



Impact Evaluation of Civic Engagement in Local Governance Project

Executive Summary

In addition to the quantitative and qualitative research, an evaluation of the CELoG project has also been conducted. This evaluation has to be considered in addition to the other two reports. The evaluation has been carried out based on the nationally representative surveys conducted for the CELoG project in 2015 and 2019. This evaluation aimed to answer the following two research questions: (1) *what was the impact of the CELoG project on participatory democracy throughout 2015-2019 years?*, and (2) *what was the impact of community consolidation process on the participatory governance of communities?*

In order to answer these questions, 18 indexes were generated based on 107 variables (out of 350) found in questionnaire. The indexes are as follows¹:

1. **Awareness index**, community residents' awareness about community governance and serving officials;
2. **Civic activism index**, community residents' activism in solving community related issues;
3. **Personal activism index**, community residents' activism in solving personal issues by approaching government representatives;
4. **Civic involvement index**, community residents' involvement in political and non-governmental organizations/groups (both formal and informal);
5. **Community activism index**, residents in community/local governance;
6. **Civic consciousness index**, residents' views on civic behavior
7. **Electoral participation index**, residents' participation in elections of different levels;
8. **Elections' fairness index**, residents' views on fairness of different levels of elections;

¹ Variables used in the compilation of indexes

9. *Index of willingness to participate in elections,*
10. *Index of awareness on vulnerable groups' involvement in local governance;*
11. *Vulnerable groups' involvement index, residents' views on the degree of engagement of vulnerable groups in local governance;*
12. *Index of availability of relevant conditions for vulnerable groups engagement in community governance,*
13. *Index of effectiveness of organizations working with vulnerable groups, views of community residents on how effective NGOs work with vulnerable groups as their beneficiaries,*
14. *Index of participation promotion by community leader, views of community residents on how well community leaders inform and engage the public in addressing community development problems.*
15. *LSG cooperation index, community residents' views on how well the community cooperates with various civic, business related and other governmental organizations.*
16. *LSG decisions' transparency index, community residents' opinions on the transparency of LSG decision-making processes,*
17. *Index of LSGs responsibilities, residents' views on how well LSGs perform their responsibilities;*
18. *Index of LSGs communication and responsiveness to its residents, availability of public relations and ethics structures as well as complaints mechanisms.*

To answer the first research question, the indexes were compared across four groups of communities: **pilot communities** (pilot consolidated communities: Dilijan, Tatev and Tumanyan); **CELoG 35 target communities** (communities which were CELoG project's target throughout all 5 years of implementation, these include both consolidated and non-consolidated communities); **CELoG 50 target communities** (15 communities have become CELoG target community in the 4th year of implementation) and **non-CELoG communities** (these are communities, where CELoG project did not perform any intervention)

The evaluation showed that there were registered positive trends in terms of participatory democracy in all groups with the exception of "pilot communities". In the group of "50 target communities", trends were similar to the "non-CELoG communities" showing positive developments in 8 indices, no development in another 8 indexes and negative trends in 2 indices.

The project demonstrated the strongest impact on the group of 35 target communities. Here positive developments have been registered in 10 indexes, no developments in 8 indexes and no index has diminished in value.

The most evident positive development was registered in the *Awareness index* and *LSG decisions ' transparency index*. These are the only two indexes that registered positive development in the group of 35 communities, however it did not improve in the non-CELoG community group. *LSG cooperation index* registered no positive development in the group of 35 communities; however this should be interpreted as a positive impact as the status of index has dropped in other community groups.

The main result of this exercise is that the positive impact of the CELoG project is noticeable the best in the 35 communities. The research shows that the communities that have been targeted by the CELoG Program for all five years and have continuously been included in CELoG activities have benefited the most. It turns out that stability and consistency are the most important features when working with communities. This is the main way to create positive public perceptions. This tendency is especially noticeable taking into consideration the consolidation process, especially in the lack of proper public awareness regarding the process.

In order to answer the second research question, the indexes were compared across two groups: *consolidated communities randomly selected in the sample* and *non-consolidated communities*. Using the indexes that were developed based on the survey questionnaires utilized within CELoG project, the research demonstrated that the community consolidation process registered a rather negative impact on residents' participation in local governance. All the indexes that registered positive development in consolidated communities did the same in non-consolidated communities as well. However, some indexes that improved in non-consolidated communities, such as the *Civic activism index* and *Electoral participation index*, have registered no change in consolidated communities. Moreover, some indexes did not change in non-consolidated communities, such as *LSG cooperation index* and *Index of LSGs communication and responsiveness to its residents*, but changed negatively in consolidated communities.

Disclaimer

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