



Non-governmental Organization Emancipimi Civil Ma Ndryshe
EC MA NDRYSHE

EC MA NDRYSHE STRATEGY 2015 – 2019

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Contents

- 1. _____ 3
- 2. VISION, MISSION AND VALUES..... 4
 - 3. STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES..... 6
 - 3.1. STRATEGIC GOAL 1 6
 - 3.1.1. Strategic Objective 1.1. 6
 - 3.1.2. Strategic Objective 1.2. 7
 - 3.2. STRATEGIC GOAL 2 8
 - 3.2.1. Strategic Objective 2.1. 8
 - 3.2.2. Strategic Objective 2.2 9
 - 3.2.3. Strategic Objective 2.3. 9
 - 3.2.4. Strategic Objective 2.4. 9
 - 3.3. STRATEGIC GOAL 3 10
 - 3.3.1. Strategic Objective 3.1. 10
 - 3.3.2. Strategic Objective 3.2. 10
 - 3.3.3. Strategic Objective 3.3. 10
- 4. _____ 11
 - 4.1. Organization’s program and main initiatives..... 11
 - 4.2. Organizational structure and main responsibilities..... 11
 - 4.3. Financial management..... 12
 - 4.4. Strategic partnerships..... 13
 - 4.5. SWOT 14

1. INTRODUCTION

A Strategy made the EC way

During strategic planning, it was noticed that, to EC, its general approach was more important than the topic it treats. For this reason alone, EC is seen as more than just an organization that deals with cultural heritage, urban planning or good governance. The process of strategic planning was, in essence, an exercise to bring the identity of the organization to light together with the establishment of the framework of actions based on this identity. During the entirety of this exercise, which was joined by a considerable number of persons, all aspects of the actions of the organization were analyzed. The moment in which this strategic document is being drafted represents a new direction of the work of EC, the beginning of a new period in the activities of the organization which aims to turn itself into the best possible example of community organization both in Prizren and Kosovo.

A number of important legal, institutional and political processes have begun within the local government in Kosovo. Some of the most important ones among those are the reform of local government, review of local planning and development documents, regional cooperation and development as well as legalization of illegal construction. All these processes find EC with a new strategic approach that aims to mobilize and direct current and future resources towards facilitating communications between the community and the local government in Prizren. According to the new strategic direction, EC will have an entirely community-based direction, a move this that will place it in the position of a mediator to ensure a true civic participation in decision-making. This document redefines the mission, vision and values of EC, by reflecting on the work undertaken during the past years and the strategic direction for the future years. The missions of the organization shall be: EC is engaged for active citizenship in creating a living environment by promoting an appropriate organization of the community, democratization of institutions and enrichment of cultural life in the main centers of Kosovo, with a special focus on Prizren and Prishtina. Whereas the work of the organization is led by the following values: impartiality, activism, result-orientation and the community as the basis for action.

The Strategic Plan of EC is built upon three strategic goal, which, within them contain strategic objectives that describe, in further detail, how EC will meet and fulfil its mission and vision, specifically:

Strategic Goal 1 – Increasing opportunities and the know-how on interacting with citizens

Strategic Objective 1.1 – Increasing the presence of the EC in the community so that we may advance our knowledge, promote civic activism and mobilization

Strategic Objective 1.2 – Deepening engagements, with a focus on Prizren and Prishtina.

Strategic Goal 2 - Better understanding and advocating of the needs and alternatives for improving the quality of life of the citizens

Strategic Objective 2.1 – Interacting with institutions so as to ensure healthy relations between citizens and institutions.

Strategic Objective 2.2 – Increasing knowledge on topics that EC addresses to overcome the challenge of lack of materials/literature in those fields

Strategic Objective 2.3. – Increasing professional competencies and capacities.

Strategic Objective 2.4 – Increasing impact through efficient communication with various groups/communities to convey the message. (PR)

Strategic Goal 3 – Fulfilling the missions through efficiently managing human and technological resources

Strategic Objective 3.1 – Optimization of resources, organizational structure and the extent of responsibilities within the organization.

Strategic Objective 3.2 – Advancement of programs and engagements, to ensure efficient management of the organization and programs by successfully fulfilling the mission of the organization.

Strategic Objective 3.3 – Financial management, capacities to raise funds and ensure sustainability.

2. VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Lately, civic activism in Prizren is increasing, where the latest example of this is the case of objecting to the demolition of Lumbardhi Cinema, because this is the oldest cinema in the city. EC played an extremely important role in raising the voice for important issues in Prizren, in mobilizing citizens and various actors of the society to actively participate in shaping the living environment in Prizren. EC continuously promotes cultural heritage by further shaping the identity of Prizren, plays a key role in improving the transparency of municipal bodies, and promotes the mobilization of citizens, civic society, media and other actors to request accountability from municipal bodies.

Continuous advocating by EC for the protection and promotion of the Historic Center in Prizren has resulted in attracting the attention of donors for the restoration of this center and of other cultural monuments in Prizren, stopping and demolishing illegal constructions in the Prevala park by returning the nature to the citizen, and the establishment of Transparency Forum which represents a synergy of the intellectual capacity of journalists and activists from the civil society to monitor and hold municipal bodies accountable.

The developments during the last few years in Kosovo, with a special emphasis on certain very fundamental issues of national level such as the declaration of independence and ending of the supervised independence have brought about a new momentum where the myth that the citizens had of believing that only international and senior levels of politicians deal with politics and matters on how the state runs is being debunked. Consequently, EC, in accordance with its mandate and the circumstances created as a result of our engagements and other developments, set its direction and purpose as per below.

Vision

Functional cities governed by all.

Mission

EC is engaged toward active citizenship for shaping the living environment by promoting an appropriate organization of the community, democratization of institutions and enrichment of cultural life in the main centers of Kosovo, with a special focus on Prizren and Prishtina.

Values

1. *Impartiality* – EC acts based on thorough and inclusive analysis and avoids any and all hasty and impulsive actions. EC aims to support and push forward alternatives which, based on research, result in being the most suitable ones, regardless of whether the majority of the society supports such an option.

2. *Activism*— EC members shall be activists that are regularly engaged in promoting civic interaction so as to fulfill the mission of the organization.

3. *Result-Oriented* – EC members are oriented toward achieving results, where the attempt does not satisfy the expectations of the organization should it not end in expected results.

4. *Community as the base for action* – EC shall always be close to the community, learning from the citizens and building a consensus for interaction and for shaping the society.

3. STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Strategic Plan of EC is built upon three strategic goals, which, within them contain strategic objectives that describe, in further detail, how EC will specifically meet and fulfil its mission and vision.

3.1. STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Increasing opportunities and the know-how for interaction with citizens

EC has turned into one of the most credible and trustworthy organization for the citizens in Prizren. EC is seen as one of the organizations that managed to bring to life the criticism of citizens in Prizren, to mobilize citizens, journalists and other actors, as well as have an impact in various developments on all levels. EC managed to have an impact in the processes where it was thought that the citizens would not be able to push forward public interest, including cultural heritage or municipal transparency here.

EC will continue to cooperate with citizens and to increase the citizens' interaction amongst them, as well as the interaction with state entities, and the public and private sector. EC aims to further increase the impact of citizens through developing successful models of civic mobilization. EC will engage in better organizing the community and well as making it key for the shaping of the environment where it lives. All EC engagements will be useful for the development of democracy in the country, optimal usage of intellectual, physical and financial potential of citizens and resources of the country in order to enrich the living environment, cultural life as well as interaction and coexistence between various cultures, and other benefits that come from a well-mobilized community.

EC will extend and deepen its engagements beyond Prizren, with an initial focus on Prishtina and gradually in other centers as well. We are already engaged in projects that are related to illegal construction and the Historic Center of Prishtina. These projects have helped in turning citizens of Prishtina into members of the EC, in better understanding of the context through research as well as in the preparation of the field to further our engagements in Prishtina.

EC managed, through various project, to successfully identify all matters that would impact in increasing the level of mobilization of citizens. Bearing in mind that this is the biggest goal of the Strategy, the main engagement of EC will go in this direction, where rather challenging activities such as civic activism based on neighbourhoods are also included.

3.1.1. Strategic Objective 1.1.

Increasing EC presence in the community so that we may advance our knowledge, promote civic activism and mobilization

Until now EC has undertaken rather successful activities and managed to have a sufficient impact at the local level as well as enjoy support from the citizens and various groups. The support of the citizens resulted in a very powerful EC where the findings and recommendations of the EC, beside being very well substantiated, also had a high level of legitimacy, thus turning EC into an organization that has a high level of influence.

EC shall further deepen cooperation and interaction with the citizens through focusing more on community initiatives, structuring of volunteer work, training citizens into self-organization, establishing neighbourhood group and so on.

EC will start developing the model of **Inclusive neighbourhood**. Such a project will aim to focus the engagement of EC in neighbourhoods, where meetings with neighbourhood representatives will take place, various issues will be discussed with certain groups and determination of actions which would contribute in further improvement of the living environment in the neighbourhoods will be aimed for. The focus of this engagement shall be promotion of activism and civic interaction for improving and enriching their living environment, as well as to push state entities and the public and private sector into supporting their initiatives. Inclusive neighbourhood will be developed through meetings with neighbourhood representatives, increasing the capacities of the residents for project planning, drafting project-proposals, raising funds, more efficient advocating, as well as interaction with citizens to develop performances and activities that enrich their communal lives.

EC shall establish **Friends of EC**, which aims to be a format of organizing the persons that want to be an active part of EC engagements. This form of organization will enable the EC to be as close as possible to the citizens, for citizens to get to know EC from close up, and to have potential to mobilize citizens whenever the need arises.

3.1.2. Strategic Objective 1.2.

Deepening engagement with a focus in Prizren and Pristina.

The EC's commitment in Prizren has evolved and through this time we managed to increase the intensity of activities as well as make progress in our engagements. EC has chosen to extend its engagements in different layers, where the ultimate goal is for EC to be present with activities and communications in as small as possible organizational units of the community. According to this strategy, the EC will focus its engagement in neighbourhoods with an aim of having the citizens of these neighbourhoods be best organized for action and influence the shaping of their living environment.

Opportunities for geographical expansion of EC into other centres beyond Prizren and Pristina are very great due to the lack of organizations similar to EC and due to its good reputation. The extent of EC is more complicated because this is more than just a simple technical process where the extent should be conducted slowly and coupled with the approach, values and philosophy of the same action that took place in Prizren where EC began its work. This is the same manner in which the process that is taking place in Prishtina is going, where, following an initial phase of research on illegal construction and Historical Center, EC in Pristina will begin activities similar to those which until now only took place in Prizren, including meetings for the inclusive city and the mobilization of various groups for protection and promotion of cultural heritage. In addition to communication with local institutions in Prishtina which has been going on for some time now, EC will begin communicating with different layers of the society and later come down to the neighbourhoods to organize neighbourhood communities.

EC will continuously have smaller engagements outside Prizren and Pristina, which will be aimed at establishing contacts with various groups in these places and informing citizens and municipal authorities about EC activities. By the end of this strategy, the EC's engagements in these places will not be as thorough but more superficial compared to the EC's engagements in Prizren and Pristina.

3.2. STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Better advocacy and understanding of the needs and alternatives for improving the quality of life of the citizens.

EC is extremely interested in having the cycle of its field actions finalized with policies that reflect the recommendations issued by the EC as well as accountable institutions that efficiently implement policies. EC has so far achieved quite good results in public criticism against harmful actions of state entities, offering alternatives to address problematic issues as well as initiating a certain agenda. All of these have been very significant in establishing the identity and enhancing the image of EC. Consequently, the EC will continue to further strengthen the criticism and develop mechanisms to better convey the message.

One of the biggest problems is the implementation of the law, where state officials abuse their powers and exceed their competencies, thus damaging public interests either through the issuance of laws or legal violations to the detriment of the citizens. Exemption from punishment has played a major role in creating such a highly corrupt environment. EC, through its engagement in identifying gaps present in laws and the legal violations perpetrated by state bodies, has made sure that these phenomena are documented and that there is public pressure relating to these issues. Furthermore, it managed to raise the problems of the city of Prizren to different levels through research and analysis, resulting in those problems also being included in the Progress Report of the European Commission.

EC, through active engagement in criticizing the detrimental actions of local and central authorities managed to highlight the great damages caused and to challenge state authorities in different ways. Seeing the effectiveness of this type of action, the EC shall invest even more in building research capacities to become a powerful "do-tank", where following research and analysis there will also be active action to achieve the implementation of recommendations.

3.2.1. Strategic Objective 2.1.

Interacting with institutions in order to ensure healthy relations between citizens and institutions.

Kosovo declared its independence in 2008 and there still are steep challenges within various fields of governance in the country. Political parties are organized groups of mainly personal economic interests which continue to have control with very weak supervision of numerous aspects of institutional and social life. When such a low standard of institutional culture exists, the lack of continuous monitoring only serves to provide space for actions that result in detriment of the citizens.

EC will engage in being the active voice of criticism of various processes by further strengthening the monitoring of actions taken by state authorities. Furthermore, EC will also push forward other processes. Monitoring of the local government and other institutions that are relevant to the lives of citizens of Prizren will be at the centre of EC's work as a watchdog organization. Monitoring will also observe central government institutions in all cases that are related to the living environment in Prizren.

One of the most important engagements of the organization will be facilitating communications between citizens and institutions. EC will utilize all its connections with community groups, as well as new communications to encourage civic action by offering appropriate activism platforms and means. In parallel to encouraging an active citizenry, the organization shall cooperate with all relevant institutions (including the central level) for drafting and implementation of public policies, by ensuring that those policies (decisions, documents, acts, etc.) are taking under consideration the needs and demands of the citizens and that the citizens are an active part of the decision-making processes.

3.2.2. Strategic Objective 2.2

Increasing knowledge on topics that EC addresses to overcome the challenges of lack of materials/literature for those fields

EC is committed to building an internal system for the production of knowledge, which would feed programs, projects, actions and future strategic plans of the organization. In concrete terms, starting from 2015, the organization will engage in establishment and maintenance of a research system that shall have a status of a special program unit within the organizational structure. The establishment of such a unit means consolidating the research capacities and the information management system, as well as the standardization of publications of the organization. Knowledge production shall be one of the most important directions of the EC in the upcoming years.

In building and consolidating research capacities, the organization shall focus on existing resources and will assess the needs for external expertise. Starting in 2015, capacity building programs for existing staff as well as permanent and temporary engagements of additional expertise will form the strategic action for the establishment of such a programming unit of the organization. EC does not aim to turn into a purely research organization (think-tank), but the lack of literature (knowledge) in the fields where the organization operates, resulted in the need of establishing an internal research capacity that will be in service of other programs of the organization.

3.2.3. Strategic Objective 2.3.

Increasing professional competencies and capacities.

During the last years of action, the EC has profiled itself in certain very narrow professional fields, including cultural heritage and urban planning. During the upcoming years, the organization will engage in increasing competencies and internal professional capacities, through training programs for existing staff, as well as engagement of external expertise for short and long-term periods. The increase of professional competencies shall be among the fundamental commitments of the organization on its path to turning into a leader organization in narrow professional fields.

3.2.4. Strategic Objective 2.4.

Increasing impact through efficient communication with various groups/communities to convey the message.

Due to the strategic direction stated in this document EC shall invest in the consolidation of an efficient system of communications to further strengthen communication with community groups in Prizren. All the products and actions of the organization that target community groups will be structured through this communication system. To ensure a strategic approach toward communicating with the public, the organization shall draft a strategic document for communication, which shall foresee all the concrete actions of communicating the work and development of organization's legitimacy toward community groups, civil society sector, media, public authorities and other relevant parties.

3.3. STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Fulfilling the mission through efficient management of human and technological resources.

Efficient management of EC's human and technological resources shall be executed through the process of optimization of resources, which will impact the organizational structure and the extent of responsibilities within the organization. Among the fundamental directions of this organization shall be the advancement of programs and engagement, ensuring efficient management of the organization and programs, by successfully fulfilling the mission of the organization as well as financial management which shall bring in capacities for raising funds and will secure the long-term sustainability of the organization.

3.3.1. Strategic Objective 3.1.

Optimization of resources, organizational structure and the extent of responsibilities with the organization.

Optimization of existing resources of the organization will be the first step towards more efficient management of human and technological resources. In this regard, the organization shall detail the terms of reference for all of the staff, by rethinking the internal division of responsibilities and a more adequate allocation of capacities. One of the more important engagements shall be direction of strategic thinking and staff contribution on how to more efficiently achieve the mission of the organization. The implementation of these internal reforms will be a permanent process within the organization, which requires continuous reflection and rethinking of the allocation of resources in execution of duties.

3.3.2. Strategic Objective 3.2.

Advancement of programs and engagements, to ensure efficient management of the organization and programs, by successfully fulfilling the mission of the organization.

Goals will be the key word for the actions of the organization. All the projects, initiatives and other actions of the EC will be designed and implemented bearing in mind the goals that the organization is committed to. Consequently, the review of actions during the implementation of activities shall be done to reflect and ensure that they are contributing toward fulfilling the goals of the organization. This requires a regular update of the organization's strategy and a permanent process of documenting the work, impact, results and meeting the strategic objectives determined through this document.

3.3.3. Strategic Objective 3.3.

Financial management, capacities to raise funds and ensuring sustainability.

Part of the process of optimizing the resources shall also be the component of financial management of the organization. Through assessment and reviewing of the resources in this component, a more efficient financial management will be aimed for together with the increase of capacities to raise fund which shall translate into longer-term institutional and financial sustainability of the organization. One of the novelties in the actions of the EC will be the drafting of a package of services, which will help the organization in diversifying revenues. Also, one of the fundamental strategic directions of the organization for the future years will be increasing the impact in programming donor funds. EC in particular aims to be turned into an organization that pro-actively raises funds, by decreasing the percentage of funds secured reactively (by responding to donor calls).

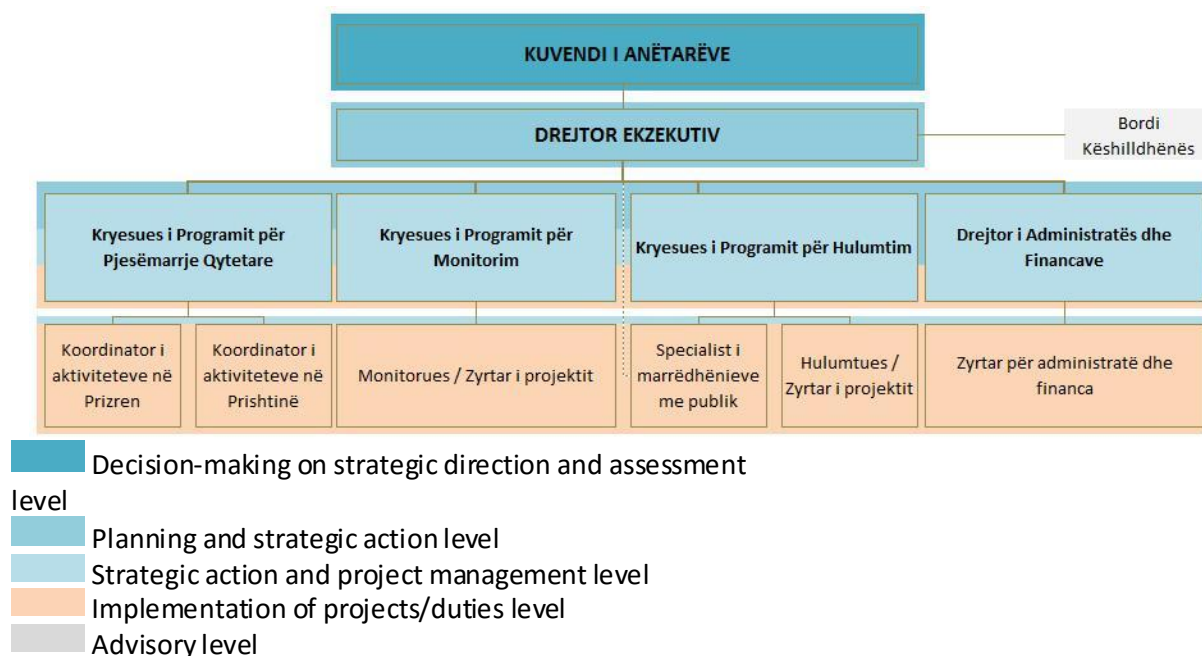
4. ANNEX

4.1. PROGRAMS OF THE ORGANIZATION AND MAIN INITIATIVES

Starting January 2015, EC will operate with the three following programs:

- 1. Inclusive City (mobilization of the community)**
Mobilization of the community represents the very essence of the work of EC. The identity of the organization stems from the engagement of the community. Inclusive city will be an important program of the organization and will represent the distinguishing feature of the EC in relation to other civic society organizations. Part of this program will be actions that promote civil activation at the level of community groups (mainly urban quarters).
- 2. Good governance (monitoring and advocating)**
To ensure that the local government acts in accordance with the requests and interests of community groups as well as keeping alive public pressure toward authorities, the Program of Good Governance will be structured around monitoring activities and the role of a watchdog of the organization. Monitoring is one of the most prominent features of the work of EC, whereas it is designed in such a manner that it will feed the two other programs of the organization with grounded, swift and credible information.
- 3. Research (knowledge production)**
Knowledge production will be one of the fields of permanent engagement of the organization. By building upon the products of research produced during the last years, the organization will build a well-structured system of research and production of policy documents. The research program will also further strengthen the production capacities of the organization and will improve the professional competences in the narrow fields of engagement.

4.2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES



Future organization of EC will be conducted in accordance with the programs: Inclusive City, Good Governance, and Research. During research and workshop of the EC staff on strategic planning, the need for EC program leaders to have an important role in the implementation of the strategy, review of the same, as well as managing projects was highlighted. Furthermore, EC is an association and works with the community, which in turn makes the expression **Head or Leader** for program leaders rather suitable. This expression also contains another very important element which would be that the Head/Leader would be elected from one of the colleagues with a two-year term with a possibility of unlimited re-election. Head/Leader would mean that beside leading the program, the Head/Leader will also be continuously involved in the implementation of projects. This would also be a motive for the colleagues that may have great knowledge to take the position of Head/Leader without any great problems or procedures. Also, any movement from the position of Head/Leader to any other position within the organization would not imply a negative assessment but simply a movement within the organization. Acceptance of the position of Head/Leader of the Program implies that the colleague will take over more responsibilities but in a lot of ways will still be a member of the team. Leader would at the same time mean that the person in this position must also be a Member of the Assembly of EC Ma Ndryshe.

The same need also surfaced on the issue of finances, where the organization already has a need of having financial sustainability and more advanced management. For this reason EC needs to have a **Director** of Administration and Finances. The expression Director in and of itself implies that this will be an assessment of professionalism and will not be a post with a limited term as is the case with program Head/Leader positions.

The third level will comprise of those implementing the projects, who at the same time may be working in different programs. I.e. EC is in need of, at the very least, engaging a person in the post of Administration and Finance Officer in order to avoid conflict of interest in cases as was the “petty cash” one. Consequently, a person that works in one of the programs will be obliged to allocate 20% of their time to also conduct duties that are foreseen for this post.

4.3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Some form of generating funds for emergencies or support for activities not supported by donor projects should be included. These forms include:

20% consultancy – EC staff will engage 80% in projects that they are paid for, whereas 20% engagement will be consultancy for the organization, which will serve to create sustainability of the organization.

Overhead line – EC will include a separate line called Overhead in budget planning of its project-proposals. This line will be around 5-10% of the overall budget. A considerable part of the donors are open to this approach since they understand that it is impossible to have all the costs of a project be direct costs and that the organization needs to have certain investments and expenses which are indirectly connected to the project.

Friends of EC – EC should establish a programs for its friends, so that the organization is in a position to use the Budget Line created from such projects for capital investment, operational expenses and payments for the organization, when these are not

4.4. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

EC shall maintain its strong position in the Transparency Forum and establish the same in Prishtina. The Network of Cultural Organizations is another platform where the organization should deepen their engagement. Membership of the organization in all other networks (Cultural Forum, Civikos, SEE Heritage) should be consolidated and EC should increase its attempts to achieve its goals by also mobilizing actions within these networks.

EC members should spend a whole day every two weeks in meeting with members of the community. All other engagements of the organization shall be left aside on that day and this will be a day dedicated to the community. Despite these meetings being seen as informal, they still need to be structured.

4.5. SWOT

FAKTORË QË KONTROLLOHEN NGA BRENDA

STRENGTHS	WEIGHT
Organized and serious at work/Staff motivated to work – Work ethics	3
Freedom of expression, opportunity to disclose staff values	3
Proximity with the community	3
Staff harmony, collegiality	3-
Consistence in action	2.5
Cultural heritage and urbanism	2.5
High level of staff activism	2-
Creativity	
Diversity of professions	

WEAKNESSES	WEIGHT
Lack of systematic approach to general and profile-based capacity building	3
Lack or insufficiency of critical thinking within the staff	3
Lack of sufficient capacities for fundraising	3
Insufficient professional and writing competencies	3
Lack of abilities for presentation and qualitative representation of the organization	3-
Staff comfortability / comfort zone / lack of initiative	2.5
Adapting language to different audiences	2
Division in two offices that causes problems in swift communication of the staff (including administration and finances)	1.5
Lack of orientation sessions for new staff	
Adequate focusing of energies in criticism and offering Solutions	
Lack of direct intervention	
Database of various data that are collected by the organization	

OPPORTUNITIES	WEIGHT
EC Credibility/trustworthiness by the citizens / public Opinion	3+
Low number of NGOs that address same/similar topics	3
Lack of systematic knowledge about EC topics and sufficient material for research	3
Direction of international donor funds to the local level	3
Better image of EC with the donors	3
Utilizing the existing potential within the networks in which EC already is	2.5
Lack of organization of the community (including the Youth	2
Need for EX in other cities	2
Exploration of good practices in Kosovo and region that may be utilized by the EC	2
Increasing potential of volunteer work (mostly with the young)	2
Positive trend of development of tourism in the Prizren region (opportunity for services)	2
Readiness of certain institutions to cooperate with the EC (Municipality of Prishtina)	2
Usage of external expertise for the needs of EC (outside research)	1.5
The growing trend for preservation of cultural heritage	1.5
Growing trend of approximation of citizens with the EC	1.5
Usage of the network of personal contacts for the needs of the organization	1.5
Utilizing the media and better relations with the media	

THREATS	WEIGHT
Low interest of the community / weariness of the community toward EC activities	3
Community's lack of belief in change, weary of roundtables	3
Lack of alternative sources of funding	2.8
Protection of cultural values / culture is not a priority for the institutions / public policies	2.5
Poor governing in the Municipality of Prizren	2.5
Prizren local media weary of EC	2
Closed institutional approach and lack of communication culture	2
Lack of donor interest for cultural heritage	1.5
External perception where the EC is equated to the opposition	1.5
Institutions weary of EC	1.5
Tendency of recruitment by political parties	1
Duplication of activities with other organizations	1

