



Center for Habitat Development

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Curriculum Vitae of Co-Plan, Center for Habitat Development

The background and mission

In 1997, the Albanian non-governmental organization Co-PLAN was officially established, as a non-profit social association that has no political and religious aims and does not participate in political campaigns, or in favor of any candidate for any public post. The Court of Tirana, decision No.5284, on 17 October 1997, registers co-PLAN.

Co-PLAN emerged out of the "Breglumasi Program", supported by the international non-governmental organizations BILANCE (The Netherlands) and VIS (Italy), which carried out actions in the field of social development and neighborhood improvement, in the Breglumasi (Tirana) low-income irregular neighborhood. This program gained sufficient experience over the previous two years, resulting in the institutionalizing of the program into an NGO.

Co-PLAN provides technical assistance to communities, local governments, and national and international organizations in the fields of urban management and community-based developments. The mission of Co-PLAN is to enhance the environmental, social and economic conditions in Albanian cities promoting self-reliance and civil society development.

Co-PLAN achieves its missions via direct involvement in community-building activities, advisory services and technical assistance financed by national and international funding agencies. Co-PLAN undertakes project preparation and implementation, carries out policy and sector studies, supports institution-building activities and organizes several events that mobilize public opinion and disseminate knowledge and innovative approaches in urban development planning and management.

Co-PLAN has a young and energetic staff from the fields of civil engineering, architecture, urban design, planning, management, economy, social sciences, and environment. Most of our staff is trained abroad. In a short time Co-PLAN has created a good reputation with its Albanian and international partners operating in Albania. It has also created intensive curricula on national and international conferences and seminars and, published a set of researches and publications.

Main Projects executed

"Breglumasi Program"

- A neighborhood Improvement Program focusing on the social and physical environment in the informally developed area of Breglumasi (33 hectares), Tirana. Actions included the organization of community representative groups, and the opening of Public spaces including road construction. A social center and kindergarten was established including the establishing of a formally recognized community based organization.

- The program was financed by the Dutch organizations: Cebemo, Mensen in Nood, and KICI (Bilance), and jointly managed with the Italian VIS (Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo) organization.
- Total budget of the program was 695.669 US\$, with social improvements and infrastructure upgrading as the main components
- Duration: September 1995-April 1998.
- Contact persons: (i) Mr. *Joep van Zijl*, Mensen in Nood, Bureau for Central and East Europe, Lutherse Burgwal 10, 2512 CB Den Haag, The Netherlands, Tel. 0031 70 3136200, Fax: 0031 70 3136201073.6456700, E-mail: caritas.nl@tool.nl;
(ii) *Antonio Raimondi*, VIS Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo, 00179 Roma, Via Apia Antica 126, Italy. Tel 06.5130253 or 0336.753390, Fax: 06.5130276, E-mail: raimondi@volint.it
- This program was selected as one of the UNCHS Habitat Best Practice Award in 1998 (for details see on internet: <<http://www.sustainabledevelopment.org/blp>>

“Roads to Stronger Civil Society”

- This project is about completion phase located in Breglumasi and the Bathore neighborhoods of Tirana. It aims to transfer community based initiatives over the entire city of Tirana, as well as to other living centers of Albania. It is doing so by promoting a competitive atmosphere for community contribution in terms of labor and money. Six kilometers of road have been opened and graveled in Urban Bathore neighborhood in an area of 155 hectares, and improvements are made in water supply and sanitation. Draining channels are cleaned with community and some attempts for garbage collection system are made. The program works with the community based job creation and income generation principle. The social component is a priority of the project and has reached through social activities to vulnerable target groups by aiming a change of mentality and an integration of the area in the city society.
- Cordaid finances the program, which is a coalition of the Dutch non-governmental organizations Bilance, Mensen in Nood, and Memisa.
- The total budget of the program is 572,525 US, to be used on social and infrastructure improvements.
- Duration: May 1998 - May 2001
- Contact person: (i) *Mr. Joep van Zijl*, Mensen in Nood, Bureau for Central and East Europe, Lutherse Burgwal 10, 2512 CB Den Haag, The Netherlands, Tel. 0031 70 3136200, Fax: 0031 70 3136201073.6456700, E-mail: caritas.nl@tool.nl;

Assistance for Project Mobilization: The “Urban Land Management Project” in Tirana.

- This is an infrastructure improvement project in Breglumasi and Bathore Pilot neighborhoods. Mainly focusing on the improvement of main services and infrastructure such as: water, electricity, roads, sewerage, and garbage collection.
- The Albanian central authorities through a World Bank loan, and resident's contributions financed the program.
- Local governments of Tirana through the Municipality and District Council of Tirana manage the program.
- Co-PLAN's focus of work was on Technical Assistance, project and community mobilization, project identification, protection and gravelling of public spaces, and establishing right of ways.
- Contact person: *Mr. Toru Konishi and Mr. Arben Bakllamaja*, World Bank Resident Mission, Str. Dëshmorët e 4 Shkurtit, No. 34, Tirana Albania. Tel: +355.42.40587/40588/40589/30017, Fax: +355.42.40590, Internet: tkonishi@worldbank.org, or abakllamaja@worldbank.org
- Duration: November 1997 to December 1999.

“Strengthening Local Government and Citizen Participation in Kruja”

- This project was a consultancy appointment for the Municipality of Kruja focusing on urban planning and development, as well as municipal management. A neighborhood urban plan was developed in cooperation with the local government and the community, a plan for the rehabilitation of the tourist resources of the city was made in cooperation with the local government. Besides, the urban planning department staff was trained in involving communities in planning methodology, including the training of computerized planning.
- The consultancy was financed by the VNG, Association of Netherlands Municipalities
- Duration: From December 1998 to January 2000.
- Contact persons: *Mr. Eric Boven* and *Mrs. Alba Dakoli-Wilson*, VNG/SLGCP Office, Rr. E Vilave Gjermane, No.8/b, Tirana, Albania. Tel: +355.42.29867/28873/35235, Fax: +355.42.71559, E-mail: eboven@snv.tirana.al

“Beneficiary Assessment for a Rural Micro-Credit Fund”

- This project was a consultancy work, to measure the impact of micro credit funds as provided by the ADF Albanian Development Fund, and the World Bank.
- Contact persons: *Mrs. Kathryn Funk* and *Mrs. Elena Galliano*, The World Bank, Rural Development and Environment Sector Unit, Europe and Central Asia Region, 1818 Washington, DC 20433 USA, Tel: 202.473.5443, Fax: 202.5221164/4773291, Internet: kfunk@worldbank.org
- Duration: July 1998.

Social Analysis for the “Albania Second Irrigation and Drainage and Rehabilitation Project”

- A consultancy work, to make an evaluation of the social impact of this irrigation project in the Kavaja and Elbasani Districts, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food - IRP Irrigation Rehabilitation Project - and the World Bank.
- Contact persons: (i) *Mr. Toru Konishi* and *Mr. Ibrahim Hackaj*, World Bank Resident Mission, Str. Dëshmorët e 4 Shkurtit, No. 34, Tirana Albania. Tel: +355.42.40587/40588/40589/30017, Fax: +355.42.40590, Internet: tkonishi@worldbank.org, or ihackaj@worldbank.org
(iii) *Mr. Ylli Dede*, director of IRP, Bulevardi Dëshmorët e Kombit, No.3, Tirana Albania, Tel/fax: +355.42.23825. E-mail: irp@icc.al.eu.org
- Duration: January-February 1999.

Training Program for City and Traffic Planners in Albania,

- This program concerned the assistance to the Austrian Traffico Verkehrsplanung, Gmunden, and Stadland Wiena organizations in training Albanian planners from the majority of the country's districts.
- Financed by Austrian Federal Chancellery
- Contact person: *Mr. Helmut Koch*, Trafico, Verkehrsplanung, A-4810, Gmunden, Kirchenplatz 1, Austria. Tel: +43(7612)70911, Fax: +43(7612)7011-4.
- Duration: Two times two weeks in June and November 1998

Assistance to local authorities of Kruja and Kamza to manage the Kosovo refugee crisis.

- This project aimed to organize coordination structures in coping with the refugee crisis, managing refugee camps, and coordinating foreign aid.
- Financing: Co-PLAN and NOVIB, a Dutch non governmental organization
- Duration: March – September 1999
- Contact Person: (i) *Mr. Ylli Lama*, mayor. City Municipality, Kruja Albania Tel: +355.(0)532.2170.
(iv) *Mr. Ruxhdi Keci*, mayor, Municipality of Kamza, District of Tirana, Albania, And, *Mrs. Janine Poelstra*, Novib, P.O. Box: 30919, 2500 GX Den Haag, The Netherlands, Tel: 0031 70 3421675, Fax: 0031 70 3614461, <chris.eijkemans@novib.nl>

Emergency improvement projects in Prefecture of Fieri to cope with the Kosovo refugee' crisis.

- This project focused on the improvement/rehabilitation of collective refugee centers in the Fieri Prefecture. Within the project there have been rehabilitated two schools in this prefecture.
- Financing: The Dutch non governmental organization CORDAID
- Duration: May-October 1999
- Contact Person: *Mrs. Marlies De Groot*, Bilance, Bureau for Central & East Europe, Lutherse Burgwal 10, 2512 CB Den Haag, The Netherlands, Tel. 0031 70 3136200, Fax: 0031 70 3136201073.6456700, E-mail: <m.groot@caritas.nl>

Improvement of Living conditions for Roma Community

This project is implemented in the period May – August 2000. The Roma Community in Allias area of Tirana, articulated their needs and priorities and asked co-plan for supporting them in providing sewerage system. The community is organized through their own CBO, the population is registered, and inhabitants in collaboration with Co-PLAN formulated a project. Local residents, whom contributed also through their own voluntary labor, cover 30% of the cost. Co-PLAN financed 70%. One kilometer secondary line of sewerage is built, and the main road in addition is graveled. Residents are assisted in building themselves the tertiary connections under technical supervision. Actually the Roma community and Co-PLAN are committed in preparing another project for water provision and asphalt of the road.

Social Assessment for the Urban Land Management Project

Co-PLAN, in partnership with ISB (Institute of Contemporary Studies) was selected via a tender procedure, to implement a Social Assessment in four neighborhoods of Tirana. The project sites, Selita, Mihal Grameno, Bathore, and Frutikultura are potential extension sites for the Urban Land Management Project. The project consists in assessing the social and economic features of the neighborhoods, as well as the community needs in regard to infrastructure conditions. It also involved the preparation of a concept plan with approximate cost of infrastructure improvements, and a pre-feasibility study and affordability analyses. It is an important assignment in respect to community preparation in regard to understand the project and to further negotiation with authorities through the finalizing of a partnership agreement for infrastructure improvements. At the end of the project community was intensively informed about the project, Community representatives groups were established in the four sites, the negotiations for partnership agreement with authorities started and two of them were signed.

The project is contracted-out by the Project Coordination Unit of the Ministry of Public Works in Marc 2000, and is completed in October 2000.

Strengthening Capacity Building for Urbanism Office at Municipality of Mitrovica Kosovo

A contract financed by CARE International and supported by the local UNMIK office. Working with Kosovo Albanian office and Serb office of urban planning. Improving their capacities and injecting the spirit of collaboration and integration.

Workshops / Executive Seminars: "Managing Tirana's Rapid Growth"

- A series of workshops jointly managed with the IHS, Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies, Rotterdam the Netherlands, and ICURP International Course on Urban and Regional Planning, Szczecin, Poland.
- Financed by IHS and Co-PLAN.
- Contact person: *Dr. Emiel Wegelin* and *Dr. Peter Nientied*, P.O. Box: 1935, 3000 BX Rotterdam, Netherlands. Tel: 10.40215.58/23, Fax: 10.404.5671, E-mail: emwe@admin.ihs.nl
- Duration: (two week courses) Tirana, December 1997, January 1998, February 1999.

Public Debates of the Urban Forum of Albania

- Organized in collaboration with the IHS, the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies, Rotterdam the Netherlands; and Municipality of Tirana, Ministry of Public Works and the World Bank resident mission in Albania
- Financed by IHS and Co-PLAN
- Contact person: *Dr. Emiel Wegelin*, , P.O. Box: 1935, 3000 BX Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Tel: +31.10.40215.58/23, Fax: +31.10.404.5671, E-mail: emwe@admin.ihs.nl
- Duration: annual activity in Tirana, November.

Participation in International Professional Meetings:

Conferences/seminars:

- International Conference on Habitat II, UNCHS, Stamboll, Turkey, 1996
- International Conference on Housing in Transition. Organizers: UPI Urban Planning Institute Slovenia, and ENHR European Network for Housing Research, Piran, Slovenia, September 1997.
- Habitat II Project. International Seminar "Urban Rehabilitation and Housing Modernization in Areas of Special Needs in Tirana. Organizers: UNDP and Habitat II Project at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Tirana Albania, April 1998.
- Conference on the Collaboration of World Bank with Albanian NGOs, Organized by the World Bank, Tirana Albania, May 1998
- International Conference: City and Culture, Urban Sustainability and Cultural Processes. Organizers: Stockholm City, Stockholm Cultural Capital of Europe 1998, Swedish Urban Environmental Council, Swedish Council for Building Studies, Institute for Future Studies. Stockholm Sweden, May 1998.
- ENHR conference in Balaton, Hungary 1999.
- International Conference: Civic Networks and Planning Communication through the new Forms of Media. Organized by Polytechnic University of Ancona, Italian Urban Institute, and Municipality of Senigalia, Ancona Italy, June 1999.
- International Conference: Housing Systems in Europe. Organized by Technical University of Istanbul, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Istanbul Turkey May 1999.
- Housing in 21 century organized by ENHR, Gavle, Sweden 2000.
- NGOs and Voluntarism, and International conference in Valencia, Spain 2000

Ongoing Projects

At the moment Co-Plan is involved in a series of projects in different neighborhoods of Tirana while keeping the organization's focus on community based neighborhood improvements, as well as a more intensive approach to strengthen Local Government.

"Roads to Stronger Civil Society"

This project focuses on the Bathore neighborhood in the Kamza Municipality, and is presently in its completion phase. This project started in 1998. It is expected that this project will be continued for another three years, starting from 2001. The details of the project are described above.

Presently Co-Plan has prepared a new project proposal "Passage to an influencing Civil Society". This project is expecting to be implemented in a three years period and tries to extend the experience accumulated in size and quality.

"Empowering Local Governance and Community Participation" in Kamza Municipality

This is a three-year project approved in March 2000. The main objective of this project is to strengthen the local administration of the Kamza municipality in order to respond adequately to the new developments in the region. This project is a logical continuation to the previous experience of our organization in closely collaborating with communities to assure improvements of living conditions in the neighborhoods. Our experience show us that authorities are not satisfactory able to follow such development processes. The experience in Bathore stresses the necessity to focus our methodology of work on both, communities and local authorities. For this purpose an office is already established in the Municipality, and a specialized team is selected for the implementation of this project.

This project aims to (i) establish a management, organizational, institutional and resource base for the municipality, (ii) provide technical assistance and on the job training to local government staff in participatory planning, urban management, land registration, and municipal finance and budget control, (iii) and, undertake pilot actions and demonstration projects with the local community organizations and disseminate innovative approaches to civic participation in urban development.

The project will try to cooperate with other similar initiatives for preparation of development plans for greater Tirana and the region as a whole.

The project is financed by CORDAID and NOVIB, which are Dutch non-government organizations, and partly by Co-LAN's own funding. The total budget is of 600,000 USD

Improving Tirana Inner City

This is a project that is going on in collaboration with UNDP, Habitat II Project, Ministry of Public Works, and Municipality of Tirana. Almost 60% of the project cost is covered by Co-PLAN through the financing of Novib (Holland), while 40% by Albanian Authorities through the habitat II project. A pilot site is identified and basic surveys have taken place. The main objective of the project is to mobilize an inner city improvement project especially in formally developed housing blocks. Co-PLAN aims to complement its own experience in informally developed areas with legally developed ones, by building models of collaboration and partnership among citizens and authorities. The project has started and continues for 10 month, in the neighborhood "1 May" of New Tirana.