Case study of piloting Participatory Budgeting in Georgian cities

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Agenda

• Project & background story
• Participatory Budgeting in Georgian cities
• Results & Impact
• Challenges & Lessons learned
Project „New e-Governance Initiatives in Kutaisi, Batumi, Akhaltsikhe and the Ministries of Finance and of Health)“
Experience with Estonian local governments since 2013

OGP at local level: transparency, dialogue, partnership, crowdsourcing

Participatory Budgeting (PB)

Tools for local e-democracy
Bike-friendly sidewalks

Safe barriers on the banks of river Emajõgi
New community garden in old widget factory area

Exercise-friendly school yard
How to implement OGP at local level?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g6inZquoV0&feature=youtu.be
E-Tools: VOLIS

Welcome to VOLIS!

VOLIS (System for Local Democracy Procedures) was created for: - to change decision making of the local authorities faster, simpler and also cheaper, using software solution for that; - to share all information regarding of the local decision-making with the public and also encouraging people to participate in these processes, VOLIS creates operating environments for the members of councils and local governments and shows the public what is happening at the sessions along with the agenda, voting results and automatically-writing protocol through the Internet.

Information system key features:
- Paperless document management and processing
- Different possibilities for participation in meetings including virtual participation
- E-voting ID card
- Automatic self-writing session protocol
- Session Webcast and recordings archive
- Participatory Democracy – including possibility to do paperless all participatory budgeting processes and use polls where secure voting by e population is provided

VOLIS developer and provider is Andmevara Ltd.

Original version of VOLIS was financed from the EU funds, from the European Regional Development Foundation. VOLIS is a freeware-based and license-free!
Implementation of PB

- Preparation
- Rising awareness
- Submission of ideas
- Voting
- Implementation
Results & impact

**Akhaltsikhe PB:** 78 proposals submitted, budget increased

**Kutaisi PB:** 30 ideas submitted and presented to the Council; 3 ideas voted and the rest added as recommendations for the Budget Strategy

**Batumi PB:** Inspiration from the project, another tool selected

- Participation institutionalized
- Learning-by-doing exercise, easily replicable
Greening the City of Akhaltsikhe

1. Landscape design involving local plants and trees
2. Water management systems
3. Public spaces
4. Adopting sustainable urban planning strategies

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Challenges & Lessons learned

- Lack of secure identification
- Low awareness and usage of e-solutions
- Political unsustainability
- Administrative support
- Timing matters
Takeaways

• E-tools are not miraculous PR-weapons but technology has great potential for open, transparent and accountable governance

• Start small, start now.

• Engage only when possible, needed and meaningful

• Youth engagement is a big challenge – invent something new!
Our toolbox

• Development of new community tool – Online-Platform for Anticorruption fight (Anticor Moldova)

• Design of local e-engagement strategies and implementation of e-engagement initiatives, models and tools (PB)

• Awareness rising and capacity building of local administrators/politicians and communities (OGP methodology)

• Supporting different countries in implementation of e-democracy related actions stated in OGP action plans (Good e-Gov in Georgia)

• (Co)-creation of E-Democracy and e-Government communication
Thank you!

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More on our website https://www.ega.ee
NB! Watch the video https://vimeo.com/311685097

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