

External Review “Kosovision Contest”

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1. Executive Summary

After a pilot project in Prizren, the Kosovision Contest has taken place for six years, involving the Ministry of Education, implemented by the Kosovo Education Center, the Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich, the University of Prishtina, and NGO Center for De-politicisation of Kosovo Society.

The initiative has targeted 5th graders in most parts of Kosovo who learned how to articulate ideas, develop visionary thinking, plan, and become persistent, all necessary skills to succeed in a liberal society. As set out, the tasks were completed in a satisfactory manner. Overall, the concept focused on the vision exercise, its visual presentation and project implementation for the winning teams.

Overall, the project has been very successful, although a number of factors (by design and circumstantial) factors may have prevented a bigger effect with regard to the democratic component. Kosovision Contest has introduced innovative elements in the practice of 5th grades throughout Kosovo that allow children to participate in the shaping of their immediate surroundings, to experience the possibility to be actors, and to prepare them to be citizens who are interested in public life and in collective and democratic decision making.

There has been an excessive focus on the “painting” and resistance to deliberate properly the co-existence theme. Despite these two significant drawbacks, this has been a very successful educational project that has had an impact, and has become sustainable.

A useful by-product of the project has been to test and expose deficiencies in inter-institutional cooperation some of which were addressed. The project managed to adequately mobilize not only its own staff but also teachers, children, school directors, municipal heads of education departments, parents and the ministry. Cooperation across various stakeholder has been excellent and this has likely increased the capacity of all education stakeholders to implement other projects. The initiative brought innovative methodology which instilled enthusiasm to urban and rural areas alike.

As foreseen at the outset of the second cycle, the project is to be handed over to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) which has expressed its willingness to integrate Kosovision in the regular curricula. Given the addition of an elective part of the curricula, and the freedom of teachers to decide on a greater portion of what they teach, there is more space for its inclusion. The project contributes to the desired educational reforms that the Ministry has been pursuing. The hand-over phase has been completed successfully whereby MEST has gradually assumed a greater financial burden as well as greater involvement in its implementation. MEST has expressed plans to involve KEC in the future too, which seems adequate for the ministry alone is unlikely to be able to address all challenges involved in the implementation of the project.

The overall goal of the project has been to contribute to the development of democratic citizenship among schoolchildren by (a) targeting 5th graders through the Kosovision contest, (b) reflect on values of democratic, (c) integrate the contest into the curriculum, and (d) bring in evidence on which to further refine the design of citizenship education.

The project saw it possible to prepare children and youth for their role as future citizens and identified favorable institutional conditions for such a project.

2. Introduction

This external review has been commissioned by the Swiss Cooperation (SCO) in Kosovo the main funder of Kosovision, with the purpose to assess the achievements of the project, its approach, quality and quantity of results against the planned objectives. The evaluation asked to review four components:

- Kosovision program Stage II (2008-2011);
- Kosovision context Stage III (2011-2014);
- Sub-program implemented in Serb-majority areas;
- Research component.

The review aimed the following specific objectives:

- Assess whether the project has achieved the planned results;
- Assess the overall implementation and delivery of outputs by implementing partners;
- Assess achievements of both components;
- Provide options/recommendations for a potential future integration/perspective of the Nase Mesto i Mi.

The key questions that were asked to be responded were:

- Has the project reached the planned objectives and results?
- Which are the project's strong and weak points?
- How successful was the project set-up and the cooperation among partners?
- What are the results achieved about TT "gender" and "good governance related to minority inclusion"?
- What are the results of component1?
- What are the results of component2?
- What are the results of the Nase Mesti i Mi component?
- What are the main challenges and recommendations that Ministry of Education should take into account for future implementation?
- Relevance of the project?
- Efficiency?
- Lessons learned?

The assessment further aimed to answer if the project reached the objectives stated in the project document, the degree that the project accomplished objectives related to transversal themes such as "gender" and "governance with focus on inclusion of minorities, and the degree of its likely sustainability given its hand-over to MEST. As a standard evaluation methodology, the assessment reviewed relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

The review was based on (a) Review of all relevant documents and samples of pupils' output and visible projects; (b) Interviews with the main project stakeholders: MEST, PHZH, KEC, school directors, municipal departments, teachers and pupils (of diverse background in terms of residence, gender, ethnicity and drawing pupils who won and who did not win); and (c) The information obtained from documents and multiple interviews was cross-checked and compared for accuracy across various sources.

The review was conducted in the second half of July and first half of August. The project team at KEC has ensured adequate arrangements despite difficulties to reach stakeholders in mid-summer. The consultant debriefed SCO regarding main findings and integrated the comments in the final draft.

3. Institutional Set-up

The Kosovision Contest has been implemented by the Institute International Projects in Education (IPE) of the Zurich University of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich, PHZH) in cooperation with the non-profit organization "Kosovo Education Center" (KEC), the television channel RTK (Radio Television Kosovo), the Ministry of Education and Technology, the NGO Center for De-politicisation of Kosovo Society and the Faculty of Education of the University of Prishtina. The project managed to raise additional support including private sponsors.

The total budget committed from SDC for the implementation of the Kosovision contest for phases I, II and III has amounted to 1,748,000 Euros. KEC had the overall responsibility for managing the program, coordinate all stakeholders, manage finances and ensure the program is audited. PHZA's has had a separate contract and its responsibilities amounted to providing support to KEC, participate in developing annual plans and contract staff of the Faculty of Education for the research component. The programme was jointly steered by SDC and MEST, who were responsible for its strategic orientation.

As foreseen, PHZH's role has gradually phased out, and most of the duties they previously discharged have successfully been implemented by KEC. MEST's involvement has increased (financial and substantial), and a Serb partner successfully brought on board. Alongside SDC, MEST was also part of the Steering Committee entrusted to monitor the progress of the

programme's implementation. During the three years, KEC has grown more mature in implementing the project and has clearly demonstrated greater responsibility and competence in running the project. It is of crucial importance that KEC continues to be MEST's main implementing partner in the next stage. Other international actors are present in Kosovo's primary education system – USAID with a basic education programme, GIZ with teachers trainings.

The interventions also enhance democratic understanding and procedures by supporting the development of local institutions' (schools', the Ministry's, the Faculty of Education of the University of Pristina) ability to promote democratic citizenship.

The project has steadily passed from Swiss to Kosovar ownership, with the Kosovo Education Center being a very useful tool for Kosovarization. The transition of ownership was conceptual as well as financial with the last three years seeing growing contribution by the Kosovo Ministry of Education. In the last three years, KEC was a direct implementer of Kosovoision while the support of PHZH was limited to the second component (research) and as support to the Kosovo Serb parallel project.

One of the most important values of the project and perhaps a by-product to draw lessons from has been to work with education administration/management at all levels, and test the coordination. From the level of work with pupils, teachers, and parents, the program has also involved school directors, municipal officials, regional educational centers, regional inspectors and the Ministry as well as the Faculty of Education of the University of Prishtina. This multi-tiered intervention has relevance beyond Kosovoision and serves useful lessons for any future projects that MEST may undertake.

4. Main Goal, Milestones & Main Successes

The Kosovoision Contest is an educational project and a national contest in which most primary schools of Kosovo. Kosovoision was initiated through a pilot phase in the region of Prizren in 2007, then by the Pedagogische Hochschule Zurich (PHZH), KFOR and the regional education office of Prizren. Following the successful pilot phase, Swiss Cooperation Kosovo and Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEST) have jointly supported the Kosovoision Contest project throughout Kosovo, implemented in two stages of three years.

The program's interventions aimed to support the development of citizenship by establishing a conducive learning environment and simulate democratic decision-making and collective planning in the form of small projects whose implementation was subsequently supported. As such, the project developed individual and institutional capacities to prepare children for their role as future citizens.

Goal	A culture of democratic citizenship is developed among Kosovo children through the education system.
Outcomes (OC) (<i>Project Objective, Purpose</i>)	OC 1: School pupils participating in the Kosovoision Contest have enhanced abilities and skills to address real life community issues in a creative and responsible way. OC 2: By the academic year 2014/15, Kosovoision Contest is a regular activity of primary education in Kosovo. OC 3: The project will constantly try to integrate K-Serbs pupils into the project.

The first three years included what above appears as Objectives 1, while Objective 3 was only implemented in the last two years. Objective 2 was added as an additional component in the second cycle (last three years) as was the research component.

4.1. Effectiveness and Efficiency

Effectiveness is defined as a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives. Overall, the degree of productivity experienced seems adequate and exceeded

expectation on several counts. The results were largely delivered as envisaged. The number of teachers and children affected seems largely to have been met, although with some indications of minor withdrawal in subsequent years. The project generally seemed to have adhered to schedule and the actual milestone completion dates matched those in the approved schedule. The geographic coverage was adequate and rural areas were not neglected despite the extra efforts required to reach them. In the future, the environment for intervention is likely to improve which can improve effectiveness and efficiency.

Efficiency is concerned whether a project used the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. Overall, the local implementation of the project was rational and cost-effective. The gradual hand-over from PHZH to KEC has made the project more cost-effective, and the assumption of various costs by MEST has contributed to the sense that various officials were expected to contribute to the project without the expectation of additional funds.

4.2. Cross-Cutting Considerations

KEC seem to have been mindful about SDC's transversal themes/cross-cutting considerations throughout the project. The sex ratio of beneficiaries was reported to have been 50-50 and among teachers the ratio is 75 female and 25 male. There some efforts to include topics of disability, poverty, equality and gender stereotyping into the project. Numerous posters addressed topics of disability, poverty and other aspects of human rights. There has been a conscious effort to reach out to individuals from various groups and backgrounds. During the awards, numerous rural schools were among winners, and the project management made a conscious effort to ensure that awards are distributed widely to encourage students of all backgrounds. The second component had a similar proportion of women involved, five versus two men.

5. Relevance, Assumptions and Level of Intervention

The evaluation found that the objectives of the program remains just as valid and relevant as it was at the outset. Activities and outputs of the programme were consistent with the intended impacts and effects, although some unintended by-products seem to be inevitable. There is no similar type of competition or teaching currently in use in Kosovo. All the interlocutors interviewed have no doubts that the project should continue in one form or another and MEST sees it as fully complementary with the curriculum.

Many of the reasons why this project was started persist to this day. It is important for public authorities to internalize the project and promote public participation and societal responsibilities as key to one's development. Obtaining such knowledge early on through education is essential to prepare the children in their role as future citizens. Problems are rife as schools still focus on rote learning, and do not prepare children either for the labour market or as skilled and responsible citizens. Pupils reach higher education without basic knowledge of the role of the state or of civil society. Universities are at the early stages of major transformation, from being the main pillar of resistance and nationalistic mobilization to a modern facility responding to needs of the economy of the future. Both on a collective and on an individual level, the understanding and the improved practice of citizenship is necessary for Kosovo's medium and long term transition to stable institutions, to a well functioning economy – itself the basis for the country's sound further development – and to social cohesion.

The project was seen as fully in line with Swiss Cooperation Office Kosovo Strategy 2009-2012. While educational in nature, the project has fit within Domain Rule of Law and Democracy" which aims to strengthen central and local government institutions, their increased accountability and their capacity to provide reliable and efficient services to all citizens. The project complemented other interventions supporting active citizenship in Kosovo – such as the newly launched Democratic Society Promotion (DSP) that also promotes citizenship, but from a different angle. The project has been implemented within the Democratic Governance and Decentralisation Domain, and was due to be handed over to the Ministry of Education, Science and Tehnology for further implementation. SCO has

shifted its priorities and is not considering this initiative for further funding. Hence, the evaluation does not focus on further recommendations.

One entry point for the promotion of citizenship is education. The quality of citizenship education at schools has to play a decisive role in the development of a sustainable civil society. The main and only purpose of this project and the interest to become part of curricula is the process of socialization and awareness for democratization. Working in groups, working with projects dominate the learning process and allows students to cultivate skills and habits to access and manage relationships with different social groups everywhere. The logic of intervention is that it relies to offer students the experience of democratic decision-making and collective planning in the form of small projects. The project also aimed to sensitise teachers and develop individual and institutional capacities.

Kosovision's methodology corresponds to the process of Education for Democratic Citizenship as Promoted by the Council of Europe, and as enshrined in its Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Recommendation.¹ This charter sees education as a key defence against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance. The charter foresees to provide "every person within their territory with the opportunity of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education", which should be included "in the curricula for formal education at pre-primary, primary and secondary school level as well as in general and vocational education and training" as well as in higher education, and "in particular for future education professionals". More concretely, democracy education means the promotion of educational approaches and teaching methods which contribute to

"learning to live together in a democratic and multi-cultural society and at enabling learners to acquire the knowledge and skills to promote social cohesion, value diversity and equality, appreciate differences – particularly between different faith and ethnic groups – and settle disagreements and conflicts in a non-violent manner with respect for each others' rights, as well as to combat all forms of discrimination and violence, especially bullying and harassment."

The Kosovision's approach was to use self-learning to help pupils paint a vision for the country, assuming that nurturing a visionary generation that seeks change is likely to help them shape the future of the country in a more dynamic manner in the future. This is aimed by stimulating them to seek creative solutions and by placing them at the centre of attention.

The promotion of democracy is reflected in the mission defined by MEST for Kosovo's pre-university education: "Building an inclusive education system that offers conditions for quality education and training for all individuals by promoting lifelong learning habits and values of democratic citizenship." It may be concluded that in the meantime, local ownership and favourable institutional conditions.

Having focused on building new school in most of the immediate post-war years, Kosovo has begun to turn its attention to more long-term prospects and democracy education seems to a priority too. Kosovo's curriculum has evolved and has create much better space where to house Kosovision under its roof and further invest in similar education more widely across the curriculum.

The latest bout of reforms of Kosovo's educational system seems the most ambitious and well-planned until now. Among other objectives, the new curriculum has a strategic orientation to contribute towards the "understanding of the roles of the state and society and their interaction" as a key priority for the consolidation of Kosovo's rule of law. The curriculum further focuses on "the understanding of the improved practice of citizenship at a collective and individual level" as necessary for Kosovo's transition to a well functioning economy and social cohesion.

Kosovo's new Curricular Framework among other things states that "education in Kosovo aims to develop knowledge, skills, positions and values suitable to a democratic society". The

¹ Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 and explanatory memorandum.
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Source/Charter/Charter_brochure_EN.pdf

sixth major learning outcome is listed as “citizen competence” which aims to create responsible citizens through the attainment of: “inter-personal, inter-cultural and societal relations, understanding and respect for differences among citizens, tolerance and respect for others, responsibility for issues and issues of overall public interest and responsible public participation, support for initiatives for useful changes for personal lives, society and environment.” More specifically, citizen competences, expressed as learning outcomes are broken down as follows:

- ⇒ Understand the social environment and how it works;
- ⇒ Understand and exercise their rights and to recognize and respect the rights of others;
- ⇒ Appreciate diversity and demonstrate tolerance, respect and open-mindedness towards difference;
- ⇒ Manage and solve conflicts in constructive manner;
- ⇒ Participate in democratic processes of decision-making (at all levels, from family to state);
- ⇒ Respect values and principles of human rights (personal dignity, fight prejudice and discrimination, fight poverty and marginalization, promote gender quality);
- ⇒ Show interest for public issues and contribute towards problem solving at the school and community level;
- ⇒ Protect the environment and contribute towards sustainable development.

The new curriculum also increases the autonomy of teachers who have control over a greater portion of the curriculum which they decide along-side teachers, pupils and other stakeholders. Schools are to design flexible and innovative programs for this part of the curriculum in given the needs, context and interests of pupils and of a specific community which enables the school to organize the teaching staff at their disposal according to the specifics of the community which the school serves. Kosovo has the form in the course labelled civic education, although this would need to undergo significant reform to meet the expectations.

School pupils participating in the Kosovision Contest have enhanced abilities and skills to address real life community issues in a creative and responsible way. One cycle of the Kosovision contest has been implemented in each of the last six years. Teachers have been prepared for their role as main actors of Kosovision Contest. Classes were observed by KEC, the Regional Education Centres, and by Municipal Education Departments. The assumption is that the quality of submitted posters, and the preparations allow democratic decision-making and cooperation within the classroom. There is evidence that in many classrooms this has indeed taken place, although with mixed results across the country.

6. Objective1: Kosovision

The project has involved most fifth grade pupils in Kosovo and at least one class per school. Over 30,000 children (or around 85 classes – about ¼ of fifth-graders of all ethnic backgrounds in 1287 classes) per year discussed topics pertaining their immediate environment clustered around four topics: education, economy, infrastructure, and co-existence. The four topics of discussion have remained the same throughout the two cycles of the project. Since the project has run for six years, most teachers have had a chance to work with Kosovision, and they have shared ample feedback. For some teachers this was done mechanically, for others it was a race, and a smaller number saw it as holistically as the designers planned it. Nevertheless, this is a work in progress that ought to have an effect in the long-run.

The children were asked to argue over priorities, vote or unify priorities, and depict their visions visually. In so doing, children develop their ideas and projects about the democratic future of the country. The depictions of childrens’ visions are done through posters and notebooks where they describe a better future and a specific idea to which they could contribute. The students had to agree – in classroom discussions and other participatory processes- on a common product (poster) and a project idea. They worked in groups and had to take over different roles and tasks.

Posters and note-books were collected by KEC and educational inspectors of the Ministry and were evaluated by a jury of five members who used several criteria to assess the posters, (a) the holistic approach to the four themes (which lead to an almost universal split of the poster

in four parts, each focusing on the four themes), (b) expression of a vision, and if there as link between the four themes, and if the pupils accomplished to present the future of Kosovo within the poster, (c) the visuals of the poster: how the themes were presented, originality and presentation (of around 1,300 classes with around 37,000 pupils, and only 40 rewards were granted to classes). The quality of preparation and realisation of projects by classes reflecting values of democratic citizenship as assessed by the selection committees.

The posters were assessed, for awarding project ideas, the criteria for which were: was the project doable by the primary involvement of the children, is the planning presented in sufficient specific detail, originality of the idea and contribution to the future. Pending victory of an awarded project, Kosovision project worked with teachers involved in the project and provided them with in-service training on practical teaching methods. Awards were made on regional and national level. Over 40,000 Euros are usually raised from parents to contribute towards higher costs of implementing the projects.

There is evidence that activities and outputs have been delivered more or less as planned, workshops were realized, selection of the best projects, planning and execution of projects, award scheme. The projects that ended up getting funded were fairly diverse. A recommendation was made three years ago to focus more on soft outcomes, and this has been partly addressed, but nevertheless, infrastructure has dominated. The topics lead to mostly hardware projects by the children, which does not fully meet the donor priorities for achieving democratic milestones as well. Infrastructure may be less relevant and usually paves the way for school directors to influence the choice of a project and found ways to build infrastructural projects around the school.

Economy	Infrastructure	Education	Co-existence
Handwork, recycling, hand-making dolls, workshop with candles and wax, digging a well and planting apples, gift shop,	School gardens, classroom renovation, school kitchen, playgrounds, school decoration, renovation of pre-school class, games cornder, cartoon illustration on school walls, fountain and garden, garden inside school, resting parks, creativity room for activities, renovation of surroundings, pre-school garden, chairs in the school park, library shelf, flower garden, locker for students, modern classroom, class-room renovation, class-room for practical teaching, school-yard, school garden (3), school hallway, colourful classroom.	Establish and equip library, poetry book, music instruments, school magazine, web page, botanic garden, argil workings, scenographic room, competition between two schools, arts atelier, visit to a pediatric hospital, say no to drugs, world map, teaching equipment, exhibition, newsletter, books	Multi-ethnic clothes, multi-ethnic corner

The project was partly carried out in the course civic education, but also in other courses, such as arts, physical education, nature and society, as well as in other elective courses. Some respondents claimed that Kosovision was done in all courses, except mathematics. Overall, it may be concluded that the project used adequate methods of interactive learning techniques to deliver the desired effects as set out in the proposal: (a) Problem-based learning, (b) Class discussions, (c) Cooperative learning, (d) Project work, and (e) Competition. The fact that the program does not take place in a specific course signifies its perception as important, but also as an external project.

Around 575-600 school directors were equipped with instructions, while 1288 teachers attended practical training and coaching. Teachers of winning classes attended additional practical work (82 of them). The vast majority were Albanian, with close to 300 Bosnian pupils, 200-250 Turkish, 280-340 RAE. Until the last year, the number of Serbs was negligible but now is fairly high (dealt with in a separate section below). The quality of submitted projects has improved over time, including the posters that present a vision for the future.

Based on feedback from teachers, children and other respondents, a list of effects below. Through the discussion of four major themes of subject matters given this form of education

children had the opportunity to think practically and have arguably drawn the following skills:

- ⇒ Cooperative learning;
- ⇒ Creative vision for the future;
- ⇒ Writing skills;
- ⇒ Critical thinking;
- ⇒ Team work and socialisation;
- ⇒ Take responsibility;
- ⇒ Clearly express principles and concepts;
- ⇒ Learn to set priority;
- ⇒ Find solutions to problems;
- ⇒ Engage in decision-making;
- ⇒ Self-aware of surroundings;
- ⇒ Strengthen individual and group identity;
- ⇒ Engage in discussion;
- ⇒ Nurture creativity through free expression of opinion;
- ⇒ Increased their self-confidence;
- ⇒ Encourage research;
- ⇒ Develop problem-solving skills;
- ⇒ Nurture creativity;
- ⇒ Nurtures persistence
- ⇒ Solidarity;
- ⇒ Develops planning skills;
- ⇒ Improves verbal articulation;
- ⇒ Pupils see themselves as important;
- ⇒ Engage in extra-curricular activities;
- ⇒ Opportunity to get children to think on their own;
- ⇒ Increase children's confidence;

The list above is further enhanced by the argument that all pupils are included in classes which are much more entertaining than the rest of the educational process. The following skills were imparted and have arguably improved teaching and educational administration and policy as follows:

- ⇒ Encouraged interactive teaching methods across the curriculum;
- ⇒ Teachers more involved;
- ⇒ Induces competition;
- ⇒ Parents more involved in the education of their children;
- ⇒ Promote modern teaching methods;

There were several weaknesses identified too:

- ⇒ Disappointment of children and teachers who do not win;
- ⇒ Copying of ideas and plagiarism;
- ⇒ Teachers channel ideas (e.g. a school director admits he wanted to see coat-hangers in classrooms);
- ⇒ Insufficient explicit priority placed on democratic values or tolerance;
- ⇒ High importance on the money;
- ⇒ Burden on teachers to worry about receipts;
- ⇒ Educational inspectors saw the project as external.

The project clearly stood out from the standard education, for it was innovative, and went against the grain of some of the routine habits in Kosovo's education, rote learning and lack of interaction. The skills imparted above are expected to make students more aware and competent for their future. What remains less clear is to what degree the project delivered on other deliverables which are:

- ⇒ Recognizing and respecting all cultures and experiences;
- ⇒ Promote tolerance of citizens of Kosovo regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, gender, social, linguistic, etc.,

Very few respondents cite democratic values as an objective, they rather cite better communication skills, courage, think out of the box, assumption of greater responsibility, group work, they get to talk more than in other classes, as primary outcomes. Getting to know

diversity of cultures is increasingly becoming important factor for the better future, and this value may have been delivered indirectly through the delivery of the milestones above. Not sure to what degree they learned about citizenship. They may have practiced it unwittingly. After the discussions, the priority always focused on the poster, on which there appears to be excessive focus, which is unavoidable considering its nature as a competition.

Overall, most risks that were foreseen in the project either did not materialize or were managed effectively. The assumption of some costs by MEST lowered some of the motivation but it has not amounted to disruption. MEST has generally kept the commitment, although at the end of the project, MEST had not formally integrated the project into its fold. After years of difficulties implementing the project in Serb areas, this was finally in place. Despite the change of funding, teacher motivation has not suffered significantly. The project management was responsive to changes of environment and problems that have occurred and took corrective action when required.

7. Objective2: Hand-over to MEST and Sustainability

The second objective stated that “By the academic year 2014/15, Kosovo Vision Contest is a regular activity of primary education in Kosovo” measured by the existence of a by-law defining Kosovo Vision Contest as a compulsory part of primary education (5th grade) and the integration of Kosovo Vision Contest in the curricula for 5th grade classes. It was expected from the Kosovo Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (MEST) to show continued commitment to the Kosovo Vision Contest, defined by the existence of a medium-term plan. In this manner, MEST was to ensure the ownership and sustainability of the interventions by preparing their full integration into the Kosovo education system and its continuation beyond SDC support.

When the interviews for this evaluation were conducted, no by-law had yet been signed to include Kosovo Vision as a formal part of the curriculum (although one was reportedly put forward to the minister for signature). The authorities see the project as attractive and seem to see it as complementary to the new curricula. During the planning process for the proposed phase, has committed through a letter of intent its support to Kosovo Vision Contest defining overall responsibilities of SDC and MEST, both as concluded in the previous evaluation and as subsequently enshrined in the project document:

- ⇒ contribution to the funding for Kosovo Vision Contest with subsequent increases during the next 2 cycles (2012/2013 and 2013/2014).
- ⇒ committed to integrate the Kosovo Vision Contest in the formal Kosovar education system by way of an administrative instruction to be released in September 2011.
- ⇒ MEST will take an active part in the steering of the programme – also through facilitating its cooperation with Municipalities.

The formal agreement was based on the assumption that “the promotion of citizenship education is an important fundament for the development of democratic society in Kosovo”, and that it was “in line with the priorities of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and more specifically of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.” MEST has shown significant buy-in into the project, including growing financial contribution and greater participation in all activities. Inspectors have monitored and assisted the staff during visits in schools. MEST participated in regular meetings organized by Kosovo Vision. To internalize the process fully, MEST will need to do even more.

After six years of its implementation, at the time of the evaluation, the integration of Kosovo Vision contest did not seem under question, but modalities of implementation were still not sure. The last stage was designed with an ultimate hand-over foreseen for 2014. MEST is now better able to realise Kosovo Vision Contest on its own although possible with continuous support. The plan was for the Ministry to integrate the concept and the practice of Kosovo Vision Contest in its own planning and activities and to allocate budget. After the academic year 2013/14, Kosovo institutions (schools, Regional Education Centres, MEST, possibly private implementing organisations) were expected to be ready to implement Kosovo Vision Contest fully on their own – both conceptually and financially. MEST commits to fully integrate Kosovo Vision Contest into the country’s primary education system by linking its core elements

with the National Curriculum by the end of 2012. But it was unclear how would MEST go about putting its commitment into practice. An MoU with MEST has been signed.

There are difficulties involved with MEST's more autonomous implementation of this project. Lower levels of rewards and fewer top-up payments will reduce the teachers' enthusiasm (e.g. education inspectors initially asked for additional payment to supervise the implementation of this project) but this may make the project more sustainable. In the previous cycle, there was dissatisfaction among educational inspectors who initially expected to get involved only against additional pay.

Moreover, in the continuation, MEST will need to conduct a whole range of activities for which it may not have adequate capacity, (a) implementation of pre-prepared activities; (b) Achieve a level of practice with these activities so teachers can make a difference and understand the basis of these changes, (c) Training of teachers to implement teaching classes; (d) Transformation of pupils in people providing ideas in the environment where they live, (e) To draft more programs in school and education directorate in inclusion of all communities to work in the project. All of these issues we can consider also as recommendations to provide sustainability for the future of the project. The Ministry is to integrate the concept and the practice of Kosovo Vision Contest in its own planning and activities and to allocate budget. The realisation of this output will require support from KEC but it remains to be seen to what degree MEST sees KEC as indispensable. MEST's current capacities are limited and should use KEC for the next period of three years.

A project is sustainable if the benefits are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. The project has become stability sustainable, and its take-over by MEST is likely to ground it within the system. It is questionable if MEST is fully cognizant of what it entails and if are fully aware what is expected of them. The current project design is somewhat demanding, but given an institutional integration, there is little in the project that cannot be done by the authorities. Since the project is organized in regional teams (1 to 2 coordinators per region), the only equivalent regional organization that MEST has are inspection offices which are to transform and deal with professional matters albeit still with oversight competences. Another possible address may be a combination of intervention at the MEST and at the municipal level.

8. Objective3: Research Component

The second component of the project aimed to ground "teaching methods of citizenship" on research results. This component aimed initially to test the knowledge of 5th graders about citizenship and use such evidence to design teacher interventions. The project foresees to assess the understanding of citizenship (Output4) and then use such evidence to produce didactic material on which to base in-service teacher training (Output 5).

The second component was initiated and implemented by the Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich, in cooperation with the Kosovo Education Center (KEC) and the University of Pristina (UP). The planned research component of the new programme phase was piloted by a preliminary project the goal of which was to develop, translate and test a questionnaire (based on the internationally used IEA-CIVED instrument) for the evaluation of citizenship education. A pilot stage of the research was conducted during 2009-2010, in four schools of the Municipality of Prishtina. Sampling methodology seem to have been conducted appropriately taking note of ethnicity, regional, and gender factors. PHZH had the primary responsibility over the project, including to contract KEC, implement research, manage finances.

It was a good decision to work with the Faculty of Education to help ground democracy education firmly in domestic ownership and create a number of stakeholders who may have research interests and their housing in the Faculty of Education makes them adequately positions to influence the curriculum of future teachers.

The understanding of citizenship among Kosovo children is assessed by research on evidence about the knowledge of 8th graders about citizenship and about respective needs.. The findings are used to design teacher training, manual/module (based on the findings from the research project) and training. In-service teacher training on citizenship can be based on didactic material. Aiming the result that teaching method of citizenship education are based on research results.

The second component of the project has led to a research paper on the understanding of the concept of citizenship among Kosovo school-children aiming to contribute to future development of the teaching methods about citizen education. A base line study (comparable internationally) has been produced although no didactic material or modules were shared with the evaluator. The Serb minority was included in the data-set although it was questionable if this was going to be used for any purpose.

The whole data set provides interesting findings that have not been consumed, and it remains up to the Educational Faculty to utilize them. The core team is actively seeking cooperation with relevant stakeholders to continue have a sustainable impact on civic education beyond the end of this project. Also, project members will use their expertise gained to have a positive impact on curriculum and text book development, making recommendations and participating in related decisionmaking. If KEC and the Faculty of Education are part of any curricular reforms of the course on Civic Education, they possess greater body of knowledge to argue to address topics of citizenship more vigorously.

Annual reports indicate that the two products were completed, a module for teacher training on citizenship and a manual for in-service teacher training and disseminated among Kosovo partners. Such material would be very useful to train further teachers, but only if this is part of comprehensive curricular reforms. KEC or other stakeholders should utilize the study, organize public debates about democracy education and attempt to influence MEST to prioritize this.

The know-how and knowledge accumulated among some individuals at the Faculty of Education may enable social researcher and education practitioners to continue the reflection on contents and methods for introducing citizenship concepts and practices in schools. There is no evidence that MEST has paid attention to such output until now. Some weaknesses were also highlighted, such as lack of motivation by the three professors to make sufficient use of the data, primarily because of their insufficient command of SPSS.

9. Objective4: Serb Involvement

One of the key objective has been the Serb inclusion into the project, measured by the number of schools and teachers contacted and invited to participate in Kosovo Vision Contest and in the Research Component. In terms of relevance, their involvement and outreach to the rest of Kosovars is even more important and urgent. The low quality of teachers, lack of motivation among children and lack of emotional ties to Kosovo are more prevalent among the Serbs and make the project even more needed.

In many ways, this endeavour was challenging because the educational system for Kosovo Serbs is run directly by Belgrade and works with a different curriculum. Serb schools in Kosovo operate within the parallel education system run by Serbia and boycott all activities coming from Kosovo. Serb teachers faced pressures not to cooperate with authorities in Kosovo, and their educational system is seen as one of the strongholds of resistance. This resistance is subsiding somewhat whereas ranging from very high in the north of Kosovo, moderate in central towns such as Gračanica/Graçanicë and Štrpce/Shtërpçë, and low in Anamoravë/Pomoravlje in south-eastern Kosovo.

Previous challenges informed the project implementation that they must be politically sensitive and flexible. After years of difficulties, a number of schools from all Serb-majority municipalities (except the north), participated. Serb schools began to be included in August 2012 given some adaptations to the project. Cooperation with Serb areas starting with a single school initially and expanded once there was a Serb NGO partner, and the project took a different name, although within the same spirit.

One of the major adaptations was its renaming – instead of Kosovo Vision, the project was named Nase Mesto i Mi (Our Place and Us), aptly to avoid politicisation. The project was right to refocus to develop a vision for the municipality and it is also accurate that it is virtually impossible to implement the project without adequate approval by the Serbian Ministry of Education. To make it happen, the management of the project had to seek verbal and written approval from several instances, including the the Head of the School Boards of the Serbian Education system. The Head of the NGO had written copy when he approached the school directors.

In Serb areas, the project was implemented with four-graders, for this is the last year with a single teacher. The challenges of implementing the project in Serb areas are further aggravated by the high salaries given by the Serbian Ministry of Education (around twice those in Kosovo's sector) which makes the reward given by the project lower in comparison. Serb areas face additional challenges, few pupils in small classes, some posters were not made by students, and political obstruction was more prevalent.

In the last two years, progress was made with the inclusion of a Serb NGO called the Centre for the Depolicisation of the Kosovo Society. Around 44 schools participated in the last year, with 84 classes in 12 municipalities (virtually all except the north), involving 880 pupils and 10 winners in the second round of the project. This may have been one of the very few projects, and it might as well be the only one, educational project implemented outside the Serbian system of education. This is not the only educational project in Serb areas although most other initiatives are of infrastructure nature. If this is among the very few projects of soft nature, it serves as an opportunity for some relations between the MEST & Serb schools.

There were three main objectives in this mini-project: to sensitise children to the current problems of their municipality, to inspire them to think about the future and encourage them to express their experiences to develop common vision, to have children work out solutions and put them into practice through their projects.

Kosovo Serbs are generally to anything that does not touch upon the curriculum. Unlike Albanian areas which supportive of including the program formally in the curriculum, the Serbs are against. Moreover, any inclusion in the formal curriculum of Serbia would need to lobby with Serbian authorities for the Kosovo Serb community will likely use this curriculum in the future. An opportunity may be the elective part of the education, which the Serbian system also allows. Fears were expressed that including it in the formal education would erode its appeal, but this may also mean fears of lower side-income, that the project has brought so far.

The importance was placed on the categorization, in order to make a better poster. The component on tolerance & co-existence was light and done reluctantly. Since co-existence was a mandatory box in the poster, they often portrayed the family as co-existence. This should not be taken as without effect, but certainly not what is to be expected. There is still reluctance of inter-ethnic mixing, and ways must be found to encourage mingling in the future, e.g. joint ceremonies.

Overall, projects in rural areas have accomplished more for the money spent and mobilized more matching labour contribution. The type of projects were mainly of infrastructure nature such as sports equipment or renovation of classrooms. Since Serb schools are very small (rarely more than 100 children), investments in such enjoy very few beneficiaries.

For the future, it is important to follow the political climate and identify when may it become favorable enough to enable more cross-ethnic cooperation, be it at an individual level, or at an institutional level. It is also difficult to discern how parents and the public see this as useful, for often the reply is, "we lack everything, so any project is useful". The project has definitely had an impact on teaching dynamics and to encourage success (e.g. a school proudly points to the certificate reward on the wall, "for all subsequent generations to see". However, the success is less clear with regard to inducements of tolerance and democracy education which the project also aimed.

Overall, the education officials in municipalities have more influence & better relations with schools. They also have more frequent contacts with officials of the Serbian Ministry of Education. Space for cooperation has improved, but there are still political obstacles for there is an expectation that education will be part of the future Association which will be subject of the future bout of dialogue in Brussels. However, Serb politicians and bureaucrats in both systems are working jointly to obtain more investments, which serves as an opportunity. If the project passes fully with MEST, it would still be useful to have a Serb NGO to implement the project, although the labest of MEST as funder may be problematic in some areas.

10. Recommendations:

Kosovo should formally adhere to the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education ("EDC/HRE")

MEST should follow the CoE Charter and initiate and promote research on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education and share information with other countries

MEST should promote educational approaches and teaching methods to promote living together in a democratic and multicultural society and enable learners to acquire skills which promote social cohesion, value diversity, combat all forms of discrimination (including bullying) and settle disagreements in non-violent manner

Since MEST is the care-taker of the project, it should expand the project to cover all classes and not only one per school.

In the next period of three years, MEST should fund KEC for the purpose, which can be phased out after the next period if MEST can then rely on its own capacities.

The Kosovision should not be conducted as part of any classes, but as a project within the Course on Civic Education (ideally mandatory and not elective). This would impart the importance of civic values and diminish the sense of the competition and of the artistic value of their output.

Topics should be expanded. Infrastructure and economy should be phased out (if not as topics, at least projects related to infrastructure should be made ineligible) while health, civic values, and environment should be phased in to focus more directly to make pupils more responsible citizens for the future.

Its nature as a contest should be preserved, however, ways must be found to enhance the education effects of the first stage. The educational effects should be the primary goal, and the rewarded projects should be instrumental to the teaching goals, not vice versa. Teachers should avoid asking children to vote over projects but should seek to build consensus.

11. List of Individuals Interviewed

1. Marcus Baechler, (Head of Office, Swiss Cooperation Office), 17 July 2014
2. Viktor Popovic (National Program Officer, Swiss Cooperation Office), 17 July 2014
3. Ardita Hima (Project Manager of Kosovision, Kosovo Education Center), 17 July 2014
4. Remzije Kosumi – Racaj, School Director, School “Shkëndia”, 17 July 2014
5. Fahrije Ajeti, Teacher, School “Shkëndia”, 17 July 2014
6. Naim Bytyqi, Teacher, School “Shkëndia”, 17 July 2014
7. Adea Gashi, Pupil, IV/2, School “Shkëndia”, 17 July 2014
8. Avni Gashi, Parent of Adea, School “Shkëndia”, 17 July 2014
9. Agim Bërdyna (Department Director, Ministry of Education and Science), 18 July 2014
10. Petrit Tahiri (Project Manager of Component 2, Kosovo Education Center), 18 July 2014
11. Naim Kadolli (Regional Coordinator, Kosovo Education Center), 18 July 2014
12. Nebojsa Simic (Director of the Center for the Depoliticisation of the Kosovo Society), 22 July 2014
13. Gani Ahmetxhekaj, Director of School, Klina town, Municipality of Klina, 22 July 2014
14. Suzanë Gjergji, Municipal Officer, Department for Education, Municipality of Klina, 22 July 2014
15. Albërina Mërlaku, Director of School, Primary School “Zgjimi”, Village of Germik, Municipality of Klina, 22 July 2014
16. Kristina Dedaj, Teacher, Primary School “Ismet Raci”, Municipality of Klina, 22 July 2014
17. Kemal Berisha (Head of the Didactic Center for the Peja Region), 22 July 2014
Kberisha_kk@hotmail.com
18. Arif Ademaj, Director of Primary School “Ramiz Sadiku”
19. Valbona Bakraqi, Teacher of a winning project, Primary School “The League of Prizren”, 22 July 2014
20. Afërdita Ahmetxhekaj Berisha, parent from Peja, 22 July 2014
21. Lorik Berisha, pupil from Peja, 22 July 2014
22. Ilir Shatri, member of the evaluation committee, Inspector of the Ministry of Education, 22 July 2014
23. Qazim Maloku, Head of Education Department, Municipality of Deçan
24. Zvonimir Vasic, Head of Municipal Department of Education, Municipality of Ranilug, 23 July 2014
25. Goran Maksimovic, parent from Kamenica, 23 July 2014

26. Magdalena Maksimovic, pupil from Kamenica, 23 July 2014
27. Goran Stamenkovic, Director of Primary School "Trajko Peric", Municipality of Ranilug, 23 July 2014
28. Gordana Cenic, Teacher, Primary School "Trajko Peric", Parallel in the village of Pancelo, 23 July 2014
29. Aleksandra Savic, Officer, Serb NGO, 23 July 2014
30. Latif Sherifi, Teacher, Kamenicë. 23 July 2014
31. Skender Kreziu, Parent, Kamenicë, 23 July 2014
32. Myftar Kryeziu, Pupil, Kamenicë, 23 July 2014

12. Documents Reviewed

During the course of this evaluation, the Consultant has reviewed a number of documents:

- ⇒ Last external evaluation covering the period between 2008-2011
- ⇒ The Application/Proposal put forward by PHZH and KEC for the project implemented between 2008-2011.
- ⇒ The Application/Proposal put forward by KEC for the period 2011-2014
- ⇒ Terms of reference for all sub-contractors
- ⇒ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Source/Charter/Charterpocket_EN.pdf
- ⇒ Project Agreement between SDC and MEST
- ⇒ Mid-year and annual reports for the last three years
- ⇒ KEC. 1 October 2012. Annual Progress Report: September 2011 – August 2012. SDC No SAP: 7F -06128.03.00
- ⇒ Various output of the project (brochures, videos, books, posters, etc.)
- ⇒ Progress reports of Component 2
- ⇒ Draft publication that has come out of Component 2
- ⇒ Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education
- ⇒ OECD. 1991. Principle for Evaluation of Development Assistance. Paris: OECD.
- ⇒ Katherina Washington, Tom Kleiber, with Beatrice Bürgler, Sabina Brändli, Kai Felkendorff. Skizze Kosovision Contest Zukunft. Kosovision Contest nach 2011 – eine Skizze.
- ⇒ Budgets for all years
- ⇒ List of projects implemented (for all years)
- ⇒ List of private donations (for all years)
- ⇒ Pädagogische Hochschule Zurich, KOSOVIION CONTES: Educational Project in Kosovo (1.9.2008 – 31.5.2011) Project description, IPE International Projects in Education
- ⇒ DEZA – Bericht KOSOVIION CONTEST. 8.2.2010. KOSOVIION CONTEST Progress Report 1.8. – 31.12.2009
- ⇒ Kosovision Contest. 2010-2011 Brochure
- ⇒ Kosovision Contest. 2010-2011 Udhëzues për mësimdhënie (për klasat e pesta)
- ⇒ Kosovision Contest. Worksheets 1, 2, 3.
- ⇒ www.kosovision.org; www.kosovision.ch
- ⇒ Numerous pupils' notebooks and posters
- ⇒ Kosovo Curriculum Framework, http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/Korniza_e_kurrikules11.pdf
- ⇒ Credit Proposal