

USAID/RCI-Sponsored  
 Stability Pact eSEE Initiative  
 Workshop on eGovernance  
 September 25-26, 2007  
 Skopje, Macedonia

**Final Report**  
**12 October 2007**

**For BC Serdon – Angela Rodel, Foreign Liaison Officer**

**Project Description: Following the success of the RCI-sponsored meetings of the Stability Pact Non-Tariff Barriers Focal Points in Bucharest in 2006 and Skopje in March 2007, the RCI program director, Filip Stoyanovich, together with Mr. Mike Mozur, Stability Pact Deputy Special Coordinator, decided to expand RCI/Stability Pact cooperation by organizing a workshop for selected government officials from each of the countries in the Stability Pact (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, UNMIK Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia). USAID Macedonia’s eGov Project was also crucial partner that helped the event run smoothly.**

**The 1.5-day conference featured presentations by leading e-governance experts from both the European Union and the US, as well as four working groups/breakout sessions in which participants could share information about the state of e-governance in their home countries and discuss ideas for improvement. The working groups were each led by relevant experts and focused on: eLeadership, eEducation, eCommerce/eBusiness, and eCustoms/eProcurement.**

<b>General Statistics</b>	
Total number of officially registered participants	<b>98</b>
Number of participants from Albania	<b>6</b>
Number of participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina	<b>2</b>
Number of participants from Croatia	<b>5</b>
Number of participants from UNMIK Kosovo	<b>7</b>
Number of participants from Macedonia	<b>38</b>
Number of participants from Moldova	<b>4</b>
Number of participants from Montenegro	<b>7</b>
Number of participants from Serbia	<b>6</b>
Number of participants from EU	<b>18</b>
Number of participants from US	<b>4</b>
Number of participants in the eLeadership breakout session	<b>19</b>
Number of participants in the eCommerce/eBusiness breakout session	<b>10</b>
Number of participants in the eEducation breakout session	<b>9</b>
Number of participants in the eCustoms/eProcurement breakout session	<b>19</b>

Performance Rating: 1=Poor, 2=Acceptable, 3=Good, 4=Excellent

Rating	Overall Performance — At a Glance
4	Was the project completed on time?
4	Was the project completed within budget?
4	Were the project deliverables completed within acceptable quality levels?
4	Were scope change requests managed successfully?
4	Were project issues addressed successfully?
4	Are the clients satisfied with the organization and logistical support of the event?

Please find the following documents attached:

- Final agenda
- Final list of participants
- Presentations
- Photos

*Accomplishments during This Period:*

**The workshop achieved its goal of bringing together representatives from the Stability Pact countries with international experts in the field of eGovernance. The breakout sessions were all well-attended and gave rise to lively discussions and debates. Following the breakout sessions, each group presented a list of suggestions and priorities that will be handed over to officials from the Regional Coordination Council that will take over the eSEE Initiative’s work.**

**Despite the extremely limited budget, participants in general seemed to be very pleased with the organization and outcome of the meeting. BC Serdon received many positive evaluations and comments from the participants and organizers.**

**The RCI team established an excellent working relationship with the staff from USAID Macedonia, who were extremely helpful in organizing this event. Mr. Mike Mozur of the SP was also an extremely enthusiastic partner who helped the event come together.**

**Outside of the context of the workshop, participants had the opportunity to socialize with each other during coffee breaks and at cocktail receptions on both evenings, thus creating bonds of friendship and opportunities for further cooperation in the future.**

*Issues during the preparation of the event and action taken henceforth:*

**Certain members of the organizational team (made up of RCI, Stability Pact and USAID Macedonia personnel) did not follow the agreed-upon division of labor and scope of work, despite the fact that it had been made explicit and distributed to and agreed-upon by all parties. This led to a certain amount of confusion regarding logistical preparations (i.e. who was in charge of communicating with the hotel, participants, materials, etc.).**

**As in past joint events with the SP, lack of organization and regular communication on the part of certain SP representatives (Mike Mozur being an exception!) made the logistical organization of the event extremely difficult; for example, BC Serdon staff up until the day before the event had no clear idea of how many delegates to expect from each country, their names and contact information, and the number of nights needed in the hotels, despite having repeatedly requested this information from the SP personnel in charge of contacting the delegates. Also, SP personnel inviting participants did not seem particularly concerned with restrictions on the number of nights that RCI would be able to pay given the limitations of the budgets, which necessitated repeated communication with them to make sure the event would not go over budget.**

**After agreeing on the dates for the eGovernance Workshop, Stability Pact representatives later added a smaller SP event at the same hotel in Skopje on September 24; despite the fact that RCI was not a sponsor of this event and had nothing to do with its organization, BC Serdon ended up essentially taking care of the logistics with respect to the hotel for this event as well in order to avoid total confusion. Confusion nevertheless occurred, however, since SP personnel were not clear in their participants lists about who would be attending which event.**

**The online registration website that BC Serdon created specifically for the event was not used with any regularity, given the fact that SP personnel were not consistent about informing participants that they needed to register. This greatly contributed to the lack of clarity about the number of participants and their arrival and departure dates.**

**BC Serdon received certain presentations and conference materials very late, in some cases only after arrival in Skopje, which meant that the USB memory sticks would not include all the conference materials; however, BC Serdon has made all the presentations available online after the conference so that participants can access them.**

*Issues during the event and action taken henceforth:*

**Given the extremely limited budget for this event, all participants besides speakers were lodged in a different hotel than where the conference took place. The SP staff in charge of inviting delegates were supposed to inform them of the accommodations arrangements and the fact that airport pickup was not arranged for them, since BC Serdon was not provided with contact information for the majority of delegates. However, SP did not inform all delegates, which led to confusion and dissatisfaction on the part of certain delegates, who arrived at the wrong hotel only to be told that they did not have a reservation. This confusion was compounded by the fact that BC Serdon staff who had made hotel arrangements were not yet in Skopje, since the limited budget for the event did not allow for them to arrive the day before the event. Thus, BC Serdon staff was unable to react on-the-spot to these problems, but instead had to contact the SP staff who were already at the hotel in Skopje to urge them to respond.**

**Due to lack of clarity about how many participants to expect (SP representatives did not have a clear idea of how many participants to expect from Macedonia or Kosovo), conference organizers made only 100 copies of conference materials, well more than the 30% margin, given that less than 60 participants registered in advance; nevertheless, the materials quickly disappeared (since many participants from the previous SP meeting who had not registered came only on the first day and then left), leaving certain late arrivals without materials at all.**

**During the breakout sessions, some participants complained that the noise level in the hall made it difficult to hear the discussions (since three breakout sessions were held in the same hall, with only the fourth in a separate room). BC Serdon staff worked with the hotel staff to maximally separate the tables; however, given the extraordinarily limited budget, there was unfortunately no way that separate rooms could have been engaged for each breakout group.**

**At the beginning of the eLeadership breakout session, due to a large number of unexpected participants, there were problems with the seating arrangements (BC Serdon staff had made name tents for all registered participants, but these were essentially ignored). However, more chairs were brought in and eventually an acceptable seating arrangement was found.**

**Despite the shortage of staff (3 people for a 100-person conference), at all times there was at least one BC Serdon staff member present in each meeting room to videotape or photograph the event and to assist with the technological and logistical aspects of the meeting, and also to work with the hotel staff to ensure the smooth running of events.**

*Issues after the event and action taken henceforth:*

**None.**

*Participant Evaluations*

**According to the evaluation forms filled out by participants, most stated that their impression of the workshop was either excellent or good. The only problems mentioned related to the fact that some did not receive materials, that the hall was too noisy during the breakout sessions and that some did not like the food. However, given the extremely limited budget for this event that affected the materials, halls and food selections, it is not clear what organizers could have done to improve these aspects.**

*Recommendations:*

**Although the event overall went very smoothly and participants and organizers were generally pleased with the conference outcome, there is still room for improvement, especially where communication between the RCI staff, Stability Pact staff, and BC Serdon is concerned. In general, RCI and BC Serdon need to double-check all information received from SP personnel to make sure it is accurate and timely, and to insist on having direct contact with conference participants to make sure everything runs smoothly.**