



РЕПУБЛИКА
СЕВЕРНА МАКЕДОНИЈА
ОПШТИНА СВЕТИ НИКОЛЕ
- ГРАДСКА НАЧАЛНИК -

Бр. 0903 = 63/23
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Mayor of Municipality of Sveti Nikole

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To: OGP Steering Committee

Subject: Application Letter

Date: 28.09.2020

Dear Sirs,

As a Mayor of Municipality of Sveti Nikole, it is my great honor and pleasure to submit our application to become member of the OGP Local Community. Sveti Nikole is a small municipality in the Vardar Region of North Macedonia but on a very good strategic position with a strong intention to grow. What is most important for us is the fact that in the open government partnership we recognize a solid basis for long-term and continuous cooperation between civil society organizations and public institutions, as well as the possibility of involving the population in policy-making at the local level. There are 2 key reasons for our great commitment to join OGP Local-the fact that the civil society sector is at the forefront of the initiative for the implementation of the process and the manner of its filtering and the fact that CSOs have a decisive role in the process and there is an opportunity for cooperation with institutions in order to help implement the given proposals and initiatives. The goal of the LSGU is to improve the cooperation with the civil sector and the citizens in the municipality of Sveti Nikole through a well-designed policy for cooperation and support that will reflect the priorities, principles and proposed approaches. Publicity, openness, transparency and access to information are our values and our commitment and the OGP will contribute to strengthening. We will pay special attention to the promotion of fiscal transparency, improvement of municipal services in the field of urbanism, communal activities, education, health, local economic development, culture and sports, but also proactivity in publishing public information. We will activate the mechanisms - Advisory Body for Open Government which will prepare a strategy and action plan for open local partnership by gaining experience and cooperation with the civil sector in the municipality of Sveti Nikole. Accessing the OGP Local will contribute to strengthening and deepening and expanding the open government process.

The most recent example of cooperation with the civil sector is the introduction of subsidized public transport in the municipality through a budget initiative initiated by the GIZ and at the request of residents of 10 settlements in the municipality of Sveti Nikole in 2019. WOMEN RESIGNING THE BUDGET, a campaign in which the women from Sveti Nikole found themselves in the role of mayors, with the opportunity to "reshape" the municipal budget. Over 300 women participated in a public debate on the budget which was attended by 80 representatives of NGOs, business sector, citizens, experts expressing the needs and priorities. From this campaign subsidized public transport was introduced in 7 villages with the possibility of expansion.



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Through the project Community Forums held in 2008 and 2019, several projects were developed and 2 were funded by project funds: Construction of a Center for acceptance of victims of domestic violence and Reconstruction of the roof structure of the kindergarten Rahilka Goneva in Sveti Nikole. The forums included representatives of 10 NGOs from 7 institutions operating at local and national level, representatives of the business sector, experts, and citizens.

Within the Project for support of the decentralization process for the municipality of Sveti Nikole, a one-stop shop system was introduced, as a municipal service center. Its purpose is to shorten the procedures for providing information and better services to citizens in the following areas: urban planning, utilities, taxes and utility fees, environment and other services that are under the jurisdiction of the municipality. These several positive examples are products of long-term partnerships between the Local Self-Government and the civil society and we are looking forward to share this experiences with the other members of the OGP Local Community, and on the other hand learn new experiences that will help us improve our Municipality.

According to the LED Strategy, the Municipality of Sveti Nikole aims to improve the living conditions of citizens of the Municipality of Sveti Nikole, providing information that will contribute to achieving improved access to financial and non-financial services for residents and companies in the municipality and implementation of activities to strengthen the capacity of the business sector. For this to be achieved the Municipality has 70 employees and different sectors that work very hard and are very dedicated in providing excellent service, especially the Department for Local Economic Development. Municipality of Sveti Nikole together with the civil sector specifically with the NGO GIZ Sveti Nikole would like to collaborate with the citizens and improve the following areas in the Municipality:

Fiscal transparency-Although the Municipality traditionally holds meetings and consultations with the civil sector for the proposals regarding the budget for the next year, Municipality of Sveti Nikole would like to take a step further and to make the spending of the Municipal budget and collects proposals from the citizens throughout the whole fiscal year even more accessible. Together with GIZ Sveti Nikole we would like to create a platform, where everybody can see the spending of the government money and every citizen and organization can deliver a proposal for the following budget.

Local service delivery –In the last few years Municipality of Sveti Nikole is dealing with the issue to serve the citizens who live alone and need some kind of assistance, and especially those who live in the further rural areas. This issue has been discussed several times with the organization GIZ Sveti Nikole and we came up with the idea for a Local Municipal Service that will be assist our citizens 24/7.

Open data and access to information- Recently there were several notes from the NGOs especially from the GIZ organization that there were difficulties in accessing public



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information because the municipality did not keep gender statistics and its data were not systematized. After conducting educational seminars by GIS and AZ to strengthen the local administration, a table was created for data entry on a monthly basis by local institutions. This data is now available to all stakeholders. But in collaboration with GIZ and the rest of the civil sector we would like to further develop the access of information and configure and transform the official municipal web page, with resources that are updated and easily accessible from all municipal areas and to make the web page accessible for people with special needs.

Gender equality- As part of the GIZ organization project Motivating Women for Gender Mainstreaming, 500 women were motivated to write their problems on 432 cards and submit them to the mayor for a consultation meeting. From the selected 52 problems, some have been solved: cleaning the river, reconstructed wastewater treatment plant, asphalted road to Erdzelia, etc. This is only part of the initiatives, but municipality of Sveti Nikole would like to create a strategy that will encourage gender equality in all aspects of everyday life.

Strategy for successful management of COVID-19- As a municipality with highly developed textile and confectionary industrial sector, recently we fought with a strong and sudden wave of Covid-19 positive cases, people who were infected in their work spaces and this period was very challenging for the employees, their employers and the municipality itself. Therefore we found it essential to develop a strategy that will be useful in this kind of situations and help the industrial sector to prevent, deal and recover quickly from these unfortunate situations.

What we want to do in the short term is to establish a network of continuous and timely information of the civil sector and citizens through a municipal newsletter every three months and published on the website of the municipality, three months of consultations with citizens and especially with women and youth, organizing panel discussions and conferences, and in the long run activating the local communities in the villages (32) for cooperation with the LSGU.

We really appreciate that you are giving us the chance to become member of the OGP family and we are looking forward to become their proud member.

Sincerely ,

Sasho Velkovski

Mayor of Municipality of Sveti Nikole

