



Verein für
Integrative Mediation e.V.

Training Report

Key Leaders from Rahovec / Orahovac

Strategic Planning Training

24 – 26 April 2008

Hotel Continental, Skopje



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Integrative Mediation:

Bringing Local Leaders Together

CSSP – Verein für Integrative Mediation e.V. (CSSP) is a registered non-profit association based in Berlin, Germany. It was founded on 16 June 2006 in Berlin and has ten founding members. Its purpose is to improve inter-ethnic communication and cooperation, and the implementation of peace initiatives to resolve local conflicts through Integrative Mediation. It also promotes efforts to support the development of democratic processes as a tool to overcome conflicts. The organization is fully funded on a yearly basis by the German Foreign Ministry and the Bundestag through the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and has its offices in Berlin. In 2006, 2007 and 2008, parts of its activities are also sponsored by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

The origin of CSSP lies in the implementation of the lessons learned from ten years of work of the International Mediator in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995 – 2004), Dr. Christian Schwarz-Schilling. As International Mediator he placed a particular emphasis on increasing dialogue. Through review, critique and the evolution of his extensive experience as a mediator, the methodology of Integrative Mediation was developed. It brings together several elements of conflict resolution at the local level in a comprehensive approach. Integrative Mediation is the core of CSSP.

CSSP seeks to empower local individuals through tailored mediation processes. This includes providing local individuals with professional training in mediation, negotiation and problem solving techniques and skills, as well as offering expertise and assistance in resolving their conflicts. At the same time CSSP tries to strengthen professional mediation in its target areas to increase capacity and provide credible alternatives to conflict. The CSSP team firmly believes in and strives for building peace from the bottom up and strengthening a community's capacity to overcome its internal disagreements and to create a fertile ground for democratic (political, economic, and social) development.

The comprehensive approach to mediation includes various levels of responsibility, multiple actors, and a variety of techniques, drawing on classical mediation and developing holistic and decentralized processes. It combines five different core elements: Mediation, Consultation, Professional Training, Advocacy, and Research & Analysis. The elements are combined in various forms and situations to develop a holistic and individual process.

CSSP assists local actors to develop initiatives and to implement confidence-building measures which apply to their specific needs and circumstances. Overall Integrative Mediation endeavours to bring the general and hierarchical process of conflict resolution down to the local level by focusing on joint meetings, dialogue, confidence-building and experience sharing.

CSSP does not seek to replace or remove ownership of the peace process. Instead, Integrative Mediation complements the work of those already in the field. The main aim is to leave decisions and solutions in the hands of local actors.

For further information contact:

CSSProject for Integrative Mediation, e.V.
Auguststr. 72
10117 Berlin
Germany

info@cssproject.org
www.cssproject.org
tel: +49 30 227 77414
fax: +49 30 227 76417



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Introduction

CSSP has been working in the municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac since 2005 in an Integrative Mediation process focussing on improving relations within municipal governance. The interventions in the municipality centred on integrating all communities into the municipal structures and consisted of a series of visits, professional trainings, and joint meetings, addressing key issues of concern such as administrative issues, project implementation and building trust between the communities. CSSP has supported the municipality in implementing a number of trust-building measures between the different communities, among which were a study trip of farmers from all communities to Macedonia and the participation of Kosovo Serbs in the municipality's annual wine festival.

The following is a report of the Strategic Planning Training conducted with key leaders from the municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac from 24-26 April 2008 as part of the overall Integrative Mediation process with the municipality. It covers the current situation of the municipality and the context of the training, as well as the methodology used. The report describes the skills and knowledge imparted as well as the participants' interaction with them. In addition to the conclusions drawn by the participants, the annex provides a compilation of the concrete results and action plans the municipal leaders are planning to implement with the skills they acquired in the training.

Current Situation and Context of the Training

The municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac is located in the South of Kosovo. It has a population of approx. 73,700 living in 35 villages and the town of Rahovec/Orahovac. The municipality has a very rural structure with the main sources of income in agricultural production and specifically grape cultivation.

While the majority of the population is Kosovo Albanian, there is a Kosovo Serb minority community of approximately 1300 people, living in two enclaves in upper Rahovec/Orahovac town and the village of Velika Hoča/Hoçë e Madhe. Other minority communities include Roma, Egyptian and Ashkali communities (together approx. 550 members). The integration of minority communities is one of the central issues for the municipality to work on. It has suffered setbacks in the past for example with the resignation of 17 Kosovo Serbs from their municipal functions in late summer 2006. Nevertheless, in recent years some progress has been achieved to sustain interethnic relations.

The Strategic Planning Training results out of the request from previous training participants and key leaders from all communities of Rahovec/Orahovac. Due to the political changes following the elections in fall 2007, many of the key leaders

changed in office. During a CSSP trip to Rahovec/Orahovac in February 2008 the new leadership in the municipality confirmed their commitment to the Integrative Mediation process and specifically their interest in the Strategic Planning Training with the Board of Directors and selected members of the municipal leadership from both communities. Thus, the Strategic Planning Training has sustained CSSP's work in Rahovec/Orahovac and was conducted using funds from CSSP's project with the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

Setting

In order to ensure maximum benefit for all participants from training measures and personal interaction, the training was designed to accommodate 17 participants. Participants were selected to include the municipal leadership (mayor and board of directors) and other key leaders of the municipality. These key leaders can function as multipliers and apply and transmit their acquired skills and insights to their respective departments and other municipal institutions. The participants included the entire Board of Directors of Rahovec/Orahovac, except for the vice president. In addition participants included representatives of the municipal assembly and other key municipal institutions.

Participants' selection aimed at taking into account gender and ethnic balance. There was a specific challenge to including women in the training since only few women are represented in the municipal leadership of Rahovec/Orahovac. CSSP undertook an extensive search for unrecognized or potential women leaders to be included in the training and function as multipliers. Two women attended this training who are both employed in the municipal administration and were identified as participants with the support of the mayor. With regard to the overall aim of the training to support the municipality's efforts at integrating the non-majority communities, special emphasis was placed on including representatives from the Kosovo Serb and other minority communities. The ethnic balance during the training was somewhat unequal, with 13 Kosovo Albanian, four Kosovo Serb participants and no representatives from the Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian communities;¹ nevertheless, the numbers reflected the municipal realities as represented in the official structures. There are no Kosovo Serbs in elected positions in the municipality.

The training was conducted in Skopje, Macedonia in order to bring the participants together on neutral ground. This setting allowed the participants to interact and discuss issues and challenges with a certain distance to the municipal dynamics.

¹ Despite sustained efforts to include members of other communities for participation in the training, no additional participants could be identified. For example, at the time of the training the process of appointing a Roma representative in the municipal structures had still been ongoing.

During plenary and group work sessions, simultaneous translation was provided in English, Serbian, and Albanian. All written materials were available in the three languages as well, and the outcomes produced in the group work sessions were translated promptly.

The training was conducted by Eva Maria Malisius and Dr Juan Diaz from CSSP e.V., and Thomas Büttner from facilitation team. Coordination tasks were fulfilled by Ulrike Gatzemeier and logistical support provided by Javor Pobric, both from CSSP e.V.

Methodology

Integrative Mediation is a comprehensive approach to mediation that combines a variety of conflict resolution techniques. Professional trainings form an integral part of the overall mediation process with a municipality. The aim of the training was to provide individual skills to the stakeholders on Strategic Planning and enable them to act as multipliers, as well as to provide them with the opportunity to interact with each other outside the formal setting of their municipal structures.

Strategic Planning is a method that aims at making an organization's work effective and sustainable through defining its aims and strategy and identifying and allocating resources. It uses a variety of business analysis techniques aiming at identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the successful implementation of aims and projects (SWOT analysis). The skills and tools imparted in the training will support the municipal key leaders in the process of creating a strategy for social, cultural, and economic municipal development for the coming years with specific regard to the integration of all communities.

The Professional Training on Strategic Planning was made up of a variety of teaching elements, including short lectures and theoretical input on the overall framework of Strategic Planning and specific tools and techniques, as well as plenary discussions, smaller working groups, and individual exercises. In addition there was time for reflection, exchange of ideas and smaller debates among the leaders. The goal of the training was to provide the participants with strategic planning skills to enable them to conduct similar processes in their respective departments, as well as within the board of directors and similar municipal structures.

Contents were presented in four steps for strategic planning and in these, theoretical knowledge was transferred not only abstractly but applied directly to the conditions in the municipality and to issues the participants themselves identified as essential. The training process was geared towards creating a common future vision for the municipality. In mixed working groups the participants worked on issues that they

identified as important to Rahovec / Orahovac as a group and developed options to work on the issues together with all communities.

Throughout the training the participants were encouraged and able to contribute with their thoughts, opinions, ideas, experiences and suggestions. The training schedule remained flexible throughout the course of the training to accommodate the participants' needs and their speed of moving forward with new concepts.

Course of the Professional Training

The professional training enhanced the learning experience of the participants by imparting specific tools and concepts as well as by referring directly to the municipal leaders' daily work context and challenges existing at the municipal level. The methods of Strategic Planning were applied immediately to problems and issues identified by the participants in their municipality with regard to the integration of all communities and social, economic and cultural progress more generally.

The training progressed in four steps, resembling the steps of the strategic planning process. These are:

1. Situation Assessment
2. Strategic Direction
3. Implementation Planning
4. Monitoring Progress

In each of the four steps the participants used the space provided to discuss issues they identified as problematic in the municipality, exchange their perspectives and ideas on options to overcoming them.²

The first step was dedicated to situation assessment. In discussions in the plenary and the groups, the participants as representatives of municipal institutions analyzed the potential strengths and weaknesses the municipal bodies show in tackling the challenges they face, specifically with regard to the integration of all communities into municipal life.

With the next step of the training (Strategic Direction) the participants were encouraged to formulate their visions for the future of the municipality in both partner and group work. The visions elaborated contained both general, overall visions, like the prevalence of tolerance and respect and improvement of living conditions; and tangible ideas on what progress could look like. The participants named several

² In the annex is included a compilation of relevant documents and results elaborated by the participants of the Strategic Planning Training for Key Leaders from Rahovec/Orahovac. The goals and strategies developed during the training have also been compiled to be distributed to the participants and will form a basis for further work of the municipal bodies.

goals they envisage for their municipality like multiethnic youth facilities, the improvement of living conditions for people with special needs, better health services for all communities, multiethnic activities like festivals and markets and better employment opportunities especially for women. While incorporating some differing perspectives, the visions created shared a lot of common ground also among the participants of the different ethnic communities. As the participants themselves highlighted, there are great similarities and overlaps in the ideas brought forward on the future of the municipality and thus solid common ground for further cooperation.

In line with the methodology taught in this training each planning process has a vision, mission and guiding principles at its core. These provide strategic orientation for the organization and define its purpose and the values on the basis of which further action will be taken. In drafting this tool for orientation of their future work, the municipal leaders of all communities brought up integration as a central guiding principle. Furthermore, the participants saw a strong connection between their vision of creating a modern and integrated municipality and their mission to improve the living conditions for all citizens equally.

In addition to this general agreement the participants were very committed to implementing their vision by working on concrete, tangible issues the municipality needs to tackle in order to create better living conditions for all communities alike. Having this in mind the participants identified specific areas in which action was needed most urgently and with which consequently the group wanted to move on and draft concrete action plans to be implemented in the coming months. The participants prioritized three clusters of issues of relevance for the future development of the municipality and worked on them in groups. These clusters were:

A: Infrastructure and economy with an emphasis on agriculture

B: Education, youth, and culture

C: Protection of the environment, and health and social welfare

In addition to these clusters, capacity building was identified as an issue of high importance in all activities of the municipality.

With the next step focusing on implementation planning, three working groups were formed to work on one of the clusters each. Keeping in mind the sustainability of the projects developed, the working groups consisted of the those participants who through their work and position in the municipal structure have a stake in the specific area worked on and can provide inside knowledge and decision-making power to move the project further in the aftermath of the training. The working groups concretized specific projects they want to undertake or reviewed projects that are already in the planning stages in the municipality. Among these projects were road and water supply construction especially in remote villages, land distribution issues,

multiethnic schooling and youth projects such as a theatre group, and establishing facilities for medical care for pregnant women and mothers with small children. The groups identified barriers to success of the projects, such as lack of resources and capacities and lack of decision-making power. They reflected on possibilities to overcome these and developed concrete strategies with which the different projects can be implemented. The groups closed their work by drafting concrete action plans for selected projects. They identified the necessary resources, a timeframe and a financial framework for conducting the specific projects they foresee.

Due to time constraints and the need expressed by participants to deepen their skills in project planning and implementation, the final step of the strategic planning process (Monitoring Progress) was covered in the form of a theoretical overview of possibilities to measure progress.

Conclusions and Next Steps

For the municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac the training took place at a very beneficial point in time: With the changing situation in Kosovo and the consolidating state structures all sides have to reconfirm their commitment to jointly creating a multiethnic municipality where progress and peaceful coexistence are possible.

Especially with regard to the overall aim of the training, to support the municipality's efforts at integrating all communities, the participants confirmed that the space offered for open discussion, the difficult issues brought forward by all sides, the exchange of their perspectives and the common goals they jointly identified for the municipality will set the ground for future cooperation. The intense frame of the training enabled them to get to know each other outside the immediate municipal dynamics, explore possibilities of cooperation, identify joint projects and define their common outlook for the municipality. Furthermore, the key leaders reiterated the need for capacity building and made clear that the training was an important step for progress of the municipality in this regard. They saw that the tangible skills they acquired on the methodology of strategic planning will enable them to make their work effective and their efforts sustainable. Overall the training contributes to the overall aim of the Integrative Mediation process in Rahovec / Orahovac which focuses on integrating the communities into the municipal structures and thereby supporting interethnic dialogue.

The participants committed themselves to applying the skills acquired during the training in their work in the municipality and to also convey them to their staff and colleagues. More specifically, the participants will take back and implement the results and projects and will focus on furthering the integration of all communities in the municipality. The mayor suggested that the mission, vision and guiding principles as identified as the basis of the strategic planning process be integrated into the

municipal work in the form of a resolution to be adopted by the municipal assembly or the board of directors.

With regard to the overall progress of the Integrative Mediation process in Rahovec/Orahovac, the training further contributed to the sustainability of the progress that has been achieved by the leadership of the municipality and facilitated by CSSP beyond the timeframe of the past legislative period. The successes of the last years at improving interethnic dialogue in their municipality will be further developed. The new key leaders were given an opportunity to consider their own perspectives on the current status and future of interethnic dialogue in the municipality and to strengthen their commitment to the integration of all communities. This takes further the work of CSSP with the municipality.

As has become clear during planning and conducting of the training, one challenge within interethnic dialogue is the interaction with minority communities other than the Kosovo Serb community. Currently there are no Roma, Ashkali or Egyptian representatives employed in municipal structures, which makes the representation of their needs and interests a particular challenge. It is the firm conviction of CSSP that integration and interethnic dialogue increases in its sustainability when all communities are involved in and committed to the process. Therefore CSSP strongly urges the municipality to strengthen its outreach to all citizens of the municipality and ensure representation of all communities in its structures. Similarly, CSSP will extend its efforts at involving representatives of all communities in its work.

In July 2008 CSSP will follow up on the implementation of the training results with a joint meeting with all participants. In this meeting, the implementation of the intended projects and specifically the cooperation and integration of all communities in the municipality will be discussed and, where necessary, further steps for progress will be drafted. CSSP will further report on its work with the municipality of Rahovec / Orahovac in an Integrative Mediation process focusing on the integration of all communities in the municipal structures and the promotion of interethnic dialogue.



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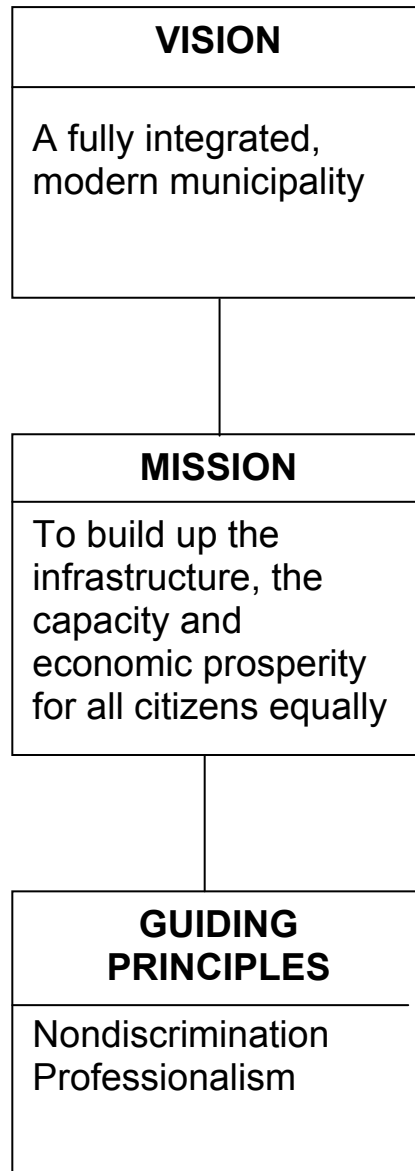
ANNEX

Participants List

<i>Position/Function</i>	<i>Ethnic Group</i>
Mayor	A
Director of Administration and Personnel	A
Director of Finance and Budget	A
Acting Director of Urbanism, Geodesy, Environment	A
Director of Health and Social Welfare	A
Director of Agricultural & Rural Development	A
Director of Culture, Youth and Sports	A
Director of Education	A
Director of Economy and Planning	A
Deputy Chairperson of Municipal Assembly for Communities	S
Senior Finance Officer	A
Personnel Manager, Office of the Deputy Chairperson of Municipal Assembly	A
Human Rights Officer	A
Municipal Communities Office	S
Acting Director of the Municipal Communities Office	S
Municipal Communities Officer	S
OSCE Senior Democratisation Officer	A

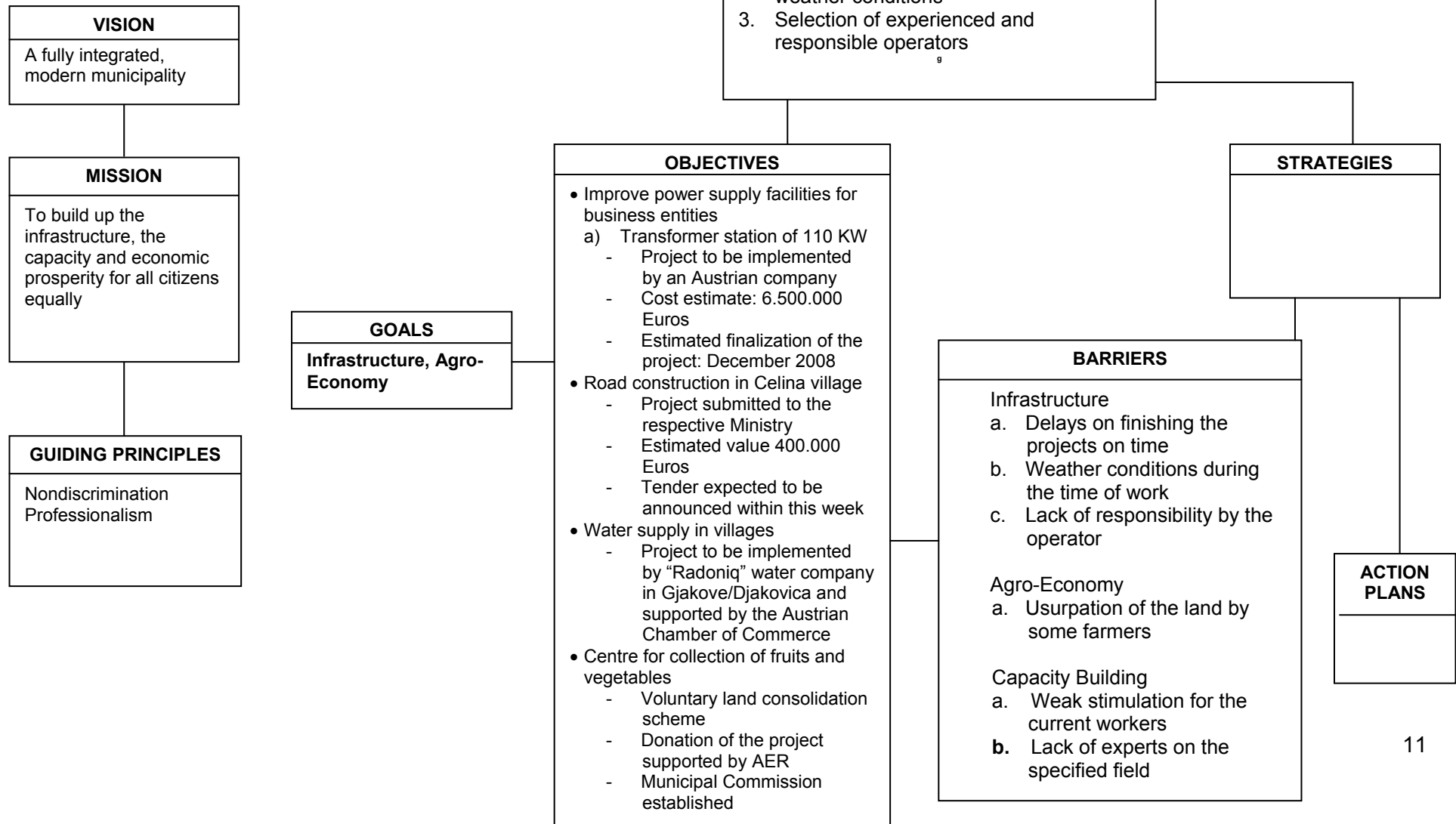
Training Outcomes

VISION – MISSION – GUIDING PRINCIPLES for the municipality of Rahovec / Orahovac



Group A: Infrastructure, Economy, Agriculture

Strategic Planning Tool



Sample Action Plan

Objective(s): Supported	Releasing the property occupied by the farmers	
Owner:	Municipal Assembly Rahovec/Orahovac	
Deliverables:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engagement of our experts for the problem identification with the necessary tools 	
Due Date:	May 2008	Total Costs: 565 Euros

	Action Step	Responsibility	Due	Cost	Person
1.	Identification of the farmers occupying lands	Property and Legal Services	7	450 Euros	15
2.	Meeting with these farmers	Department for Cadastre	8	45 Euros	15
3.	Decision making during the talks	Department for Cadastre	1	0 Euros	15
4.	Publication of the decisions	Department for Cadastre	7	70 Euros	15

Strategies

Agro-Economy:

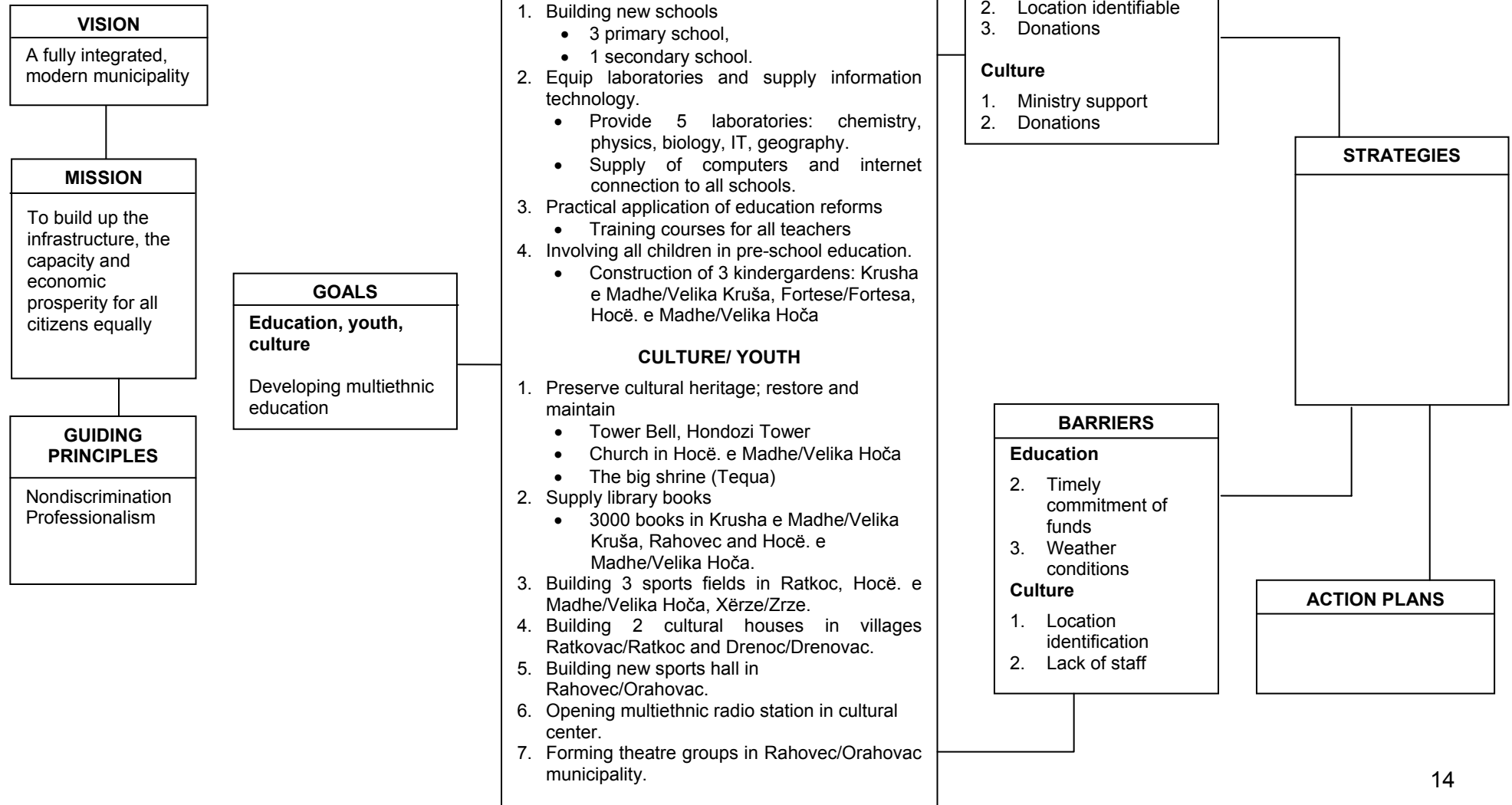
- Usurpation of land by farmers prohibits the implementation of land consolidation
 - a. Identification of farmers occupying private land
 - b. Issue invitations to such farmers by responsible authorities
 - c. Set a timeframe for vacating the usurped land along with a warning that failure to voluntarily comply will result in legal action

Capacity building:

- Ensure adequate incentives for employed civil servants
- Recruit full-time external consultants to support projects implementation

Group B: Education, Youth, Culture

Strategic Planning Tool



Sample Action Plan

Objective(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furthering multiethnic education • Safeguarding cultural heritage
Supported	
Owner:	Municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac
Due Date: 28.11.2009	Total Costs: 1.585.000 Euro

	Action Step	Responsibility	Due	Cost	Persons
1.	Project ensurement	Directorate for Culture Sport and Youth	2 months	35000	3 persons
2.	Location identification	Rahovec/Orahovac municipality	2 months	/	3 persons
3.	Finding means	Government/ donors	3 months	750000	Rahovec/Orahovac municipality / Government
4.	Opening of tenders	Procurement office / ministry	30 days		3 persons
5.	Identification of doners	Responsible commission	15 days		3 persons
6.	Work supervisor	Professional supervising staff	Perma nent		3 persons
7.	Due date	Rahovec/Orahovac municipality	28th novem ber 2009	750000	Operator
8.	Promotion	Rahovec/Orahovac municipality	28.11.2 009	50000	Government / Operator

Strategy

Project: Sports Centre Rahovec/Orahovac

Implementation: Municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac – CSY

Vision:

- Need for recreation, sports and different youth activities
- Integration of all communities

Cost of the project: 750.000 Euros

Source:

- Government – MCSY
- Donations – Doners conference

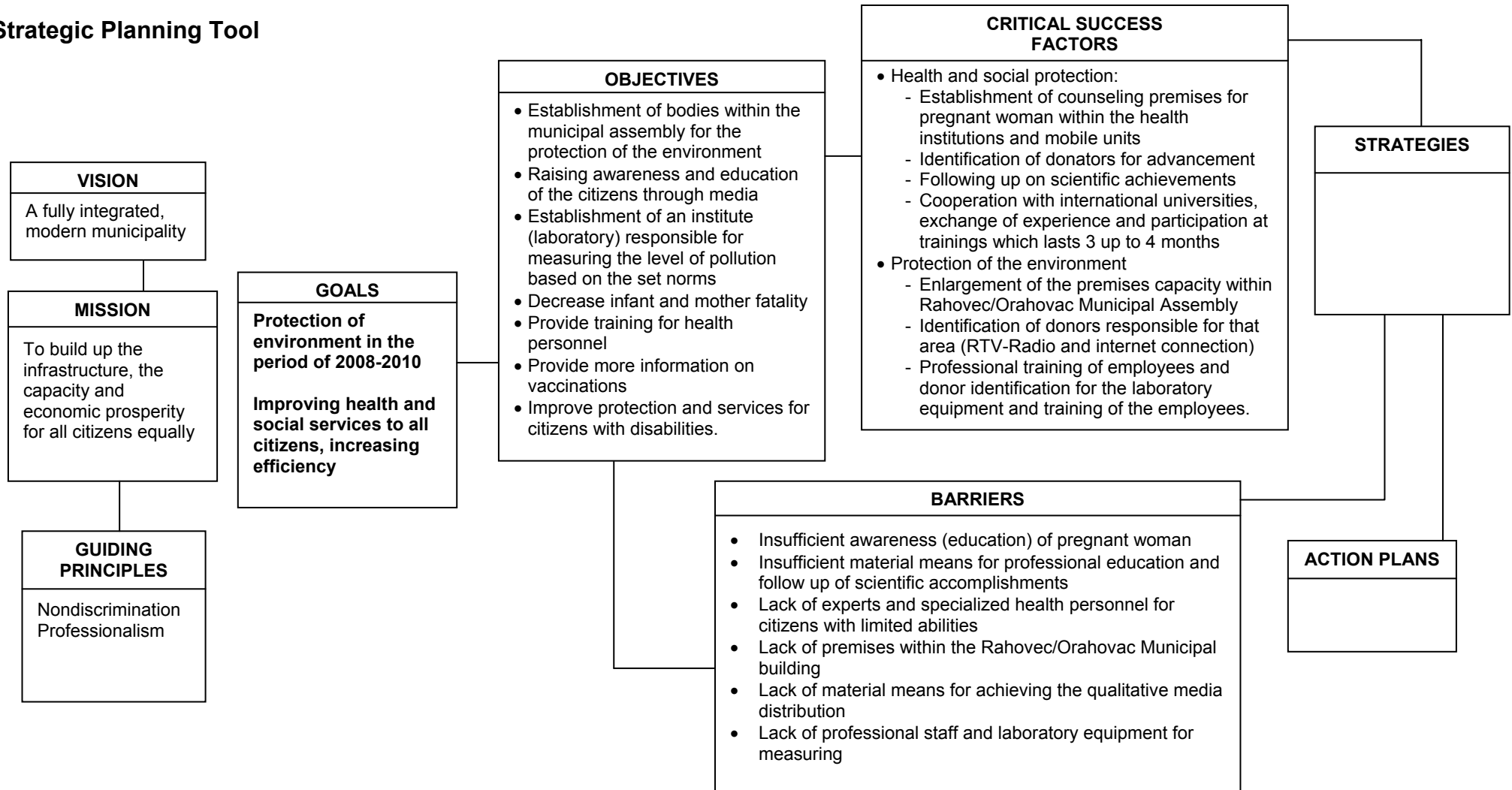
Time frame: 2 years

Barriers:

- Identify a location
- Identify funds

GROUP C: Protection of the Environment; Health Care and Social Services

Strategic Planning Tool



Sample Action Plan

Strategy: Decrease mortality rate of mothers and newborn children

Objective(s): Supported	Improvement of mother and child health conditions		
Owner:	Department of Health and Social Welfare		
Deliverables:	Establishment of the consultancy for pregnant woman		
Due Date:	2010	Years: 2 years	Total Costs: 436.000 Euros

	Action Step	Responsibility	Due	Cost	Person-Yrs
1.	Purchase of mobile ambulance vehicles	Maternity Department	45 days	80.000 Euros	2
2.	Construction of a consultancy office	Main Family Medicine Center	50 days	120.000 Euros	1
3.	Purchase of medical equipment and inventory	Health Department	30 days	200.000 Euros	6
4.	Prequalification of the health employees	Health Department	6 months	8.000 Euros	4
5.	Equipment: audio-video and projector	Health Department	45 days	12.000 Euros	1
6.	Practical consultancy lessons and health education	Private institutions	12 months	16.000 Euros	12

Strategy Priorities

Objective: Decrease the mortality rate of infants and mothers

- a. Enhance the health of post-natal women and infants
- b. Coordination of local and international associates working in the area of health
- c. Conduct systematic medical check-ups in remote areas through mobile teams
- d. Establish a consultancy centre at municipal level
- e. Conduct lectures, disseminate medical information and conduct projects to support scientific work
- f. Involve external consultants

Personal Commitments from Strategic Planning Workshop

No	Commitment	Author
1.	To have a meeting with Board of Directors To ask directors to apply the skills acquired here into their work in respective services To monitor the application of skills in practice	Mayor
2.	To propose a Board of Directors meeting to discuss Municipal Development Strategy. To review and amend as appropriate, specific points of the strategy to ensure that it is as realistic as possible	Head of Administration and Personnel
3.	To inform colleagues on the purpose and benefits of this training, share knowledge and skills, apply them to issues at work and seek resolution. To seek to promote team work (in groups) as more problems and challenges can be resolved better. A chance has been provided to move ahead faster with our joints projects.	Director of Agriculture and Rural Development
4.	Meeting with women members of Municipal Assembly, civil society and some delegates of the Kosovo Parliament	Municipal Gender Equality Officer
5.	To convey the skills to subsidiary staff To look into projects to promote people with disabilities in municipality	Senior Budget Officer
6.	Develop Municipal Return Strategy 2008 Develop Action Plan for implementation of MRS 2008 Prepare quarterly reports for Board of Directors Routine activities in developing action plans in Municipal Communities Office	Head of Municipal Communities Office
7.	I will propose a meeting of the Board of Directors to discuss the issues reviewed here and discuss strategies and action plans for implementation.	Director of Education
8.	Develop Municipal Integration Plan Develop Action Plans for MCO Work on Municipal Returns Strategy 2008	Deputy Head of MCO
9.	Sum up seminar content with staff Organize a meeting with directors of individual departments (to discuss the employment opportunities for Serbian community) Integration	Deputy Chairperson of Municipal Assembly
10.	Will use the skills to develop strategic plans for department with my staff, as they have no plans at present. Review the asset management practices in municipality (as no substantial progress was made for the past 8 years) and complete this in one year (place labels, establish committees, evaluate assets and amortization) in order to obtain correct asset overview, as required by administrative instructions	Director of Economy and Planning
11.	I will reactivate the town cinema, which has not been operational for the past nine years	Director of Culture, Youth and Sports

12.	I will implement the accounting and tax software in the Department	Director of Finance and Budget
13.	Work on integration in local institutions in stages, in cooperation with the local government	Personnel Officer
14.	Meeting with my staff to discuss the demarcation of the new path for the highway, invite all owners for discussion. Inform the owners of construction plans and how it affects their plots	Acting Director of Urbanism, Geodesy and Environment Protection
15.	Strengthen the Emergency Department in the Primary Health Care Centre, recruit and train professional staff, provide ambulance vehicles, and modern medical equipment. Emergency Service should operate 24 hours, should also work in the field, emergency home visits, etc. Presently lacking: professional staff, modern equipment, functional inventory.	Director of Health and Social Welfare
16.	Reconcile vehicle use reports and logs General vehicle check-up, prepare vehicle service list	Transport Assistant
17.	CSSP will come to municipality to have a joint meeting	Eva Maria Malisius and Juan Diaz, CSSP e.V.