



The background illustration is a colorful, stylized aerial view of a road construction site. In the upper left, a yellow road roller is paving a road, surrounded by orange traffic cones. A blue tractor is also visible nearby. The road curves through a green landscape with trees and bushes. In the lower left, a yellow front loader is dumping a load of blue material (likely gravel or concrete) onto a dirt path. A blue bridge with a metal railing spans a body of water in the lower right. The overall scene depicts infrastructure development in a rural or semi-rural area.

Report of the Social Audit Team in Vitia

Monitored project “Renovation and expansion of the road”
Project “Kongresi i Manastirit” – Second Phase

This report was prepared by the DEMOS project, implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Kosovo.

Disclaimer: The findings and conclusions expressed in this report do not necessarily represent the views of the European Union, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway.

DEMOS and the purpose of the project

The Decentralisation and Municipal Support (DEMOS) Project supports the 38 municipalities of the Republic of Kosovo in achieving more democratic local governance and better municipal management. The DEMOS also supports the Government of Kosovo in the development of policies, which are more conducive to rule-based financing of municipalities.

DEMOS is currently in its third phase (2022-2025) building on the successes achieved since the start of the project in 2014. The project is co-financed by the European Union in Kosovo, Switzerland, Sweden, and Norway and is implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Kosovo.

DEMOS's support for the municipalities of Kosovo is within the framework of the Performance Grant as one of the tools that guarantees support for municipalities with good performance.

Municipal performance is assessed through the Municipal Performance Management System (MPMS) of the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA).

With the aim of increasing performance in certain indicators, DEMOS also provides technical assistance to municipalities. A special focus of the project is also support for the central government where DEMOS is focused on providing assistance in building policies for a more favorable framework for decentralized governance.

Under the first component of the project, DEMOS III aims to open the data for wider public review of municipal performance and initiate social audits to monitor the impact of Municipal Performance Grant (MPG) projects on citizens. The purpose of this intervention is to involve civil society organizations and citizens in conducting social audits to monitor Municipal Performance Grant (MPG) projects implemented by municipalities.

To mitigate the reliability risks of Performance Grant funds, and at the same time to monitor the impact of projects on citizens, DEMOS has established social audits within the Municipal Performance Grant (in the system). Social audits will also include performance monitoring and project planning processes at the municipal level. The project will support the development of sampling tools and methodologies, including training to successfully conduct such social audits. The aforementioned social audits will be financed by part of the Municipal Performance Grant funds and will be developed by civil society organizations. For this, DEMOS will partner with key CSOs.

BIRN Kosovo is an independent, non-governmental organisation, whose goals are providing information to the citizens and contributing to the democratic transition process in the country, promoting accountability, rule of law and policy reform. BIRN Kosovo in particular aims to serve as a watchdog of public institutions, monitoring the work of governing and public institutions. In addition, through the production of quality and impartial TV debates and training of youth on argumentation and debating skills, BIRN aims to promote and encourage a culture of debate in Kosovo. BIRN's vision is to secure its position as the premier Kosovo's investigative journalism organisation, addressing the need for objective, quality, sustainable reporting on the country's many challenges. BIRN Kosova has been engaged by DEMOS to facilitate the Social Audit process in the five selected projects in Drenas, Suhareka, Kaçanik, Hani i Elezit, and Vitia.

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Executive Summary

In 2022, the DEMOS project team implemented a capacity-building program for a group of civil society activists to enhance their capabilities to facilitate the Social Audit process in the community.

As a new concept in Kosovo, Social Auditing began to be implemented by DEMOS and Civil Society Organizations in 2022, and the first reports published during that year enabled concrete changes in the audited projects.

Who finances the Social Audit?

The Social Audit is a voluntary program that doesn't require financial compensation for its team members. However, teams can seek financial support from independent donors to cover expenses related to travel or visits.

In mid-2023, the BIRN team, trained by DEMOS, initiated the creation of five Social Audit teams across five different municipalities.

A group of 18 citizens with different occupations from the city of Viti were involved in the Social Audit process for the project "Renovation and expansion of the 'Kongresi i Manastirit' road".

The Social Audit Team

Social Audit teams are citizen groups that come together with the aim to enhance transparency and accountability in public institutions. These volunteer groups analyze processes with the goal of providing recommendations and fostering greater citizen involvement in decision-making.

Following the prescribed methodology, our group initiated the analysis and monitoring of the road renovation and expansion project, as well as citizen discussions and involvement in municipal decision-making.

Based on the established methodology, the team has drawn the following conclusions:

- The project for road renovation, expansion, and building the square encountered design issues, leading to modifications during its course.
- Unplanned works were avoided and were undertaken in order to complete the project.
- The road renovation and expansion project, initiated in response to citizen requests, aimed to address the needs of Vitia.
- No violations were found in the procurement process for selecting the project implementation company.
- The project was executed without strict adherence to the Dynamic Plan, resulting in delays.
- The investments fell short of fully satisfying the community's needs.
- Although in the final phase, some project works remain incomplete.
- The project was designed without adhering to accessibility standards for persons with disabilities.
- Within the park, there is a lack of benches and signage specifically designed for people with disabilities.
- Certain sidewalks are not accommodating for individuals with disabilities.
- The signaling system is poorly designed, with crosswalks leading to green areas instead of sidewalks in some places.
- The road and square were not deemed safe workplaces during project implementation.
- The expanded road lacks designated lanes for bicycles or electric scooters.
- The design company failed to identify zones and underground infrastructure, leading to an incident where the project affected a sewer pipe.
- The project did not have accurate geodetic data and did not have accurate cadastral measurements at its start.

What should a Social Audit team know?

Social Audit teams do not need to be strictly professional. Teams need civic will and courage and are recommended to have basic knowledge in:

- The functioning of the municipality;
- Access to public documents;
- The public consultation process, especially during budget and investment planning in the municipality;
- The public procurement process;

A specific emphasis was placed on assessing the transparency and public disclosure aspects of the project with respect to citizens. The team found that:

- The Municipality of Vitia did not organize a public discussion for the project in question.
- The municipality had published the contract signed between the municipality and the construction company.
- The municipality had not proactively published other documents, such as oversight reports or payment invoices, on the municipality's website.
- The executive project for road renovation and expansion was not available publicly on the municipality's website.
- The Social Audit team obtained access to the executive project only after submitting requests for public documents.
- The project announcement table on the municipality's website lacked information about the name and contact details of the project supervisor.
- The Municipality's website does not have a list of the names of municipal officers involved in project oversight. The team managed to identify the contract manager and obtain the necessary information for the project.



In addition to scrutinizing the planning and execution of the project, the Social Audit team in Vitia delved into the transparency of the municipality in its dealings with citizens. Notable findings include:

- The Municipality of Vitia demonstrates significant efforts to engage citizens in public meetings.
- Various platforms are utilized to encourage citizen participation in meetings and public discussions.
- Public discussions primarily revolve around infrastructure demands, often presented as individual requests.
- Citizens possess limited information about the outcomes of requests submitted in previous years.
- Documentation of public meetings is solely in the form of final reports for these meetings.

Methodology

This report presents data collected from interviews, requests for access to public documents, field visits, and discussion with community. In the beginning of May, a team from DEMOS and BIRN selected five projects across five municipalities in Kosovo, based on predetermined standards to be included in the Social Audit process.

Who establishes the Social Audit team?

Social Audit teams are established independently of institutions and can be formed by community representatives or other groups. They operate autonomously from the government and do not require approval from public institutions for their formation.

In 2022, the Municipal Performance Grant financed 57 projects across 14 municipalities. At the start of the evaluation, four municipalities were excluded from the selection as they were included in a similar Social Audit project the previous year. Field visits were conducted in the remaining 11 municipalities by BIRN to assess the situation and request information about the project stages. After receiving the report from the field, the DEMOS and BIRN team evaluated the projects based on these criteria:

- The status of the project (completed, over 50% of the works completed, or in the initial phase);
- Targeting and high or low impact of projects for marginalized groups such as women, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and non-majority communities;
- The nature of the project and the area of impact with priority in the fields of education, health, and the environment;
- The value of the grant allocated for the implementation of the capital project.

Based on these criteria, it was decided to audit the following projects: the construction of the “Isa Berisha” park in the municipality of Hani Elezit; the construction of the wastewater collector in the municipality of Drenas; the construction of the firefighters’ building in Kaçanik; the construction of the hiking trail and the Mushtisht - Guri i Matozit road and Topliqan - Gjinoc road in Suhareka; the renovation and expansion of the “Kongresi i Manastirit” road in the Municipality of Vitia.

Who established the Social Audit group in Vitia?

Using a predetermined methodology, BIRN created a list of representatives and professions that should be included in the Social Audit teams. The selection criteria require that the group shall include women and marginalized categories. It also aims that the group should also include a variety of professions and ages.

BIRN submitted to DEMOS the tentative list with professions. After coordination, BIRN contacted the citizens of Hani Elezit to ensure that the specified categories were included in the team.

Following the selection of the projects, DEMOS and BIRN received letters of support from the mayors of the five municipalities, marking the kick start of the Social Audit process for the project. The established Social Audit team used several techniques to collect data for this report.

They searched online for the municipality's public data, compiled a list of over 50 questions about the project, sought information from the municipality, sent requests for access to public documents, and analyzed the documents received from the Municipality. To document the findings, the team conducted field visits and held meetings with officials.

Who are the members of the Social Audit team?

Members of the Social Audit teams are community members who are not in conflict of interest with the project. Officers of the institution directly related to the project and the official oversight process of the project cannot be on the teams.

The data in the report were collected by the 18 members of the Social Audit team and the report was prepared with the assistance and support of BIRN. The report was made public after addressing the comments received from the Municipality of Vitia.

Team composition: 18 members



9 women or 50 %

- Pensioners
- Journalists
- Activists
- Economists
- Handikos/persons with disabilities
- Civil Society
- Representatives of non-majority communities
- Business owners
- Residents



9 men or 50%

Work map

Jun 2023

- Field visit
- Targeting and identifying profiles that will be part of the team
- Preparation of the list with the profiles of the members of the Social Audit team
- Selection of team members of the Social Audit team

Jul 2023

- Two-day training for Social Audit
- Create the group on the Viber communication platform
- Appointment of persons within the team for sending requests to the Municipality
- Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Municipality of Vitia
- Field visit of the team
- Looking for accessible materials on open platforms

August 2023

- Resubmission of applications for access to public documents
- Meetings with municipal officers to coordinate other activities
- Field visit to discuss collected data
- Online meetings with the group to discuss findings

September 2023

- Meeting with the contract manager
- Analyze the documents received by the municipality and prepare for the next meetings
- Analysis of materials from public consultations

October 2023

- Meeting with project management to discuss findings
- Team meeting to analyze received documents
- Recording of findings by the Social Audit team
- Division of duties for the team members in drafting the report
- Setting the structure and determining the points of writing the report
- Delineate the duties for writing the report

November 2023

- Drafting the report on the findings and recommendations of the Social Audit team in Vitia
- Editing the report
- Addressing comments and suggestions

December 2023

- Send the report to the municipality for validation
- Presentation of the report to municipal officials
- Implementation of the media campaign to promote the report

The environment in which the Social Audit process takes place

The Municipality of Vitia is among the average municipalities in Kosovo with 46,987 residents and a budget of 13,069,495 Euros. The municipality's budget is small, and the assistance from the Performance Grant project has a significant impact on the community.

Vitia is among the municipalities that benefited from the funds of the Municipal Performance Grant. The funds were allocated to invest in the project of renovating and expanding the road and building a square that initially planned to cover a stream flowing in that area. The project cost about 600,000 Euros and was a request from the citizens.

Municipal Performance Grant

The Municipal Performance Grant is a fund that rewards well-governed municipalities. In 2022, 14 municipalities benefited from this grant due to their good governance. The grant is financed by the EU, the Government of Switzerland, Sweden, and Norway. In 2022, municipalities received about 8 million Euros from the Municipal Performance Grant. The project is managed by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Kosovo.

During the summer, the creek was dry and emitted an unpleasant odor, and the area was not organized to manage the influx of people. The area was used for a market of artisanal products, but after the reassignment, the municipality has not yet decided where to place the huts that have been removed from that area.

The project, which was funded by the Municipal Performance Grant, included investments in roads, sidewalks, lighting, signage, greening, and signage. The Social Audit team assessed that the area needed investments in this direction because the public spaces and recreational areas in the municipality are not sufficient for the citizens.

Main findings

The Social Audit team in Vitia, after group discussions, managed to channel their findings into four main points. Based on the focus of engagement, the team found that the municipality faces challenges in the process of public consultations, in the process of project planning, and in the process of tendering and implementing them.

What is the impact of Social Auditing?

Social Auditing in the Municipality of Vitia influenced the improvement of the project. The municipality committed to creating access for people with disabilities.

As a result, the findings in this process were categorized into four chapters.

- Findings in the process of consultations with citizens
- Findings in the planning process
- Findings in the contracting phase
- Findings in contract implementation

Chapter I - Findings in the process of consultations with citizens

The Municipality of Vitia is home of approximately 46,000 residents. It conducted 9 meetings with various citizen groups in 2021 to collect information and gather investment needs from the community for the planning of the 2022 budget.

The Social Audit team sought to scrutinize the public consultation process in Vitia. In pursuit of this analysis, the team requested data from the municipality, including documentation that would validate the occurrence of this process in the Municipality of Vitia.

Absence of Meeting Records and Documentation

At the outset of the inquiry, the team received a response from the municipality, revealing that no minutes were recorded during public meetings with citizens. Without recorded meetings or comprehensive documents capturing the entirety of the discussions, the team was constrained to analyze only the final reports from public consultations. In these reports, it was observed that women's participation in meetings was notably low, reaching a maximum of 34% in the best-case scenario.

Low Participation in Public Meetings

Upon reviewing the public consultation report for 2021, the team observed that the municipality made efforts to include specific categories in the discussions. To engage non-majority communities, a separate meeting was conducted. However, data revealed that only 4 members from non-majority communities participated, and their requests were limited, focusing on issues like drinking water and the employment of two citizens in city cleaning.

Further analysis of various meetings indicated that requests from citizen groups were generally broad and lacked specificity. For instance, in meetings with teachers, only one request was submitted, related to "continuing engagement in education development."

During a meeting with BIRN representatives, the project facilitators, the team discussed methodologies used in other audited municipalities. It was emphasized that the Municipality of Vitia should adopt procedures for documenting public meetings similar to those implemented in Suhareka, Han i Elezit, Kaçanik, and Drenas.

Individualization of Citizens' Requests

The team found, during their analysis, that the municipality did not present the complete content of meetings in public consultation reports. Some citizens' requests were summarized in less than one line without any justification for their importance.

Poor Performance of Public Meeting Moderators

Some citizens who participated in public discussions were also part of the Social Audit team. Members of the Social Audit group, some of whom participated in public discussion meetings, noted a lack of sufficient information provided by municipal officers at the beginning of meetings regarding the outcomes of requests submitted in the previous year. This absence of information led to the repetition or non-submission of requests, eroding trust in the process.

The Role of Moderators in Public Discussions

Moderators play a crucial role in public discussions. Moderators should be more proactive, encouraging citizen involvement in discussions about municipal projects and budgets. They should stimulate debate and draw out ideas and proposals from participating citizens.

The Social Audit team concluded that the moderators of public discussion meetings are unable to provoke debates and pose questions about the community's needs. Especially in rural areas, moderators should be proactive and provoke the community if certain investments are needed.



Lack of Public Discussion for the Investment Project

During their work, the Social Audit team sought information on whether the conceptual project “Renovation and Expansion of the ‘Kongresi i Manastirit’ road” had been discussed with the residents. The municipality had not organized a meeting with the citizens where the project would be presented and the citizens’ comments on the project would be received. The team discussed the experiences of the municipalities of Hani Elezit and Suhareka, where residents were involved in the project design phase. They highlighted models where it is seen that the involvement of citizens has significantly improved the quality of project planning.

Lack of Public Documents for the Project

In the publicity of the project materials, the team found that there are some materials published about this project on the municipality’s website, but some important materials are missing. It was found that the contract signed between the Municipality and the construction company was published. Also, annex contracts and the reasons for the addition of works have been published.

The team also found that the municipality had not proactively published other documents, such as supervision reports or payment invoices, which are not public on the municipality’s website.

An important material for citizens is also the initial project. The Social Audit Group found that this document is not on the municipality’s website, and only after a request for access to public documents was a printed copy of the project given to the team.

Lack of Information about the Supervisor

The team also addressed other elements of accountability. An important element that the team identified is the fact that the citizens of the area did not know who the project supervisor was. The supervisor is an important officer to whom any problem and irregularity in certain projects can be reported. The team found that in the project announcement table, the municipality had not notified the citizens about the name of the project supervisor and his contacts.

Contract Supervisor

The contract supervisor is a person or company engaged by the municipality. He is responsible for overseeing each phase of contract implementation. The supervisor prepares reports for each phase.

After requesting access to public documents, the team was able to identify the contract supervisor. Engaging in discussions with the supervisor proved beneficial for the team in gaining a better understanding of the project implementation process.

Chapter II - Findings in the Planning Process

During the work process, the Social Audit team scrutinized documents provided by the Municipality of Vitia related to the planning phase. The team found that the design of the project was carried out in the Municipality of Vitia. The team identified planning errors and miscalculations of materials, causing issues in the contract implementation process and project completion.

Social Impact of the Project

In discussions and after field visits, the Social Audit team assessed the project's impact on citizens. The group identified several problems hindering the area's proper functionality.

The team found that the design of the road on both sides and leaving a promenade in the middle did not provide a sustainable solution for citizens. The area cannot be used for staying due to vehicle traffic that emits pollution, and the spaces were deemed antisocial.

Design Outside Standards for Disabled People

The Social Audit team found that the project design is unfriendly to disabled individuals. The designed seats are not marked and designated for people with disabilities. Seats were not marked for disabled use and were inconveniently placed, hindering citizen movement. Additionally, there was no design or marking for blind individuals. Wheelchair users faced accessibility challenges due to high sidewalks, and there was no designated parking for disabled people in the area. There is no parking lot designed for disabled people in the area.

Design - Obstacle to Movement

The team found that investments in the square posed challenges for the movement of baby strollers. Plastic traffic delineators were placed in the square, between seats and trees, hindering parents with strollers and disabled individuals from moving freely. Their placement in the middle of the square prevents movement for parents with strollers or individuals with disabilities, as the remaining space in the square is either occupied by seats or trees.

The pedestrian crosswalk is not set up according to standards and is not user-friendly. Although the project intended to have sidewalks on both sides of the road, field visits by the team revealed that one side of the road entirely lacks a sidewalk. The contract manager explained that constructing a sidewalk on the undeveloped side would require expropriating private property, preventing its realization.



Lack of Irrigation System Design

The area, filled with trees, lacked an underground irrigation system, necessitating traditional irrigation methods to maintain greenery. As a result, the greenery in the area will have to be maintained with traditional irrigation systems.

Errors in Signalization Design

During the field visit, the team found that in some areas, signage and directional signs are not up to standards and criteria. Besides the fact that the area lacks signage and access for people with disabilities, the team found that the placement of crosswalks has disoriented the citizens. This is because they have to step on a green area if they cross the crosswalks placed on the road. During the field visit, the team noted that the road, although it is of the new model, does not guarantee access and dedicated lanes for the movement of bicycles and electric scooters.

Incorrect Calculations in Design

The design company had not identified the zones and underground infrastructure. As a result, during the implementation of the project, a sewer pipe was also affected. The project did not have accurate geodetic data and did not have accurate cadastral measurements at its start. The lack of planning for the parts that needed to be demolished, according to the contract manager, obliged the Municipality of Vitia to sign an additional contract and simultaneously make changes to the base contract.

Chapter III - Findings in the Contracting Phase

The Social Audit team analyzed the contracting process of the project. They found that the process was smooth and did not receive any complaints to the contracting authorities. However, the team found that the Municipality of Vitia was obliged to sign a contract for additional work on this project due to inadequate planning of the works in the project. The Municipality of Vitia signed the contract worth 569,724 Euros with the Group of Economic Operators “Berisha Company SHA.; Rahovica Commerce SHPK.; Haxha Kom SHPK” for the implementation of the project “Renovation, asphalt laying and expansion of the route and sidewalk on the ‘Kongresi i Manastirit’ road Vitia - Phase II.” The design of this road was done by an officer of the Municipality of Vitia, Xhelal Musa.

The Municipality of Vitia had announced the tender for the renovation and expansion project of the “Kongresi i Manastirit” road on August 12, 2022, in which 6 companies or groups of economic operators (consortia) had bid.

The consortium composed of “Berisha Company, Rahovica Commerce, Haxha Kom” was recommended for the contract. The value of their bid was 569,724 Euros, or the lowest price offered.

All other economic operators and consortia that had submitted bids in this tender, the Municipality of Vitia had eliminated from the competition for non-compliance with the requirements of the tender dossier.

The consortium “Pro & Co Group & Engineering” was eliminated from the competition on the grounds that they did not have a certified person for safety at work and did not complete some items in the bid. Four other bidders: “Hidroing 2Sh”, “Art Projekt”, Global Golding” and “Nika Pro-Ing” were eliminated from the competition on the grounds that they did not make the tender insurance, or did not offer engineers and equipment according to the request in the tender dossier.

None of the economic operators who were eliminated from the competition had submitted a Request for Review to the Municipality or a complaint to the Procurement Review Body. The lack of complaints had paved the way for the Municipality of Vitia to sign the contract with the consortium recommended for the contract. The contract was signed on September 29, 2022.

Need for an Annex-Contract

Due to the improper calculation of obligations, the municipality had to sign an annex-contract. This annex-contract has a value of 69,880 Euros and is signed with the same company that won the base contract. This annex contract primarily covered demolitions necessary to clear the way for project implementation. In addition to demolitions, supply of moulds for concreting the walls of the closed channel were also provided, which had a value of 26,325 Euros.

Chapter IV - Findings in Contract Implementation

The main findings identified by the team are in the implementation phase of the project. In this phase, the team found serious problems, which were created due to poor planning and errors in the calculation of bill of quantities.

The Social Audit Group discovered that the municipality's project faced implementation challenges on the ground due to design errors. From the project's commencement, shortcomings in the planned works' design were evident. The group found that the Municipality of Vitia introduced two types of changes to the project, totaling half a million Euros: modifications within the contract and the signing of an additional work contract that was not initially planned.

One of the initial findings revealed that the project designer miscalculated the quantities of materials required. The group analyzed documents, finding that the project manager, Florim Ramaj, sought approval from the mayor for changes. In the letter dated November 15, 2022, Ramaj acknowledged that "some errors in the bill of quantities (items that are not foreseen) and geodetic measurements have been noted".

He had requested the mayor's approval for the correction of the bill of quantity, as "some works do not need to be implemented and some additional works which are necessary to be implemented for the completion of this phase of the project".

The Mayor of the Municipality of Vitia, Sokol Haliti, had approved the requested changes. The Social Audit Group found that initially changes were made within the contract, but which did not exceed the initial contract value of 569,724 Euros.

For instance, the contracted quantity for "sidewalk filling with gravel, crushed stone 0-140mm of 60MN/m², t30" was 93 m³ at 22 Euros per m³. The price for one m³ of this gravel was contracted for 22 Euros. Following the review, 1,286m² were added, so an increase of about 1200%. The planned expenditure for only for this item was 30,349 thousand Euros.

The team identified items where the value of planned works was reduced. For instance, the placement of 640 meters of edging was originally planned, but only 335 meters were realized. Additionally, the municipality initially intended to coat 1,860 m² of asphalt with emulsion at 0.65 Euros per m², but this contracted coating was ultimately not implemented.

Technical Acceptance Commission

The Technical Acceptance Commission, a professional team of the municipality, inspects the works at the end of the project. Based on the commission's report, the works are accepted and payments are made.

In total, following the correction of the contract, there were 23 items where less work was completed than initially contracted. Conversely, only 5 work items saw more work done than initially contracted. However, these costed substantially more. Importantly, these changes did not impact the total contract value.

In addition, the Municipality of Vitia was obligated to sign an annex contract with the same company, amounting to 69,880 Euros. This annex contract primarily covered demolitions necessary to clear the way for project implementation. In addition to demolitions, supply of moulds for concreting the walls of the closed channel were also provided, which had a value of 26,325 Euros.

The original contract specified laying 6 cm thick AB11 asphalt at 10 Euros per m². However, the annex contract planned for 7 cm thick AB16 asphalt at 16 Euros per m².

Additional works

Concrete works - 10,480 €

Asphalt works - 20,416 €

Cube works - 1,170 €

Side rail works - 1,596 €

Carving works - 26,325 €

Metal works - 2,158 €

Total: 62.145 €

Site safety

One issue that the Social Audit team has paid attention to is workplace safety. The Social Audit Group found that the measures taken to secure the workplace are outside the standards of safety and health at work.

The area where channels up to 3 meters have been opened was surrounded by a plastic tape, which does not provide any protection. The area in some cases had landslide and was not safe for passers-by.

In the photos provided from the place where the works were carried out, workers were also seen working in the area without protective equipment and without adhering to safety procedures at work.



Conclusions/Recommendations

Following the Social Audit team's analysis at the project's completion, several conclusions have been drawn:

- As a direct outcome of the Social Audit team's efforts, the municipality has pledged to undertake measures to adapt spaces for people with disabilities.
- The Municipality, in response to the Social Audit team's findings, has taken steps to replace the damaged cubes in the project.
- The municipality has committed to fulfilling the obligations outlined in the project for tree planting.
- There is a need for the municipality to address the issue of kiosks/huts where some small businesses operated, which were previously located in the area now occupied by the square.

What happens with the recommendations?

The recommendations of the Social Audit groups serve to improve governance. The recommendations will be used to improve future projects and to improve the current project.

The team concluded that the Municipality was willing and ready to cooperate with the team and address the raised issues. Recommendations for citizen involvement:

- The Municipality should continue the practice of calling special groups of citizens to public consultations but should increase participation in them.
- For important projects, the Municipality should hold consultative meetings with the community to present the projects.
- The Municipality should review the procedures for documenting public meetings and ensure that the data collected from citizens are written in minutes and stored in archives.
- To implement a citizen oversight process, the municipality is recommended to publish more documents about projects, including the construction project.
- The Municipality is recommended to also publish other documents produced during the monitoring of projects, such as supervisor reports or technical acceptance reports.
- The Municipality is recommended to put the name of the contract supervisor or the address where citizens can send information on the announcement tables.

- The Municipality is recommended to publish a list of people involved in the monitoring of municipal projects on its page.
- In the process of meetings and consultations with citizens, the Municipality is recommended to change the way meetings are organized. It should focus on providing more information about what has happened with the requested projects from the start.
- The team recommends that with special programs the Municipality should train the moderators of public consultation meetings to develop their capacities for provoking debate, promoting topics, and bringing out proposals for new projects in the community.
- The Municipality is recommended to start using online platforms in order to include as many citizens as possible in public meetings.

Recommendations for the project planning process:

- The Municipality is recommended to conduct an internal audit to analyze the bottlenecks and problems in the planning process, which led to additional works and unplanned work.
- The Municipality should ensure that geodetic measurements and terrain measurements are made before starting project planning.
- The Municipality should ensure that in future projects it designs access for people with disabilities.
- The Municipality is recommended to provide spaces and signage for people with disabilities in future projects.
- In the planning of large projects, the municipality is recommended to plan the implementation of all works without the need for additional investment.
- The Municipality should conduct preliminary studies on the condition of the land before deciding on investments in order to avoid disruptions to other projects.
- In the planning of works, sufficient funds should be allocated to implement the Law on Safety and Health at Work.
- The project's time planning should be better, in order to guarantee timely implementation of projects.

Recommendations for the project monitoring process:

- The monitoring of the work process should be more active and prevent the possibility of destruction or various damages.
- Supervisors should record every case when the company does not respect safety and health at work rules.
- The contract manager should make a record after each visit and meeting with the contractor.
- The Municipality should provide more clarifications about errors in the project bill of quantities.

The Social Audit team has discussed and concluded that the project needs new investments and interventions.

Recommendations for new investments in the project:

- Intervene and ensure access for people with disabilities.
- Install signage for people with disabilities.
- Remodel the seats and adapt spaces for use by people with disabilities.
- Ensure that incorrect signage is removed and placed in the right places.
- Provide an irrigation system in green areas.
- Provide parking around the park for people with disabilities.

Letter from the Mayor of the Municipality of Vitia

I extend my gratitude for your collaboration and commendable work with the municipal institutions of Vitia.

Throughout this period, your high level of professionalism and dedication during the analysis of the project implemented by the Municipality of Vitia has been evident, proving essential for our citizens.

Be assured that we will incorporate all your observations and suggestions in our future endeavors. The engagement of various stakeholders from civil society, alongside citizens and my colleagues, will serve as valuable experience for the execution of upcoming projects that aim to benefit all residents of the Municipality of Vitia.

The Municipality of Vitia is eager to foster close cooperation with all interest groups in the future and to maintain transparency for the collective welfare.

Sincerely,

*Sokol Haliti
Mayor of the Municipality of Vitia*



Letter from the Social Audit Team in the Municipality of Vitia

Active citizenship is not a new concept for some members of the team in Vitia. However, it's important to acknowledge that the Social Audit initiative signifies a higher level of civic engagement in overseeing projects funded by public resources, often combined with grants from both local and international governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Social Audit team's comprehensive approach to understanding the entire process is commendable, having them delved beyond the basics to explore the full spectrum of the process. This includes selecting a specific project for funding, assessing its rationale, tender procedures, the selection of an economic operator, quality control of the work, and tracking the dynamic plan, among other things.

During training sessions and meetings with representatives from DEMOS and BIRN, we have become more knowledgeable about our rights as citizens and the methods to access public documents. Furthermore, we have learned how to read, analyze, and dissect contracts between institutions and economic operators.

We recognize that such civic engagement demands the will and commitment of each of us to overcome challenges that arise along the way. The positive spirit within the Vitia team and the readiness to contribute have bolstered our confidence that collectively, we can achieve significant outcomes for society.

Therefore, we are convinced that Social Audit will foster greater and more direct citizen participation in the decision-making process, as well as enhance transparency and accountability. Moreover, it will contribute to establishing a standard or mindset for responsible conduct by public institutions in their operations.



Social Audit Team in Vitia

No.	Name and number	Occupation/Function
1	Albulena Selmani	Activist/deals with projects for people with special needs
2	Emine Drainca	Handikos/person with disabilities
3	Sadie Hajdari	Handikos
4	Xhevat Haliti	Pensioner
5	Rifat Aniqi	Representative of Roma community
6	Nurije Bajrami	NGO 'Women of Goshica'
7	Merrushe Maliqi	NGO 'Women of Goshica'
8	Fatime Maliqi	NGO 'Women of Goshica'
9	Hyrije Shabani	Small business/artisan
10	Sabrije Ismajli	Small business/artisan
11	Sabri Avdiu	Business owner
12	Tefik Salihu	Journalist
13	Donjetë Sadiku	Economist/Youth Center
14	Irfan Maliqi	Journalist
15	Valmir Sallahu	Qendra Rinore
16	Florim Brahimi	History major/Activist
17	Kadri Aliu	City Council
18	Afërdita Imeri	NGO 'March 8'



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