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# Annual Report 2000

Main Project:

**CORDAID**

*“Roads to a Stronger Civic Society,”*

Project no.: C-432/8004

Other projects:

**CORDAID and NOVIB:**

**“Strengthening Local Governments and Citizens Participation in the Municipality of Kamza”**

Project no: C-432/8052

**NOVIB and HABITAT II PROJECT:**

**“Making Communities Partners with Authorities through the assistance for Urban Rehabilitation and Housing Modernisation Project”**

Project no: ALB 037-00-003

**NOVIB:**

**“Improving Social and Physical Infrastructure in Bathore Neighbourhood”**

Project no: ALB-037-00-002

**“Community Based Actions for Improving Living Conditions of Roma Community”**

**Allias Tirana**

Project no: ALB-037-00-004

**Tirana, May 2001**

## Table of content

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
1.1. Introduction to the report.....	3
1.2. Introduction to Co-PLAN.....	3
1.3. Background on Co-PLAN's approach.....	4
2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN BREGLUMASI .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.1. Follow up reporting and hand over of VIS activities .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.2. Additional activities in Breglumasi.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN BATHORE.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.1. Working with children and youth, and training of volunteer social animators ...	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.2. Forming and organising group activities with women .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.3. Environmental campaign .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.4. Training the existing CBO and community leaders .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.5. Establish the neighbourhood newsletter: Bathore 2000.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.6. Networking with other organisations operating in Bathore.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4. COMMUNITY BASED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AND UPGRADING..	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.1. Presenting legalisation and upgrading strategies with residents .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.2. Building the community centre and kindergarten.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.3. Completing the upgrading of playground at the Bathore school.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.4. Completing road building .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.5. Evaluation and revision of the solid waste disposal system.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5. STUDIES .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.1. Gender survey.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.2. Social aspects of urban development in Bathore.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.3. Social-economic survey with students of the Polytechnic University.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.4. Publications.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.5. Attending local and international training, debates, conferences and seminars	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6. CO-PLAN ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.1. External project evaluation 1998-2000 .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.2. Internal evaluation.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.3. Co-PLAN business plan.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.4. Enhancement of the financial management .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.5. Financial auditing.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.6. Project proposal 2001-2003.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.7. Planning of Co-PLAN activities .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.8. Improve networking and partnership.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.9. Improving internal communication and functioning of Co-PLAN's organisational structure	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.10. Resource management improved .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.11. The annual urban forum.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
7. STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAMZA .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
8. IMPROVING ACCESS AND CREATION OF BASIC SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN BATHORE.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
9. PRE-FEASIBILITY STUDY IN FOUR NEW PILOT AREAS OF THE ULMP	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
10. TRAINING THE (ASSA) NGO IN ASSISTING COMMUNITIES DURING ULMP IMPLEMENTATION .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
11. MAKING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES PARTNERS WITH AUTHORITIES THROUGH ASSISTANCE IN THE URBAN REHABILITATION AND HOUSING RENEWAL PROJECT .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

12. CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING OF THE URBAN PLANNING OFFICES IN MITROVICA, KOSOVO .....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
13. COMMUNITY BASED ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS OF A ROMA COMMUNITY IN ALLIAS, TIRANA .....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
14. ASSISTANCE TO STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KRUIJA .....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
15. SUMMARY OF EXPENSE AND FUNDS RECEIVED DURING 1998-2000..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Introduction to the report

In May 1998, *Bureau Midden en Oost Europa*, now Cordaid, signed an agreement with Co-PLAN, Center for Habitat Development, to undertake a development programme, which goal was: (i) to contribute to social development and improvement of low income neighbourhoods, through community development and community based neighbourhood upgrading; and (ii) to contribute to the development of civil society, through community organisation and the institution of Co-PLAN as an important local actor.

This report describes the activities and progress of our NGO from January until the end of December 2000. It covers the core project “Roads to a stronger civil society”, and other projects that combine and complement with this core project. By making this report we included all Co-PLAN staff in drafting the main indicators of their work. We focused on such things as activities done, indicators of these activities, actors involved, community involvement, difficulties experienced, and what we learned from it. The exercise of together filling out those indicators proved to be worthwhile. It was on the one hand a kind of internal evaluation, while on the other hand it delivered the information required.

The ending of the core project, is not the end of the activities, since in 2000 we forwarded a programme proposal to Cordaid called – “A passage to an influencing civil society”. This programme is at many points a continuation of the activities that started with the “Roads to a stronger civil society” project, but following also a further conceptual development.

### 1.2. Introduction to Co-PLAN

Co-PLAN is an Albanian non-profit non-governmental social association without political or religious aims. It is registered by the Court of Tirana (decision No.5284, on 17 October 1997), and emerged out of the “Breglumasi Programme” (1995-1997) that was supported by Bilance (The Netherlands) and V.I.S. (Italy). It carried out a social development and neighbourhood improvement programme, in the low-income irregular Breglumasi neighbourhood of Tirana. This programme gained considerable experience and success in urban neighbourhood upgrading, resulting in the institutionalisation of Co-PLAN as an NGO.

Co-PLAN focuses its activities on the social changes in the living environment, aiming to support the collective welfare of people, especially to those most in need. We do this via pilot actions for neighbourhood improvement through community organisations, and acting as a kind of “service centre” for neighbourhood communities. Co-PLAN plays also the role of advocate towards the public sector, as well as providing assistance and consultancy services to local and central government agencies - including international agencies - that work in the field of urban and community development.

The main activities of Co-PLAN focus on: giving practical support to communities, local and central authorities and other actors in the field of urban development; research studies; and training courses and seminars. Co-PLAN concentrates its activities on the following objectives: (i) analysis of social, economic, and cultural problems; (ii) identification of strategies and proposals to habitat improvement; (iii) dissemination of information related to the urban life problematique; (iv) presenting community problems to the Government and Parliament; and (v) establishing working relations and experience exchange with analogue Albanian and foreign organisations.

### **1.3. Background on Co-PLAN's approach**

The core activity of Co-PLAN since its establishment was the "Roads to stronger civil society" project; financed by the Dutch organisation Cordaid<sup>1</sup>. The support of Cordaid concentrated on implementation of urban community development projects and organisational strengthening. For its other projects, or project co-financing, Co-PLAN has had also support from other international organisations as NOVIB, World Bank, UNDP. Additional financing is incrementally raised from consultancy services, while for project financing the Albanian authorities and local communities give their contribution. The Centrum Ontmoeting der Volkeren (Centre for the meeting of peoples COV), and PSO (The Netherlands) offer technical assistance by supporting the Management and Technical Adviser.

The philosophy of Co-PLAN is based on: (i) Facilitating and assisting target groups to improve their living conditions; (ii) Improving the quality of residents participation in policy processes; (iii) Providing contemporary insight to local and central authorities on how to upgrade urban communities. Co-PLAN operates on a demand driven basis, which means that beneficiaries should contribute to the works and services that Co-PLAN is providing. This can be either in cash terms or in labour assistance. The actions of Co-PLAN aim to make the contribution of beneficiaries and target groups as best visible as possible.

In this perspective the development objectives of Co-PLAN for 2000 have been: (i) Continuation of the contribution for social development and physical improvement in Breglumasi, and phasing out by transferring full responsibility for continuation to the partner organisation VIS and Don Bosko Center; (ii) Transferring the Breglumasi project experience to other low-income neighbourhoods through community development work, and community-based improvements; (iii) Contribution to the development of civil society through the institutionalising of Co-PLAN as an important actor in the field of urban and community development.

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau Midden en Oost Europa, Mensen in Nood/Bilance, now Cordaid

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# **CORE PROJECT**

## **Roads to a Stronger Civil Society**

(Financed by CORDAID, the Netherlands)

Cordaid No.: C-432/8004

Co-PLAN No: P9801-00

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# 1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN BREGLUMASI

## 2.1. Follow up reporting and hand over of VIS activities

This paragraph has mainly to do with the social component of the upgrading intervention in the informally developed neighbourhood of Breglumasi in Lapraka, Tirana. As agreed, VIS has been responsible for designing and implementing the social component, while Co-PLAN was responsible for financial management and reporting to the donor. The most important actions during the year were:

- (i) working with youth and animators group (actually counting some 120 people);
- (ii) working with children with poor or without any family support;
- (iii) working with women's group towards legalisation and financial sustainability;
- (iv) training teachers of the kindergarten and improving its sustainable functioning;
- (v) maintaining and physically improving the social centre and kindergarten;
- (vi) mobilising additional funds for extending and further developing the health care centre;
- (vii) Ensuring full presence in the area by establishing a "sister's mission" at the local church.

Meanwhile, contacts with municipal authorities have been established, especially with regard to legalisation of services as the kindergarten, infrastructure, and public services. VIS and the 'Don Bosko' Centre are still interested to continue their presence in the neighbourhood. They designed a strategy for the coming years that will be discussed with Cordaid and other interested donor organisations. Their presence is considered a guarantee for positive developments in Breglumasi, at least in the mid-term perspective. For more information, see the attached VIS quarterly reports.

## 2.2 Additional activities in Breglumasi

Co-PLAN withdrew from physical improvement actions in Breglumasi during 2000, but continued to be present in the neighbourhood in key decision moments such as:

- (i) to clarify to local residents on issues related to the infrastructure improvements project (ULMP) of the municipality;
- (ii) to facilitate contacts between the local CBO with authorities, especially with the municipal Project Management Team (PMT) of the ULMP;
- (iii) to transfer lessons learned in Breglumasi to other areas/cities, and use social animators to train other youth groups, especially in Bathore;
- (iv) to train, strengthen and assist a new local NGO, the Albanian Social Services Association (ASSA), in order to follow up on the role of Co-PLAN within the ULMP, especially for convincing and collecting the financial contribution of residents for infrastructure (power supply, and financed by the local authorities).

Almost 95% of the local residents involved in the ULMP project paid their contribution for the secondary and tertiary power supply, and the last connections have been implemented successfully. Residents have now a formal power supply and are included in a legal fee collection system. At the inauguration ceremony the minister of public works and the new major of Tirana visited the neighbourhood. Presently, the residents have identified the second priority (sewerage system) and the collection of a resident's contribution has started (for more details see attachments).



Social centre



Beneficiary contribution



Happy day

# 1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN BATHORE

## 3.1 Working with children and youth, and training of volunteer social animators

During 2000 Co-PLAN put concerted efforts on the young generation of Bathore, as an instrument to reach long run sustainability.

### *A. Working with children*

By working with children Co-PLAN aims: (i) to initiate a process of cultivating new generations with positive attitudes for future development of the neighbourhood; (ii) to provide alternatives for the 'street' culture, as social infrastructure is not present; (iii) to give time to their parents to do income generating activities

These aims were achieved by working on a daily base with a group of 40 children, and on a weekly base with 150 other children. In addition, Co-PLAN reached more children by assisting and/or jointly working with other NGOs specialised on children and active in Bathore. Thanks to this collaboration, actions were organised as sport days and plays, English language courses, sport activities, celebration of festivity days, like 1<sup>st</sup> of June, the Children Day, etc. An interesting project was equipping the local school with curtains using cost sharing principles with the parents and school staff. Another joint activity was the organisation of a march in central Tirana to raise awareness and attention among authorities and local population on the day of signing the International Convention for Children Rights.

In addition, Co-PLAN supported the physical improvement of the local school including actions to continue improving the school's playground. The most prominent action is the construction of a new kindergarten, which will relieve the local school from the high demand for space. Often such activities are good examples of collaboration between teachers, community leaders, parents and local authorities, both in terms of organising and cost sharing. Co-PLAN is thankful for collaborating on this issue with partner NGOs as the CCF, AiBi, BSF, Amurt, etc.

### *B. Forming and training youth and social animators groups*

By working with the youth of Bathore, Co-PLAN aims to create social cohesion and 'provoke' improvement actions and community involvement. This has been achieved by several initiatives, such as: (i) cleaning draining channels and public spaces along the main roads; (ii) greening the environment and protecting public spaces by planting trees; (iii) Organising recreational activities and festivity days to strengthen social cohesion.

Thanks to using the youth groups almost 280 families (1,400 persons) were involved in improvement actions. Key local residents, local teachers, and doctors, NGOs like AiBi, CCF, BSF and the municipality have all supported the works. In addition, Co-PLAN supported the organisation of social and leisure activities in order to promote a community spirit. Visits to the Dajti mountains, Kruja historic city, Ardenica church, Durres beach, Kukes villages, etc, served as an incentive and provided a good environment for training and discussions among youth.

There are already established five youth groups and one social animators group in Bathore. One of them is really progressing well since it has its own logo, name, rules etc. Two youth groups are created on request of the local school director, involving around 40 youngsters.

Training of volunteer social animators has been a key intervention of the social component. This activity aims to create an active group of youngsters that feel responsible for the future of the area. The training of youth and social animators is achieved through:

- (i) *Biweekly meetings* in Bathore with English language courses, sport activities, social gatherings, and discussing improvement actions. Social animators are considered as facilitators in establishing contacts with the community, and mobilising residents for improvement actions.
- (ii) *Experience exchange* workshops between Breglumasi and the Bathore social animators. These workshops are organised in collaboration with VIS and the social animators of Breglumasi. The activity served also to show Bathore youngsters another environment of Tirana, and used the facilities and space of the Don Bosko and the Breglumasi Social Centre. Several workshops were organised and the experience is also replicated with AiBi for training of local social animators. In addition, social animators acted as facilitators, especially for promoting the organisation of women groups and women's activities.

### **3.2 Forming and organising group activities with women**

Co-PLAN increased its attention on women issues during the year. In general can be said that women in Bathore are prohibited by their men to participate in public meetings, especially if these are outside Bathore. Basically, the women lack time and depend on men's decision making. In this respect, Co-PLAN strategy of intervention focused on forming, organising, supporting and training two women groups. The focus in these women groups is based on problem solving. This means that they come together to discuss cases when problems appear, and there is a need for finding solutions, rather than on a daily base.



Bathore women having a meeting



Youth getting ready for a trip

Besides, the women of Bathore have been involved in several other activities, such as: cleaning the living environment, planting trees, improving public spaces as the health care centre, school and along roads, and sewing and preparing the curtains of the Bathore school. Almost 50% of the people that participated in those actions were women. Around 40 women have been involved in preparing sweets for the children's day (1<sup>st</sup> of June). During festivities - like the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of March (respectively the day of teachers and women) - nearly 70 women celebrated outside Bathore. Visits to the Tirana Park and the New Year's party have also been organised successfully. In addition, 100 women received counselling and advice, especially on health care, family planning and employment issues.

Co-PLAN's objective is to attract specialised NGOs to work with women. Presently, one women group is transferred to 'Medica Mondiale', a German NGO operating in Albania. Collaboration with local Albanian NGOs like NACCS, "Support to Albanian Teenager", "Independent Forum of Albanian Women", and the "Regional Development Agency" have also been considered as complementing our work. A group of educated women in the area asked Co-PLAN's help in organising a women' CBO in the area, and initial work has already started and more is planned. All the mentioned NGOs make use of the community room in the Health Care centre built in 1999



by Co-PLAN. During 2001 Co-PLAN plans to work on training key women, initiate income generating activities, create a network of contact for women of Bathore, and invite other specialised NGOs to work with them.

### 3.3 Environmental campaign

Environmental issues have also been given more attention by Co-PLAN during the year. Issues with an environmental side include:

#### *A. Organising Health and Environment Consciousness Campaign*

This campaign has been executed during a two-week period. The first phase aimed to cleaning 1.2 kilometres channel in the sub-neighbourhoods 2, 3 and 4. The second phase focused on cleaning 800 meters channel in sub-neighbourhood 1. In total 2.3-km channel was cleaned. Intensive door-to-door information was given by distributing 500 leaflets. Some 65-m<sup>3</sup> garbage was collected and removed, covering a 40 hectares area. Local aldermen, social animators, youth and women groups have contributed in organising the local people to undertake action. The project involved at least 300 families. Families were awarded with 280 plants to be planted along the streets or in their gardens. In this campaign the community gave more than 2000 hours of free work. At the end 30 T-shirts with public messages and logos of NGOs participating in the action were distributed to the most distinguished participants. This activity had a wider organisational impact thanks to the close collaboration with AiBi, CCF, BSF, and Amurt NGOs.



Collecting garbage



Tree planting

#### *B. Selecting and planting greenery in public spaces and along roads*

This activity is new for Co-PLAN, and was promoted by the community development worker. The purpose of the action was (i) to protect public space; (ii) to organise local residents; and (iii) to promote a greener environment.

Initially this idea started by planting trees along roads where families had agreed to give parts of their land for new roads. It showed the families that had agreed to release land as well as to mark the border between a road and private land. A plan for greenery development was prepared and planting places were indicated, while people were informed through individual and group meetings on the organisation of a planting campaign. They were offered free plants (bush and shrubs). Trees were planted voluntary, and as a result the area develops now into a greener and more respectable environment. Co-PLAN worked together with community leaders, social animators, youth and women groups, and Medica Mondiale. Greening of the area was used as an instrument to involve community groups in the improvement of public spaces. The high show-up of community members (700 hours of voluntary labour) is a positive indicator.

In total 410 trees were planted, and about 600 residents were involved in planting, either in a group or family base. In addition 450 information and sensibilisation leaflets were distributed. An important result is that these public spaces are now better maintained and protected than the areas without greenery. The project covered the main public spaces of the sub-neighbourhoods 1, 2, 3 and partly 4.

Maintenance, protection and irrigation of the plants are organised by youth and social animators group. It is already a lesson that trees must be planted immediately after the opening of public spaces, as people tend to narrow these after some time. Co-PLAN plans for the next year to delegate such activity to a specialised NGO that will also be trained on participatory methods, or to a local women's group or CBO of the area.

### **3.4 Training the existing CBO and community leaders**

Co-PLAN worked continuously with community representatives; both elected by people themselves (community leaders) and appointed by local authorities (Aldermen). This is done in order to keep a representative balance and strengthen at the same time the community and authorities. One of the main targets was strengthening and enlarging the local CBO "Rilindja". Several meetings and on-the-job training were organised fitting the Co-PLAN interventions, including the ULMP actions. Rilindja was assisted in designing and applying for an OXFAM financed project that aims training of local women in sewing.

Focus was given to the reorganisation of free and democratic elections for the CBO leadership, and training of the elected people towards voluntarism and civic contribution. This included training on mentality building especially for those who see this as a pure 'employment' instead of civic engagement. Further, key leaders of Bathore were invited to city-wide meetings and debates, including confrontation with different situations and opinions on their neighbourhood.

Several group and identification meetings of subdivisions in the Bathore 2 pilot site were organised, including election of representatives. In addition, Co-PLAN has worked to link up and the leadership of the areas already involved in the ULMP and these new areas. Co-PLAN organised also an analysis of the period 1997-2000; and planning for 2001-2003 period with the local leaders. About 30 community leaders, including women and youth leaders were working with Co-PLAN to design a strategy for Co-PLAN intervention and to draft a neighbourhood development plan. Oxfam and ISB have also approached the CBO for undertaking deep interviews on social issues with assistance of Co-PLAN.

For next year a special budget will be delegated to the 'Rilindja' association upon the submission of a clear action plan and strategy. More attention will be given to activate the CBO for a planned extension of the ULMP to the sub-neighbourhoods 2 and 3, which cover almost 50% of the Co-PLAN working area in Bathore. This will be for sure a priority of the Bathore team of Co-PLAN.

### **3.5 Establish the neighbourhood newsletter: Bathore 2000**

This initiative is being much appreciated by the Bathore community and local authorities. The first step focused on the establishment of a local redaction committee with key representatives from different areas and community groups. Each publication has a certain theme, and depending on the theme a community group is targeted and involved in the preparation phase. Articles are mostly written by local residents and typed by 5 members of the youth group, one representative of the Aldermen and one women representative, which were all trained by Co-PLAN staff. Local authorities are often invited to react, while Co-PLAN and other NGOs also write comments. Periodic meetings are held to draft, analyse and prepare the newsletter. Co-PLAN takes care for printing, while community representatives and social animators do the distribution. The editing board is organised in a well-balanced membership in relation to gender, age and social category. Computer training to the text-writers aims to increase sustainability of the newsletter.

Thanks to this newsletter, the community is now more informed on the problems and potentials of the neighbourhood, including ways how to overcome difficulties. From the other side, activities of different NGOs are better described and spelled out to them. The newsletter is also used to sensibilise and prepares the community to join several social and/or improvement activities. It serves as a bridge to link authorities with community concerns. There are 4 newsletters published this year with between 800-1,200 copies each. The newsletter proves an effective tool for employment announcements, explaining the ULMP project principles, and give information in the case of the garbage collection project. Thanks to the announcements people can immediately react, and the high number of respondents is a good indicator of its usefulness.

In addition to the 'Bathore 2000' newsletter, which is targeting the local population and is published in the Albanian language, an English language newsletter is published by the Bathore NGO network, aiming to reach international partners and organisations. This newsletter is published once per year, and is jointly financed by all NGOs active in the network. The initiative is considered a unique co-ordination effort in Albania, and is a successful continuation of the co-ordination efforts during the Kosovo crisis in 1999.

For next year Co-PLAN plans to focus on increasing the ownership of the community over the newsletter, and a resolution should be found for selling instead of free distribution.

### 3.6 Networking with other organisations operating in Bathore.

The Bathore NGO Network (as labelled so by its members) has been promoted by Co-PLAN since 1999. It was operative all year by having regular monthly meetings organised by the municipality of Kamza assisted by Co-PLAN. This initiative aims sharing information in- and outside the network, including combining actions, co-ordination and sharing of activities and projects, on a demand responsive basis. Daily information and leaflets about the network can be received at the information desk of the Co-PLAN office in the municipal office.



Signing agreements



Networking in action

Some of the activities co-ordinated by the network included:

- (i) health and environmental campaign, shared by all members;
- (ii) celebration of the Children's day on 1<sup>st</sup> June, shared with AiBi, BSF, Amurt, and CCF
- (iii) producing Bathore 2000 Newsletter (English), financed by all, implemented by Amurt;
- (iv) sharing of office space for community activities with Medica Mondiale, WGA, and PU;
- (v) assisting other institutions like Kamza Municipality, Ministry of Public Works, ULMP, ICMC, the World Bank, BBC Radio, CAD, IFAW, ASSA, ISB, etc;
- (vi) improving the physical conditions of the Bathore school in collaboration with CCF;
- (vii) organisation of social evenings, cooking fair and other festivities in Bathore;
- (viii) initiating a Bathore web page, under BSF care;
- (ix) facilitating contacts with MoK, placing glass in the Bathore school windows;
- (x) several cleaning actions and garbage collection in the surrounding environment

Another important activity was the opening of a Summer School by CCF, an NGO initiative working with children, teachers and parents in the school of Bathore. This initiative provides alternative education for children during summer holidays. It created also more time for parents to focus on income generating activities. The campus of the summer school was improvised on the playground, which had been upgraded jointly by Co-PLAN and CCF. Around 2,000 kids have attended this event.

Co-PLAN financed several activities related to the network's activities, such as assisting the "Woman for Global Action" NGO in drafting a project proposal for a Children centre, which was forwarded and approved by the poverty alleviation project at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, financed by a loan of the World Bank; a project on investing in a primary water supply line in Bathore by the Premiere Urgence NGO; and continuation of social work with children including hiring one staff of BSF for activities in area 6 of Bathore. Although the network is a success, still many barriers will have to be overcome, such as improving the commitment of its members, avoiding misunderstanding and professional jealousies, etc.

Next year Co-PLAN will focus on transferring the full ownership of such initiatives to the municipality of Kamza, and strengthen professional collaboration among the NGOs. It is also planned to enlarge the network to cover all territories of the municipality.

# 1. COMMUNITY BASED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AND UPGRADING

## 4.1 Presenting legalisation and upgrading strategies with residents

Initiatives for upgrading were often started after people visited our public events like the Urban Forum or watched our TV-programmes. Financial assistance for execution is mainly given by the ULMP. The Social Assessments undertaken within the framework of the ULMP aims to extend this project from the Bathore Pilot Site, to Bathore 2 and 3, which is an increase from 13.5 to 84 hectares. This has been a 6-month contract financed by the Albanian authorities, and involving a lot of door-to-door or public meetings, explanations and discussions.

In addition, Co-PLAN has been designing a joint initiative together with the Municipality of Kamza and the Land Tenure Centre (LTC) of the Wisconsin University (USA)<sup>1</sup>. The objective is to initiate a preliminary registration of all properties within 70 hectares of Bathore. This experience will establish procedures for registration and legalisation for the Municipality of Kamza, the Office of Immovable Property Registration System (IRPS), and central government. This is the first step of a national scale programme towards involving the IPRS in 'problematic'<sup>2</sup> areas like Bathore. A draft partnership agreement is prepared between the LTC, Municipality of Kamza and Co-PLAN and will be effective between 2001-2003.

## 4.2 Building the community centre and kindergarten

No community centre exists in Bathore except some rooms rented by different NGOs to undertake their activities. Co-PLAN used the community room in the health care centre that was built in 1999. However, this could never satisfy the needs for a neighbourhood like Bathore. Therefore, Co-PLAN undertook several actions, such as:

- (i) organise a workshop with all representatives and key persons from Bathore for the identification of potential construction sites;
- (ii) promotion of a competition among the Bathore sub-neighbourhoods on the selection of the potential construction sites;
- (iii) discussion between members of the Bathore NGO network on their needs and ideas on what functions a community centre could offer;
- (iv) Organising an OOPP with the community and community leaders in order to identify persons in the community that would offer the land for free.

Besides this clear need for a community centre, the local and regional authorities approached Co-PLAN and asked for assistance in building a new kindergarten. The main reason is that the elementary and secondary school are overcrowded with children and works with double shifts, and risking to change to triple shifts. There are now 2,200 kids between 3-14 years attending education in this building, and it is the only social infrastructure for an area having at least 22,000 residents. The authorities committed to identify land and funds to build another school in Bathore. The construction site for the combined kindergarten/community centre is now selected within the Bathore School ground.

Finally, a partnership agreement was signed between Co-PLAN, Municipality of Kamza, school management and Department of Education of the Tirana District (DETD). Based on this document Co-PLAN constructs a three-floor building, out of which two floors are destined for kindergarten and the last floor as community centre. Authorities agreed to cover the long-term

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<sup>1</sup> Land Tenure Centre of Wisconsin University is assisting Albanian authorities since 1993 in building a contemporary system of information on land and other types of immovable property in Albania.

<sup>2</sup> Areas with considerable illegality and informality patterns

maintenance and salary payment of the employees. After construction, the building will be handed over to the local authorities with the condition to use it also for the local communities.

A construction company was selected based on tender procedures, and completion is expected by the end of the spring 2001. The building is financed by Cordaid (both Bathore and Kamza projects) and Novib. The social centre will be used by the community, CBOs, other community groups, NGOs, local authorities, ULMP etc. In the first phase, all involved actors will do the maintenance based on space and time of use, while in the long and medium terms, this will be the local authorities' responsibility.

### **4.3 Completing the upgrading of playground at the Bathore school**

During the year, Co-PLAN worked regularly with the staff of the school and social animators to further improve the conditions of the playground and surrounding environment of the school. The purpose is to focus on the educational process, and to transform it to a place to be used by all, for having meetings of different community groups and social exchange.



Building the playground



Playing in action

The ideas were presented to the Director and teachers and actions were co-ordinated with CCF. Construction works were done either by involving community groups or by hiring specialised local workers. Through a modest ceremony the playground was transferred to the school, but more effort is to be given to organising teachers and children in maintaining and protecting the space. There are 2,200 children that use the upgraded facilities. The intervention gave incentives to other NGOs to work and invest there. The playground is 1,700 m<sup>2</sup> and has a place for meetings, several playing appliances, sport facilities and greenery. Upon request of the teachers the fence and entrance gate of the school were also improved. It is important to notice the participatory way in which the playground was built. For example all actions were consulted with teachers and other NGOs. Youth groups painted appliances and sport equipment, including planting the greenery and watering them.

During 2001, Co-PLAN aims to upgrade the football and volleyball/basketball fields, upon the completion of works in the kindergarten/community centre. The playground will be completed and more attention will be given to maintenance issues that still appear to be a problem.

### **4.4 Completing road building**

Much effort went into identifying, opening and gravelling of more public spaces. The fact that the opening of certain road segments was organised by a community development worker shows that the approach of Co-PLAN has shifted towards development rather than mere civil works. Key actors were Co-PLAN, the local CBO, and the Municipality of Kamza.



Between 1998-2000, around 48,000 square meters public space with a total length of 6 kilometre was opened and gravelled, out of which 2 kilometres or 16,000 m<sup>2</sup> was opened during 2000. Novib financed in 2000 the opening and gravelling, while Cordaid's funds were in its place transferred for building the kindergarten/ community centre. 15 public meetings were organised together with a considerable number of door-to-door visits. Around 200 families were contacted and residents have been actively involved. Almost 1.6 hectares have been released for public space. Around 50 local residents and 15 local drivers have been temporarily employed, while 480 full time working days have been offered for free by the community or local authorities. Access to the area and transport within the area is considerably improved and residents' satisfaction has clearly increased.



Opened and recognised public space



Preparing private space for public use

Co-PLAN has continuously been insisting to involve local authorities in the development process, and as a result all public spaces were planned and marked out in close collaboration with the municipal planning office. In certain cases, local authorities intervened to find legal solutions, which are acceptable for all parties, and when necessary imposed implementation of a project that was supported by a majority of the community but blocked by 1-2 families.

There was a clear impact by attracting other investments in public infrastructure thanks to the availability of public space for roads and Rights of Way. Primary lines of sewerage and power and water are already installed, either adjacent or within the neighbourhood, respectively by ULMP, KESH and Premiere Urgence. For more information please see the attached map.

For 2001 Co-PLAN plans to work on strengthening the presence of local authorities, to increase community pressure on difficult situations, and to identify structures to undertake maintenance of public space. Discussing and designing maintenance of public space and improvement plans as made by the community will be a priority.

#### **4.5 Evaluation and revision of the solid waste disposal system**

During early 2000, Co-PLAN worked to evaluate and revise the new experimental system of solid waste collection and disposal that was initiated in Bathore. Around 500 families of sub-neighbourhoods 3 and 4 were organised in 42 groups of 10-15 families each. Each group elected a representative, identified a place for garbage collection, and collects a fee of 50-100 lek per month to be paid to a local resident for removing garbage from the collection point. Co-PLAN assisted technically in the organisation of the process and provided 42 garbage bins, located in places identified by local residents, who also donated land for this.

The Co-PLAN Community development worker monitored the collection and removal of garbage as well as the collection of fees by residents. Despite the boosting of the community on the success of the project, still a low percentile of groups/families paid regularly the fee and cleaned their garbage away. Indeed, some families gave up from using the system. The system functioned well in certain areas but failed in some others. This happens mainly because of a lack of trust and indifference on public concerns. From the other side, there are also many other important priorities at subsistence level that shifts garbage collection to receiving a lower priority.

Nonetheless, Co-PLAN insisted to continue with this initiative and link it to local authorities, in terms of initiating a process of thinking on how to establish a formal garbage collection system including the informal areas of the municipality. Obviously, communities have to contribute as one of the first steps towards legalisation. In addition, Co-PLAN is using this intervention as a model to test technicalities for a municipal model of Solid Waste Collection and Disposal System. This will be developed during 2001 within the framework of the project “Strengthening local government and community initiatives in the Municipality of Kamza”.

# 1. STUDIES

## 5.1. Gender survey

A gender survey was undertaken in order to integrate more of the important aspects of development into Co-PLAN's policy and knowledge base. By doing this we want to meet international standards, while it was also one of the main recommendations of the internal reflection of the organisation. It was decided to undertake a gender survey in a selected part of Bathore, which is the main project area of Co-PLAN. The survey was trusted to Valbona Spahija under the supervision of Adri Hartkoorn. The survey was conceptualised as a qualitative survey through a process of learning by doing, under supervision of the Co-PLAN advisor. During fieldwork other Co-PLAN staff were involved, and selection of male or female interviewers depended on the specific gender sensitivity of some of the questions. The field survey is finished and the final report will be finished halfway 2001. The main conclusions will give Co-PLAN important indicators for adapting its policy and approach towards a better inclusion and access to - especially for women - improved living conditions. The initial findings show dependency of women on men in decision-making, and indicate the social, cultural and economic drawback of the originally rural-based residents. The final report will be distributed to our main donors.

## 5.2. Social aspects of urban development in Bathore

This is a social survey that mainly focused on the vulnerable groups living in Bathore. Mirela Dalipaj, the Community development worker of Co-PLAN, undertook this Survey during 1999, and the initial results were presented during the Urban Forum of 1999. During 2000, Mirela worked to prepare and finalise a report under the supervision of Adri Hartkoorn. This was at the same time considered as an on-the-job training process. The findings of the report are important indicators of how the social structure in Bathore functions. The report is distributed to several NGOs that were interested on the survey, including the World Bank, UNICEF, etc. The survey helped Co-PLAN to build its strategy of intervention for the period 2001-2003.

## 5.3. Social-economic survey with students of the Polytechnic University

### *A. Social Economic Survey: Inner City Housing Block, 1<sup>st</sup> of May, Tirana*

This survey amongst 420 families, served as a first step towards the identification of problems and needs of residents of inner Tirana, and enabled us to design an urban renewal project and to apply the informal area experience in legal conditions. The survey was conducted early in the year, and 50 students of the 4<sup>th</sup> year from the Department of Architecture and urban Planning, Faculty of Civil Engineering were involved, linking directly their academic exercises with practical projects. Besnik Aliaj, who is also lecturer at the University lead the survey. Students were trained on how to undertake a survey, design a questionnaire, approach people, storing data and draw conclusions. Data processing was implemented in the SPSS programme and elaborated by Flamur Kuci. A report of this survey, served as the basis for the design for the: (i) urban and housing renewal project in the 1<sup>st</sup> of May inner city block, financed by UNDP and Habitat II Project under the Ministry of Public Works; (ii) and, making authorities partners with the community in improving neighbourhood conditions project, financed by Novib. The Project is under implementation and will be completed in April 2001. This experience showed how academic work could be practically applied.

### *B. Social Economic Survey on the Urban Space of Lana Creek, Tirana*

The positive experience of working with University students was repeated during November and December, where Besnik Aliaj lead a survey on informal constructions and activities developed along the Lana Creek in Tirana. Presently, a passionate debate on illegal constructions and what

to do with them is going on in the country. In order to give a professional stand on such issues, Co-PLAN decided to intervene in one of the hottest areas of illegal development in Tirana. Around 45 Students were trained how to undertake a survey. Nearly 400 establishments were approached and 336 were actually interviewed. Luan Deda is undertaking data analysis in SPSS and a report will be produced and distributed to local and central authorities. In addition, a TV programme and press conference is planned early 2001, serving as a sensibilization campaign to make Authorities aware to provide investment alternatives to people and businesses, rather than bulldoze private investments.



Debating the future



The Urban forum invitation

## 5.4. Publications

### *A. City Made by People II*

Co-PLAN prepared successfully the second volume of its professional publication on urban development issues. This was a successful collaboration with a number of national and international experts in order to produce a publication especially applicable to the Albanian urban development situation. No doubt the quality of the publication is a success of Adri Hartkoorn that worked as editor, while it was a learning process for the Co-PLAN staff too. The book was presented during the Urban Forum, and is published in an Albanian and English version. The main theme is the approach of urban management to urban development issues, by looking at it from the perspective of authorities and people. Co-PLAN acknowledges also the contribution of IHS in co-financing the publication, and all contributors for the interesting articles. The book is widely requested for in Albania and Kosovo, including requests from international partners. Part of the success is the fact that it provides solutions for local urban development, and is therefore very much applicable in the regional context. This second volume opened also the way for a new tradition of Co-PLAN by producing other publications in the coming years.

### *B. Donors manual on urban development & infrastructure investment projects*

Co-PLAN undertook an interesting and needed co-ordination effort by preparing the donor's manual on urban and infrastructure investment projects. This effort was implemented in close collaboration with the ULMP and the Urban Planning Department at the Ministry of Public Works. The manual was made thanks to the effort of Mirela Dalipaj with the support of Sotir Dharmo (ULMP director) and specialists of the Urban Planning Department from the Ministry of Public Works, while Arben Bakllamaja (WB), Adri Hartkoorn and Besnik Aliaj (Co-PLAN) also assisted.

The material is prepared in English, but next year it will be updated and translated into Albanian. This initiative will help in a better identification of partners of Co-PLAN, and in addition it will serve the urban sector in general for co-ordination purposes.

## **5.5. Attending local and international training, debates, conferences and seminars**

Training in and outside Albania is done to get or transfer knowledge. Each staff member that attends certain training shares his/her lessons learned with other Co-PLAN staff by presenting the main outcomes and developing individual or team goals for the short or medium term. Some of the activities Co-PLAN staff were involved in are:

### **Besnik Aliaj:**

- ? Participated in February in an International Conference on East-West Cultural Exchange organised by the 'Romualdo Del Bianco' Foundation and the University of Florence, Italy. Participation aimed to support a publication of Co-PLAN on the history of development and planning of Tirana, and establish contacts with university and research institutions in Italy as well as other countries. Paper presented.
- ? Participated in March in the inaugural ceremony for the opening of the new IHS building as well as in the international debate on urban and housing development organised by IHS for this event. The objective was to strengthen collaboration and partnership with IHS, and to transfer local experience at international scale and vice-versa. Paper presented.
- ? Participated in June, together with **Flamur Kuci**, in a Training of Trainers Course organised by MDF, Management for Development Foundation, Ede, The Netherlands. Cordaid financed this course with the objective to promote partnership among Albanian NGOs and develop capacity for training and advice in Albania.
- ? Participated and contributed in June in preparing and implementation of a national workshop on National Action Plan for Housing Strategy prepared by the Ministry of Public Works, Housing Department, with assistance of IHS Rotterdam. Lecture presented.

### **Dritan Shutina:**

- ? Participated in April in a World Bank regional conference on the NGO sector on development issues, organised in Lithuania. Thanks to the conference Co-PLAN is part of the respective working group of the World Bank and contributes to its agenda. Paper presented.
- ? Participated in May, together with **Ruzhdi Keci**, (former major of Kamza and now employee of Co-PLAN) in the international urban expert meeting in the Netherlands: "Learning from the ground". Cordaid organised this meeting. Co-PLAN presented the development experience of the Bathore neighbourhood and Kamza municipality. Paper presented.
- ? Started in August with a 2year Masters Course on Public Administration, at Pittsburgh University, after receiving a scholarship from the USA Embassy in Albania.

### **Luan Deda:**

- ? Participated in June in the annual international conference on housing and urban development of the ENHR European Network and Housing Research in Gavle, Sweden. The objective was to better understand the changes in the housing supply in Southeast Europe. We intend to continue contribution for this network and to look into possibilities to bring the conference to Albania. Paper presented.

### **Amalia Tola,**

- ? Participated in May in an ORT (USA) course in Albania on financial management. The course was a result of the collaboration between Co-PLAN and several NGOs working on environmental issues.

- ? Participated in November, together with **Dorela Mansaku** and **Enkelejda Sotiri**, in two training workshops (2-3 days each) on financial management and project proposal writing by Cafod Albania. The aim was to strengthen this capacity especially for the Kamza project.
- ? Had one-day professional enrichments discussions on financial management with Marlies de Groot (Cordaid), Peter Nientied (the Netherlands), and Mike Rodell (IHS).

**Flamur Kuci,**

- ? Participated in a 3-months training course (January-March) on inner city urban development at the IHS Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The objective was to use this experience for initiating the inner city urban renewal project in Tirana, and strengthen his capacity as project manager for the Kamza Project. Paper prepared.
- ? Had professional enrichment discussions with Peter Nientied (the Netherlands) and Claudio Acioly (IHS).

**Valbona Spahija,**

- ? Participated in September in an international conference on Gender Equity in Finance, organised by the International Training centre for Women in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The aim was to establish contacts with specialised NGOs on gender issues in order to develop specific gender development knowledge in Co-PLAN.

**Artur Cakalli:**

- ? Participated with **Mirela Dalipaj** in an international conference of Mediterranean countries on Voluntarism and the Role of NGOs in Valencia, Spain. Co-PLAN contributed with a presentation and a poster, and is now affiliated to this network.

**Mirela Dalipaj:**

- ? Participated (partly with **Adri Hartkoorn**) in a Tirana training workshop of OXFAM on Participatory Rapid Assessment for informal settlements. Facilitator was Robert Chambers of the IDS in Sussex, UK.

**Rudina Toto:**

- ? Participated in a 4-months training on cultural and professional enrichment at the IPC, the International Peoples College in Elsinore, Denmark. The aim was to increase her knowledge on development in order to prepare her for taking a position in the Kamza project.

**Internal training of Co-PLAN:**

- ? All staff attended a training (1-day each) on project management by Claudio Acioly (IHS) and Peter Nientied (The Netherlands).
- ? The Executive Board of Co-PLAN had a series of strategic discussions on organisational and financial sustainability for the mid-term with Joep Van Zijl (Cordaid) and Peter Nientied (the Netherlands)

# **1. CO-PLAN ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

## **6.1 External project evaluation 1998-2000**

The evaluation of the 'Roads to Stronger Civil Society' Project was without doubt a crucial moment of reflection for Co-PLAN. Besides being an external evaluation, it was also a training opportunity and internal reflection exercise for the team, and the two weeks of evaluation have been used intensively for this purpose. The evaluation was initiated by a careful preparation of a ToR and selected readers, and included site-visits, individual and group meetings, as well as exchanges with partners.

The evaluation aimed to reach two main results: (i) appraisal of the project 'Roads to stronger Civil society' and (ii) measure the performance of Co-PLAN as an organisation. Based on the analysis and assessment of the results achieved, the evaluation team drew conclusions regarding future options and potentials for Co-PLAN. In general, the assessment is positive and there is a good perspective for consolidating an efficient and results oriented type of organisation. Co-PLAN concentrated especially on suggestions and recommendations for improvement for the coming three years.

It is essential that Co-PLAN had the internal brainstorming, a revised mission statement and organisational structure, although this is rather to be seen as a process of improvement and adjustment rather than a static result. In addition, a performance perspective for the next 3 years is also foreseen and communication and networking has been analysed. For more information, see the attachments and the Evaluation Mission Report.

## **6.2 Internal evaluation**

No specific internal evaluation was held in 2000, however, as explained above, the external evaluation was used also as an internal reflection. In addition, Co-PLAN utilises the monthly staff meetings as internal reflection, where strategic issues are discussed parallel with normal routine reporting. Besides, all the IHS and other consultants working for Co-PLAN have also contributed in internal reflection and brainstorming. In 2001 Co-PLAN will have a week of internal reflection and discussion to elaborate issues coming out of the External Evaluation Report 1998-2000.

## **6.3 Co-PLAN business plan**

Co-PLAN has not prepared a real business plan yet. However, several steps were taken during 2000 to prepare the base for such a plan. A SWOT analysis is undertaken in 1999 and 2000, and a three-year preliminary plan was prepared with the assistance of Claudio Acioly (IHS), Max Jeleniewski (Municipality of Rotterdam) and Sokol Celo (GTZ). Furthermore, a 5-year business forecasting was prepared with the assistance of Peter Nientied. In 2001 Co-PLAN will develop this aspect in more detail. For more information see the appendices.

## **6.4 Enhancement of the financial management**

The financial management of Co-PLAN has seriously improved thanks to the strong commitment of Amalia Tola our financial officer. During year 2000 a great work is done in relation to budgeting, budget adjustment, cash flow planning, administrative registering of bills, fund management, efficient internal finances, reporting of finances to different donors, etc.

However, special attention is still required for the complexity due to the diversification of projects and donors of Co-PLAN. A valuable support for this purpose was the assistance and monitoring of Co-PLAN's finances by Cordaid by Marlies de Groot (Cordaid). In addition,

discussions were organised with specialists such as Mike Rodell (IHS), Peter Nientied and Max Jeleniewski (The Netherlands), as well as with the auditing specialists of KPMG. Outcomes of these discussions are reflected in the new financial proposal for the new three-year programme proposal submitted to Cordaid. Another crucial issue was the discussion and development of clear ideas on overhead costs and measures to be taken to ensure financial sustainability of Co-PLAN in the coming years. For the next year Co-PLAN plans to transfer the experience of Amalia Tola to Floreta Pirushi and to a still to be hired bookkeeper. Amalia will focus on more qualitative services including training on financial issues to other NGOs and to municipalities. For this purpose a training course is planned for them during 2001 at the MDF, assisted by Cordaid.

## **6.5 Financial auditing**

The financial auditing in 2000 covered the finances of 1999, and was done by KPMG. A copy of the final report, with results and recommendations is handed to each donor, while the report was also discussed with the Advisory Board. The results of the auditing are positive. Auditing for 2000 was prepared and an agreement with KPMG was reached in December for the new auditing in April 2001. The results will again be distributed to all the donors in June 2001, and we are again confident that good results will be coming out.

## **6.6 Project proposal 2001-2003**

Considerable efforts were given in designing the new three year programme proposal: *“Passage to an influencing civil society, 2001-2003.”* The programme covers three main intervention areas: (i) neighbourhood development; (ii) institutional development; (iii) and organisational and operational development. The drafting of the proposal has been a long process involving all the team members and consulting with our main partners. The final proposal used the logframe of the project cycle management methodology for clearly defining objectives, purpose and activities. Cordaid has principally approved the proposal and now details are under elaboration. We are thankful to Cordaid for the flexibility shown in the time between the completion of the 1998-2000 programme and designing and approving the new programme for 2001-2003

Additionally, Co-PLAN designed several other project proposals, and a number of them are approved including their financing: (i) the project for assisting local authorities and communities of the Municipality of Kamza, financed by Cordaid 50%, Novib 28% and 22% from local sources; (ii) the project for improving social and physical infrastructure in Bathore, (iii) the project for improving living conditions of the Roma community in Tirana; (iv) two projects with UNDP and NOVIB on the inner city housing renewal; (v) social assessments for new pilot sites of the ULMP and training of the ASSA NGO working for ULMP; (vi) capacity building of urban planning offices in Mitrovica Kosovo, etc. For more information please see the next chapter.

## **6.7 Planning of Co-PLAN activities**

Co-PLAN continued with planning its own activities in an improved manner as a crucial step towards reaching better efficiency. For that purpose a detailed project plan was prepared and approved early 2000 by the staff. This plan contained activities; bar chart with deadlines; and timing, personnel and percentage involvement for each project. Monitoring and revising of the work-plan was undertaken to cope with the changes & additional generated work. The plan helped the team in keeping on track, but it is still limited in flexibility, for which the management now is trying to improve.



## **6.8 Improve networking and partnership**

Improving the networking with partners was an important finding of the internal reflection of 1999. During 2000 several efforts were undertaken in joining and promoting professional and/or civic networks. Some of the most distinguished networks are:

- (i) The NGO network and other government initiatives, operating in the neighbourhood of Bathore. This is a grassroots-type of network and keeps us updated on the ongoing developments. The members meet monthly and publish an English newsletter, while a home page is in the stage of development. The network shares objectives, financing and many projects or actions are jointly organised. Co-PLAN and the Kamza municipal authorities do the co-ordination.
- (ii) The Urban Forum network is now a successful and reputable initiative of Co-PLAN. It is conceptualised as a coalition of government and non-government organisations interested in making the urban and community development issues in Albania a political priority. The network is initiated and co-ordinated by Co-PLAN, while the World Bank and ULMP also assist. They meet periodically and annually in a big public event. Publications and TV-programmes give a broad coverage.
- (iii) Co-PLAN is a member of the ENHR, European Network of Housing Research, which is an international professional network. Each year we join their conferences or contribute for publications. Thanks to this network Co-PLAN is one of the initiators of the Balkan Initiative of the CDS-Net, Civil Development and Housing and urban Development in Albania. We are intending to organise an international conference in Albania on urban and housing development policies in rapid urbanisation conditions.
- (iv) The World Bank ECA Region NGO Group, which is a network of NGOs from central and east European countries and working on the development of civic initiatives of the World Bank. Besides participation in the conferences, exchange of information through IT is regularly applied.

Additionally, Co-PLAN was involved in efforts to create a coalition of NGOs financed by Cordaid (The Netherlands), aiming to promote civil society values and develop sector policies. Another effort is to identify partners and networks operating in the fields of environment and gender. Contribution is also given to poverty reduction and anticorruption networks, but these contributions are still limited. However, Co-PLAN has been careful to identify the right type of organisation to work with. We do not want to make networking an aim in itself but rather use it to support project implementation, since it costs valuable capacity and energy. For the moment we would like to stick to the networks we are now involved with.

## **6.9 Improving internal communication and functioning of Co-PLAN's organisational structure**

Based on the outcomes of the internal reflection in 1999, Co-PLAN decided to have regular monthly staff meetings and Executive Board meetings. In this way every two weeks the key staff is exposed to recent developments and progress. Additionally, a set of internal rules of communication were set and agreed upon. Other improvements came from the introduction of individual performance evaluations, on basis of which people received - depending on their performance - up to two extra salary premiums. Also, the organisational diagram of the Co-PLAN structure was prepared, revised and reformulated. The division of staff over the projects was completed and an office handy man was hired. In addition, all job-descriptions were improved and an organisational vision was drafted and approved. Reporting has also been improved and follows a more structured format.

Parallel with these actions Co-PLAN stimulated social gatherings such as in case of marriages, births, birthdays or other occasions by getting together and sharing pleasure and free time. Sometimes, these are jointly organised with partner organisations.

### **6.10 Resource management improved**

The office administrators Amalia Tola and Floreta Pirushi undertook various actions regarding the improvement of resource management. Co-PLAN has now a policy in asset management for which a scheme of calculation is prepared, and this asset management system is explained to all staff. A positive experience has been the proper recording of working hours on a daily base and the percentage of time involvement for each staff in different project.

Furthermore, the office administrators developed overhead costs indicators, which are essential for financial sustainability calculations. Liquidity problems were minimised and reporting on cash advances were done usually on a weekly base. The use and maintenance of cars has also improved thanks to regular recording in the vehicle logbook. The resource centre, especially the library of books, videos, and CDs, including the archive is being further developed. Nevertheless, more improvements are required. During 2001, Co-PLAN will pay a lot of attention on these issues, and training of office administrators has been planned. Co-PLAN aims to transform its resource centre into a meeting place for academics, students, researchers, and NGOs.

### **6.11 The annual urban forum**

The main objectives of the Urban Forum, held in November, were (i) to create a collaborative atmosphere among citizens, institutions and authorities, by promoting the civil society elements of urban development; (ii) to support a process of creating a political vision towards a strategic development plan for the Greater Tirana region; and (iii) make urban development a political priority in Albania by “provoking” a reform in this sector.

The forum was composed of two activities, the round table discussion and a ceremonial evening. The round table discussion - with key actors of the main institutions - was on preparing, designing and approving *a strategic development plan for the Greater Tirana region*. They looked into issues as a consensus on the need for such plan; which main steps are to be taken in preparing it; which actors are involved and with which potential partners; what are the potential resources, and which possible steps should be taken to manage the urban realities of Tirana. The outcome showed that still a number of key actors are still not convinced that planning in Albania should be drastically changed. They still see no need for action and result-oriented planning, while clearly all the negative externalities of not doing so can be seen in the cities. A planning where communities can express their needs, and where decision-makers incorporate such needs. It again showed that Co-PLAN's efforts to keep this subject on the political agenda should continue.

During the ceremonial evening the documentary “Tirana, its frightening growth!” from journalist Xhemal Mato was shown, and the “City made by people II” book was officially launched. The evening was closed by the official handling of the “Man/Woman of the year for NGOs” price, co-organised with the Albanian Civil Society Foundation (ACSF).

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# OTHER PROJECTS

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# **1. STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAMZA**

(Financing by Cordaid 50%, Novib 25%, and Local Sources 25%)

Cordaid No.: C-432/8052

Novib No.: ALB-037-00-001

Co-PLAN No.: P0001-00

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Co-PLAN has been present in the Municipality of Kamza (MoK) since 1997, through the Bathore neighbourhood project, and assistance given during the Kosovo crisis in 1999. The experience at grassroots level underlined the importance and need for co-ordination at the authorities' level. For this reason the MoK and Co-PLAN, with IHS assistance designed during 1999 a project proposal, aiming to strengthen local authorities' capacity through promoting partnership with communities.

In January 2000, this project was submitted to the donor organisations Cordaid and Novib (The Netherlands). The donors approved the project, with the condition that 25% of the financing should come from local sources. After a period of discussions and official approval, the project started in April 2000. The final project and respective budget were represented and approved by the local authorities (major and municipal council) in April 2000.

Given the highly politicised atmosphere of the local elections of October 2000, Co-PLAN decided strategically to focus on good quality preparation and planning efforts. Given its financial weakness, the municipality showed the readiness for collaboration by offering three offices for the project's staff. As the municipal building is in a rather poor state, this does not allow for a normal functioning of the project, and certain investments for improving the project's offices and equipping them were undertaken in May. In June, the official contract signing ceremony and project start was organised, with the participation of central authorities, project and NGO partners, community leaders, municipal staff, and wide media coverage.

In August, the hiring of new staff took place. In addition, an OOPP workshop with key municipal and project staff (18 persons) aimed to understand and establish the problems and needs of the municipality. Also a partnership was designed and developed with the Land Tenure Centre (Wisconsin University) and the Immovable Property Registration System (IPRS) in order to deal with the complicated issues of land and building ownership in Kamza. As a result a preliminary workshop on land and ownership issues with the LTC, IPRS, ULMP, World Bank, municipal and project staff (30 people) was organised in September. Co-PLAN also contacted all major candidates for the position in the MoK, and explained and presented the project and its importance for the municipality.

During early October the elections took place, and a new Major was elected, Mr. Fran Gjin Gjoni, from the Socialist Party. He showed a keen interest in the project and several briefings were given to him on the project and the role of Co-PLAN. The initial agreements were revised and reconfirmed. After these steps Claudio Acioly, project responsible from IHS, was invited to undertake a two-week mission for designing a plan of activities and schedule of consultancies, including the training of project staff on project management.

During November the project staff completed the baseline information for Kamza and its municipal office. In November assistance was given to set up and advise on the new municipal structure with the new major, with assistance of Peter Nientied (Bathore project). In addition, a result oriented project planning was undertaken with the project staff reformulating it to the priorities of the new leadership. Furthermore, the project staff gave assistance on municipal finance. A workshop on ID/OS, including readers and other preparations was prepared and undertaken during December. Another important achievement was the identification of maps and aerial pictures in December.

## **2. IMPROVING ACCESS AND CREATION OF BASIC SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN BATHORE**

(Financed by NOVIB, The Netherlands)

NOVIB No.: ALB-037-00-002

Co-PLAN No.: P0004-00

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In addition, to the intervention financed by Cordaid (1997-2000) and by Novib in 1999, another project took place during year 2000 to improve physical access and basic social infrastructure in the Bathore neighbourhood. This project combined very well with the objectives of the previous project financed by Novib: Emergency Assistance to Kosovar Refugees. In addition the project complements with the project financed by Cordaid: Roads to Stronger Civil Society.

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Another activity was the cleaning of a 1.5 kilometre irrigation channel that crosses the neighbourhood, and the building of three pedestrian bridges and one bridge for car use. The project was implemented in close co-operation with the youth, women and social animators groups, who mobilised in addition their families. Local residents did initial cleaning and a local company did the specialised machine works. Cleaning was combined with the health and environmental campaign. However, in certain segments the cleaning is relative because the drainage channels are also used as an open-air sewer. One of the drawbacks was that local residents regarded the project as an employment opportunity, rather than giving priority to improving the living environment (payment disputes).

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added 5 public taps and 0.6 kilometres pipeline to the already 10 public taps and 5 kilometres pipelines built by PU with EU funds. The system served also public buildings like the school and health care centre. Still, the water supply is a sensitive political issue, and authorities face a dilemma to send water to Bathore, when Tirana faces also a water reduction policy.

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### **3. PRE-FEASIBILITY STUDY IN FOUR NEW PILOT AREAS OF THE ULMP**

(Financed by the ULMP, Ministry of Public Works, through a loan of the World Bank)

Co-PLAN No. C0001-00

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The Project Co-ordination unit (PCU) of the ULMP awarded this project after a competition. The contract covered 4 pilot sites: Bathore and Frutikultura in the Municipality of Kamza, and Mihal Grameno and Selita in the Municipality of Tirana. This means that Co-PLAN had to work in close partnership with the Project Management teams at municipal level. The work covered the period March - November 2000 dealing with social assessments, developing concept plans, pre-feasibility studies and drafting and preparing partnership agreements between community and local authorities.

This contract goes along with the interests and objectives of Co-PLAN, especially related to the core project financed by Cordaid. It makes people partners with local authorities; involves them in initiatives towards legalisation and integration; and improves living conditions thanks to the infrastructure provisions. This is done in a participative approach where people and authorities share responsibilities and benefits, i.e. cost are shared and people are included in legalised systems.

The main activities of the project were: (i) to prepare proposals and negotiations on the contract; (ii) mapping and familiarising with the sites; (iii) design and test questionnaire for social survey; (iv) train interviewers on questionnaire and computer data entry; (v) conduct interviews, data entering; data processing and analysing in SPSS; (vi) introducing the project to community and establish community representative groups; (vii) design interventions with community and specialists of utility companies; (viii) finalise concept plan in co-operation with all actors, and organise stakeholders workshop; (ix) draft partnership agreement and prepare parties to sign; (x) Reporting including final report, with conclusions, recommendations and revision of concept plans

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However, certain constraints have been faced. The October local elections really disturbed the project in time and trust building aspects. Unfair promises of politicians caused unrealistic expectations to residents; unprofessional competition by other NGOs created confusion to residents; and lack of a serious municipal follow up also hindered the progress. Limitations of appropriate infrastructure specialists create also a barrier in undertaking well-prepared improvement actions. Formal co-operation and co-ordination with utilities is hardly possible because of bureaucratic attitudes and corruption, and alternative solutions have to be identified.

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#### **4. TRAINING THE (ASSA) NGO IN ASSISTING COMMUNITIES DURING ULMP IMPLEMENTATION**

(Financed by ULMP, Ministry of Public Works, through a World Bank loan  
Co-PLAN No.: C0002-00

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In September Co-PLAN was asked to train and assist a newly established NGO in the Urban Land Management Project. This project provides infrastructure improvement in those areas most in need. This project is extended and Co-PLAN cannot cover all the community works, and specifically for this purpose an NGO was identified and trained. The objective was to transfer the experience of Co-PLAN to other organisations. In this set up Co-PLAN remained the leading organisation in community mobilisation for building partnership agreements with authorities, while the other organisation concentrated on the collection of residents' contribution.

For this purpose training was organised in the classical way by lecturing, showing case studies, on-the-job training, and assisting the NGO in the field including reporting. A team of four (all one year ago finished psychology students) of the "Zeitgeist" social association were trained. They were successful in their first contract and Co-PLAN has also involved them as subcontractors in other projects. The association is now called Albanian Social Services Association (ASSA), and is a serious partner of Co-PLAN. This contract proves that Co-PLAN's experience makes it now possible to work at a higher level and that the specialised habitat NGO scene gets extended. By keeping "on top" of such developments we intend to safeguard quality and ensure direction.

#### **5. MAKING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES PARTNERS WITH AUTHORITIES THROUGH ASSISTANCE IN THE URBAN REHABILITATION AND HOUSING RENEWAL PROJECT**

(Financed by MPW/UNDP 40%, NOVIB 55% and 5% resident contribution )  
MPW/UNDP.: ALB/95/003 PIU  
NOVIB No.: ALB-037-00-003  
Co-PLAN No.: P0002-00

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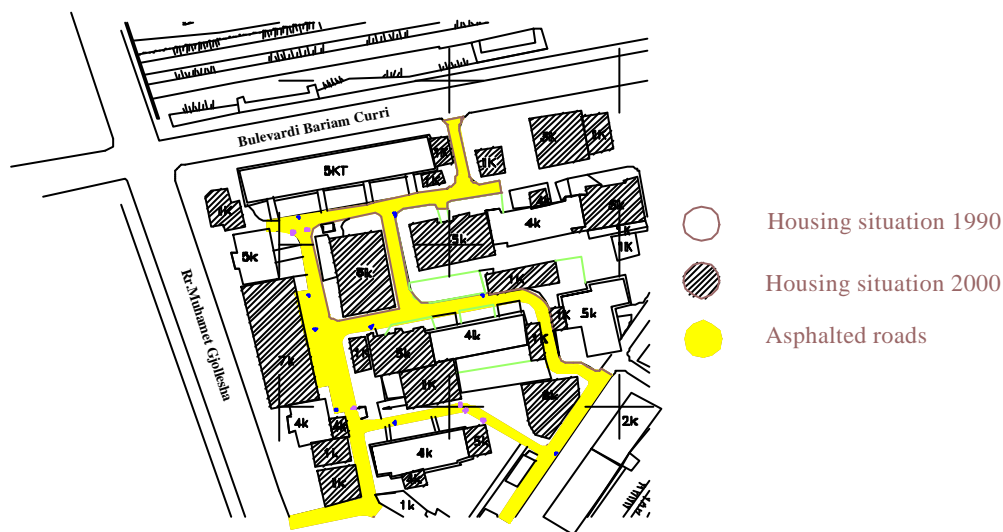
This project is also known as the Urban Renewal and Housing Improvements project in a quarter of inner Tirana. The project is financed mainly by NOVIB, while considerable funding was also offered by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of the Habitat II Project in the Ministry of Public Works, financed by UNDP. The residents contributed a small part of the funds. The project started in 1999, but due to a lack of interest by the local government of that time it was moving slowly. Nonetheless, Co-PLAN insisted in building a collaboration model between residents and authorities in a legal area of the municipality, likewise it had done in informal areas. The Habitat project experienced several staff changes, and this postponed the initiation of the project, and Co-PLAN used this time to prepare a good project. The change in municipal leadership after the local elections in October, as well as additional supported mobilised by NOVIB, a new momentum was given to the project.



The contract covers the period January 2000-April 2001. After project mobilisation and approval from the ministry and municipality, a social economic survey was organised with the students of the Polytechnic University of Tirana, department of Architecture and Urban Planning. This combined academic purposes with practical values, and served them to understand the new complex situation of urban development.

Main activities in the project were:

- (i) prepare proposal and contracts negotiations, mapping and familiarising with sites;
- (ii) design / test social survey questionnaire, and train students in interviewing and data entry;
- (iii) conduct interviews, entering data in the computer, analysing and processing;
- (iv) reporting/ conclusions, including identification of needs, priorities, and affordability;
- (v) introduce project to the community, and establish community representative groups;
- (vi) design infrastructure improvement interventions, and intervention plan for approval by municipal technical territory adjustment council;
- (vii) approve project and draft/sign partnership agreement between Co-PLAN and community, and collect residents contribution, and implement the investment/improvement plans;
- (viii) invite authorities to contribute for greenery and other potential actions like street lighting;
- (ix) present the experience to the broad public through media, and draw lessons;
- (x) Prepare extension of this experience to other areas, by setting up a project at city level in close collaboration with municipality and ministry.



Situation showing a part of the Tirana e Re neighbourhood

Indicators of success were:

- (i) A partnership agreement was signed with the community and recognised by authorities;
- (ii) 80% of the households have paid 70% of their contribution of 3,500 Lek;

- (iii) 400 metres of neighbourhood road asphalted, and 900 m2 of greenery planted;
  - (iv) 50% of the households were contacted individually and 15% are active in the process;
  - (v) informal/illegal occupied land given back its green function;
  - (vi) Community groups are established in the area based on apartment buildings.
- Actors involved in the project were: 40 University students; the PIU, Habitat II Project of the Ministry of Public Works; UNDP Albania; Tirana municipal planning department; utility companies of greenery and infrastructure; 12 representative community members of a total of 162 households; ASSA, Albanian Social Services Association

ASSA is a local NGO that was trained by Co-PLAN to work with communities in community based improvement actions. Their role was very important in the social aspects and collection of beneficiary contribution. Approximately, 50% of households in the four housing blocks of the area were directly contacted to discuss the rationale of the project, while some 15% of them were actively involved in the project. 15 residents representative groups were established in the neighbourhood, and they continue with follow up after the project ended.

There were several constrains encountered during project implementation. The local elections disturbed the project in time and in trust building, while unfair promises of politicians caused unrealistic expectations to residents. The first selected project site had a bad experience with a construction company that pretended to improve the green space but then attempted to construct a high-rise building in the already high dense space. This fact created conflicts with residents and it was almost impossible to convince them at first for the seriousness of the project. Because of this situation the project had to change to another site, causing a time delay. The indifference of residents in the area's improvement, and the low active involvement in the project was also a factor for delay, mainly caused by a lack of trust and confidence in authorities and other organisations. A specific target group of the elderly people living alone and without support had difficulties joining the project due to their poor/limited financial capabilities. Actually, there was noticed a considerable gap between high-income and low-income households.

One of the main lessons learned is that building a new model of developments requires substantial time in community trust building and assuring understanding of the main objectives. In addition, it is evident that political support is needed to implement these types of projects. An added value for Co-PLAN is the enriching experience it got in working in the legal areas of the inner city. It is also a learning model for community based improvement actions in areas where a community approach is more difficult and the required expected standard for services is higher.

## **6. CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING OF THE URBAN PLANNING OFFICES IN MITROVICA, KOSOVO**

(Financed by CARE International Kosovo)

CARE No.: CIK 01-005 & 007

Co-PLAN No.: C0003-00 & C0004-00

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Care International Kosovo awarded this contract to us, after 'tipping' by IHS. The purpose of the contract was to build contemporary planning capacity in both (Albanian and Serbian) urban planning offices in Mitrovica. This city is basically divided by ethnic hate that exploded after the Kosovo war. The city is divided by the Ibar River, which is considered to be the physical border between both ethnic groups. Before the war there was only one single local authority and planning office where specialist from both ethnies worked together. The city has been a big

industrial centre in Kosovo (mining, battery factory) and represents one of the bigger cities in Kosovo.

The task of Co-PLAN was to work with both planning offices and train them in effective planning where the old planning system failed. The latter proved not to work in the new situation of a free market with democratic ruling. It was essential to explain that even in the bad situation of a divided city, it was in the interest of both communities to have an integrated and unique planning to avoid negative externalities.

The presence of Adri Hartkoorn as an 'unbiased' party was an added strong point for Co-PLAN, in respect to emphasise its neutral position, while the other team members were Luan Deda, and partly Besnik Aliaj. The main actions undertaken were:

- (i) definition of training needs through a organisational and political analysis;
- (ii) assessment of the potential community participation in planning;
- (iii) assessment of the technical capacity of the urban planning staff;
- (iv) prepare a conceptual basis for workshops and training;
- (v) training and conceptualising of planning for the planning staff;
- (vi) writing of a concept plan for Care International Kosovo for further technical assistance;
- (vii) Reporting.

This consultancy proved to be a very positive experience for Co-PLAN and an added value to its curriculum. The community-based approach was introduced in Mitrovica and lessons learned from Albania were replicated to this new situation. The work was a right combination of urban planning concepts and civic society elements. The contract served to refresh the contacts of Co-PLAN in Kosovo, which were established after the war in 1999. The professional community appreciated this exposure to new ideas, including the City made by People, Volume I and II publications, and the visit of three key-staff to the Co-PLAN urban forum in November in Tirana. Co-PLAN used also this opportunity to identify potential local partners and professionals with whom we could collaborate in the future.

This opportunity to work as a consultancy service was important to us, since this is one of the possibilities to combine our knowledge on urban development with income generation in the longer term. Also it is a proof that Co-PLAN can work independently with international development organisations, which is important in respect to having access to projects, ideas and further organisational development. This co-operation also showed that conducting training is an effective instrument to spread community-based approaches to a wider group of, often very interested, professionals. Finally, such co-operation forces Co-PLAN's staff to ensure up-to-date knowledge on urban issues, which is a real incentive for further study.

## **7. COMMUNITY BASED ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS OF A ROMA COMMUNITY IN ALLIAS, TIRANA**

(Financed by NOVIB 75 % and Local Residents 25%)

NOVIB No.: ALB-037-00-004

Co-PLAN No.: P0003-00

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This is a rather unique and successful project of Co-PLAN during this year. The Roma community of the Allias neighbourhood in Tirana covers 60% of the area, and are well organised through the Human Rights Association of Tirana. They clearly articulated their needs and priorities and local community leaders came to Co-PLAN with a request to jointly share the costs for building a sewerage system in the neighbourhood. Until then authorities had ignored their needs and people felt abandoned. From our side it was explained that any improvement is based on cost sharing principles and broad participation of community. For this purpose several conditions were set including (i) identification and registration of the local residents; (ii) preparation of a physical/topographic map; (iii) designing a draft technical project proposal with respective costs.

In one month this was prepared and an official meeting in the area was held with all community members. Co-PLAN redesigned the project; verified the costs; and confirmed it with the municipal authority. The public meeting served to introduce the philosophy of Co-PLAN, its experiences in other areas, and detailed explanation of the project including the conditions. The community expressed understanding and readiness to join the project on cost sharing principles up to 30% of the total cost. A leadership of five distinguished members of the community was democratically elected to collect the residents' contribution and to monitor implementation. In order to build trust, Co-PLAN decided to start working initially with its own funds.

A sewerage specialist was hired to consult and supervise the works, while local residents were employed as technicians and labourers. Community meetings were organised to explain problems and difficulties, in case of problems or misunderstandings. In total 80 families were involved with meetings and providing labour, while their contribution covered 30% of the costs, and extra money was collected to pay for five additional daily workers for one month. As costs were reduced due to more free labour than forecasted, the free coming money was used for gravelling the road, after consultation with the community. This increased the beneficiary satisfaction and reinforced their trust in co-operation. At the end of the works, the local community organised a celebration with authorities, media and the school to show this collaboration model. The community expressed their readiness to improve the water supply and built a community centre, along the same logic.

The main lesson learned for Co-PLAN was that success is more evident when communities are better self-organised, and have clearly articulated needs and priorities.

## **8. ASSISTANCE TO STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KRUJA**

(Financed by VNG, the Netherlands)

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This is an inherited project of Co-PLAN since 1999, and entails advice and support to the Municipality of Kruja in collaboration with VNG, the Association of Dutch Municipalities. Co-PLAN assisted mainly in the preparation and approval of the city's regulatory plan; and initiation of pilot projects for a new residential area and the inner city historical area. During this year Co-PLAN participated in seminars of the VNG. In addition, key municipal authorities were invited to training opportunities of Co-PLAN to enlarge their understanding on urban development issues and the role of communities. Besides, Co-PLAN worked on evidencing other improvement pilot priorities as the main access road into the city.

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# OTHER PROJECTS

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# **1. STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAMZA**

(Financing by Cordaid 50%, Novib 25%, and Local Sources 25%)

Cordaid No.: C-432/8052

Novib No.: ALB-037-00-001

Co-PLAN No.: P0001-00

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Co-PLAN has been present in the Municipality of Kamza (MoK) since 1997, through the Bathore neighbourhood project, and assistance given during the Kosovo crisis in 1999. The experience at grassroots level underlined the importance and need for co-ordination at the authorities' level. For this reason the MoK and Co-PLAN, with IHS assistance designed during 1999 a project proposal, aiming to strengthen local authorities' capacity through promoting partnership with communities.

In January 2000, this project was submitted to the donor organisations Cordaid and Novib (The Netherlands). The donors approved the project, with the condition that 25% of the financing should come from local sources. After a period of discussions and official approval, the project started in April 2000. The final project and respective budget were represented and approved by the local authorities (major and municipal council) in April 2000.

Given the highly politicised atmosphere of the local elections of October 2000, Co-PLAN decided strategically to focus on good quality preparation and planning efforts. Given its financial weakness, the municipality showed the readiness for collaboration by offering three offices for the project's staff. As the municipal building is in a rather poor state, this does not allow for a normal functioning of the project, and certain investments for improving the project's offices and equipping them were undertaken in May. In June, the official contract signing ceremony and project start was organised, with the participation of central authorities, project and NGO partners, community leaders, municipal staff, and wide media coverage.

In August, the hiring of new staff took place. In addition, an OOPP workshop with key municipal and project staff (18 persons) aimed to understand and establish the problems and needs of the municipality. Also a partnership was designed and developed with the Land Tenure Centre (Wisconsin University) and the Immovable Property Registration System (IPRS) in order to deal with the complicated issues of land and building ownership in Kamza. As a result a preliminary workshop on land and ownership issues with the LTC, IPRS, ULMP, World Bank, municipal and project staff (30 people) was organised in September. Co-PLAN also contacted all major candidates for the position in the MoK, and explained and presented the project and its importance for the municipality.

During early October the elections took place, and a new Major was elected, Mr. Fran Gjin Gjoni, from the Socialist Party. He showed a keen interest in the project and several briefings were given to him on the project and the role of Co-PLAN. The initial agreements were revised and reconfirmed. After these steps Claudio Acioly, project responsible from IHS, was invited to undertake a two-week mission for designing a plan of activities and schedule of consultancies, including the training of project staff on project management.

During November the project staff completed the baseline information for Kamza and its municipal office. In November assistance was given to set up and advise on the new municipal structure with the new major, with assistance of Peter Nientied (Bathore project). In addition, a result oriented project planning was undertaken with the project staff reformulating it to the priorities of the new leadership. Furthermore, the project staff gave assistance on municipal finance. A workshop on ID/OS, including readers and other preparations was prepared and undertaken during December. Another important achievement was the identification of maps and aerial pictures in December.

## **2. IMPROVING ACCESS AND CREATION OF BASIC SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN BATHORE**

(Financed by NOVIB, The Netherlands)

NOVIB No.: ALB-037-00-002

Co-PLAN No.: P0004-00

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In September Co-PLAN was asked to train and assist a newly established NGO in the Urban Land Management Project. This project provides infrastructure improvement in those areas most in need. This project is extended and Co-PLAN cannot cover all the community works, and specifically for this purpose an NGO was identified and trained. The objective was to transfer the experience of Co-PLAN to other organisations. In this set up Co-PLAN remained the leading organisation in community mobilisation for building partnership agreements with authorities, while the other organisation concentrated on the collection of residents' contribution.

For this purpose training was organised in the classical way by lecturing, showing case studies, on-the-job training, and assisting the NGO in the field including reporting. A team of four (all one year ago finished psychology students) of the "Zeitgeist" social association were trained. They were successful in their first contract and Co-PLAN has also involved them as subcontractors in other projects. The association is now called Albanian Social Services Association (ASSA), and is a serious partner of Co-PLAN. This contract proves that Co-PLAN's experience makes it now possible to work at a higher level and that the specialised habitat NGO scene gets extended. By keeping "on top" of such developments we intend to safeguard quality and ensure direction.

#### **5. MAKING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES PARTNERS WITH AUTHORITIES THROUGH ASSISTANCE IN THE URBAN REHABILITATION AND HOUSING RENEWAL PROJECT**

(Financed by MPW/UNDP 40%, NOVIB 55% and 5% resident contribution)  
MPW/UNDP.: ALB/95/003 PIU  
NOVIB No.: ALB-037-00-003  
Co-PLAN No.: P0002-00

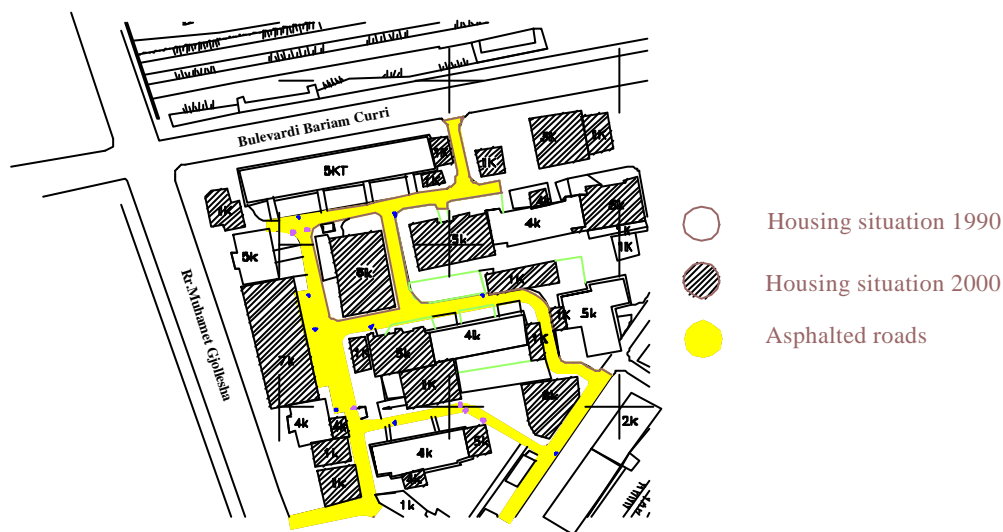
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This project is also known as the Urban Renewal and Housing Improvements project in a quarter of inner Tirana. The project is financed mainly by NOVIB, while considerable funding was also offered by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of the Habitat II Project in the Ministry of Public Works, financed by UNDP. The residents contributed a small part of the funds. The project started in 1999, but due to a lack of interest by the local government of that time it was moving slowly. Nonetheless, Co-PLAN insisted in building a collaboration model between residents and authorities in a legal area of the municipality, likewise it had done in informal areas. The Habitat project experienced several staff changes, and this postponed the initiation of the project, and Co-PLAN used this time to prepare a good project. The change in municipal leadership after the local elections in October, as well as additional supported mobilised by NOVIB, a new momentum was given to the project.

The contract covers the period January 2000-April 2001. After project mobilisation and approval from the ministry and municipality, a social economic survey was organised with the students of the Polytechnic University of Tirana, department of Architecture and Urban Planning. This combined academic purposes with practical values, and served them to understand the new complex situation of urban development.

Main activities in the project were:

- (i) prepare proposal and contracts negotiations, mapping and familiarising with sites;
- (ii) design / test social survey questionnaire, and train students in interviewing and data entry;
- (iii) conduct interviews, entering data in the computer, analysing and processing;
- (iv) reporting/ conclusions, including identification of needs, priorities, and affordability;
- (v) introduce project to the community, and establish community representative groups;
- (vi) design infrastructure improvement interventions, and intervention plan for approval by municipal technical territory adjustment council;
- (vii) approve project and draft/sign partnership agreement between Co-PLAN and community, and collect residents contribution, and implement the investment/improvement plans;
- (viii) invite authorities to contribute for greenery and other potential actions like street lighting;
- (ix) present the experience to the broad public through media, and draw lessons;
- (x) Prepare extension of this experience to other areas, by setting up a project at city level in close collaboration with municipality and ministry.



Situation showing a part of the Tirana e Re neighbourhood

Indicators of success were:

- (i) A partnership agreement was signed with the community and recognised by authorities;
- (ii) 80% of the households have paid 70% of their contribution of 3,500 Lek;

- (iii) 400 metres of neighbourhood road asphalted, and 900 m<sup>2</sup> of greenery planted;
  - (iv) 50% of the households were contacted individually and 15% are active in the process;
  - (v) informal/illegal occupied land given back its green function;
  - (vi) Community groups are established in the area based on apartment buildings.
- Actors involved in the project were: 40 University students; the PIU, Habitat II Project of the Ministry of Public Works; UNDP Albania; Tirana municipal planning department; utility companies of greenery and infrastructure; 12 representative community members of a total of 162 households; ASSA, Albanian Social Services Association

ASSA is a local NGO that was trained by Co-PLAN to work with communities in community based improvement actions. Their role was very important in the social aspects and collection of beneficiary contribution. Approximately, 50% of households in the four housing blocks of the area were directly contacted to discuss the rationale of the project, while some 15% of them were actively involved in the project. 15 residents representative groups were established in the neighbourhood, and they continue with follow up after the project ended.

There were several constrains encountered during project implementation. The local elections disturbed the project in time and in trust building, while unfair promises of politicians caused unrealistic expectations to residents. The first selected project site had a bad experience with a construction company that pretended to improve the green space but then attempted to construct a high-rise building in the already high dense space. This fact created conflicts with residents and it was almost impossible to convince them at first for the seriousness of the project. Because of this situation the project had to change to another site, causing a time delay. The indifference of residents in the area's improvement, and the low active involvement in the project was also a factor for delay, mainly caused by a lack of trust and confidence in authorities and other organisations. A specific target group of the elderly people living alone and without support had difficulties joining the project due to their poor/limited financial capabilities. Actually, there was noticed a considerable gap between high-income and low-income households.

One of the main lessons learned is that building a new model of developments requires substantial time in community trust building and assuring understanding of the main objectives. In addition, it is evident that political support is needed to implement these types of projects. An added value for Co-PLAN is the enriching experience it got in working in the legal areas of the inner city. It is also a learning model for community based improvement actions in areas where a community approach is more difficult and the required expected standard for services is higher.

## **6. CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING OF THE URBAN PLANNING OFFICES IN MITROVICA, KOSOVO**

(Financed by CARE International Kosovo)

CARE No.: CIK 01-005 & 007

Co-PLAN No.: C0003-00 & C0004-00

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Care International Kosovo awarded this contract to us, after 'tipping' by IHS. The purpose of the contract was to build contemporary planning capacity in both (Albanian and Serbian) urban planning offices in Mitrovica. This city is basically divided by ethnic hate that exploded after the Kosovo war. The city is divided by the Ibar River, which is considered to be the physical border between both ethnic groups. Before the war there was only one single local authority and planning office where specialist from both ethnies worked together. The city has been a big

industrial centre in Kosovo (mining, battery factory) and represents one of the bigger cities in Kosovo.

The task of Co-PLAN was to work with both planning offices and train them in effective planning where the old planning system failed. The latter proved not to work in the new situation of a free market with democratic ruling. It was essential to explain that even in the bad situation of a divided city, it was in the interest of both communities to have an integrated and unique planning to avoid negative externalities.

The presence of Adri Hartkoorn as an 'unbiased' party was an added strong point for Co-PLAN, in respect to emphasise its neutral position, while the other team members were Luan Deda, and partly Besnik Aliaj. The main actions undertaken were:

- (i) definition of training needs through a organisational and political analysis;
- (ii) assessment of the potential community participation in planning;
- (iii) assessment of the technical capacity of the urban planning staff;
- (iv) prepare a conceptual basis for workshops and training;
- (v) training and conceptualising of planning for the planning staff;
- (vi) writing of a concept plan for Care International Kosovo for further technical assistance;
- (vii) Reporting.

This consultancy proved to be a very positive experience for Co-PLAN and an added value to its curriculum. The community-based approach was introduced in Mitrovica and lessons learned from Albania were replicated to this new situation. The work was a right combination of urban planning concepts and civic society elements. The contract served to refresh the contacts of Co-PLAN in Kosovo, which were established after the war in 1999. The professional community appreciated this exposure to new ideas, including the City made by People, Volume I and II publications, and the visit of three key-staff to the Co-PLAN urban forum in November in Tirana. Co-PLAN used also this opportunity to identify potential local partners and professionals with whom we could collaborate in the future.

This opportunity to work as a consultancy service was important to us, since this is one of the possibilities to combine our knowledge on urban development with income generation in the longer term. Also it is a proof that Co-PLAN can work independently with international development organisations, which is important in respect to having access to projects, ideas and further organisational development. This co-operation also showed that conducting training is an effective instrument to spread community-based approaches to a wider group of, often very interested, professionals. Finally, such co-operation forces Co-PLAN's staff to ensure up-to-date knowledge on urban issues, which is a real incentive for further study.

## **7. COMMUNITY BASED ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS OF A ROMA COMMUNITY IN ALLIAS, TIRANA**

(Financed by NOVIB 75 % and Local Residents 25%)

NOVIB No.: ALB-037-00-004

Co-PLAN No.: P0003-00

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This is a rather unique and successful project of Co-PLAN during this year. The Roma community of the Allias neighbourhood in Tirana covers 60% of the area, and are well organised through the Human Rights Association of Tirana. They clearly articulated their needs and priorities and local community leaders came to Co-PLAN with a request to jointly share the costs for building a sewerage system in the neighbourhood. Until then authorities had ignored their needs and people felt abandoned. From our side it was explained that any improvement is based on cost sharing principles and broad participation of community. For this purpose several conditions were set including (i) identification and registration of the local residents; (ii) preparation of a physical/topographic map; (iii) designing a draft technical project proposal with respective costs.

In one month this was prepared and an official meeting in the area was held with all community members. Co-PLAN redesigned the project; verified the costs; and confirmed it with the municipal authority. The public meeting served to introduce the philosophy of Co-PLAN, its experiences in other areas, and detailed explanation of the project including the conditions. The community expressed understanding and readiness to join the project on cost sharing principles up to 30% of the total cost. A leadership of five distinguished members of the community was democratically elected to collect the residents' contribution and to monitor implementation. In order to build trust, Co-PLAN decided to start working initially with its own funds.

A sewerage specialist was hired to consult and supervise the works, while local residents were employed as technicians and labourers. Community meetings were organised to explain problems and difficulties, in case of problems or misunderstandings. In total 80 families were involved with meetings and providing labour, while their contribution covered 30% of the costs, and extra money was collected to pay for five additional daily workers for one month. As costs were reduced due to more free labour than forecasted, the free coming money was used for gravelling the road, after consultation with the community. This increased the beneficiary satisfaction and reinforced their trust in co-operation. At the end of the works, the local community organised a celebration with authorities, media and the school to show this collaboration model. The community expressed their readiness to improve the water supply and built a community centre, along the same logic.

The main lesson learned for Co-PLAN was that success is more evident when communities are better self-organised, and have clearly articulated needs and priorities.

## **8. ASSISTANCE TO STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KRUIJA**

(Financed by VNG, the Netherlands)

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This is an inherited project of Co-PLAN since 1999, and entails advice and support to the Municipality of Kruja in collaboration with VNG, the Association of Dutch Municipalities. Co-PLAN assisted mainly in the preparation and approval of the city's regulatory plan; and initiation of pilot projects for a new residential area and the inner city historical area. During this year Co-PLAN participated in seminars of the VNG. In addition, key municipal authorities were invited to training opportunities of Co-PLAN to enlarge their understanding on urban development issues and the role of communities. Besides, Co-PLAN worked on evidencing other improvement pilot priorities as the main access road into the city.

# 1. SUMMARY OF EXPENSE AND FUNDS RECEIVED DURING 1998-2000

Currency: US\$

<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Investments in infrastructure</b>				
Buildings & play-fields	73.438	28.184	2.443	104.065
Roads	44.733	93.355	7.082	145.170
Solid waste disposal & sewerage improvement	32.268	5.951	0	38.219
Water system	9.898	0	0	9.898
Housing & shelter improvement Kosovar refugees	0	129.780	0	129.780
	<b>160.337</b>	<b>257.270</b>	<b>9.525</b>	<b>427.132</b>
<b>Operational costs</b>				
General program	47.075	12.582	28.280	87.937
Breglumasi social Program	20.180	19.659	17.396	57.235
Social Program Bathore	15.248	4.398	0	19.646
Legalisation and Infrastructure program	24.620	10.656	8.654	43.930
Researches, publications, consultancy	36.129	24.222	1.600	61.951
Making communities partners with authorities (Habitat project)	11.957	0	0	11.957
Community based actions of Roma community	1.458	0	0	1.458
Training local authorities & other costs	39.382	0	0	39.382
Housing & shelter improvement Kosovar refugees	0	28.629	0	28.629
	<b>196.049</b>	<b>100.146</b>	<b>55.930</b>	<b>352.125</b>
<b>Administrative expenses</b>				
Salaries and employee benefits	16.895	17.020	6.758	40.673
Office running costs	6.200	11.825	5.646	23.671
Expatriate costs	2.585	6.912	4.424	13.921
Depreciation	32.807	21.051	14.353	68.211
Other	11.569	13.425	522	25.516
	<b>70.056</b>	<b>70.233</b>	<b>31.703</b>	<b>171.992</b>
<b>General program reserve fund</b>	<b>62.640</b>	<b>33.500</b>	<b>10.000</b>	<b>106.140</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>489.082</b>	<b>461.149</b>	<b>107.158</b>	<b>1.057.389</b>

**RESOURCES**

Cordaid (Mensen in Nood)	329.640	226.336	117.219	673.195
Novib	247.223	97.154	0	344.377
PCU at Ministry of Public Works of Albania	57.065	30.590	0	87.655
VIS	0	0	85.774	85.774
FAO	0	36.980	0	36.980
World Bank	0	4.750	31.416	36.166
UNDP	7.720	5.790	1.452	14.962
Care International	10.482	0	0	10.482
Community	8.605	0	0	8.605
SNV	0	7.682	0	7.682
IHS	0	0	5.000	5.000
ADF	0	0	3.899	3.899
VNG	730	1.180	200	2.110
IRC	0	1.988	0	1.988
UNICEF	0	0	1.447	1.447
Trafico Verkhersplanung	0	0	500	500
	<b>661.466</b>	<b>412.450</b>	<b>246.907</b>	<b>1.320.823</b>



## Summary overview of expenses and funds received during 2000

Currency: US\$

