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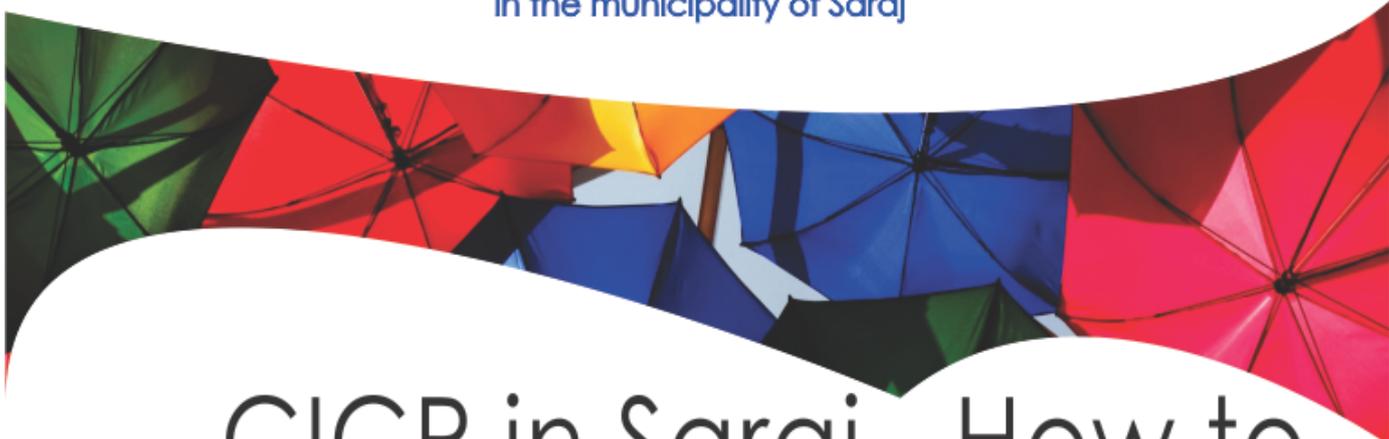
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Project: Enhancing the capacities of commission for Inter communities relations
in the municipality of Saraj



CICR in Saraj - How to Make it Yield Positive Results in Protecting Minority Rights at the Local Level?

Enhancing the capacities of the
commission for inter-community relations
(CICR) in the municipality of Saraj



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ENHANCING THE CAPACITIES OF THE COMMISSION FOR INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SARAJ

POLICY PAPER

Skopje, 2015

Resume

The aim of this policy paper is to enhance the work of the Commission for Interethnic Relations (CICR) in Saraj Municipality by putting forward five recommendations whose implementation would minimize the issues with which CICR members face on a daily basis in their operations. Overcoming these barriers would benefit CICR in Saraj Municipality especially because of the fact that it is a newly and voluntarily established one and therefore, its members are granted with the opportunity to lay down the foundations of a fully functional CICR that promotes inter-ethnic cooperation. The recommendations have been devised by conducting a semi-structured interview with a focus group, whose participants are members of CICR of Saraj Municipality. The thematic analysis led to the identification of five key priority issues, and subsequently, five recommendations. Namely, (1) need for accurate definition of CICR's mandate; (2) CICR members to execute their obligations in a professional and timely Manner; (3) enhancement of the cooperation between CICR and Saraj Municipality and securing its support; (4) active engagement of citizens and civil society organizations in the work of CICR; and (5) securing a budget line for funding the daily work and activities of CICR.

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Introduction

Inter-ethnic coexistence is one of the fundamental values of multiculturalism and is a precondition for maintaining the stability of a particular country and the development of its democracy (Kis 1996; Linz and Stepan 1996; Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino 2007). In that context, the Ohrid Framework Agreement (hereinafter OFA) was signed so as to enable peaceful development of democracy through integration of the ethnic minorities, not only at national, but also at local level (Lyon 2011; Bieber 2005; Ilievski 2007; Stanisevski and Miller 2009).

Just and equitable representation of all ethnic communities in the institutions at national and local level was considered to be one of the key objectives of the OFA. Therefore, the creation of the Commission for Inter-Community Relations (hereinafter: CICR) within the municipalities aimed at developing and improving the relations between the different ethnic communities, ensuring their active participation in the decision-making process, especially regarding issues which directly concern them (Haziri et al. 2009). CICRs as such are the sole institutional framework for dialogue between communities (Tomovska and Neziri 2011).

Despite the progress in the work of the municipalities that CICRs should encourage, the practice shows a different picture. Namely, the general understanding of the CICRs is that most of them are not functioning properly and fairly, encountering obstacles when carrying out their work, whereas few of them exist and function on paper only. In addition, the European Commission's (hereinafter: EC) reports on Macedonia's progress suggest that the established CICRs do not have sufficient financial resources to fully exhaust their capacities (European Commission 2013).

The aim of this policy paper is to enhance the work of the CICR in Saraj Municipality by putting forward **five** recommendations devised through an analysis of a focus group conducted with members of the CICR in Saraj Municipality. The CICR's members have benefits from implementing these recommendations mainly because of the fact that it is a newly established one and therefore, its member are granted with the opportunity to lay down the foundations of a fully functional CICR that promotes inter-ethnic cooperation.

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All of the participants in the focus group agreed upon five key issues stalling the work of their CICR – insufficient familiarity of members with the mandate of CICR; the importance of regular meetings of the CICR; cooperation with the Municipal Council; cooperation with civil society sector; and lack of funding for activities of the CICR.

The structure of this policy paper is as follows. First, we present the conceptualization and the legal framework upon which the research was conducted. Further, we present the methodology and the results of the research. Finally, after discussing the results and the conclusion, we present the recommendations for improving the work of the CICR in Saraj Municipality.

I. Conceptualization

Although the CICRs are the sole institutional framework for dialogue between local communities (Tomovska and Neziri 2011) their work is very poorly defined in the Law on Local Self-Government (hereinafter LLSG). Previous reports and studies on this issue have highlighted the lack of clear and precise regulations on the scope of work, election of members, technical conditions and financing of CICRs. For instance, the UNPD report for Interethnic Dialogue and Cooperation in Macedonia for 2010 indicated that CICRs do not have the preventive and advisory role they should have (United Nation Development Program 2010). According to the European Commission report on Macedonia's progress in 2009, the responsibilities of the CICR are vague, their operational capacities are ineffective, and the selection of members for CICR is not transparent (European Commission 2009). The Progress report for 2013 on the other hand, emphasized that CICRs operate with insufficient financial resources and have ill-defined powers, which ultimately leads to insufficient utilization thereof (European Commission 2014). All of the above points that the situation with CICRs that are already in place in municipalities that have no legal obligation to form a CICR is made even more difficult.

A preliminary research of the Center for strategic research and documentation FORUM shows that all existing CICRs, regardless of whether they exist in municipalities that have or do not have legal obligation to form one have similar difficulties (Center for strategic research and documentation FORUM 2008). Nevertheless, the best way to overcome these difficulties and enhance the work of a

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particular CICR is by assessing the obstacles and needs which a particular CICR is facing and consequently providing recommendations that are tailored to their unique conditions.

II. Legal Framework

It is from OFA - which practically put an end to the armed conflict in 2001 and represents a framework that regulates the issues of ethnic communities - that the formation of a Parliamentary Committee on Inter-Ethnic Relations comes from¹. In order to achieve equitable representation of ethnic communities in public institutions and participation in policy and decision-making process at the local level as well, the LLSG from 2002² stipulated the formation of local CICRs that would help overcome potential inter-ethnic problems in the municipalities.

The work of CICR is defined explicitly only in Article 55 of LLSG. According to Article 55, paragraph 1 of the LLSG, the municipalities in which at least 20 percent of the entire municipal population as determined at the last census is comprised by members of a different community, are obliged to establish CICR. These CICRs consist of equal number of representatives of each community existing in a particular municipality³. The latter makes CICR a unique mechanism through which "various ethnicities [are involved] in the process of management, [have] equal opportunity to debate universally acceptable solutions for issues that concern them and which are related to their identity" (Tomovska and Neziri 2011, 17). The selection of members for the CICRs should be regulated by Statute, as stipulated in Article 55 paragraph 3 of the LLSG. CICRs review issues pertaining to relations between communities represented in the municipalities and give opinions and proposals for resolving these issues⁴, whereas Municipal Councils are obliged to consider the opinions of CICRs and decide upon them⁵.

¹ Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, Official Gazette 52/1991, 1/1992, 31/1998, 91/2001, 84/2003, 107/2005, 3/2009, Amendment XII

² Law on Local Self-Government, Official Gazette 05/02

³ Ibid, Article 55, paragraph 2

⁴ Ibid, Article 55, paragraph 4

⁵ Ibid, Article 55, paragraph 5

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Despite the fact that all municipalities with legal obligation to establish a CICR - in accordance with Article 55, paragraph 1 of LLSG – did so by 2009 (Tomovska and Neziri 2011, 14), several municipalities without the legal obligation, among which the municipality of Saraj, have recognized the benefits from this Committee and have established one as well.

III. Methodology

Taking into consideration that this policy paper aims to provide recommendations for improving the work of the CICR in Saraj Municipality, the conducted research is of qualitative nature, in order to obtain detailed information on the CICR in Saraj. The data was collected through fieldwork, namely, by conducting a focus group with the members of the CICR in Saraj. The interview was conducted according to a semi-structured topic guide. This type of a questionnaire is most suitable for conducting focus groups as it gives enough space for interaction between the group members and the interviewer, as well as it enables the interviewer to modify the questions throughout the interview process depending on the group characteristics.

Thematic analysis was applied to the interview transcript (Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Braun and Clarke 2006; Gibbs 2008), so as to explore the obstacles which the CICR in Saraj Municipality is facing.

IV. Discussion of the Results

Five key issues have been identified during the analysis of the focus group interview with the members of the CICR of Saraj Municipality. Namely: insufficient familiarity of members with the mandate of the CICR; the importance of regular meetings of the CICR; cooperation with the Municipal Council; cooperation with civil society sector; and lack of funding for activities of the CICR.

1. Insufficient Familiarity of Members of CICR in Saraj Municipality with the Mandate of CICR as Such

The LLSG does not regulate the work of CICRs in a sufficiently elaborated manner. Thereafter, it often happens that members of the newly established CICRs

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have no clear picture of what questions they should focus on (Tomovska and Neziri 2011). The conclusions of the focus group indicate that despite the fact that members of the newly established CICR in Saraj Municipality attended trainings at the beginning of its establishment, they still need additional trainings in the future. Mainly, as indicated by several participants in the focus group:

"During the training we had, we understood a lot of things, as you need to understand which our obligations are, which our rights are, where to our limits are. [...] I think that any training, no matter what the training is about, is a plus for anything." (Interlocutor 2, Focus Group).

"We do cope with everything however we have not been fully introduced to be honest [...] It will be of great benefit to the functioning of the CICR, the Municipality, the mere project⁶, if more trainings are organized. Because, when you see closely, we all come from different backgrounds and we definitely need some training." (Interlocutor 4, Focus Group).

Additionally, the first association on what the key priorities should be in the work of CICR, for most of the CICR members in Saraj Municipality is resolving inter-ethnic tensions in the community, especially among youngsters:

"At the beginning, you know, we were working very well with each other, but with the newcomers now, our relationship had to be taken to a new balanced environment where both theirs and ours part is respected, so, it took a bit of time, so it was one period [of adaptation] but it is not a problem anymore, it is really fine now, the youngsters get well together with us [...] There was a proposal to introduce a sport activity, that is football, for which the older ones won't be invited because they are aggressive in football, rather to invite some from the younger generation, you know our saying "you learn from the young ones what socializing is, so it will be nice if a competition is organized for kids from 4th or 5th grade." [Interlocutor 3, Focus Group]

"[...] When it comes to inter-ethnic relations, that is a process, and no matter of other things, it practically exists among youngsters. We have two environments, the home environment, where the child is growing, and we have an environment where it socializes with its peers; and, most of the time, it is either at home, either at school, hence, it is here where cooperation between municipalities is needed, in the sense of common projects that will be implemented in the elementary schools and dedicated to inter-ethnic relations." [Interlocutor 4, Focus Group]

⁶ The establishment of CICR in Saraj Municipality came to practical realization through a project implemented by Saraj Municipality and ZIP Institute.

The insufficient familiarity of the CICR members in Saraj Municipality actually limits them to work properly and fully execute their responsibilities. It is of exceptional importance for them to be well informed and familiar with their responsibilities so they can continue to prepare action plans that reflect the needs of the communities living in Saraj Municipality.

2. Irregular Meetings of CICR Members and Insufficient Commitment of Some of the Members

Given the perception of most of the participants in the focus group regarding the CICR's mandate, it appears that their dedication and commitment in terms of regularly attending the CICR meetings is insufficient. The participants' enthusiasm (Interlocutor 1, 2, 3 and 4) to contribute towards the improving of the situation of their community in Saraj Municipality was more than apparent. Nonetheless, it was pointed out that the full composition of the CICR usually never meets, "due to additional working responsibilities and duties" (Interlocutor 3), and therefore "skipping a few meetings means that one is no longer up to date with what is happening with the work of CICR" (Interlocutor 4).

"In a way, we represent our communities, and if one member is missing, for instance I am missing, I might have not agreed with what the people present at the meeting decided upon, it might be that the decision is not right for my ethnic community if I did not participate in its delivery". (Interlocutor 4, Focus Group)

"First and foremost the presence of representatives of those communities that are part of this municipality is important. I think that there has not been a meeting on which all of us were present. I think that we are not having a serious approach to the issue. So therefore, I do not know the reasons, but somehow we are not being serious from the very beginning. That is the first and main thing for the work to run further [...] I am here as a representative of the Bosniaks, if I do not show up, I can do nothing for them." (Interlocutor 2, Focus Group)

Irregular meetings and insufficient commitment of CICR members is one of the key issues that need to be resolved as it is the human factor that "pulls" all other things.

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3. Support from and Cooperation with the Municipal Council

The third key issue that can stall the work of CICR in Saraj Municipality is the irregular communication with the Municipal Council. According to what the focus group participants told us, they do not know when the Council is holding meetings and therefore they are not informed about the Council's work (Interlocutor 4). Furthermore, although three participants are both CICR members and Municipal Councilors, some of the CICR members think that those who are members of both bodies are not active enough during the meetings of CICR, even though it is precisely those members that can actually contribute significantly towards the improvement of the work of CICR (Interlocutor 2).

„But I think these our representatives are not very active, at least from what I came to understand after having met them. They are not very active on our meetings, I am not a Councilor and I do not know how active they are on the Council meetings. [...] If you are not present on [CICR] meetings, how would you know what to say on [Council meetings], and how would you know what you should request? [...] I think [these type of people] are elected in any organization to be able to push things. I think people intentionally play this card. If someone is directly involved, it will be easier to push the work” (Interlocutor 2, Focus Group).” (Interlocutor 2, Focus Group)

Furthermore, the focus group participants emphasized that the fact that they are not having an office to use for the operation of the CICR is another issue that hinders their progress.

You see, we have CICR, but we don't have a place where to hold meetings. That is an additional problem – It creates frivolous approach to the issue. We do not have our own nest, we are here and there, we have no working atmosphere [...].” (Interlocutor 2, Focus Group).

This facility, according to them, should be provided by the municipal council because in that way the latter will show willingness to support the work of the CICR and it will signal that a possibility for a successful cooperation is on the way. In fact, one of the participants in the focus group interview offered a potential office facility:

“We have no office. Hence, we are in an old shack. We do have an object built in 2006-2007, it is planned to be a police station, however, changes in the urban planning documentation have been made and this object is supposed to be a municipal premise. [...] Another floor needs to be built in that object, so that those who want can get an office, would there be offices of CICR, CSOs – those who really want to work, but, I

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don't know when would that be, I don't know.” (Interlocutor 3, Focus Group)

4. Inclusion of Citizens and Civil Society Organizations in the Work of CICR

The fourth key issue that emerged from the focus group interview refers to cooperation between the CICR of Saraj Municipality on the one hand, and citizens and civil society organizations on the other hand. In that regard, the interlocutors said that there are civil society organizations in Saraj Municipality, but they are not informed how many of them exist and how they work (Interlocutor 2, 3). They mentioned the existence of Boards of ethnic communities (Interlocutor 2), but their operation thereof is at a different level, mostly due to the different socio-economic situation of ethnic communities (Interlocutor 4). In general, the conclusion derived from the focus group interview on this topic is that there is an initiative to involve citizens and civil society organizations in the work of CICR, but the CICR members are still not sufficiently aware of the relevance of doing so, as well as the mechanisms for how to achieve it.

What appears to be a problem regarding this issue is precisely the fact that one of the most relevant tasks of each CICR is to continuously get informed about the needs and problems of the citizens and civil society organizations. That is the only way for the CICR members to be able to submit recommendations to the Municipal Council.

5. Lack of Funding for CICR Activities

All of the participants in the focus group identified the financial instability of the CICR in Saraj Municipality as an issue of enormous importance, which might eradicate even the motivation of CICR members to continue putting efforts in making the CICR work. They complained that they are not receiving fixed annual budget from anywhere (Interlocutor 1), which makes it hard both for the daily operations of the CICR as well as for the implementation of activities. Their thoughts were on the line that the municipality should introduce a budget line for the CICR only, and that the amount of the budget should be in line with the necessities of the CICR (Interlocutor 2,3).

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V. Conclusion

This policy paper aims to enhance the work of the CICR in Saraj Municipality by identifying the key obstacles that this CICR is facing with and suggesting recommendations for how to overcome them. The results showed that in spite of the enormous enthusiasm of CICR members and fact that the CICR in Saraj Municipality was established voluntarily - that is without legal obligation - huge efforts need to be made to put the CICR on the move forwards.

The focus group analysis yielded five key issues whose solving would provide for an enabling environment for the development of CICR in Saraj Municipality:

- Insufficient familiarity by CICR members with the mandate of the Committee;
- Irregular meetings and insufficient working commitment of CICR members;
- Underdeveloped cooperation with the Municipal Council;
- Lack of cooperation with citizens and the civil society sector; and
- Lack of fixed annual funding for the work of CICR.

Notwithstanding the fact that a lot of work has to be done, the interview with CICR members revealed that they possess enthusiasm and eagerness, which allows them to make progress and positive changes in their municipality. It would be interesting though, to conduct another research in an year from now so as to see whether this enthusiasm is sustained and to check whether the provided recommendations have been implemented.

Based on the issues analyzed and the conclusions derived for each issue, as well as through a review of the existing research and literature, the next chapter of this policy paper provides five recommendations for improving the work of CICR in Saraj Municipality for each of the issues analyzed in chapter IV.

VI. Recommendations for Enhancing the Work of CICR in Saraj Municipality

The recommendations provided in the existing literature pertaining to improving the work of CICRs established in the Republic of Macedonia are numerous, starting from having a clear understanding of its mandate, providing financial stability, adopting rules of procedure, providing administrative support to CICRs from the

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municipalities (Haziri et al. 2009; Tomovska and Neziri 2011; Center for strategic research and documentation FORUM 2008), increased involvement of the Ministry of Local Self-government in the CICRs (Center for strategic research and documentation FORUM 2008). In what follows, we present five recommendations, each of them directed to a particular key issue detected at the CICR in Saraj Municipality.

1. Accurate Definition of the CICR Mandate

Taking the legal framework regarding CICRs as envisaged in the LLSG as a starting point, CICRs are entitled to prepare recommendations regarding the relationship between the ethnic communities living in the particular municipalities and to submit them to the municipal councils, as well as to act in the direction of overcoming the potential inter-ethnic problems in their respective municipalities (Boshkovski 2012). In other words, "CICR's activities are directed towards the full realization of communities' rights and needs on cultural, educational, religious, and social level" (Haziri et al. 2009, 9). In the spirit of the OFA, this implies that CICR can submit recommendations to the Council on matters pertaining to culture, use of languages, the use of emblem and flag of the municipality, the names of streets and other infrastructural facilities – as all these issues affect the relations between ethnic communities.

The role and responsibilities of the CICRs go beyond formal submission of recommendations to the municipal councils. In fact, overcoming potential ethnic problems involves promoting tolerance and good inter-ethnic relations. Thus, CICR can initiate activities that will encourage and facilitate communication and cooperation between communities, such as organizing various sports activities or cultural events, debates and public forums during which the problems between the ethnic groups and the like will be discussed.

Finally, the adoption of the rules of procedure for the CICR of Saraj Municipality will significantly facilitate its work (Haziri et al. 2009; Center for strategic research and documentation FORUM 2008). The rules of procedures are prepared and adopted by the CICR members themselves, as "the main benefit of having such a document is that it clarifies the fundamental rules of operation of CICR, and gives the impression

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of transparent and well-organized body, enabling more efficient and effective debates and avoiding misinterpretations about the treatment of the issues discussed by the CICR” (Haziri et al. 2009, 12).

Adopting the rules of procedures is a firm step forwards, yet there are two other things that would further help the CICR members in becoming familiar with the mandate of CICR. First, creating a simple how-to document would put at ease all CICR members as it will contain all the things related to CICR as such and their responsibilities in a simple, non-technical and user-friendly language. Such guidelines would be at best developed with an external expert on this issue. Second, as already emphasized by all the focus group participants, the organization of trainings, workshops and seminars, aside the rules of procedures and the guidelines, is the way through which CICR members will gain practical knowledge, skills and capacities that are to be employed in executing the daily operations within the CICR.

2. CICR Members to Execute their Obligations in a Professional and Timely Manner

As noted in the chapter discussing the results from the focus group interview, the work enthusiasm of the participants is undoubtedly visible. This is precisely the primary condition that can really result into an excellent work of the CICR of Saraj Municipality. Nevertheless, fulfilling this condition will solely not do. The CICR members should not only be eager to improve the work of the CICR – they should also take the necessary measures to implement their “vision”. Thereafter, regular meetings with all members of the CICR are of utmost importance for a continuous work of the Committee.

The CICR is the institution within the municipalities that is supposed to have the key role in applying the Badenter principle of voting in the work of the Municipal Council (United Nation Development Program 2010). This implies that CICR members should monitor the Council sessions regularly and when that is not possible they should get informed through the Council reports and minutes. Consequently, our recommendation for improving the effectiveness of the CICR in Saraj Municipality is that the members should hold regular meetings during which they discuss the issues related to the municipal Council. In addition, departing from the mandate of the CICR,

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issues regarding preventive and reactive measures related to managing possible interethnic conflicts should also be discussed regularly (United Nation Development Program 2010) because - as indicated by interview participants – these issues still exist, especially among youngster in Saraj municipality (Interlocutors 2, 3, 4).

3. Enhancement of the Cooperation between CICR and Saraj Municipality and Securing its Support

If we observe the composition of CICR's members in Macedonia, one can notice that members of the Municipal Council and external members compose each CICR. It is precisely the CICR members who are Municipal Councilors at the same time, who can lobby in the Municipal Council for support and cooperation with the respective CICR.

Three actions need to be undertaken so that the cooperation with and support from Saraj Municipality is secured for the CICR. First, Saraj Municipality shall provide CICR with an office (Haziri et al. 2009). The workplace is an indispensable condition for the proper functioning of the CICR of Saraj Municipality as it provides CICR members with the sense of ownership, gives them the working conditions and motivates them to meet regularly. For a start, the CICR can use the Municipal Council's offices, however on the long run, the municipality should provide CICR with an office that will be used exclusively by the CICR, in which manner the fact that CICR is a separate entity will be emphasized.

Second, in terms of cooperation and communication with the municipal council, as stated in point 2 of this chapter, CICR should regularly follow and monitor the work of the Municipal Council in order to identify the relevant issues of the mandate CICR. At the same time, the Council of Saraj Municipality should be obliged to inform the members of the CICR regularly and to seek an opinion from them whenever issues affecting ethnic communities in the municipality are on the agenda. In that context, logistical and administrative support for municipal CICR expressed by appointment of a person that will be performing that support (e.g. keeping records, collating and archiving documents, etc.) will significantly improve the work of CICR.

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Third, for providing administrative and logistic support and cooperation from the Municipality, the CICR shall prepare and submit annual working plans for its work to the Municipality. In that way, the CICR would be able to ask for the envisaged administrative and logistic support for the next year. Additionally, this will increase the transparency of the CICR and will ensure continuity in its operations (Tomovska and Neziri 2011; Haziri et al. 2009).

4. Active Engagement of Citizens and Civil Society Organizations in the Work of CICR

4.1. Engaging the Citizens

Departing from the fact that citizens who are members of certain ethnic communities are the main beneficiaries from the activities of CICR it is clear that the CICR needs to be regularly informed about their needs and problems. However, in order to encourage citizens to engage in the work of CICR, they first need to be familiarized with the work of CICR and the way it can help. In other words, the CICR needs to devise mechanisms and strategy for communication with the citizens residing in Saraj Municipality. Our recommendation is to regularly update the website of CICR of Saraj Municipality, to have media announcements, flyers and to organize public debates (Tomovska and Neziri 2011) – all these are useful tools for informing the municipal residents.

Besides informing the citizens about the work of CICR, it is important to establish mechanisms through which citizens can lodge complaints and petitions on issues that affect them. For this purpose, the CICR of Saraj Municipality should establish a practice of open days for its citizens, and provide them with special forms that will be easily available in the municipality and on the website of the CICR (Bojadzieva 2011).

4.2. Establishment of Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations

Civil society organizations are an important partner of the CICR primarily because working with them helps in addressing problems of ethnic communities. Additionally, signing partnerships with them brings two key benefits to CICR: (1) providing alternative

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ways of financing projects, and (2) strengthening the capacity of the CICR members by attending trainings organized by civil society organizations (Tomovska and Neziri 2011).

The recommendation of ZIP Institute to the CICR of Saraj Municipality is to move towards signing memoranda, or creating partnerships with several local civic organizations, along with which CICR would submit project applications, but would also use their capacities if sharing experiences and knowledge to CICR members.

5. Securing a Budget Line for Funding the Daily Work and Activities of CICR

The lack of fixed funding that will allow the CICR to function properly and make a contribution in Saraj Municipality is an issue with multidirectional negative consequences, threatening the mere existence of the CICR. For that matter, it is of utmost importance for CICR members to secure this in the very beginning of its establishment and start functioning “at full steam”. CICR members that participated in the focus group themselves mentioned that the best way in doing so is by being given a fixed amount of financial support from Saraj Municipality budget needed for the next year, and secure the daily wages for the members and finances form the planned activities. Concurring with the thoughts of CICR members, ZIP Institute recommends that CICR members hold meetings with the municipal council on the issue of financing of CICR and ask for a fixed annual budgeting. The requested amount should be based on the envisaged activities of CICR for the upcoming year, which includes daily wages for the CICR members and finances for the planned activities. Finally, Saraj Municipality could secure a budget line solely devoted to CICR, showing its willingness to help the work of CICR in this way as well.

Alternatively, financial resources for implementing project activities can be provided through applying for grants from national and international organizations and institutions. Using their network of contacts and established partnerships with civil society organizations and institutions, ZIP Institute encourages the members of CICR in Saraj to prepare project applications with their partner organizations, through which they would ensure funding for implementation of their envisaged project activities aimed at improving the inter-ethnic relations at the Municipality of Saraj.

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