



REPORT OF THE SOCIAL AUDIT TEAM IN LIPJAN/LIPLJANE

MONITORED PROJECTS

"Construction of the Sports Hall at 'Ismail Luma' School"
"Construction of the Kindergarten in Rufc i Ri - Phase Two"





This report has been developed by the DEMOS project, implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Kosovo.

Disclaimer: The findings and conclusions expressed in this Report do not necessarily represent the positions of the European Union, Switzerland or Sweden.

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December 2024



DEMOS

Decentralisation
and Municipal
Support

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.

The project is co-funded by the European Union in Kosovo, the Swiss Government, and the Swedish Government. DEMOS is implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Kosovo.

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

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 DEMOS project has supported the establishment and development of activities that engage citizens in decision-making processes, including Social Audit Teams, which have overseen the implementation of projects funded by the Municipal Performance Grant.



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 Kosovo, in partnership with Democracy Plus, has been engaged by DEMOS to facilitate the Social Audit in 11 selected projects across six municipalities: Gjakovë/Đakovica, Pejë/Peć, Klinë/Klina, Malishevë/Mališevo, Lipjan/Lipljane and Obiliq/Obilić.



Democracy Plus (D+) is an independent and non-profit organization founded in March 2016. D+ is committed to building a democratic society by increasing citizen participation in political processes, increasing accountability and influencing decision-making processes. D+ strives to integrate information technology in all their efforts, this to promote the use of the Internet, which has an important role in the democratization of a society. D+ aims to

contribute to the creation of good practices for good governance by public institutions at central and local level, strengthening the rule of law, advancing political parties, and supporting free and fair electoral processes. D+ undertakes initiatives aimed at bringing decision-makers closer to the citizens through policy research, facilitation of dialogue or communication and public education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	DEMOS and the purpose of the project
7	Executive Summary
8	General Findings
9	Specific Findings in the Project “Construction of the Sports Hall at Ismail Luma School”
9	Specific Findings in the Project “Construction of the Kindergarten in Rufc i Ri – Phase II”
10	The environment in which the Social Audit process takes place
11	Chapter 1 - Common Findings in Both Projects
11	Findings in the process of consultations with citizens
12	Projects as a Community Need
12	Lack of Project Discussion with the Community
13	Lack of Transparency in Publishing Investment Projects and Accompanying Documents
14	Chapter 2 - Specific Findings in the Project “Construction of the Sports Hall at Ismail Luma School”
14	Delays and Contract Termination
15	Discussion on Extending the Dynamic Plan
15	Risk in the Unfinished Construction
16	Errors in Project Planning
16	Physical Distance Between the Hall and the School
16	Lack of Changing Room
17	Lack of Equipment Room
17	Lack of Dedicated Sanitation Facilities
17	Heating Capacity Issue
17	Variety of Sports Activities
17	Lack of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities
18	Chapter 3 - Specific Findings in the Project “Construction of the Kindergarten in Rufc i Ri”
18	Change of Position from the Conceptual Project
18	Contracts for Additional Works
19	Lack of Fencing in the Kindergarten Courtyard
19	Unsuitable Playground for Kindergarten Children
19	Interventions in Kindergarten’s Interior Spaces
20	Conclusions / Recommendations
22	Methodology
23	Who Established the Social Audit Group?
23	How Were the Data Collected?
23	Data validation
23	Team composition
24	Social Audit Group Activities
25	Social Audit Team in Lipjan/Lipljane
27	Letter from the Mayor of the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane
28	Letter from the Social Audit Team in the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A team of civil society activists, supported by the training program of the DEMOS Project, initiated a pilot initiative for citizen engagement in overseeing the implementation of public projects. These citizen groups were named “Social Audit Teams.”

As a new concept in Kosovo, Social Auditing began to be implemented by DEMOS and civil society organizations in 2022, continuing into 2023 and 2024. With the support of DEMOS, two Social Audit Groups were established, involving around 300 active citizens in these processes. Trained members of the Social Audit Teams became activists and provided over 100 specific recommendations to local governments aimed at improving municipal operations.

During 2024, BIRN and D+ with the support of DEMOS helped establish 11 Social Audit teams in six municipalities, Gjakovë/Đakovica, Pejë/Peć, Klinë/Klina, Malishevë/Mališevo, Lipjan/Lipljane and Obiliq/Obilić.

The program received the support of local governments, with six mayors signing memorandums of understanding with the

organizations to facilitate the Social Audit process. The Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane is among the beneficiaries of funds from the Municipal Performance Grant.

In July, Democracy Plus (D+) began research to identify active citizens from this municipality to be involved in the Social Audit process.

After consultations with the community, interest groups, and civil society, D+ in consultation with the DEMOS Project recommended over 20 citizens to become part of the Social Audit Team.

Without expressing interest, citizens were invited to the one-day training program, during which they were empowered to carry out the Social Audit process. During another daily training session in the Social Audit process, the team was trained to read documents.

In accordance with the methodology developed by DEMOS and adapted by BIRN, the group of citizens from Lipjan/Lipljane established the “Social Audit Team.” They were tasked with analyzing and monitoring two projects, “Construction of the sports hall at Ismail Luma School” and “Construction of the Kindergarten in Rufe i Ri - Phase Two”. The total value of the two projects is €232,508.22.

The two teams have worked separately on project monitoring, however, after completion, they conducted joint consultations to identify

common and specific findings from the two audited projects.

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.

GENERAL FINDINGS:

🔍 The Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane is seriously committed to consulting the community in the budget drafting process.

🔍 The municipality holds regular public meetings and consultations with citizens.

🔍 However, the inclusion of women in the budget drafting process remains low.

🔍 Both audited projects are of great importance to the community of Lipjan/Lipljane.

🔍 The municipality has not organized specific meetings to present the projects to the communities.

🔍 The public procurement process was conducted without complaints from the economic operators.

🔍 The municipality awarded contracts based on the criterion of the lowest responsive price.

🔍 The municipality published the contracts for both projects on its website.

🔍 The municipality had not proactively published other documents, such as oversight reports or payment invoices, on the municipality's website.

🔍 Executive projects for both projects are also not publicly available on the municipality's website.

🔍 The municipality had published decisions for appointing managers for the two projects.



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.*

SPECIFIC FINDINGS IN THE PROJECT

“Construction of the Sports Hall at Ismail Luma School”

The construction project was halted after the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane terminated the contract with the winning economic operator.

After the work stopped, the construction site was not secured by the economic operator.

The project completely overlooked the standards for access for people with disabilities.

The project did not plan for a physical connection between the hall and the school.

It also did not include the construction of a changing room, equipment room, and separate sanitation facilities.

According to the bill of quantities, the school’s boiler does not have sufficient capacity to heat the hall.

SPECIFIC FINDINGS IN THE PROJECT

“Construction of the Kindergarten in Rufc i Ri – Phase II”

The constructed building differs in location from the initial project plan.

The project experienced delays due to tendering failures, causing both phases of the tender to go through re-tendering.

The Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane also signed two additional contracts for extra work in the two tender phases.

The courtyard of the kindergarten lacks physical separation from the “Migjeni” elementary school building.

The playground area was not completed, and the installed playground equipment is unsuitable for the kindergarten children.



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.

THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE SOCIAL AUDIT PROCESS TAKES PLACE

The Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane is among mid-size municipalities in Kosovo, with a population of 57,605 residents according to the 2011¹, Census and a budget of € 19,779,849.00². The municipality's budget for capital investments is small, making the assistance from the Performance Grant Project significantly impactful on the community.

Lipjan/Lipljane is among the municipalities that benefited from the Municipal Performance Grant funds. These funds were allocated to the construction project of the sports hall at "Ismail Luma" school and the construction of the kindergarten in Rufc i Ri. The construction project for the sports hall at "Ismail Luma" school was part of a procurement activity as Lot 1, along with the construction of the sports hall in Banullë village, for which €540,000.00 was allocated.

Constructing a sports hall for "Ismail Luma" elementary school was a significant need for its students. This school, with a high number of students, faced a lack of suitable space for sports activities and physical education, essential elements for children's well-being and growth.

The Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane also

signed a financial support agreement for the construction of the kindergarten in Rufc i Ri, a project in its second phase, with the Ministry of Local Government Administration and Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, represented by DEMOS. The estimated value for this project was €260,000.00, with:

- A total amount of €250,000.00 allocated from the DEMOS budget for this project
- A total amount of €10,000.00 from the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane's budget for this project
- Any amount exceeding this project cost to be financed by the municipality's budget.

The construction of the kindergarten in Rufc i Ri is of great importance for the community and new generations, creating opportunities for early education and care for the children in this region. This kindergarten will provide a safe and educational environment for children in Rufc i Ri and surrounding villages such as Ribar, Hallaq, and other villages in Lipjan/Lipljane. Kindergarten represents a significant investment in the community's future, helping families in the area as this facility offers day care for their children, facilitating parents' engagement in work or other activities.



1 Population in Regions and Cities: Kosovo Agency of Statistics. <https://ask.rks-gov.net/PopulationStats/PopulationByRegion> (last accessed on 28.10.2024).

2 Mid-term Budget Framework for the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane 2023 – 2025 <https://tinyurl.com/yj4p6uy7> (last accessed on 28.10.2024)

CHAPTER 1 - COMMON FINDINGS IN BOTH PROJECTS

During the Social Audit process in Lipjan/Lipljane, the team addressed a range of topics that were uncovered during the analysis of documents and field visits. The team identified problems in the citizen consultation phase, the planning process, the tendering phase, and the implementation of contracts.

Findings in the process of consultations with citizens

Citizens play an important role in the budget planning and development process of the municipality. This collaboration is realized through public meetings and consultations between the municipality and citizens. To analyze the level of citizen involvement in municipal decision-making, the Social Audit Team reviewed the documentation created during meetings and consultations in Lipjan/Lipljane over recent years.

The Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane had published on its website the announcement³ for public hearings regarding the Budget Planning for the years 2023 – 2025, scheduling nine (9) meetings: two (2) in the Assembly Hall and seven (7) others organized in elementary schools and youth centers in village areas of the town. In the public hearings for the Budget Planning 2023 – 2025 with citizens and other interested teams, there were 142 participants, of whom only 35 were women (25%). The municipality organized a separate meeting with women and women's associations, civil society organizations, youth associations, sports clubs, persons and associations of persons with disabilities, and farmers of the municipality.

Meeting minutes for the public hearings for the 2023 – 2025 budget were published on the municipality's website, but they were highly generalized, not specifying the concrete needs raised by citizens during the meetings. According to these minutes, citizens generally expressed their thoughts on the direction of budget investments, dominated by proposals for investments in infrastructure, education, and healthcare, but without providing specific details on the types of investments being discussed.

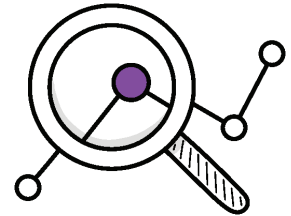
The Social Audit Team also analyzed the minutes published by the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane for the budget planning hearings for the years 2024 – 2026.

According to these minutes, the municipality held eight (8) meetings with citizens, organized in the Municipal Assembly Hall. The meetings were initially held with the Assembly members, then with women and women's associations, civil society organizations, persons with disabilities, sports clubs, village council presidents, and residents of Lipjan/Lipljane's villages.

In these meetings, 120 citizens participated, of whom 41 were women (34%). However, the Social Audit Team noted that the percentage of women's participation was higher due to the separate meeting with women and women's associations, which had 21 women, whereas only two (2) women participated out of a total of 49 attendees in the four (4) village meetings in Sllovi, Grackë e Vjetër, Ribar i Madh, and Baicë.

Meanwhile, based on the analysis of the budget hearing minutes for MTBF 2024 – 2026, the Social Audit Team noted that the municipality had held six (6) meetings, with a total of 105 participants, of whom 59 were women (56%).

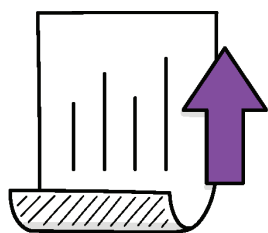
Based on the analysis of the budget hearing reports for the planning of the project budget for the years 2023 – 2025 and 2024 – 2026, it was not evident that these two projects were presented as requests from citizens participating in these meetings organized by the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane.



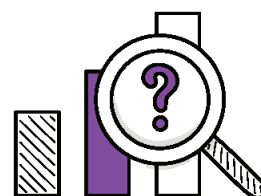
³ Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane. Announcement for public hearings. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3rhzk82> (last accessed on 28.10.2024).

Projects as a Community Need

The two funded projects are essential for the Lipjan/Lipljane community, although they were not identified as requests in budget hearings. Constructing a



sports hall for “Ismail Luma” elementary school was a significant need for its students. This school, with a high number of students, faced a lack of suitable space for sports activities and physical education, essential elements for children’s well-being and growth. Requests for the construction of the sports hall date back to 2018 when the chairman of the School Governing Council initially approached the Municipal Directorate of Education (MDE)⁴,) with a request for the sports hall, followed by the school principal requesting the inclusion of this project in the 2019 capital investment planning⁵. The construction of the kindergarten in Rufe i Ri is also of great importance to the community and new generations, providing opportunities for early education and care for the children of this region. This kindergarten will provide a safe and educational environment for children in Rufe i Ri and surrounding villages such as Ribar, Hallaq, and other villages in Lipjan/Lipljane. The kindergarten represents a significant investment in the community’s future, helping families in the area as this facility offers day care for their children, facilitating parents’ engagement in work or other activities.



Lack of Project Discussion with the Community

In addition to budget hearings, municipalities can develop consultations with the community during the project design phase to gather suggestions for the final project.

The team found that during the planning phase of projects, although the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane considers citizens’ needs for capital projects, it does not organize meetings with citizens to present these detailed investment projects, where citizens’ comments could be reflected in bill of quantities. Discussing projects with the benefiting citizens helps improve the quality of the projects and allows citizens to offer their comments in the early stages of investment planning.

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.

⁴ Request No. 182/2018 for the construction of a sports hall, submitted by the chairman of the board, Mr. Alban Arifi, on May 17, 2018.

⁵ Request No. 186/2018 for the construction of a sports hall, submitted by the director of Municipal Sports Facilities, Mr. Driton Sadiku, on May 23, 2018.

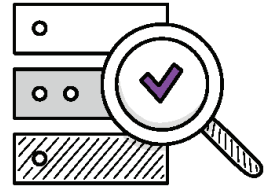
Lack of Transparency in Publishing Investment Projects and Accompanying Documents

The team found that the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane published the project contracts on the municipality's official website. Additionally, contracted prices, including bills of quantity, were attached to the contracts.

The municipality also attached decisions for appointing contract managers and supervisors from the Directorate of Infrastructure and the minutes of the tender openings, noting the total bid amounts of all companies participating in the tender. These documents were also made public on the electronic procurement site, e-procurement.

The team found that the detailed project was not public for the two investment projects.

Along with the project, documents produced by the contract manager, payment invoices, and evidence of project changes were missing.



The team also found that the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane, specifically the contract managers, did not proactively publish other documents, such as supervision reports or payment invoices, which should be uploaded to the e-procurement site, but these were obtained through a request for access to public documents.



Who finances the Social Audit?

Work in the Social Audit Teams is voluntary. All costs associated with the Social Audit are covered through a co-financing agreement between the Ministry of Local Government Administration and the DEMOS Project. The public investments monitored by citizens through the Social Audit this year were funded by the Municipal Performance Grant.

CHAPTER 2 - SPECIFIC FINDINGS IN THE PROJECT “CONSTRUCTION OF THE SPORTS HALL AT ISMAIL LUMA SCHOOL”

In the project for “Construction of the Sports Hall at Ismail Luma School,” the Social Audit Team identified specific issues related to this project. The team found that the construction work for the sports hall began on July 17, 2023, with the opening of the construction site.

The work encountered problems due to the presence of an electrical pole in the area where the hall was to be built, and the Kosovo Energy Distribution Services Company (KEDS) was delayed in granting approval and providing a technical solution for its relocation.

After the commencement of construction, protective fencing was only installed after the school principal insisted on the safety of students and staff. The lack of these measures at the start of the project posed a risk to everyone frequenting the school, as the construction area remained open and uncontrolled. The principal’s request for fencing ensured that the construction area was isolated from the rest of the school, preventing potential accidents and ensuring a safer environment for the children.

Based on the analysis of contract manager reports, the last site visit was conducted on November 20, 2023, where it was found that contracted works valued at €79,304.02 had been completed and paid for. The payment amount realized was €52,295.07 from the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA) and €12,352.45 from the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane.

Due to the works not being completed within the year, the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane lost the MLGA funds for this project, which belonged to the Municipal Performance Grant and could only be used during 2023.

Delays and Contract Termination

According to the special contract conditions, the completion of all works was set at 120 days after the contract came into effect, but no later than November 20, 2023. Thus, according to the contract signed with the economic operator, the project was supposed to be completed within 2023, but this did not happen as the work was halted in the second half of 2023. In the contract termination decision, the municipality stated that it held several meetings with the

economic operator to continue the works, but without success, it unilaterally terminated the contract on May 31, 2024. Based on the analysis of the decision, which the Social Audit Team obtained through a request for access to official documents, it stated that the contractor did not adhere to the contract for the removal of the concrete electric pole, which was part of the contract’s bill of quantities (item 13.5 in the Miscellaneous Works chapter).

“The scope includes the supply and installation of two 9-meter concrete electric poles, in compliance with standards for this type of activity. The price should account for the relocation of the existing network, the supply of necessary cables for the full functionality of the network (average distance between the two poles, up to 80 meters), excavation for pole placement, installation of the poles, concrete rings, gravel, and the concreting of the ring sections”.

Discussion on Extending the Dynamic Plan

In the meeting organized with the contract manager, the Social Audit Team was informed that the municipality and the economic operators' team had several meetings to extend the dynamic plan, but the economic operators' team did not agree, taking the matter to the competent court. According to the contract cancellation notice, although the removal of the pole was a contractual obligation of the

economic operator, the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane submitted a request to KEDS for the relocation of the said pole, where there were delays. Taking into account this delay from KEDS, the municipality accepted to extend the dynamic plan. Meanwhile, the economic operator claims that the delays were not their fault, and the exceeding of the contract's dynamic plan was the responsibility of the Municipality and KEDS.



Risk in the Unfinished Construction

After the termination of the contract, the sports hall building remains unfinished, with construction left halfway, including only the concrete foundation and block walls. Within and around the building, several exposed rebar elements that were not removed pose a safety hazard for students and the school community, as the building is very close to the school. The lack of fencing around the construction site, which is

still open and accessible to children, increases the risk of accidents, making it essential to implement safety measures to prevent children from accessing this dangerous area.

Despite the suspension of work, the structure is in good condition, but it is at risk of damage from autumn and winter rains.



Errors in Project Planning

The Social Audit Team analyzed the documentation provided by the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane related to the project and its technical specifications, including the project’s appearance, materials, and functionality. During the analysis of these materials, the team identified several issues associated with this project.

Initially, it was found that the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane lacks the capacity to design projects and therefore contracts external companies to design for the municipality. During discussions with school representatives, it was noted that there are some design defects that hinder the normal functioning of the hall.

Physical Distance Between the Hall and the School

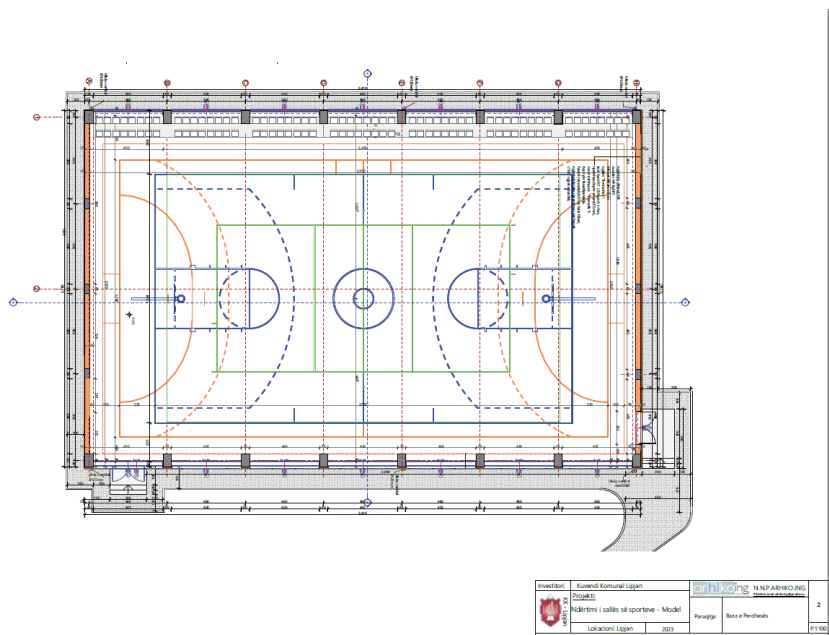
One of the main design defects identified by the Social Audit Team is that the sports hall is not physically connected to the school building, specifically to its corridor. This means students must go outside to enter the sports hall and return to the school after completing physical activities. Such a situation, especially during the winter season, poses a health risk for students

who may be exposed to cold and dampness after exercising or playing. This issue could have been easily resolved with a connecting corridor, as the distance between the buildings is very short and feasible.

Lack of Changing Room

The absence of a changing room in the sports hall project presents a significant problem for students who will not have a suitable place to change their sports clothes. Without a changing room, students will not be able to change comfortably and safely, creating issues for the development of sports activities. Moreover, the lack of space for storing their clothes and shoes

causes not only inconvenience but also hygiene problems, as they will have to carry them or place them somewhere they can get dirty. This aspect becomes even more concerning when students go outside in wet conditions, risking their shoes and clothes getting soiled and unsuitable for later use.



Lack of Equipment Room

The absence of a dedicated space for sports equipment in the sports hall poses a significant problem for teachers of physical education. Without an appropriate area to store and organize sports equipment such as basketballs, soccer balls, volleyballs, cones for exercises, weights, jump ropes, and mats, teachers face challenges in maintaining and storing these materials securely and orderly. This deficiency impacts the efficiency of teaching and equipment use, as scattered materials in other areas of the hall create an uncontrolled and unsafe environment for students.

Lack of Dedicated Sanitation Facilities

The lack of dedicated sanitation facilities, specifically a toilet and a water sink in the sports hall, is another shortcoming identified by the Social Audit Team. Although the sports hall is part of the school, it is physically separated from the main building, forcing students and teachers to go outside to use the toilet or other sanitary resources. This situation presents difficulties, especially during cold or rainy periods, when sweaty and tired students have to go outside for basic hygienic needs. Furthermore, the absence of a water sink within the hall makes it difficult for students to hydrate during or after physical activity, negatively impacting their comfort and health.

Heating Capacity Issue

The Social Audit Team also found that, according to the project's bill of quantities, the sports hall heating would be provided by a heating pump connected to the existing school boiler. Discussions with the school principal, who was part of the Social Audit Team, revealed that the school's boiler capacity is insufficient to heat the hall adequately, necessitating either an increase in boiler capacity or alternative heating provision.

Variety of Sports Activities

A positive aspect of the sports hall project, as identified by the Social Audit Team, is that it offers opportunities for a variety of sports, not just football, which is often more played by boys, but also includes activities that promote gender equality. The project includes space for basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and gymnastics, creating an inclusive environment where girls and boys can equally participate in sports suitable for everyone.

Lack of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

During the Social Audit process, the team found that the project entirely overlooked the standards for accessibility for people with disabilities. The entrance to the hall, according to the project, is designed with steps and lacks ramps to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities.

CHAPTER 3 - SPECIFIC FINDINGS IN THE PROJECT

“CONSTRUCTION OF THE KINDERGARTEN IN RUFC I RI”

The Social Audit Group analyzed the kindergarten construction project, evaluating all its aesthetic and functional aspects. During this review, they noted that the project had a contemporary concept with modern elements that reflected a commitment to a pleasant and stimulating environment for children. The chosen design was attractive and in line with current standards, while also creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Moreover, the group found that this project was highly functional, including spaces suited for various activities within the building.

The kindergarten has four equal classrooms equipped with sanitary facilities, sleeping and resting areas, a reception area for parents, a kitchen, administrative areas, and storage. In total, this kindergarten can accommodate 80 children from the area.

Change of Position from the Conceptual Project

In the conceptual project submitted by the company “Arhiko Ing,” the building was planned to be constructed in the northern part of the courtyard of the “Migjeni” elementary school, with access to the parcel from the local road “Ismet Asllani.” From the site visit, it was noted that the municipality had changed the position from the conceptual project, with the kindergarten built in the western part of the courtyard, parallel to “Ismet Asllani” road. This relocation resulted in the kindergarten facing the school, and both buildings sharing the same entrance, but there is still no fence separating the kindergarten area from the school.



Contracts for Additional Works

The Social Audit Team found that the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane had awarded two additional contracts during the kindergarten’s construction, increasing the project’s cost and completion time. In the first phase, the municipality awarded a contract for additional works for the purchase, transportation, cutting, and placement of rebar CBR – 400 500 MPA, totaling €12,595.

The need for a supplemental contract also arose in the second phase of the kindergarten’s construction, as the contracted quantity of “Alucobond” type façade was insufficient. This contract was signed with the same company in November 2023 for €23,437.

The Social Audit Team found that construction works for the kindergarten in Rufci i Ri began on September 16, 2023, with the kindergarten inauguration on May 29, 2024. To make the kindergarten functional, the Social Audit Team found that the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane had awarded two more contracts: initially in February 2024 for supplying the kindergarten with small materials, bedding such as sleeping bags, blankets, pillows, etc., valued at €9,495, and later in March for furnishing with various inventory and equipment, valued at €15,275.

Lack of Fencing in the Kindergarten Courtyard

During a visit to the kindergarten, the Social Audit Team found that the kindergarten had started operating with children, but there were several issues that needed to be addressed by the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane. Since the kindergarten is located in the courtyard of the “Migjeni” elementary school, the lack of physical separation between the schoolyard and the kindergarten’s courtyard poses a challenge for the safety and full functionality of the area. This situation creates obvious problems, especially in the school sports field area, where balls hit the kindergarten windows during games, risking the safety of the kindergarten children and damaging the building’s structure.



The kindergarten offers easy access for children and individuals with limited mobility as it is at ground level; however, access for visually



impaired individuals in the courtyard and entrance is not regulated, and the bathrooms inside the kindergarten are not suitable for wheelchair users.

Another unresolved issue identified by the Social Audit Team was the open space, without fencing, in the kindergarten courtyard that borders the local road “Ismet Asllani.” The open space, very close to the playground, posed a direct risk to children who started attending kindergarten in September, before all works in the area were completed. However, the installation of the courtyard fence had begun and was expected to be completed with the closure of works in the park area, as confirmed by the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane.

Unsuitable Playground for Kindergarten Children

The lack of an outdoor space dedicated exclusively to kindergarten children is a significant problem for educators and the children themselves, who conduct almost all their activities inside the kindergarten building. During field visits, the team noted that the municipality is finalizing the construction of a playground, but this project is not yet complete, and the space was being

used by school students, not the kindergarten children. The municipality has confirmed that the playground will be equipped with suitable toys for the kindergarten children. The team also observed that the area around the kindergarten and school is characterized by dirt, impacting on the hygiene of the environment for the children.

Interventions in Kindergarten’s Interior Spaces

The interior spaces of the kindergarten meet the necessary standards, providing ample space for the children, beds for sleeping, and a clean and well-maintained environment. However, the kindergarten needs a supply of educational toys and open shelves for toys, which should be

placed in the play corner, enriching the children’s educational experience. The indoor areas within the kindergarten offer access for people with disabilities.

CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Recommendations for citizen involvement:

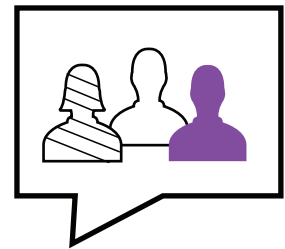
The municipality should organize early public consultations to discuss the project during the ideation phase. This helps in identifying the community's specific needs and concerns, thus avoiding potential problems from the start.

During meetings and consultations with citizens, the municipality is recommended to improve the organization of meetings. It should focus on providing more information about what has happened with the requested projects from the start.

The municipality should take steps to involve more women in budget hearings.

To ensure a process of citizen oversight, the municipality is recommended to increase transparency towards citizens by:

- Publishing more documents related to projects, including the full project and contract with economic operators.
- Publishing other documents produced during project supervision, such as supervisor reports or technical acceptance reports.
- Placing the name of the contract supervisor or the address where citizens can send information on notice boards.
- The municipality is recommended to bring major projects that affect the interests of citizens to public discussions.



Recommendations for the Construction of the Sports Hall at “Ismail Luma” School

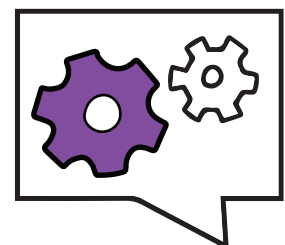
The municipality should announce a new tender to resume work so that the project can be completed as soon as possible.

The new project should include the construction of a suitable changing room where students can change their sports clothes comfortably.

The new project should include the construction of a room for sports equipment where teachers can store items such as balls, cones, weights, and ropes, making equipment management safer and more efficient.

The new project should include the construction of a physical connection between the hall and the school to avoid exposing students to cold weather and ensure safe access during winter.

The new project should include the construction of dedicated sanitary facilities with toilets and water sinks inside the sports hall.



Recommendations for the Construction of the Kindergarten in Rufo i Ri:

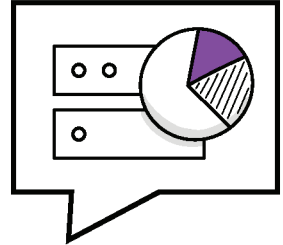
Fencing and Securing Outdoor Spaces: Install fencing to separate the kindergarten courtyard from the schoolyard and ensure a dedicated play area for kindergarten children.

Improving the Playground: Equip the playground with appropriate toys for young ages that meet safety and developmental standards.

Supplying Educational Materials: Provide didactic tools and open shelves inside the kindergarten to make toys and learning materials accessible to children.

Safe Installation of Air Conditioning and Window Adjustments: Relocate the air conditioning unit away from the sleeping area and raise the window handle to prevent children from opening it.

Installing Waste Bins: Add waste bins in suitable areas around the kindergarten to maintain a clean environment and teach children about environmental responsibilities.



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.

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.

METHODOLOGY

This report presents data collected from interviews, requests for access to public documents, field visits, and conversations with municipal officials, implementing companies, and the community. In July, DEMOS and the Ministry of Local Government Administration, based on pre-established standards, selected 20 projects in 12 municipalities of Kosovo to be included in the Social Audit process.

DEMOS and the Ministry conducted an open process to select organizations to facilitate the process. After evaluation by a professional jury, BIRN and D+ were selected to participate in the Social Audit of 11 projects in six municipalities.

Name of the Project	Municipality	Value	Project Phase at the Start of the Audit
Construction of the Klina Riverbed	Municipality of Klinë/Klina	746,046.00	Implementation
Construction of the Settler for Drinking Water Filtration	Municipality of Klinë/Klina	849,921.63	Implementation
LOT 5 - Construction and Maintenance of Paths in 'Karagaç' Park	Municipality of Pejë/Peć	234,500.00	Tendering/Implementation
LOT 6 - Construction of the Clinic in Trestenik Village	Municipality of Pejë/Peć	85,631.00	Tendering/Implementation
Expansion of the 'Martyrs of the Nation' Road - Western Entrance of the City	Gjakova/Đakovica Municipality	1,004,545.60	Implementation
Construction of Public Spaces in the City Center	Gjakova/Đakovica Municipality	1,187,211.72	Implementation
Construction, Treatment, and Cleaning of the Riverbed with Accompanying Structures - from the Bridge in the Center to the Transit in Malishevë	Municipality of Malisheva/Mališevo	1,487,459.74	Pre-tendering
Construction of the Kindergarten in Ruc i Ri - Phase II	Lipjan/Lipljane Municipality	247,958.69	Implementation
LOT 1 - Construction of the Sports Hall at 'Ismail Luma' School in Lipjan	Lipjan/Lipljane Municipality	248,226.45	Implementation
Construction of the Park and Sports Field in Bakshi Village	Municipality Obiliq/Obilić	164,614.17	Implementation
Construction of Parking at the Social Housing Units 'Hades' in Obiliq	Municipality Obiliq/Obilić	67,894.05	Implementation

Who Established the Social Audit Group?

The Social Audit Group is a team of citizens who voluntarily respond to the initiative to engage in overseeing projects.

To ensure broad community involvement, BIRN and D+ developed a list of professions and community representatives who would be invited to join the group.

The selection criteria aimed to prioritize the inclusion of marginalized social groups such as women, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and minority communities.

The selection criteria were based on the DEMOS methodology, which suggests which categories of citizens should be included in the process. This methodology aimed for a diverse group in terms of professions and ages to ensure inclusivity.

BIRN and D+ teams contacted over 150 citizens from 6 municipalities to invite them to join the groups. After preparing the preliminary list, BIRN shared the profiles of recommended members with DEMOS, and after receiving comments, 120 citizens from the targeted municipalities joined the groups.

In Lipjan, two groups were established with 27 citizens to work on project oversight.

How Were the Data Collected?

For compiling this report, the established Social Audit Team used several techniques to gather data.

They searched online for the municipality's public data, compiled a list of 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 of the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane.

The data in the report were collected by the 27 members of the two Social Audit Teams, and the report was drafted with the assistance and support of the D+ team. The report was made public after addressing the comments received from the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane.

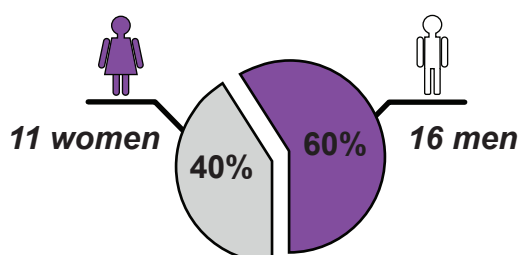
Data validation

The two Social Audit Groups in Lipjan/Lipljane worked separately to identify problems in their projects and draft the reports.

In their meetings, the groups agreed on systematic findings across both projects and specific findings for individual projects.

The teams also agreed on the recommendations presented in this report. After structuring the findings, the team met with the Deputy Mayor of the municipality and sought comments from the municipality on the report's findings. Before publication, the municipality reviewed the report, and their responses were incorporated into this report.

Team composition



Retirees; Students; Economists; Professors; Handikos; Activists; Residents.

SOCIAL AUDIT GROUP ACTIVITIES

July 2024	● 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
August 2024	● Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane ● Publishing promotional materials on social media ● Training for Social Auditing ● Create the group on the Viber communication platform ● Field visit of the team ● Social Audit Team's field visit to document findings ● Check the accessible materials on open platforms ● Appointment of persons within the team for sending requests to the Municipality ● Sending requests for access to public documents ● Receiving responses from the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane
September 2024	● Training on document reading ● Meeting with the Project Manager ● Team's communication with the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane ● Receiving additional responses from the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane ● Discussion and analysis of the documents received from the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane. ● Periodic meetings and field visits ● Analyzing materials
October 2024	● Team meeting to analyze all documents received from the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane ● Recording of findings by the Social Audit team
November 2024	● 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 ● Drafting recommendations by the team ● Drafting the report on findings and recommendations by the Social Audit Team ● Meeting with the Mayor of Lipjan/Lipljane and municipal representatives ● Editing the report ● Addressing comments and suggestions ● Send the report to the municipality for validation ● Presentation of the report to municipal officials
December 2024	● Implementation of the media campaign to promote the report ● Preparing implementation plans for the recommendations and Social Audit reports by municipalities

SOCIAL AUDIT TEAM IN LIPJAN/LIPLJANE

No.	Name and Surname	Profession
1	Kamer Podrimqaku	Chairman of the Local Neighborhood Council and Physical Education Teacher
2	Driton Sadiku	Principal of "Ismail Luma" School, Lipjan
3	Flakrim Zejnullahu	Professor of Architecture
4	Gazmend Osmani	"Ulpiana" Football Club
5	Xhylishahe Sadiku	Parents' Council of "Ismail Luma" School
6	Florim Budakova	Physical Education Teacher and Head of the "School Sports" Association at "Ismail Luma" School
7	Alush Bikliqi	Chairman of the Patients' Council in Lipjan
8	Afrim Mena	Handikos
9	Erdona Kadriolli	NGO "Youth Vision of Shala"
10	Agim Ademi	Journalist
11	Diart Salihu	Youth Representative
12	Art Krasniqi	NGO "YAGR"
13	Mimoza Zogaj	Parents' Council of "Ismail Luma" School
14	Ahmet Karameta	Pensioner
15	Melisa Sadiku	Students' Council of "Ismail Luma" School
16	Ganimete Osmani	Nursing teacher
17	Majlinda Krasniqi	Teacher
18	Besmire Aliu	NGO "In Time"
19	Besarta Troli	Psychologist
20	Leotrim Pajaziti	NGO "Youth Vision of Shala"
21	Besim Zeneli	Handikos
22	Bleriana Kadriolli	Student

23	Vlora Aliu	Instructional
24	Erdona Kadriolli	NGO "Youth Vision of Shala"
25	Muhamet Guci	Citizen
26	Besart Arifi	NGO VoREA
27	Agim Tasholli	Pensioner



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.

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.

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF LIPJAN/LIPLJANE

It is with great pleasure that I share this Social Audit report with you, a document reflecting the efforts of the audit teams and our commitment to transparency, accountability, and open governance. This process has provided an exceptional opportunity to analyze our work, identify strengths, and address areas where there is still room for improvement.

I would like to emphasize that for the third time, the Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane, in collaboration with the DEMOS program, has conducted a Social Audit. This cooperation has been and continues to be a crucial pillar in strengthening local governance and ensuring that the voice of citizens is always represented in our work. We are ready to continue this successful partnership in the future, turning it into a model for sustainable and inclusive development.

Our commitment to providing quality services, investing in long-term impact projects, and promoting equal development remains at the heart of every decision we make as an institution. This Social Audit has played a significant role in highlighting the results of our work and supporting the continuous improvement of our administration.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the team that conducted this Social Audit and for the continuous support from the DEMOS program and the D+ organization. Your assistance has been very important in establishing a solid foundation for transparency and the improvement of public services. The Municipality of Lipjan will continue to be a reliable and dedicated partner in meeting the needs and expectations of its citizens. Best regards, Imri Ahmeti Mayor of Municipality of Lipjan/Lipljane.

*Respectfully,
Imri Ahmeti
Mayor of Lipjan Municipality*



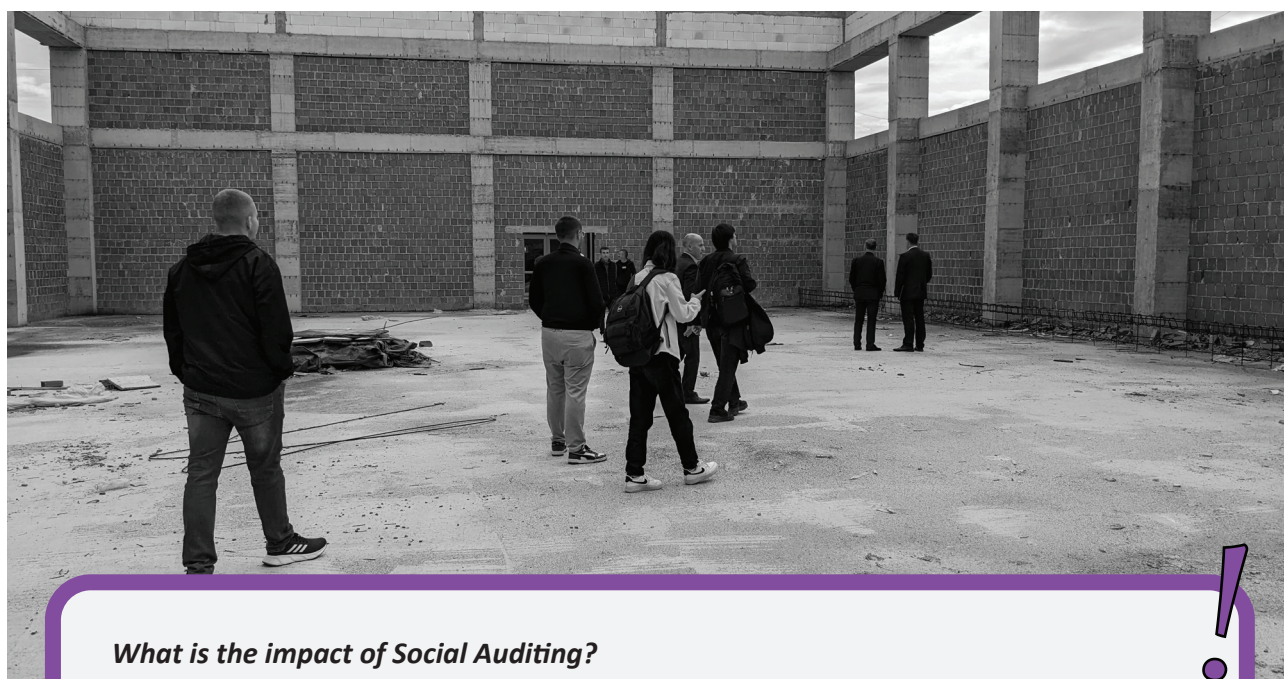
LETTER FROM THE SOCIAL AUDIT TEAM IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LIPJAN/LIPLJANE

For us as citizens, the Social Audit process has been a new approach that we had not practiced before. Through the training we attended and the steps we took together with the organization Demokraci Plus, we gained very relevant knowledge about this process. It also provided an exceptional experience for our citizen involvement in monitoring the projects that the municipality implements for us as citizens. What stands out to us is the engagement of our citizens, involving various profiles and professions to contribute in all possible dimensions. Furthermore, the methodology encourages citizens to be active in monitoring and simultaneously cooperate fully with municipal authorities to provide joint contributions in this regard.

Through this entire process, we have been able to identify issues that we as citizens believe can be improved and made more functional in the monitored projects, all of which have been addressed to municipal authorities. With this, we have managed to somewhat influence the growth of active citizenship in society and the increase of municipal transparency for these two projects.

As a Social Audit group, we highly value this approach or methodology for monitoring capital projects, as it increases citizen engagement, such as local councils, civil society, and all possible groups in society.

We hope that this approach will become a standard practice, firstly for Local Councils and also supported by civil society, to increase transparency and active citizenship in society.



What is the impact of Social Auditing?

Social Auditing in the Municipality of Lipjan influenced the improvement of the project oversight.



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