

Municipal Spatial Planning Support Programme (MuSPP)

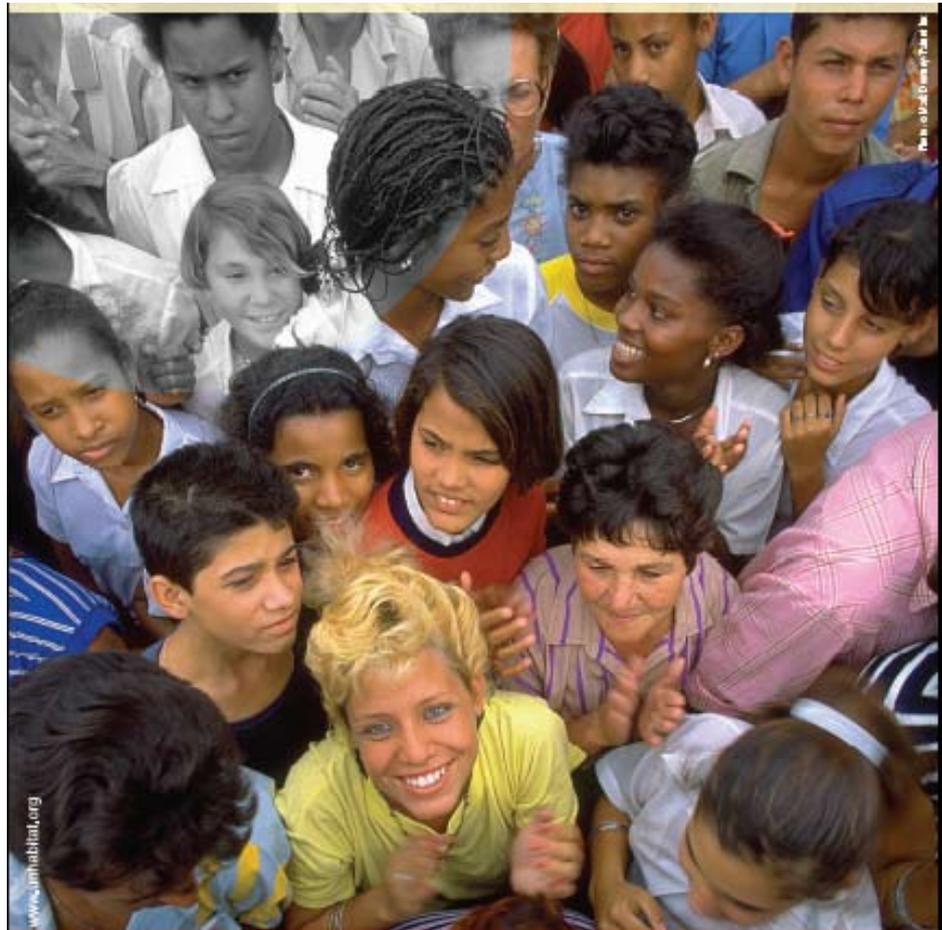
CELEBRATION OF WORLD HABITAT DAY IN KOSOVO

This issue of special edition of the newsletter provides information on the celebration of the World Habitat Day in Kosovo. United Nations designated the first Monday in October every year as World Habitat Day (WHD), to reflect on the state of human settlements and the basic right to adequate shelter for all. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat. This year's theme "A safe city is a just city" has been chosen to raise awareness and encourage reflection on the mounting threats to urban safety and social justice, particularly urban crime and violence, forced eviction and insecurity of tenure, as well as natural and human-made disasters.

At this day various activities were held in different parts of Kosovo, organised jointly by municipalities and UN-HABITAT's Municipal Spatial Planning Support Programme "Better Cities Together". The focus of the activities was on looking for ideas which can be implemented through cooperation with various stakeholders and would lead to increased safety of women and children; safer public spaces open to various social, ethnic, and age groups; safer school environments and disaster prevention. More information on awareness raising activities organised on the day, you can find onward this newsletter.

We hope that with this special edition of the newsletter, MuSPP is giving a contribution in highlighting some key human settlement issues in Kosovo cities, which must be considered in further planning processes.

MuSPP Team



**A safe city
is a just city**

WORLD HABITAT DAY

1 OCTOBER 2007



WORKING TOGETHER IN MAKING KOSOVO CITIES SAFE AND JUST

Urban crime and violence are at the top of the agenda for many people living in cities. It is now accepted by most national and local spheres of government that urban safety needs to be built from homes and street level up, and incorporated into local and national planning. It cannot be left to the police alone, was the message of Anna Tibaijuka, the Executive Director.

It was shared with representatives of local government institutions, experts, youth, media

and civil society organizations who participated in the events marking the World Habitat Day in Kosovo on October 1, 2007.

A safe city is a just city, the theme of this year's World Habitat Day, was chosen to raise awareness and encourage reflection on the mounting threats to urban safety and social justice.

Kosovo cities, like other cities all over the world, seek effective ways to fight the root causes of crime such as poverty, deprivation and social exclusion, and of natural disasters.

The focus of the activities organised by UN-HABITAT's Municipal Spatial Planning Support Programme 'Making Better Cities Together' in Kosovo was on looking for ideas which can be implemented through cooperation with various stakeholders and would lead to increased safety of women and children; safer public spaces open to various social, ethnic, and age groups; safer school environments and disaster prevention.

WHD CELEBRATION IN GJILAN/GNJILANE AND GJAKOVA/DJAKOVICA

Gjilan/Gnjilane:

"A safe city is a just city" was the leading theme of the meeting during which representatives of municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane, KFOR, Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, OSCE, Kosovo Police Service and more than hundred participants including 70 children and their teachers discussed various aspects of urban safety and prepared a catalogue of concerns.

Fires, earthquakes, flooding, air pollution, crime and drugs, safety for handicapped, informal settlements, houses and schools too close to main roads, as main reason of traffic accidents and potential threat to people's safety, were some of the issues raised in this debate.

A particular interesting part was the contribution of the children in the debate through different means of expression such as drawing, poems, slogans, but also discussion.

A better approach and cooperation between different departments of the municipality and other institutions was seen relevant to increase the safety in the future.

This event included a short walk with the motto Safe walking from the school through the city center up to the offices of the department of urbanism, while traffic was halted by the participants and drivers interviewed, to draw attention of the public and the media to the safety issues.

Gjakova/Djakovica:

New benches, litter bins, well-tended grass and trees, lightning, garden toys for children would turn a small city park in the center of Gjakova/Djakovica into a more attractive place with potential new functions and more creative use, citizens said.

Representatives of the local authorities, the Informal Council of Civil Society Organisation and MuSPP/UN-HABITAT team marked World Habitat Day with an event which included the 'Walkabout in the City Park' and Round Table Debate on 'Translating Democracy into Good Governance from the Planning Perspective'.

Public spaces and their safe and easy access to citizens is one of the major concerns of many local governments, once public spaces are taken over by gangs or abandoned because of fear.

The upgrading of a small city park in the center

of Gjakova/Djakovica, submitted to MuSPP as a demo-project, was the key issue during the discussion held by secondary school pupils, officials, experts and representatives of civil society organizations.

They came with a number of different ideas on how the city park could be improved, and turned from a "pass-through" area to a place where they would like to stop and enjoy themselves.

These ideas were collected through a short survey conducted among women, the elderly, and youth, all of them pointing to the greater care for the greenery, lighting of the area and cleanliness of the park.

The discussion during the round table debate showed a great interest of citizen involvement in planning process and the implementation of the demo project.

School students proposed to have open air cinema in the park, as an attractive recreation place for youngsters. They also proposed to celebrate World Habitat Day each year as Youth Day in Gjakova/Djakovica.

The promise of the CEO that he would support each initiative that comes from civil society and citizens was warmly welcomed by participants.



WHD CELEBRATION IN PEJA/PEC AND PRIZREN



Pejë/Pec:

"Being same time in two different places for the moment is impossible, but moving faster from one to another still remains a need and challenge!" This was stated in a consultation meeting of Mobility Stakeholder Group co organized by the local MuSPP team and Peja/Pec municipality on the occasion of the World Habitat day. Peja/Pec, under its motto 'green and vital region' had declared Municipal Mobility Policy as one of six priority areas of improvement for the future of the city.



In that context, public transport especially urban transport network appears as a top priority. This was the main topic of discussion with Mobility Stakeholder Group on WHD held in Pejë/Pec on 1st of October 2007. This group comprises members who represent Local government, Civil Society, Private Sector and community.



The CEO Mr. Shkëlzen Hyseni pointed out in his opening speech that better mobility in Peja/Pec could contribute to more safety on streets.

Arrival of the 1st train in Peja/Pec, that occasionally happened the same day by inaugurating train line from the capital Prishtina/Pristina to Pejë/Pec and back, is an important milestone, brings hope but also some other challenges for improvement of mobility.



Therefore, the idea of Mobility center and the draft proposal for urban transport network were presented to participants of the meeting. First proposal belongs to the longer term investments and it considers moving of the actual bus station next to the railway station by creating a central multi-modal node for mobility in the city.

For the moment, both stations will operate in their original locations. More important was the draft proposal for creating urban transport network that introduces 4 bus lines, central node in the old part of the city and interconnection with regional and inter-municipal bus lines.



The proposal was combined with infrastructure solutions for "city gates" that are another important topic of mobility respectively traffic circulation.

One of this "gates" needs immediate intervention because of crossing with railways. Proposal will be also one of topics of the forthcoming Conference on Sustainable Transport/Mobility

and Spatial Development that will take place at the end of October 2007 in Prishtina.

As promised before participants by CEO, a small working group will be established under decision by him self, that will consolidate the final proposal for further review in Board of Directors and approval in Municipal Assembly of Pejë/Pec of Urban Transport Network. "Pejë/Pec will be every day safer and just for its inhabitant's" were concluding remarks of the meeting.

Prizren:

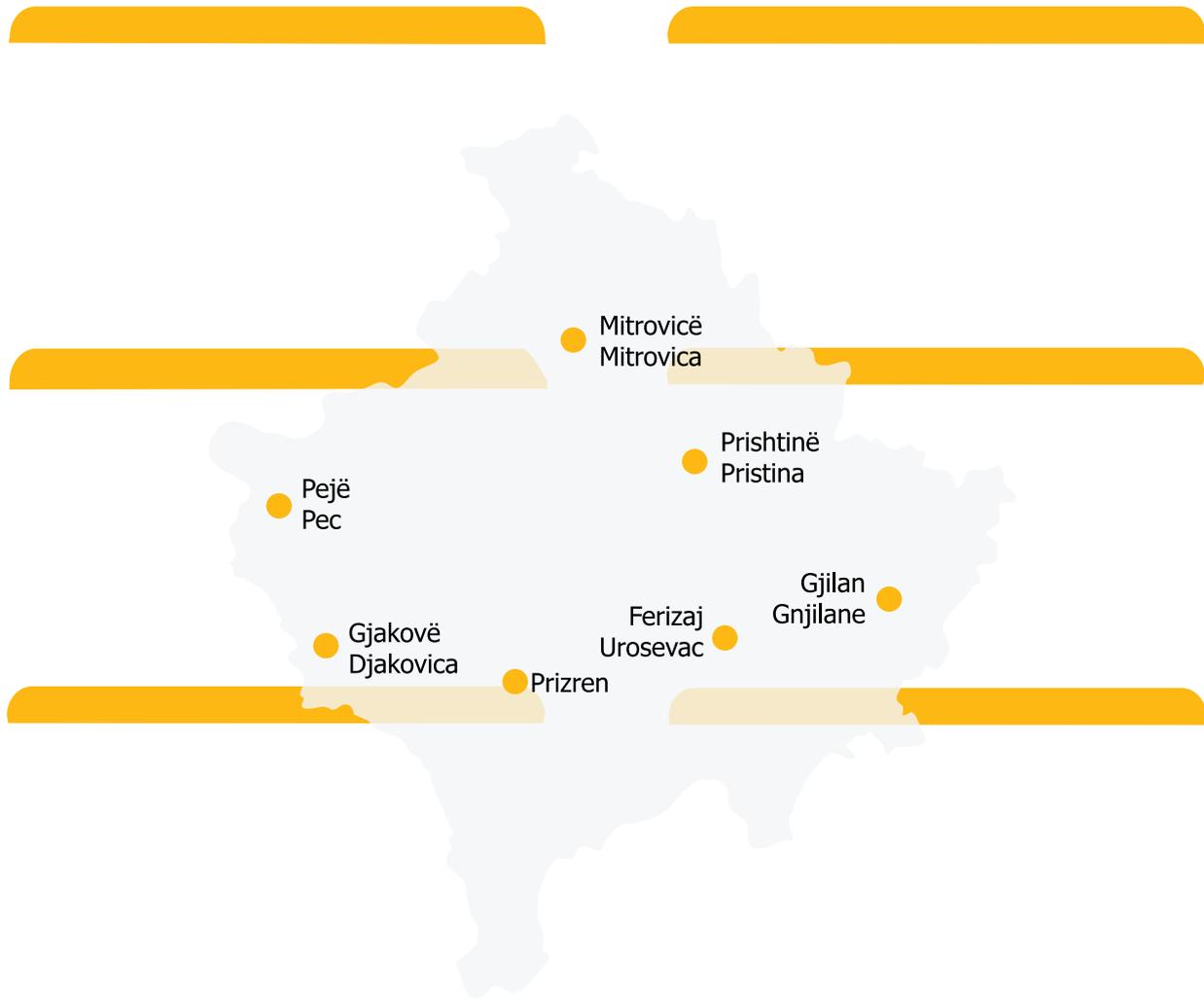
In Prizren a large group of disabled citizens including pupils had the opportunity to express their ideas on how they perceive current obstacles and challenges in the living environment and how they see the future developments in their city in regards to safety issues during a meeting co-organised by MuSPP, Handikos and the municipality of Prizren.

Participants divided in four working groups discussed their issues and came up with set of recommendations on safety matters which were different depending on the type of disability. Street lights; adequate size of phone booths; sidewalks, parking places and ramps for the people with disabilities; elevators in the high buildings; family advice center; representation in municipality, employment opportunities etc are relevant to the people with physical disabilities.

Deaf and mute participants raised issues including the violence to deaf-mute women, the lack of respect and care for this category of people and as a result they are faced with FEAR, the lack of transport for children from rural to urban area, difficulties in communication, the lack of institutional support, non-participation in decision making.

Therefore it was recommended that institutional aid-support is needed, putting the traffic signals for deaf-mute people; implementation of the Law for the people with disabilities especially to be focused on Communication; stronger penalties for those who threaten the deaf and mute, financial support for the training of this group of the disabled and awareness raising of the society for their needs.

The meeting ended with hope that the raised issues will be taken into account in the municipal development plan which is under preparation and hope that concrete projects will be implemented to improve living environment for the disabled.



MAKING BETTER CITIES TOGETHER

To ensure a better life to all its citizens, Kosovo needs better cities. This can only be achieved by planning and working all together. "Making Better Cities Together" is the motto of the Sida-funded Municipal Spatial Planning Support Programme, through which UN-HABITAT will support the municipal spatial planning in Kosovo. Kosovo cities and towns are in the process of drafting the municipal and urban plans. The plans are to be strategic and action oriented, detailed in the urban regulatory plans and implemented through private and public investments. The six secondary cities of Kosovo - Pejë/Pec, Gjakova/Djakovica, Prizren, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Ferizaj/Urosevac and Gjiilan/Gnjilane - can contribute to a more balanced development of Kosovo and reduce the ongoing migration of population to the capital city, Prishtinë/Pristina. Through integration in the European urban network, the Kosovo cities and its citizens will be connected with other European cities. This can be achieved by attracting investments in sustainable urban development and improving access for all. Private investments are needed to match the public funds in order to provide better services to the citizens: decent social housing, hospitals, schools, roads, public transport and last but not least attractive public spaces to respond to the needs of the changing society.

IMPRESSUM



Municipal Spatial Planning Support Programme in Kosovo

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