

REReP 2.3: Promoting Networking and Cooperation of Environmental NGOs

ALBANIA Progress report May 31, 2003

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1. Introduction

1.1 Set up of the project in Albania

Due to the present MKOE project in Albania, REC and MKOE reached an agreement of considering MKOE as leading organization on supporting NGO e-network. Therefore a continuous dialogue and exchange of information exists between two country representations in activity and time planning. MKOE supports the operation related costs of the “Center for Electronic Communication” (QKE), while REC Albania through the country component of REReP 2.3 supports some of the activity related costs for this Center. In addition, REC and MKOE has closely cooperated on supporting and organizing other NGO sector activities, which enhance the e-networking and cooperation in regional and national scale.

In addition to the common activities organized and support by REC and MKOE, REC Albania is responsible for developing and implementing several other activities under REReP 2.3 in the fields of “E-Info Exchange” and “Logistic support for e-networking”. Although the leading role remains with REC Albania, the cooperation with NGOs and especially QKE has been principle of our work.

1.2 QKE establishment and strengthening process

By the initiative of MKOE, a group of e-communication is established in Albania called Center for Electronic Communication” (QKE) (initially known as “Jehona”). It is composed by 4 NGO members of different NGOs, coming from different regions of Albania. The 4 young members have shown a high dedication and enriched the short curriculum of this group by ideas and means of encouraging the e-communication among the environmental NGO sector.

Step by step, QKE established the organization structure and procedures such Charter and other important papers, which will allow them to get registered and establish a legal registered group. The process of registering is due. The group holds monthly meetings in Tirana, where specific topics are discussed (organization, activities, future strategies, new contacts, etc). Recently the group has hired an assistant who is working on assisting the group on activity implementation.

QKE has its own logo, web page (www.qke-al.org) and has made several presentations to get know by the environmental NGO community in different meetings, publications of REC, MKOE, etc.

Finally, QKE has established links and cooperation with other networks in the region, as BlueLink, etc and participated actively on regional meetings with this focus (Bulgaria, Kosovo/a, etc). QKE is part of the Project “Regional Environmental Content Sharing in the SEE Region” .

1.3 QKE partner on implementing REReP 2.3 activities

REC Albania has considered the strengthening of QKE as one of the important component of REReP 2.3 implementation in Albania, going in parallel with the strengthening of the all environmental civil society. This approach aims at promoting similar positive experiences from the region and establish the bases of cooperation and information and experience share within this sector.

REC support the activity part of QKE working plan mainly being focused on Capacity Building for other env. NGO in Albania (training component). Such a support has a double positive effect: a) capacity building for NGOs and b) increase the visibility and promote the establishment of QKE in the NGO sector. In addition, REC supports some promotion materials such as leaflets, etc.

The “Logistic support for e-networking for NGOs” aims at supporting the establishment of e-network through providing equipment to other NGOs. QKE is involved in the process by developing a questionnaire, which will help REC Local Advisory Board on making the best decision on awarding the requested equipment.

2. Progress of activities to date (REReP 2.3 support)

2.1 Capacity Building: NGO Training on “E-communication tools”

QKE has organized two trainings out of 6 planned courses. All arrangements and logistic support for the training programme is arranged by QKE hired assistant. The implementation period for this activity started from March 2003. The course in figures are presented in the following paragraph:

First training course: (Geographical Region: Korce-Pogradec)

Place:	Pogradec
Date:	April 19, 2003
Participants:	12
QKE Trainers:	2
Invited Journalist:	1

Second training course (Geographical Region: Shkoder – Lezhe - Puke)

Place:	Shkodra
Date:	May 17, 2003
Participants:	13
QKE Trainers:	2
Invited Journalist:	1

The feedback for the trainees is good and evaluating the training as useful for their future work. (Attached training reports) REC Albania staff has worked closely with QKE on trying to support and monitored the preparation and implementation process by participating in preparatory meetings, support with material photocopies, telecommunication, etc. The evaluation is that QKE is quite committed to deliver high professional trainings and use this opportunity to their maximum visibility and presentation in front of NGO community.

2.2 Information Exchange: Information exchange on environmental field (Env. Today)

In the frame of REReP 2.3, REC is on the implementation of this activity since Aug 2002, as a follow up of the previous project supported by MKOE. The goal is establish a forum of information exchange via e-tool Environment Today. One person is working daily on env. information collection, compilation of the daily e-packages and deliver the product to approx. 350 email addresses. The activity in figures is presented in the following paragraph:

Title of product:	Environment Today : (e-version)
No. of packages (from Aug.02 to date)	244
Total no. of packages (from May 00-May 31, 03)	954
Distribution:	350 addresses
Distribution time:	daily
Sources of env. information:	NGOs, GO, inst, academia, individuals
No. of NGO contribution in total:	75%
Structure of product:	Country / Region / worldwide NEWS, Announcements, Project/REC introduction

This service is the only one in Albania ensuring an up-to-date and very fresh env. information to all sectors. It helps especially the NGOs in districts to establish links and be part of a broader information pictures. There is constant increase in no. of subscribers and contribution arriving to "editor" account.

The positive feedback is expressed very frequently in meetings, letters to editor, message to e-mail accounts etc.

By MKOE support, REC Albania produces the bi-weekly printed version of **Environment Today** contains NGO News, Opinions, Interviews, Profiles, etc, It is addressed and targets the environmental NGO community needs and fields of developments.

2.3 Transparency and ownership of networks

REC Albania supported the youth session in the National Meeting of environmental NGOs organized and supported by MKOE in partnership with Assoc. for Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania (PPNEA).

The youth activism has been seen as one of the weaknesses for the civil society developments in env. sector in Albania. By the initiative of PPNEA and moderation of QKE, 12 youth members of different env. NGOs discussed on how the network of youth units within env. NGOs. It was a good opportunity to promote QKE as a capacity and opportunity for enhancing env. youth activities. Figures about the event:

Place:	Golem, Albania
Date:	April 27, 2003
No. of participants :	youth section 12
QKE Moderation:	1
Duration:	4 hrs

2.4 Logistic support for e-networking for NGOs

In the frame of this activity, REC Albania announced during April month (2003) the opportunity of supporting Env. NGO by equipment, which will help them on further developing the ecommunication. Specific TORs are produced and certain condition which will favorable for e-networking (office, experience, etc). The deadline was set for May 09, 2003. Eighteen project proposals (requests for equipment) are submitted to REC.

Phases of equipment award:

<i>a- Announcement:</i>	<i>April 01 – May 09, 2003</i>
<i>b- Collection of proposals:</i>	<i>until May 09, 2003</i>
<i>c- Prescreening on fulfillment of criteria:</i>	<i>May 24, 2003</i>
<i>d- Notification of the first round selection</i>	<i>May 25, 2003</i>
<i>e- Questionnaire to be prepared with QKE on the interest for e-networking:</i>	<i>May 31, 2003</i>
<i>f- Distribution/collection of questionnaire</i>	<i>June 15, 2003</i>
<i>g- REC/QKE processing the questionnaires</i>	<i>June 20, 2003</i>
<i>h- Board Meeting (QKE as observer)</i>	<i>June 25, 2003</i>
<i>i- Purchasing procedures according to REC policies</i>	<i>June 25 - July 15, 2003</i>
<i>j- Award Agreements and Delivery to NGOs</i>	<i>June 15 - June 31, 2003</i>

3. Conclusions and future plans

- The progress of the project busted during 2003, although the activities related to Environmental information exchange continued according to the predefined plan since Aug 2002.
- The partnership with QKE is evaluated as very good and opening opportunities for their strengthening and institutionalization as NGO.
- Besides the efforts done with NGOs on presenting the opportunities of the e-networking, there still room for further progress to raise their interest on activism.

According to the project activity plan, the implementation will continue in the coming months according to the following steps:

No.	Field of Activity	Time of Implementation	Implemented by
1	Capacity Building (4 training courses)	June – October 2003	QKE
2	Promotion materials for QKE (leaflet, business cards, adhesives)	June – July 2003	QKE
3	Environmental Today(e-version) (daily e-packages)	Continuous	REC
4	National Meeting of NGOs interested on e-networking	Sept 2003	QKE
5	Computer support (to NGOs)	June-July 2003	REC/QKE