

Project “Developing Enterprises Locally Through Alliance and Action”

The World Bank (Department of small and medium enterprises) and the Institute for an Open Society - SOROS (Initiative for Local Governance and Reform in Public Services) in cooperation with Albanian organisation Foundation for Local Autonomy and Governance (FLAG) have begun implementing of DELTA project. This project focuses in building strategic and action plans that would impact policy reforms and economic development, especially in private sector, in municipal (local) level.

This program consists of a methodology that promotes strengthening of capacities and facilitates cooperation between municipal officials and local businesses in building common strategies and vision that will serve the development of private sector, institutionalisation of private-public partnerships and compiling of programmes and local projects that would lead towards preparing of an agenda for a solid development of private sector.

DELTA project has been successfully tested in 7 municipalities in Kosovo (2002-2003) and is continuing in five other municipalities after the presentation of these plans has proved successful for local municipalities in general as well as for business community in particular. Initially, DELTA in Albania will be a one-year project that will include five Albanian municipalities: Durrës, Shkodër, Korçë, Berat dhe Lezhë, and it implemented by FLAG.

The Strategic Planning of LED is the biggest planning effort in municipal level in which, the business community is expected to contribute not only during the planning process but in its implementation as well.

The plan will consist of several projects. Through strengthening of institutions, infrastructure and of policies that support private enterprises, a great part of these projects will aim for the development and strengthening of small and medium enterprises – SME as well as increasing their profitability, employment opportunities and of income for municipal budget.

This plan will enable the partners that want to work in municipality and support municipal government or local business to develop programmes and implement projects that have been jointly formulated and with a World Bank methodology

The participation of business community in formulating the plan is considered necessary by the municipal government. No one can better articulate the problems and needs of a business than the business community itself..

The Municipal government has offered to help you; it's your turn to accept this help (invitation).

The successful implementation of this project will enable the business community to:

- To offer partnership in the process of formulation of the Strategic Planning for the LED
- To include in Strategic Planning of LED business primary needs for an improvement of business climate.
- To contribute in formulating programmes for lowering of red tape and other administrative barriers.
- To request financial and administrative support of a municipal government in implementation of projects that aim an improvement of infrastructure and public services that are vital for the business.
- To create a 'climate of cooperation' with local government, since an 'open' (approachable) local government has more chances to favour the business than a 'distant' municipality.

The inclusion of business community in preparing of this plan has some advantages:

- It will help in creating a trust with banks and other loan agencies/institutions.
- It will make it easier to identify the needs for technical and financial assistance that would help strengthen business capacities and its competition capabilities.

- It will help municipal government in marketing and promoting a better and more professional way the business potential and will facilitate municipal, national as well as regional policies that will help the local business.
- A better direction of the businesses in municipality in preparing their business plans, directing the funds for investments since every business will see through this planning the development priorities and the allocation of financial and human resources.
- It will provide for a continuous and institutionalised engagement of a business community in improvements of a Plan as a change of situation requires.
- It will enable the business community to continuously monitor the implementation of the Plan.

Building of capacities that would periodically make the process of a local strategic planning, will lead to a institutionalisation of this process in municipal government. Meantime, the direct beneficiaries of this will be businessmen, local governments and municipal communities who will continuously increase their chances to access the economic opportunities.
