in the Republic of Macedonia, for the purpose of greater transparency, accountability and responsibility in spending of public funds.

This is an in-depth research of the current relation of municipalities towards public procurements in detecting the weaknesses and deriving recommendations for



improvement of the situation. The research will be implemented at a sample involving 21 municipalities (seven small, seven mid-size and seven large), having equal geographic, regional, ethnic and political representation.

The research will be implemented through analyses of available data on public procurements for these municipalities, visits and interviews in municipalities,

sending of requests for access to public information, implementation of surveys in order to research the public opinion, as well as use of other databases and information (official gazettes, audit reports, Electronic System for Public Procurement etc).

Media and NGOs against corruption

The goal is to enhance the role of media and NGOs in the fight against corruption, through increase of their capacities, involvement and cooperation in the fight against corruption in Macedonia.

Journalists from twenty media in the country (local and national) will be trained in investigating and reporting corruption. Moreover, about thirty NGOs will acquire knowledge and skills for introduction of anti-corruption components in their regular program, projects and activities. Finally, media and NGOs will work together on their increased cooperation and involvement in the fight against corruption in the country by becoming part of a joint network and signing a joint declaration.



USAID Project for Transparent Governance

The objective is to increase confidence among citizens and businessmen in local authorities through establishment of practices for more transparent, more accountable and more responsible governance, encouragement of citizens for involvement in the local decision-making process and exchange of best practices among municipalities throughout the country regarding the enhancement of operations, as well as improved satisfaction of the local community. Following the first stage of activities implemented in four municipalities in eastern Macedonia, the operations will be expanded to additional four municipalities in the Skopje region: Gazi Baba, Petrovec, Aracinovo and Cucer-Sandevo, along with seven multiethnic communities in the country's west and southwest. The idea is to use and apply the experiences, practices and procedures established in the four municipalities to the other municipalities throughout Macedonia. The project is implemented in partnership with NGO Info-Center from Skopje and EHO from Stip.



Monitoring of public procurements

The objective is to analyze the implementation of the public procurement process in the country through in-depth research and monitoring of a randomly selected sample of 160 public procurement procedures, revealing whether the basic principles of public procurements function: transparency, competitiveness, equal treatment of economic operators, non-discrimination, legal proceeding, cost-effectiveness, efficiency, effective and rational use of budget funds, commitment to obtain best value for money, as well as accountability for the funds spent through public procurements.

The process represents a continuation of the monitoring of public procurements, which has lasted since 2008 and has thus far significantly raised the public awareness in Macedonia over the significance of public procurements, problem of misuse in procurements and the possibility to reduce the room for corruption through legal and practical changes.

Besides detecting weaknesses, indicating problems, proposing measures to reduce the room and possibilities for misuse, there will be lobbying among competent institutions in the course of 2011 for more serious changes in regulations, especially in the Law on Public Procurement, for the purpose of enhancing this significant process in our country.

