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Editor's notes

Welcome to the second issue of **dlgn news**! This issue is dedicated to the F2F meeting in Sarajevo that will take place in March. Since our last issue, a lot has happened in the preparation of the meeting. A total of 71 network members from 21 countries will be attending the meeting. Around 37% of the participants are from SDC CoOfs, 21% are from SDC HQ, 29% are SDC partners from the field and 13% are SDC partners at HQs.

The program of the meeting provides opportunities to discuss topics of interest, as well as for informal networking. Upon arrival, on Sunday 6th, a video training course will take place with all those participants that registered to do social reporting. From the 7th to the 9th the **dlgn** Learning Projects will be holding different discussion workshops. On Monday evening a joint dinner will take place at the cosy restaurant Pivnica HS, the dinner will include a cultural event organized by Pro Helvetia. This will be a great opportunity for all participants to network informally. The F2F will be combined with the annual conference and NEXPO of NALAS that will take place on the 10th and 11th of March. Also as announced beforehand, on Saturday 12th, interested participants will have the opportunity to choose from two tourist excursions: a two-hour city sightseeing or a trip to the historic city of Mostar. For more information regarding the F2F program, follow the link: http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Community_Activities/F2F_Sarajevo_2011

Logistics: The **dlgn** F2F will be held at the Hotel Europe, which is situated in the epicentre of Sarajevo, just a few steps away from the Main Street and the old city centre. Sarajevo is the capital and the largest city of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is surrounded by the Dinaric Alps and situated around the Miljacka River. It has a total of 297, 416 residents, in its four municipalities and an area of 141, 5 Km². The city is famous for its traditional religious diversity, with adherents of Islam, Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Judaism coexisting there for centuries. The official currency of BiH is the convertible Mark (BAM), which has an exchange rate of 1 CHF equal to 1, 5 BAM. For more information, refer to the Information Kit on the following link: http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Community_Activities/F2F_Sarajevo_2011

In this issue, we want to dedicate time to provide details about NALAS and the NEXPO, also the main results of the Learning Projects will be presented together with some additional information related to the preparation of the F2F. Finally, information about courses on **dlg** is provided.

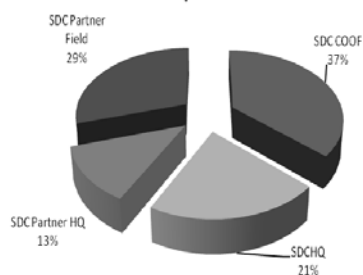
We hope that you enjoy this second issue and that it provides you with the information and links you are looking for.

Warm regards,

Kuno Schläfli,

Focal Point DLG, Western Balkans Division SDC

Participants in F2F



Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS)

Established in 2001, NALAS is a network of associations of local authorities of South East Europe (SEE). The Network brings together 15 Associations, which represent roughly 4000 local authorities, directly elected by more than 80 million citizens of this region. The NALAS Secretariat, based in Skopje, is responsible for the overall coordination and the implementation of the activities. NALAS is a year-long partner of SDC in the Balkans. It has developed important and well respected capacities for formulating policies in the interest of its members. NALAS has a knowledge centre, which is "topic oriented" and gathers, stores and disseminates documents and information on the member associations and local authorities in South East Europe in general and also focuses on topic-oriented material drawn from the NALAS task forces' productions. You can download and search through documents and products in the following link: <http://nalas.eu/knowledge/index.aspx>

NALAS NEXPO

On the 10th and 11th of March 2011, delegates from around 100 local governments from all over South East Europe (SEE) will gather in Sarajevo to present, share, discuss and network in the frame of the NALAS "NEXPO". This is the first time that such an event will take place in the region. Local governments of SEE will have the opportunity to exhibit about their achievements and challenges in more than 100 established fair booths. Together with the Expo, different conferences and workshops will take place. On Thursday 10th of March, all **dlgn** members are invited to participate in the opening session, where our Vice-Director will address the audience, together with the President of Bosni&Herzegovina, the Mayor of Sarajevo, and other authorities. In the afternoon, we can all participate and exchange with the mayors in different interesting workshops (see programme). Co-organized with SDC, a conference on social inclusion will take place on Friday March 11th, with a panel discussion that will look into answering the following question: "innovative communities open to all: which role for local governments?" In this conference, an overview of SDC's Western Balkans Portfolio will be presented together with a paper with focus on experiences from South East Europe. Workshops and conferences on issues such as e-governance, good governance, EU integration and sustainable tourism will be part of the agenda on Thursday and Friday. For more information regarding the NEXPO follow the link:

http://www.nexpo.nalas.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2&Itemid=20

On our way to Sarajevo – update on the Learning Projects (LP)

The F2F in Sarajevo will be the opportunity to reflect upon the results of the different Learning Projects that were working this past year on **dlg** issues. Workshops on each of the LPs will take place throughout the three days. In this newsletter, we are happy to present a short summary of each LP:

Sustainable Municipal Finances

Through this Learning Project, SDC wants to promote learning from international and own practice on how to best support local governments in order to improve their capacities and financial endowment which enhances their room for manoeuvring and action. The LP elaborated a concept paper on international practices regarding the subject. Based on this concept, eight case studies reflecting SDC practices were developed in Bolivia, Central America, Mozambique, Mali, Serbia, Albania, Madagascar and Burkina Faso. A process of peer revision of case studies took place once the case studies were finalised. This work concluded in the elaboration of synthesis of international practice and SDC experiences and was followed by an E-discussion on focused questions about the main findings of the synthesis paper. The workshops during the F2F will continue the discussion on the main results of the synthesis paper, so that participants can endorse the results and the synthesis paper is transformed into a LearnBook. For more information about this learning project please follow the link: http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Wiki_Workspace

Social Inclusion

The main purpose of this Learning Project is to develop an overview of successful and innovative SDC strategies promoting social inclusion in local governance processes and to compare this with the work “on the ground” of other donors. The joint discussion and analysis shall result in a synthesis of good practice and success factors. The LP developed four case studies in B&H, Bolivia, Niger and Bangladesh, and made a comparative analysis paper of donor approaches and implementation on the ground. During the F2F, a series of 3 workshops are expected to take place for joint discussion and analysis of experiences. The workshops will include a discussion of SDC practices at national level using as example the case of Bosnia & Herzegovina; a discussion of SDC practices at grassroots levels in the framework of the work done in Bangladesh and a final workshop that will elaborate on SDCs good practice combined with the necessary pre-requisites. For more information about this learning project, follow the link: http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Community_Activities/F2F_Sarajevo_2011

Local Governance Assessment (LGA)

The Learning Project is based on the initiative that started at the last F2F meeting in New Delhi in 2009 and has the main purpose of developing a roster of Local Governance Assessment tools that serve beneficiaries (i.e. local stakeholders), implementers and SDC to inform about governance results (successes and shortcomings) and to provide mutual learning and information for future action. It is also envisaged that the results of the assessment serve as a baseline on governance issues. The LP prepared five case studies from South Africa, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Nicaragua, Bangladesh and Afghanistan together with a synthesis paper, which will be presented and dis-

cussed during the F2F workshop. In a second workshop, a roster of selected LGA tools will be developed. This roster should meet the requirements and needs of the SDC practitioners. A reflection paper has been established which will help participants of the second workshop to compare LGA tools in depth and to jointly decide on priority needs and requirements regarding LGA tools and to learn on methodological, as well as, practical aspects of LGA. The inputs from the workshop will directly allow for finalizing and distributing the roster of relevant tools shortly after the F2F. Finally, it is expected that the practical implementation of selected tools from the roster takes place. In a third workshop, at the F2F meeting, the aspects of power and politics in local contexts when assessing governance will be reflected in depth. For more information about this learning project follow the link: http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Community_Activities/F2F_Sarajevo_2011

Election support

This Learning Project has the aim of reflecting about SDC's comparative advantages in supporting electoral processes and democratic practice in partner countries. The analysis will be centred on reflecting upon what has worked in the past and what should have been avoided in terms of: program design, policy dialogue and support strategies. Ideas will be gathered regarding how to act in a harmonized environment in order to construct efficient partnerships and minimize risks. The workshop will include the presentation of a synthesis paper elaborated by Swisspeace on experiences from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Mozambique, Bangladesh, India and Bosnia & Herzegovina. Two short presentations will focus on concrete experiences. For more information about this learning project, follow the link: http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Community_Activities/F2F_Sarajevo_2011

Study tour guidelines

The main purpose of this Learning Project is to provide a guideline for organizing and implementing study tours to Switzerland, while using the rich experiences made by previous organizers. The learning process that took place consisted of one SDC internal brainstorming workshop at headquarters, which resulted in the drafting of a guideline for consultation with all working group members. The guideline was revised and it will be presented during the F2F for discussion. Expectations, needs and experiences of representatives in COoFs and SDC partner organizations will be gathered, to be included for the final version of the guideline. For more information about this learning project, follow the link: http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community_Affairs/Community_Activities/F2F_Sarajevo_2011

Social Reporting

During the F2F, social reporting will be one of the main tools for sharing the information and the outcomes of the event. Some of you already signed up for the video course that will take place on Sunday 6th of March from 18:00 to 20:00 and the follow-up workshop on Friday 11th. Social reporting is a new approach in reporting about events. Its purpose is to overcome some of the well-known knowledge management shortcomings of normal reporting. With social reporting, reports are being produced during the event by different authors and are published immediately on the web. There are many different reporting formats like interviews, video testimonials, blog posts, pictures, audio recordings, power point presentations, including texts. Social reporting can be used whenever there is an interest by a broad audience to

get information about the event. For more information about social reporting at SDC follow the blog written by Adrian Gnägi at: <http://www.sdc-learningandnetworking-blog.admin.ch/2010/11/23/social-reporting-on-training-the-learning-sdc-mongolia-country-program/#more-1380>. Additional information on social reporting can be found on: <http://ictkm.cgiar.org/2008/12/04/what-is-social-reporting/>. If you want to follow the live-blog of the **dlgn** F2F click on the link: www.dlgn-f2f2011.ch to have up to date information from Sarajevo.

Information Platform

An Information Platform will be established with the aim of sharing and getting key information about 'who is who' and 'who is doing what' in dlgn. This Platform will allow participants to get informed about the 'richness' of **dlg** and valorise the existing knowhow and experience within the network. Tools, methods of assessments, case studies and expertise shall be shared. Every F2F participant is invited to come and share the best practices, documents and materials on this platform. For more information contact: annick.vuilleumier@deza.admin.ch

Network News

Call for applications: Practitioners Course on Decentralization and Local Governance

The Institute of Federalism in Fribourg is offering a two-week-long course for practitioners on Decentralization and Local Governance from the 28th of March to the 08th of April. It will provide participants with an opportunity to deepen insights into current debates on decentralization and local governance fostering a vital dialogue among professionals and academics. A range of international lecturers will provide their expertise and teaching will be a mix of lectures, case studies, presentations and working groups. To apply, submit a completed application form available at www.federalism.ch together with a motivation letter, a CV, two letters of reference and a proof of health/accident insurance for medical care abroad. Course costs are 2500 CHF including materials, accommodation with full board and a tourist excursion. Travel expenses and visa costs are at the expense of the participants. Information on scholarships is available on the same website. Deadline for registration is the **28th of February**, 2011. For further information contact federalism@unifr.ch

Train4Dev Course on Harmonization, Decentralization and Local Governance

From the 24th to the 28th of January 2011, the pilot training course "Harmonisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance" was held in Bruxelles. The course was organised by the Train4Dev Subgroup on Decentralisation and Local Governance in order to discuss the design and implementation of coherent, aligned and harmonised support strategies for decentralization. The course was built on literature and case studies as well as on the experiences of the participants themselves. For more information about this course follow the link on dlgn Shareweb: [http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community Affairs/Community Activities/Train4Dev January 2011?navigationURI=en/Home/Community Affairs/Community Activities/Train4Dev January 2011&officeID=94&officeID=94](http://www.sdc-decentralization.net/en/Home/Community%20Affairs/Community%20Activities/Train4Dev%20January%202011?navigationURI=en/Home/Community%20Affairs/Community%20Activities/Train4Dev%20January%202011&officeID=94&officeID=94)

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