Role of Local Government Associations of South East Europe in Training Delivery to Local Authorities

NALAS

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS OF SOUTH EAST EUROPE IN TRAINING DELIVERY TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

-WORKING VERSION –

July 2008

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FOREWORD

The main purpose of NALAS is to strengthen its members' capacities and help them to provide better services to local governments. In order to fulfil its role, NALAS provides a platform for permanent exchange of experiences among its members and partner institutions, performs comparative analysis and produces recommendations to its members in various fields. The results of its activities are being published and presented on its website within the Knowledge Center, as well as at different regional and international events.

The NALAS publication on the Role of Local Government Associations in training delivery at local level is produced in the framework of the NALAS "Quick Response" program; it responds to a request from the Union of Municipalities of Montenegro for support in the preparation and implementation of their National Training Strategy. While not having the intention to set out general principles of training delivery by LGAs, this publication presents experiences of NALAS member associations and provides practical advice to LGAs to appropriately position themselves within the market of training services to local government. This publication corresponded with the International Conference named "Towards Sustainable Training Systems and Effective Capacity Development in Local Government" organized by The Center for Expertize of the Council of Europe, thus contributing to development of basic tenets of training system for local government throughout Europe.

This publication comprises several parts:

▶ The results of a Survey on the role of Local Government Associations in training delivery to local authorities (NALAS Secretariat, February-March 2008)

▶ A summary of recommendations and developments, and of challenges that NALAS members are currently facing; this part of the publication presents the result of a NALAS Workshop for training staff of NALAS member associations (6-7 March 2008, Skopje)

▶ Policy recommendations based on the conclusions from the Workshop

▶ Useful information: links to partner organizations dealing with training, training contact persons from all NALAS members, as well as links to the NALAS Knowledge Center where more material from member associations can be found.

The publication was reviewed by the Editorial Board, constituted of NALAS members and other partners active in the field of training of local governments, such as the Council of Europe's Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform, ENTO (European Network of Training Organisations) and KDZ (Centre for Public Administration Research). Therefore, NALAS is particularly thankful to the members of the Editorial Board that ensured the quality of the publication:

- Mr. Fatos Hodaj – Secretary General of the Albanian Association of Municipalities and NALAS Liaison Officer, member of the Executive Bureau,

- Mr. John Jackson – the expert of the Council of Europe and its Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform,

- Mr. Boris Bakota - ENTO Bureau Member, Secretary General of Croatian Institute for Local Government and the Assistant Professor at Faculty of Law in Osijek,

- Mr. Thomas Prorok – KDZ Senior Researcher and Consultant.

Finally, the publication could not be prepared without the valuable inputs of NALAS member associations: NALAS Liaison Officers as well as the training officers who participated at the NALAS training workshop. The NALAS staff put a lot of effort in gathering the information and making the analysis. Also, the significant experience in training delivery to local governments of the Lithuanian partner, the Training Center for Local Authorities, helped us in formulating the recommendations presented in the publication.

Kelmend Zajazi
NALAS Executive Director

NETWORK OF ASSOCIATIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

NALAS is a network that brings together 13 National Associations which represent over 4000 local authorities, directly elected by more than 80 million citizens of this region NALAS was created in 2001 under the auspices of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (Working Table 1) and the Council of Europe. During the first years, NALAS functioned as an informal organization with regular meetings, seminars and training programs. In July 2005, NALAS became an officially registered association with its headquarters in Strasbourg. The NALAS Secretariat was established in March 2007, in Skopje.

The NALAS Task Force on Association Development (TF AD) brings together representatives of senior management of all member associations. Its activities are cross cutting and intersect with all other NALAS Task Forces. TF AD is hosted by ZELS, the Macedonian Association of Local Self-Governments. All NALAS programs and activities that aim at strengthening the institutional capacities of NALAS and its members are developed within TF AD.

NALAS Member Countries

One of the first results of TF AD activities was the "Quick Response" program, which is a new service that NALAS has provided to its members. The purpose of the Program is to answer members' urgent needs promptly, primarily using the knowledge already existing within the NALAS network.

ASSOCIATION	ACRONYM
Albanian Association of Municipalities	AAM
Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina	SOGFBiH
Association of Towns and Municipalities of Republic of Srpska	ALVRS
National Association of Municipalities of the Republic of Bulgaria	NAMRB
Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities	SCTM
Association of Kosovo Municipalities	AKM
Association of the Units of Local Self-government of Republic of Macedonia	ZELS
National League of Associations of Mayors from Moldova	NLAMM
Union of Municipalities	UoM
Romanian Federation of Local Authorities	FALR
Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia	SOS
Association of Mayors and Local Communities from Moldova	AMLCM
Union of Municipalities of the Marmara Region	UMMR

SURVEY REPORT:
The Role of Local Government Associations in Training Delivery at the Local Level

Is the training for local government regulated by law?

No 64%

Yes 36%
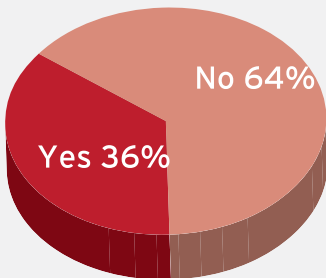
Yes
Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania

No
Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Serbia, Republic of Srpska, Moldova, Slovenia

Analysis of questionnaires submitted by NALAS member associations

During February 2008, NALAS surveyed its members to gather facts and best practices, challenges and recommendations for strengthening their training capacities.

A total of 11 member associations out of 12[1] responded to the distributed questionnaire. This Survey Report, The Role of Local Government Associations in Training Delivery at Local Level, presents the most significant findings.

The questionnaire covers several important issues, including: the development and implementation of a National Training Strategy, Training Delivery, the Training Capacities of Associations and the funding of training; it identifies good and bad experiences and sets out key questions in all these fields.

Training Strategies in South East Europe

Only 4 out of the 11 NALAS members' countries have already adopted national training strategies. The Moldovan government adopted their strategy in 2007, while the Romanian and Bulgarian governments adopted or revised their strategies in 2006 and the Albanian in 2003.

1 The Union of the Municipalities of Marmara Region, Turkey (UMMR) joined NALAS after the survey took place and became 13th member of the network.

The Romanian Federation of Local Authorities (FALR) and the National Association of Municipalities from the Republic of Bulgaria (NAMRB) have identified the central government institutions, including institutes of public administration in charge of training at national level, as partners involved in the process.

In Moldova and Albania, the development of the National Training Strategy has been supported by the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform of the Council of Europe, and both associations and non-governmental organizations have been involved in the process. Currently, Montenegro is going through the same process and the Strategy has recently been adopted.

The following concerns were expressed about the development of training strategies:

▶ In some cases, local authorities/LGAs were not involved in the process or were only asked to send comments; the strategy was developed mainly by the central government and its training institutions.

▶ In some cases, there was insufficient focus on developing a realistic Action Plan and the Strategy was never implemented.

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Bulgaria	Albania			Bulgaria Romania	Moldova, Montenegro (in process)
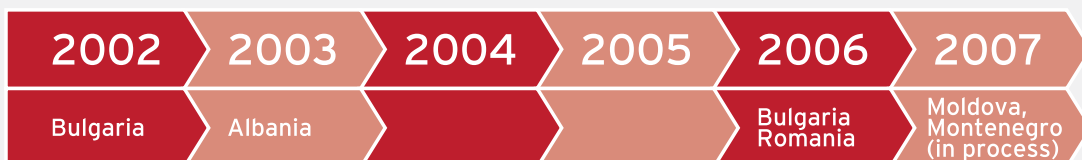
Adoption of national training strategies

Training Needs Assessment

When asked how often they conduct training needs assessments (TNA), the NAMRB, ALVR and SOS have responded that they conduct training needs assessment on a regular basis. The AAM conducts training needs assessment once every 3 years. The others (FALR, SCTM, UOM, ZELS, NLAMM and SOGFBiH) stated that they do training assessments, but without a set framework. Therefore, it can be concluded that, while all associations consider the TNA to be an important step in planning their training activities, it can be done in different ways ranging from a complex and costly process to regular feedback from training events.

| 2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
			FALR		AKM, ZELS UOM, SCTM, SOGFBiH

Training needs assessments

Training Delivery

Associations were asked about the number of trainings they have delivered in 2007 and the number of participants they have trained.

SOS has been most active in 2007 with 65 training sessions and 2000 trained participants, followed by SCTM with 57 training sessions and 1155 participants.

Most training programs have been targeted at municipal employees (73 out of 80 listed), few uniquely to elected and appointed persons (6 out of 80) and only one has been targeted for other professionals (social workers).
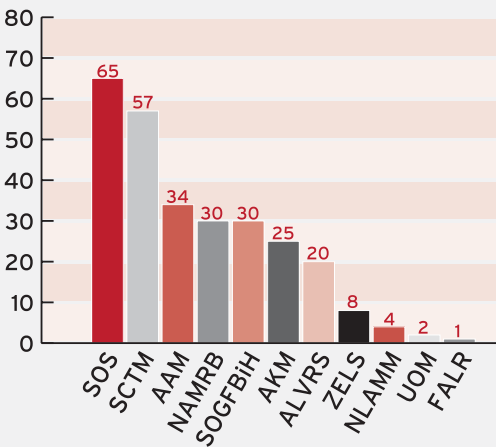
Number of delivered trainings in 2007
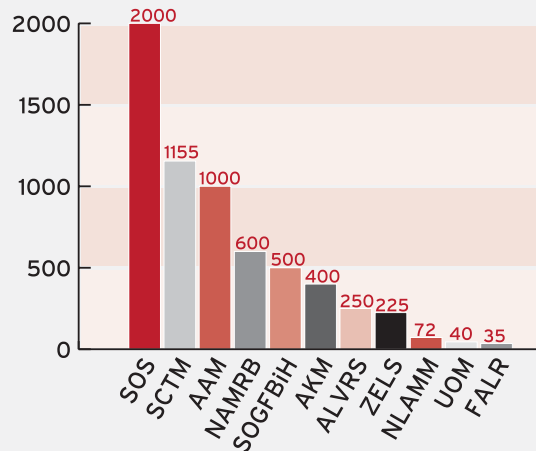
Number of trainees in 2007

All associations together have listed 80 training programs as having been implemented in 2007, out of which SCTM implemented 21 programs, SOS 17, AAM 12, NAMRB 9, ZELS 5, ALVRS 4, SIGFBiH 4, AKM 3, UOM 2, NLAMM 2 and FALR 1. Most of the associations developed and implemented the training in the field of finances (11 out of 54), internal management and ethics (10), municipal services (6). The other areas common for several associations are local economic development, project management, public relations and access to EU funds. Additionally, SCTM has important training activities in strategic planning, while other topics (skills, environment, water supply) are covered by only 1 or 2 programs.

All associations have had a positive experience with using local expertise (municipal officials) as trainers.

Training programs implemented in 2007 by NALAS members:

FINANCES

- ▶ Property Management
- ▶ Training for IT experts on the administration of the local fees and taxes in the municipalities
- ▶ Training for internal auditors in municipalities
- ▶ Annual budget, preparation of the budget
- ▶ Training of heads of departments for finances
- ▶ Training on collection of taxes
- ▶ Training in local finances
- ▶ Training on procurement
- ▶ Local public revenues collection

MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT AND ETHICS

- ▶ Training of the municipal councilors
- ▶ Training for Local Councils from Armenia under the FORECAST/HICD Project
- ▶ Training of newly elected officials
- ▶ Training for city councilors
- ▶ Leadership development program
- ▶ Strengthening Partnerships and Internal Management
- ▶ HRM Training

- ▶ Procedures, methods and techniques for Monitoring Boards and communication
- ▶ Training of the quality boards
- ▶ Public Ethics at local level

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

- ▶ Corporate planning of municipal services
- ▶ Service Provision and Strengthening Partnerships
- ▶ Operation of citizen assistance centers
- ▶ Training on municipal police
- ▶ Training on licensing
- ▶ Constructive permits issuing

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ LED Office organization and interpersonal skills
- ▶ Business Generation Tools and Techniques and the Role of Infrastructure
- ▶ Planning and Provision in Local Economic Development
- ▶ Economic development, including the municipal role in stimulating private business

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- ▶ Preparation and implementation of projects, financed by the structural instruments (Structural funds and Cohesion fund) of the EU
- ▶ Project proposal writing and preparing of tender documentation
- ▶ Professional preparation of project funding applications
- ▶ Project Cycle Management

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

- ▶ Understanding of European Union institutions, pre-accession processes and their impact on municipalities
- ▶ European Union - how to prepare on local level?
- ▶ Informational workshop for IPA funds

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- ▶ Participatory approach in process of Strategic planning of sustainable development
- ▶ Introduction in strategic planning in social protection
- ▶ Sustainable Development Monitoring Strategy
- ▶ Action planning

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING

- ▶ Public relations
- ▶ Building network with PR in the municipalities
- ▶ Municipal marketing

SKILLS

- ▶ Mediation and facilitation
- ▶ Team work and communication skills
- ▶ Staff training

OTHERS

- ▶ Civil mobilization' tools
- ▶ Prevention, mastery and getting over of the consequences of disasters
- ▶ Trainings for implementing legislation related to environment
- ▶ Training on water supply
- ▶ Prevention and control of AIDS – for medical specialists and social workers

Training Capacities

Five associations do not have any staff who are solely responsible for training activities, while the others have between one and six employees dealing only with training (NAMRB–6, ZELS–4, SCTM–3, SOS–2, AAM and SOGFBiH–1). Only 2 associations have special training units (NAMRB and SCTM), while NAMRB also has a training centre for local authorities in the centre of the country. Furthermore, the NAMRB has a daughter company that among other activities, organizes training and seminars.

Six associations have no organized database of trainers, but engage them on an ad-hoc basis. The other 5 associations have formed their own pools of trainers: combining the in-house and external trainers, NAMRB can engage as many as 55 trainers to respond to the training needs of the local authorities, SCTM 48, ZELS 44, SOGFBiH 30 and AAM 24. These also include municipal officials, thus giving Associations a valuable advantage.

Good and Bad Experience

Good experiences	Bad experiences
▶ Training free of charge (except this becomes negative when it leads to a lack of motivation and focus) ▶ Permanent monitoring of training quality ▶ Permanent improvement of training modules ▶ Off-site and regional training ▶ Partnership with training institutions ▶ Use of local expertise ▶ Professional networking and exchange of experience ▶ Joint identification of problems	▶ Strong competition where this leads to low standards ▶ Inadequate selection of trainees by local authorities ▶ Insufficient cooperation with central government ▶ Weak criteria for selecting trainees by local authorities

Sources of Funding for Training in 2007

The donor community is a leading source of funding for training in the local government sector. FALR is completely dependent on donors, and this dependency is similar among all NALAS members. Only SOS (no donor funding) and NARMB (40% donor funding) have managed to charge municipalities for training, while the others are exploring funding from both training fees and, to a small extent, other sources, such as membership fees, the association's resources and central government contribution.

Therefore, except in Slovenia and Bulgaria, the main sources of training funding are donors; this has advantages and disadvantages:

▶ All training is free and thus the participation is high. On the other hand, since it is free, the selection of participants is poor with low commitment.

▶ Dependence of donor funding does not allow training activities to be regular.

▶ Dependence of donor funding narrows the area of training.

▶ Training covers donors' priorities and thus makes it partially/fully supply-driven.

▶ Donor funding helps an association to develop its capacities and high quality programs, but does not ensure long-term sustainability.

Association	Donors	Mamber-ship fee	Central govern-ment	Paid by municipal-ity	Associa-tion's own resources
AAM Albania	75%	10%	0%	5%	0%
SOGFBiH Bosnia and Herzegovina	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%
NAMRB Bulgaria	40%	0%	0%	60%	0%
AKM Kosovo	70%	30%	0%	0%	0%
ZELS Macedonia	70%	0%	20%	0%	10%
NIAMM Moldova	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
UOM Montenegro	90%	0%	0%	0%	10%
ALVRS R. Srpska	87%	5%	5%	3%	0%
FALR Romania	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
SCTM Serbia	90%	5%	0%	0%	5%
SOS Slovenia	0%	15%	0%	85%	0%

Sources of funding for training in 2007

Most of the training activities of NALAS member associations are financed through donor-funded projects.

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN TRAINING DELIVERY TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE[2]

Country	Most important development	Main challenges
Republic of Srpska	▶ raised awareness of local authorities on the need for permanent education	▶ nonexistence of relevant law and NTS
Albania	▶ NTS approved ▶ effective cooperation between stakeholders	▶ identify real needs ▶ ensure training programs are of good quality ▶ use existing opportunities efficiently
Serbia	▶ lots of high quality training programs developed according to identified needs ▶ good database of trainers in different topics relevant to LGs	▶ coordination of different donor supported programs ▶ development of NTS ▶ definition of standards for training development and delivery
Bosnia	▶ local/national experts ▶ needs assessment through SWOT analysis	▶ inadequate funding (donors, municipalities) ▶ no relevant laws nor NTS ▶ resistance to training, caused by lack of training culture and by too many training offers (often low quality)

2 The table lists the inputs of the participants of the NALAS workshop held in March 2008 in Skopje.

Macedonia	▶ many training programs developed ▶ ZELS training center ▶ local expertise	▶ development of NTS ▶ funding of training
Romania	▶ free market	▶ can and/or should LGA be present/ competitive at the market?
Montenegro	▶ TNA (clear identification of real needs) ▶ NTS preparation ▶ CoE and EAR support	▶ local authorities do not appreciate, and are not interested enough in, systematic training ▶ insufficient support from the government ▶ financing of the NTS implementation
Turkey	▶ LGA's local governance Academy	▶ internationalizing of training programs and partnership with foreign counterparts

Based on their experiences, NALAS partners from the European Union identified the following developments in training delivery to local governments:

Lithuania	▶ quality programs, certifications, recommended by LGA ▶ creation of a database of training offers (topic, trainers, price, evaluation, other information)	▶ cooperation with NGOs, universities, state institutions ▶ insufficient trainees for the amount of training on offer
CoE	▶ focus on leadership development, best practice exchange, public ethics, performance management, NTS, intermunicipal cooperation	
Austria	▶ competition	▶ knowing needs of customers ▶ reaching potential customers/participants (database)

Key questions

The key questions raised by NALAS member associations can be summarized in 4 groups:

Developing the Training Strategy; Training curricula

- ▶ What would be a good basis for preparation of a national training strategy?
- ▶ How should/could an NTS action plan look like?
- ▶ How to improve the TNA?
- ▶ How to design training curriculum, in the light of the Training Needs Assessment?
- ▶ How to share experiences of the development and implementation of training modules for local authority officials?
- ▶ How to increase specific training programs on the drafting and implementation of projects and on applying for EU preaccession and accession funds?

Alternatives concerning Training Funding

- ▶ Should training be paid for by local authorities or should it be free of charge?
- ▶ How to explain to local authorities that they have to pay for training?
- ▶ How to secure greater funding for training?
- ▶ How to secure long term sustainability of training units within the Associations?

Involvement of other partners; Role of the central government/agencies

- ▶ How to enhance cooperation with donors?

Models for Delivering Training

- ▶ What is the role of LGA training units in supporting HR offices in local authorities?
- ▶ What examples are there of how daughter companies work?
- ▶ How LGAs as public institutions can play an international role within existing national legislation?
- ▶ How to better follow up conducted training sessions with support to trainees/local authorities in implementing the acquired knowledge and skills?
- ▶ How to improve the quality of training?
- ▶ How to design the certification and accreditation of training providers / trainers / training programs?
- ▶ How to manage distance learning?
- ▶ What are the relative advantages of the different ways of training: study tour, twinning, crossborder cooperation etc?
- ▶ How to enlarge the role of the LGA from being just a coordinator to becoming an implementer as well?

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE NALAS WORKSHOP "ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE IN TRAINING DELIVERY TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES"

• TRAINING STRATEGY/CURRICULA
WHY SHOULD LGAs BE INVOLVED IN TRAINING?
▪ LGA is in a good position to disseminate information and coordinate training delivery based on identified needs.
▪ LGA has the best insight into real municipal needs and problems.
▪ LGA has established, permanent contacts with local authorities.
▪ LGA can make useful linkages between training and advocacy.
▪ LGA can ensure the quality of training.
▪ LGA has the best access to municipal expertise.
▪ LGA can ensure that the contents of training reflect the interests of local authorities.
▪ Training delivery is a potential income-generating activity for the LGA.
LGA SHOULD PROVIDE TRAINING TO:
▪ Councillors (elected representatives)
▪ Municipal staff
▪ Heads of departments
▪ Managers of municipal enterprises

LGA SHOULD ESPECIALLY PROVIDE TRAINING IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- All LG responsibilities
- Project preparation and management
- EU issues (integration, funding, EU issues relevant for local level)
- Local democracy development
- Local economy development
- Strategic planning
- Relevant legislation
- Marketing
- Municipal service provision

WHERE can NALAS members find more information about training modules?

A list of training programmes already delivered by LGAs can be found in the Training Survey (on page 7 of this publication).

Some existing training modules can be found on the NALAS web site: www.nalas.eu/knowledge.

• TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

POSSIBLE METHODS (from the cheaper to the more expensive and time-consuming)

- Using the knowledge/information within the association (generated through/based on advocacy) in a structured way
- A question at the end of each seminar (i.e. as part of the evaluation form): What other training do you need?
- Survey of different target groups (i.e. by e-mail to heads of departments)
- Questionnaires sent by post/e-mail combined with visits to municipalities
- Meeting with all members, regional meetings with members and making use of other events (eg General Assemblies, Board meetings, Conferences)

> *During the process of training needs assessment organized in 2006 by AKM with the support of the Norwegian Government and KS (Norwegian LGA), one of the main ways used for collecting data and identifying the training needs of the newly elected councilors was the qualitative method in the form of meetings with focus groups.*

- Send experts to assess performance of local authorities and identify areas for improvement
- Capacity needs assessment (focus groups + other tools) in response to municipal action plans and strategies)

> *In some countries – **Montenegro, Albania, Moldova** - training needs assessment has been completed with the support of the Council of Europe, and comprised a complex analysis which included several tools:*
> - *survey based on a carefully prepared questionnaire*
> - *Interviews with LG representatives*
> - *analysis of the legal framework*
> - *analysis of training providers*
> - *workshops / bilateral discussions with stakeholders*

- Complex survey (quantitative + qualitative) + analysis with other tools (i.e. SWOT analysis), including also an analysis of legal framework

Note: A good formulation of questions is very important!

• MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF A TRAINING INSTITUTION

INTEGRATED (DEPARTMENT WITHIN THE ASSOCIATION)

PRO	CONS
▪ Full control	▪ Financial risk
▪ More accountability	▪ Tax risk
▪ Closer connection with membership	▪ Political dependency
▪ Knowledge capture	▪ Uncompetitive (potentially)
▪ Access to donor funds	▪ Limited growth (it needs to evolve to be successful)
▪ Most simple to initiate (market advantage)	▪ Complicated decision-making process
	▪ Staff involved in other LGA activities

LGA + DAUGHTER COMPANY

PRO	CONS
▪ Can make profit	▪ Insufficient income
▪ Administration (good value)	▪ Less control for LGA
▪ Separate from membership fees	▪ Potential power struggle between LGA and daughter company
▪ Less risk for LGA	▪ Losing focus due to market competition
▪ LGA in charge of content	
▪ Compete in the open market	

> *Since the end of 2005 **NAMRB** started the operation of its own Local Government Training Center in Girgini, Gabrovo Municipality. The Training Center comprises several buildings (a training building, a residential building, an administrative building, and sports ground) and it will be used for the implementation of the training events organized by NAMRB. There is a team of experts, which is a part of NAMRB's organizational structure, who will manage the Training Center's activities. While the Training Center has not become fully operational, NAMRB is organizing training through its Training Unit within the association, as well as through its daughter consultancy company.*

INDEPENDENT AGENCY

PRO	CONS
▪ Brings in other stakeholders	▪ Expensive
▪ Access to wider range of expertise	▪ Diluted leadership and ownership
▪ Broader range of products and provision	
▪ Makes a profit	
▪ Compete at the open market	

Different organizational models correspond to different development phases: usually, an LGA starts with establishing a special training department and when it grows, a daughter company is established. The independent agency may be the last step in the development of the income-generating training center that is competitive in the free market.

• QUALITY CONTROL

1. How to guarantee the quality of training?

- Reporting system: evaluation both by participants and by trainers

  > *ZELS receives feedback on local authority training needs based on every day contact with members, and occasionally on a conducted questionnaire. ZELS staff identifies the urgent needs of municipalities; currently, most of the Macedonian municipalities need training in the use of IPA funds, legal interpretation, preparation of urban plans, transparency, accountability and citizen participation.*

  > *Most of the associations are sending their staff to support the organization of training and at the same time participate in the training for local authorities, delivered or co-organized by the LGA. One of the examples is the training on the EU integration of local level organized by the SCTM, with support of the Fund for Open Society: SCTM staff – members of the association's EU Task Force - participated in the training as lecturers (on the topic of the role of LGA in the process of the EU integration), but at the same time helped the Training Unit with the organization, and participated actively in the training; this allowed them to get insight in the real local authority needs and to plan further activities in the field.*

  LGA staff to participate in training

- Test trainers (ask for detailed programs, recommendations), including trainer-to-trainer evaluations

- Visit/gather trainees some time (3 months) after the training to assess how useful the training has been.

2. How to improve the quality of training?

- Involve the best experts in preparing training curricula

  > *A tradition to organize the training of trainers (TOT) has been established at NAMRB: it organizes Training of Trainers in various fields of local activity thus preparing experts to work as trainers in the different regions of the country. In this way, a wide network of well trained local experts in specific areas was created and they are now in a position to provide assistance to their colleagues from the other municipalities.*

- Use professional trainers

3. Follow-up to training (support trainees/local authorities in the implementation of acquired knowledge and skills)

- Providing additional support to trainees / local authorities for the period needed for the implementation of the acquired learning

- Mailing lists, sending information to participants (on a regular basis)

> *After the EU training organized by the **SCTM,** with participants from more than 70 municipalities (out of 167), the SCTM EU Task Force (comprising SCTM staff volunteers) created the mailing list of all participants (from 10 training sessions) and continued to send them information on the EU, including new EU calls for proposals and news on the EU integration process in Serbia.*

- Forums and internet websites

> *"Municipal Training Courses Project", as a component of the larger Exchange Programme, is designed for municipal training and was carried out in cooperation with the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (**SCTM**). It was managed by the European Agency for Reconstruction, financed by the European Union and carried out by the consulting company Louis Berger SAS. The program developed and delivered training courses in 8 topics identified by SCTM members as priorities: Corporate planning of municipal services, professional preparation of project funding applications, project cycle management, economic development, including the municipal role in stimulating private business, understanding of European Union institutions, pre-accession processes and their impact on municipalities, Citizens Assistance Centres, asset management and municipal marketing / image building. All material for the training was available at a special section of the Exchange program website: http://www.exchange.org.yu/training, while forum discussions were opened for all topics: http://www.exchange.org.yu/training/msgboard. Training manuals were developed and distributed to all participants/participating municipalities and SCTM Training Center took over further dissemination of manuals and replication of trainings.*

4. Certification + accreditation of training providers/trainers/training programs

Pros	Cons
▪ Sets standards	▪ Not easy to establish
▪ Helps local authorities to choose the training	▪ Informal recommendations by municipalities could be sufficient
▪ Provides external quality control	▪ Tendency to monopolize
▪ Enhances competitiveness – certificated training are good for participants' careers (valid and recognized certificates)	▪ Good trainers need no accreditation / might not be accredited
	▪ Process of accreditation takes too long

If you think of accreditation as a means of quality control, start with the accreditation / certification of training programs.

If you need to be an accredited training provider in order to offer certified training programs, look for a partnership with an accredited training provider (i.e. higher education institutes).

5. How do we get the right people in the training?

▪ Be specific in the invitation: what is the target group of the training?

▪ Advise municipal leadership about whom to send

▪ Permanently work on raising awareness of municipal leadership

● FINANCING TRAINING IN SEE and EU COUNTRIES

Options:

- Training fees

> *NAMRB, SOS and ALVRS have good practice in charging municipal repre-sentatives for participation of the training they are organizing. ZELS has also has started to charge municipal representatives for participation of the training organized; the first paid service for **ZELS** members was delivered for about twenty counsellors from Kocani municipality on the following topic: "Municipal finances". The training was organized at the hotel and participants paid all cost of the training, including expert and hotel expenses and materials.*

- Membership fees

> *In case of the SCTM, 90% of training costs are covered by donor funds, while 10 % are the contribution of SCTM in logistics, personnel, training facilities, etc, that are funded from membership fees; the contribution of municipalities covers travel costs of participants or the provision of training facilities.*

- Share of remaining costs (between members/participants)
- Members' in-kind contributions
- Donor funds
- Partner contributions
- Central government funding (taxes, Ministry of Finance):
  - based on the project proposals (case of Lithuania)
  - for group of municipalities (through projects)
  - from different budget lines

> *The **ALVRS** has a status of an organisation of "special public interest"; as such it is eligible to apply for funds for implementation of certain ac-tivities (including training) from the state budget.*

- Association's own resources
- From the profit made of additional services offered on the market (eg consul-tancy):
  - selling training to other parties (e.g. contracts with political parties)
  - project preparation

- research
- renting equipment/premises
- Sponsorship from private companies
- Organize training during other events (e.g. GA) and thus lower costs
- Integrate specific themes in training organized by other training organizations

- From municipal budget, regulated by law: e.g. in Turkey, 1% of the municipal budget assigned for training

How to explain to local authorities that they should pay for training? How to sell training?

- Start with a low or symbolic training fee so that local authorities get used to putting training in their budgets, and then increase it little by little
- Start by ensuring that there is a training budget line in municipal and/or central government budget
- LGA should do some marketing to sensibilize local authorities on the importance of the training and why it should be paid
- Offer training demanded by LSGs
- Convince mayors and high level municipal management, starting with a smaller number of selected municipalities, through:
  - part of assemblies
  - board discussions
  - visits to municipalities
  - SWOT analysis
  - forums of professional groups
- Co-organize training with international organizations to raise the profile of the LGA as training provider.
- Demonstrate that LGA is not-for-profit organization but offers services to our members
- Raise awareness that the free market does not necessarily offer sufficiently adapted training for municipalities, and may not cover the topics in which local authorities are interested; on the other hand, training provided by associations should be:
  - Cheaper
  - Timely
  - Unique
  - Needed

- Provide best experts
▪ Find the place for the association in the market, e.g. newly elected representatives, finances
▪ Do not provide training just to do it, but make a good choice of topics and ensure quality.

How to secure long-term sustainability of LGA's training unit?

▪ Ensure high level quality training (better than the others offer), so that the benefit from choosing LGA training can be visible
▪ Organize follow-up activities, such as technical assistance
▪ There is not enough high-quality training in the market targeted on local authorities; the LGA should raise awareness and create training culture at local government level
▪ Offer a one-stop service for mayors
▪ The LGA can create a new market for training by creating forums of municipal professionals (e.g. lawyers) and support the exchange of experiences, discussing problems, finding solutions and providing new information on training.
▪ In some cases, the other forms of education may be acceptable for local authorities to attend and pay for (eg specialised academic programmes).
▪ LGAs should not provide training just for its own sake, but should make a good choice of topics and ensure quality.

• COOPERATION WITH PARTNERS

Possible partners:

▪ donors:
- political parties
- political foundations
- international NGOs
- bilateral and international organizations
▪ partner associations from other countries
▪ professional associations
▪ mass media

- local authorities
- central government:
    - human resource management authority
    - ministry in charge of local self-government
    - "technical" ministries
    - civil servant agency
- training providers:
    - public administration academy
    - higher education institutes
    - training agencies
    - other training providers (such as national NGOs)

> *Training which the **NAMRB** organizes in cooperation with partner organizations, including different higher educational institutions, is constantly increasing in number. As a result of its partnership relations, NAMRB carries out high-quality training workshops for its members in cooperation with the Business Administration Department of the Sofia University "Sv. Kliment Ohridski", Public Finance School of the Ministry of Finance, Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar", New Bulgarian University, University of Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy, etc.*
>
> *Under various joint projects - both national and international - NAMRB involves Bulgarian municipal representatives in an array of training workshops, which are usually carried out on modular basis. Such training workshops are organized in partnership with the Local Government Training Institute of the Assembly of French Departments, the British Local Government International Bureau, the Italian regions of Lazzio, Abruzzo, and Sicily, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs at UNDP (UNDESA).*

WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT?

- Trouble-shooting

- Governmental HR office can support training in general issues (skills)

- Financing (partial)

- Provide training in delegated functions and common or shared functions

> *Jointly with central government **ZELS** is implementing training for local government: e.g, with financial support of the Ministry of environmental and physical planning, ZELS implemented the training for local government administration on environmental issues: 4 training for 70 municipalities were organized in November-December 2007.*

- Take part in TNA process

- Provide expertise/trainers

- Deliver training in legislation (not the preparation of training curricula)

> *The **SOS** is regularly organizing training on new legislation for municipal representatives. These training sessions are usually paid for by municipalities. Besides others, the representatives of relevant ministries are participating at the training as lecturers, based on their legal obligation to inform municipalities about new legislation.*

- Provide legal framework for certification, accreditation

- Be aware that there might be conflicting interests between local authorities and the central government. If training is delivered by the central government or through trainers from the central government, local government interests must also be considered and divergent positions made clear.

How to coordinate donor training activities?

- Meet donors and present LGA plans

- Create a database of training providers and serve as filter, in order to avoid duplications and contradictions

- Motivate local authorities to inform the LGA about the training they receive

- Create an advisory group of key donors (present ideas and plans; coordinate)

- ▪ Sensitize donors to inform LGA about the training they deliver to local authorities (oblige them through an agreement)
- ▪ Be aware of short term missions for project identification and feasibility studies and try to influence them
- ▪ Make an overview of all training delivered and planned, and send it to donors
- ▪ Refer to the Paris Declaration
- ▪ Apply for funds (EU) to be administered by LGA directly

> *SCTM within Programme "Support to Capacity Development of SCTM – phase II" established Programme Advisory Group (PAG) consisting of representatives of key donors, towns and municipalities and Ministry for Public Administration and Local Self Government. Besides other tasks of PAG, it represents opportunity for SCTM Training Centre to coordinate different training initiatives and activities. SCTM Training Centre produces on a regular basis overview of finished, on-going and planned training activities for local authorities.*

How to change role of LGA from coordinator to implementer?

- ▪ Closely follow the training delivered by donors, by
  - ‑ sending LGA staff to training
  - ‑ get hold of the training content
  - ‑ get funds
- ▪ Concentrate on specific programs that cannot be done by the others and use existing resources (staff, municipalities, in some cases central government staff)

How to involve other partners?

- ▪ Establish the LGA as a coordinating body
- ▪ Be professional and attractive to partners

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

ON THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS IN TRAINING DELIVERY TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

1. The LGA should be involved in the training of local authorities - regardless of the specific circumstances in the country - because the LGA can best ensure that contents and opinions taught are in the interest of local government.

2. The LGA should offer all kinds of training needed for local authority employees and elected representatives. However, if the national market offers sufficient high quality training to the employees, or if the capacity of the LGA to offer training is limited, the LGA should focus on the training of elected representatives, and develop special training packages for those newly elected.

3. A Training Needs Assessment is an important step in the process of training preparation and delivery; it should be done regularly, using effective, yet inexpensive, tools, such as evaluation forms and discussions after seminars, e-mail surveys, meetings with members etc.

4. To ensure the quality of training delivery, the LGA should establish a pool of trainers that comprises both professional trainers and local authority practitioners. The provision of additional support to local authorities for the period needed for the implementation of the acquired knowledge is as important as good preparation and evaluation of the training. Since the main role of the LGA in providing training to local authorities should be to ensure the quality of training delivered, the LGA should act as a barrier for training institutions that deliver low quality training programs.

5. If the LGA thinks of accreditation as a means of quality control, it should start with the accreditation/certification of training programs. If it needs to be an accredited training provider in order to offer certified training programs, the LGA should look for a partnership with an accredited training provider (i.e. higher education institutes).

6. Different organizational models correspond to different development phases: usually, an LGA starts with establishing a special training department within the association; when it grows, a daughter company is established. The independent agency may be the last step in the development of an income-generating training center that is competitive in the free market.

7. The main role of the central government in training delivery to local authorities should be to ensure an adequate legal framework, providing financial means for training and participating in specific sectoral training.

8. The LGA should play an active role in ensuring that available funds for training are used without overlap and according to the real needs of local authorities, by coordinating the training activities through informal meetings and exchange of information, or – even better – by establishing a coordinating body at the national level.

9. The LGA should contribute to creating a favorable legal framework for the training of local authority employees and elected representatives, and thus contribute to the long term sustainability of their training units/companies. This comprises, among other things, lobbying for the adoption of laws which regulate the obligation of local authority employees and elected representatives to attend professional training, and lobbying for the introduction of training funds as a permanent budget item of municipal budgets.

LIST OF TRAINING MATERIAL AVAILABLE IN NALAS KNOWLEDGE CENTER

Moldova

▶ Training Needs Assessment (TNA)
▶ National Training Strategy 2007-2010
▶ Action Plan for implementing National Training Strategy

Kosovo

▶ Training of newly elected officials, PPPs
▶ TNA report, English

Serbia

▶ TNA report 2007
▶ Overview of training programs
▶ Training modules developed within Exchange project

Montenegro

▶ TNA 2008

Albania

▶ National Training Strategy for Local Government in Albania 2004-2006

Macedonia

▶ Toward Transparent Municipality manual
▶ Selection of Best Practices in the units of local self-government

General:

▶ Training manuals developed by UN-HABITAT

▶ (Elected Leadership, Local Economic Development, Conflict Management and Participatory Planning, Participatory Budgeting, Municipal Finance, Transparency, Distance Learning, Training Impact Evaluation)

▶ CoE Toolkit: "Towards Modern Local Government Association"

▶ Approach to Quality Assurance in Local Government Training, CoE and UNDP

USEFUL LINKS

▶ Centre of Expertise for Local Government of the Council of Europe: www.coe.int/local

▶ European Network of Training Organisations (ENTO): www.ento.org

▶ KDZ - Centre for Public Administration Research, Austria: http://www.kdz.or.at

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The **Centre of Expertise** offers expertise and guidance, sometimes in cooperation with other international or national organisations, to Ministries responsible for local government and to Local Government Associations through a range of capacity-building programmes, drawing on European best practice. These include the development of national training strategies, leadership development, performance management, public ethics, community engagement and various training programmes.

ENTO is a European Network of Training Organisations for Local and Regional Authorities from almost all of the 46 Council of Europe member States. ENTO organises one or two seminars each year on topical issues for the management of local and regional authorities, focussing particularly on the implications for training and development services.

The **KDZ's** international projects focus on the modernisation of public governance and management, e-government in Europe, also paying particular attention to the reform and strengthening of local and regional authorities in countries of Eastern and SouthEastern Europe. It cooperates actively with the Council of Europe, OSCE, OECD-experts and CEMR. Furthermore, KDZ is a member of the German local government association KGSt and of ELANET (European Local Authorities Telematic Network) working together with Governance International (Bristol) and the University of St. Gallen (Institute for Public Services and Tourism, Switzerland).

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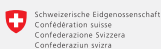
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