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### How Kosovar citizens engage in the political process: The role of interest groups and the uses of technology

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***How Kosovar Citizens Engage in the Political Process:  
The Role of Interest Groups and the Uses of Technology***

**Masters in Public Policy Thesis Submitted in  
Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements for the**

**College of Liberal Arts/Public Policy Program at  
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

**Rochester, New York**

**March, 2006**

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## Summary Page

1. **Thesis title:** How Kosovar Citizens Engage in the Political Process?  
The Role of Interest Groups and the Use of Technology
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3. **External Sponsors:**
  - 1) American University in Kosovo Foundation
  - 2) Rochester Institute of Technology: Science, Technology and Public Policy Program
  - 3) Rochester Institute of Technology: Center for Multidisciplinary Studies
4. **Abstract:** This thesis focuses on how Kosovo citizens currently engage themselves in the political process. An engaged civil society is needed to assist Kosovo in its transition toward a final status decision as well as continuing development. As this is a very broad question to address, the focus is on two areas: how do citizens engage themselves through interest groups and how do these interest groups use technology to promote political engagement? Structured interviews with local citizens involved in Kosovo interest groups are the main source of information used in the analysis. Quantitative and qualitative analysis is used to explain Kosovo citizen motivation to participate, barriers to engagement, minority issues in the political processes, uses of technology, and recommendations for the future development of Kosovo civil society.

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## List of Acronyms

The following is a list of acronyms and their meanings used throughout the text.

Acronym	Complete Title
AUK	American University in Kosovo
CDHRF	Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms
CIVPOL	International Civilian Police
CMS	Center for Multidisciplinary Studies
CRGP	Center for Research and Gender Policy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions
DFDI	British Department for Internal Development
EARF	European Agency for Reconstruction

HABITAT	United Nations Center for Human Settlements
EU	European Union
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPKO	Internet Program Kosovo
IT	Information Technology
KCC	Kosovo Chamber of Commerce
KEC	Kosovo Education Center
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO)
KFOS	Kosovo Foundation for and Open Society
KPS	Kosovo Police Forces
MFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PISG	Provisional Institution of Self-Government
RIT	Rochester Institute of Technology
SFERA	Institute for Social and Policy Studies
SOK	Statistical Office of Kosovo
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## ***I. Introduction***

The history of Kosovo has been summarized by Bernard Kouchner, the head of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) “as forty years of communism, ten years of apartheid, and a year of ethnic cleansing” (NATO, 2000). Based on their extensive record of social and political oppression, the re-development and installation of a peaceful democratic system in Kosovo will be a long and difficult process.

As of June 10, 1999, Kosovo was granted autonomy from Serbia and defined as a protectorate of the United Nations (Gil-Robles, 2002). Kosovo utilizes regional and international humanitarian efforts to assist in building a more stable society (NATO, 2000). The United Nations has set up a parallel system of government to assist in the restructuring and transition to a democratic and capitalistic society. This parallel system consists of UNMIK as the main decision making branch. UNMIK is made up of international leaders, while the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) is a body of locally elected leaders established to share and carry out administrative actions as power is transferred to them (Archer, 2003). The security forces are also set up in similar arrangement, with the power slowly being transferred from the United Nations police forces, CIVPOL, and the NATO Kosovo Forces, KFOR, to the local Kosovo Police Force (KPS) (Archer, 2003).

Many different social, economic, environmental, and political issues were identified from previous research on Kosovo’s development which used a systems approach titled *Current Social, Economic, Political, and Environmental Issues in Kosovo: Exploring Linkages to Sustainable Development* (Fisher, 2005). Policy recommendations were made to address Kosovo’s challenges with a sustainable

development goal by taking into account that different issues are often linked by a common root issue(s); understanding the larger picture can often assist policy makers in better understanding and forming sustainable development plans for the future (Fisher, 2005).

In the case of Kosovo, a root issue that linked many other issues, such as ethnic division, distrust of government, violence, and slow economic development, was the undefined final status. As demonstrated in my earlier work, the outcome of Kosovo's final status is a main concern for many citizens, creating great uncertainty in Kosovo's future (Fisher, 2005). This issue alone may be a major motivation to encourage citizens to voice their opinion and become engaged in the political process. However there are a number of different issues that may drive citizens to become involved in an interest group or other means of engagement in the policy and political processes.

Conclusions from the previous research suggested that strong linkages and greater communication between communities and their government should be a focus for Kosovo (Fisher, 2005). This thesis examines how Kosovo citizens are becoming engaged and participating in the political-decision making process through the actions of an interest group and the uses of technology. Data concerning Kosovo's current public participation activities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were collected from interviews and publications of eight different local NGOs and two international organizations. Discussion includes information on the activities and development of the organizations interviewed, motivation for participation in Kosovo, barriers to participation in Kosovo, a specific focus on minority issues in public participation and



how they differ from general society, the uses and development of technology in Kosovo's civil society, and conclusions and recommendations.

## ***II. Literature Review***

### **A. Public Participation**

Encouraging citizens to express their viewpoints and desires is important for building and maintaining a democracy in which citizen participation is valued in decision making. Even in a representative system in which citizens are not the direct decision makers, communication between citizens and public officials is highly important for the officials to understand the needs of the communities and constituents. The United Nations Center for Human Settlements (HABITAT) describes increased participation as “the single greatest positive feature of the development of cities in the last 30 years...Participation, of course, is not the same thing as influence, and certainly not the same thing as decision-making; yet it is an essential element in each” (2001, p. 40).

Philosophers Bentham and Mill explain a main purpose of participation to be: “a purely protective function, it ensured that the private interests of each citizen were protected (the universal interest being merely a sum of individual interests)” (Pateman, 1970, pg. 20). Another philosopher, Rousseau, agrees that participation is “a way of protecting private interests and ensuring good government” (Pateman, 1970, pg. 24).

Participation in the political system is also important for building more unified communities and greater acceptance of final decisions. Rousseau theorizes that participation increases a citizen's sense of belonging to the community (Pateman, 1970). The United Kingdom's Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions

(DETR) also explains in a report titled *Public Participation in Making Local*

*Environmental Decisions* how public participation can lead to good decision making:

Involving more people in the process uses a wider range of experiences. It brings in more points of view and uses knowledge about local conditions that might not be widely known. If the decision takes account of this wider range of experiences and views, it is more likely to be 'right' since more issues have been considered and more risks evaluated. Lengthy arguments after the decision has been made can also be avoided since different opinions have already been considered. The decision is more likely to withstand scrutiny if the decision-making process is more open, more honest and more accountable (2000, pg 11).

Although there are many apparent benefits to public participation in decision making and other government actions, participation is a difficult concept to define.

Definitions of participation are often broad for application in different circumstances, at many different levels, and to include in a combination of many different activities. One definition of participation comes from McGregor in his 1960 book titled *The Human Side of Enterprise* in which he explains that participation "consists basically in creating opportunities under suitable conditions for people to influence decisions affecting them. That influence can vary from a little to a lot" (pg. 124).

In this thesis research, participation will be considered to be any citizen action and/or communication where a citizen chooses to be involved with an organization which contributes to the political processes or the public good. This definition of participation is general in order to include a wide variety of public participation activities such as research, taking part in an activity, or involvement in a training seminar. It may also include one time involvement or sustained participation. This is done to ensure that all views of participation held by Kosovo citizens are included, which may differ based on the situation, experiences, or beliefs of each citizen.

## **B. Interest Groups and Their Role in Public Participation**

Interest groups are one way that information and points of view can be expressed between a citizen or community and government, presenting many possibilities for public participation to affect policy decision making. Interest groups may be non-governmental organizations that focus on lobbying, research, neighborhood revitalization, or other actions that promote the organization's cause. According to Jeffrey M. Berry in *The Interest Group Society*, an interest group is defined simply as "an organization that tries to influence government" (1997, pg. 4). He further explains:

It is often the case that interest groups are equated with voluntary organizations, membership groups composed of people with similar interests or occupations who have joined together to gain some benefits... They are a primary link between citizens and their government, forming a channel of access through which members voice their opinions to those who govern them (1997, pg 5-6).

There are a number of reasons why citizens may want to become involved in an interest group, such as concern in a common cause or issue in which they are motivated to take action, desire to become involved with one's community, to build one's knowledge and skills, desire to benefit others, or achievement of personal benefit through influencing decision makers and the public. There are a number of ways that citizens may find out about interest groups as well. Many learn about organizational activities through business or personal connections, through information distributed in the mail by the organization, or media attention that the organization receives around an activity. In *Linking Citizens to Government*, Lawrence S. Rothenberg speculates that those who join interest groups are more often those that are interested in politics and place greater weight on political issues (1992, pg. 74). Rothenberg also describes how interest groups are able to play a role in the policy making process:

Given a membership that is capable of learning and that takes political goals into account in their decisions about retention and activism, rumblings from the grassroots can guide an organization agenda which, in turn, may provide elected officials with cues regarding how to behave. The very same membership sensitivity to political factors that helps determine goals may also feed back into a group's ability to have an impact on policy. Thus, public interest groups are not necessarily impotent, symbolic vehicles that lack political influence; their actions may even be prompted and facilitated by organizational contributors.(1992, p. 222).

Unfortunately, most of the literature on interest groups and links between citizens and government has been limited to focusing on American politics. However, there is still much to learn from the years of experiential research and literature from the Western world in how interest groups are formed, how they gain members, and how they influence policy. For example, when researching how groups are formed one often looks to Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action*. Olsen hypothesizes that, using rational thought, people with a common interest will still choose not to join an organization because they experience the same benefits whether they are involved or not (1965). This is otherwise known as the "free rider" issue.

Therefore, interest groups must find a way to provide benefits that only those involved can receive. Cigler and Loomis explain three different types of benefits that organizations can provide members: material, solidary, and expressive (1998). Material benefits are "tangible rewards of participation, such as income or services that have monetary value"; solidary incentives are "the socially derived, intangible rewards created by the act of associations, such as fun, camaraderie, status, or prestige"; and expressive rewards are "those derived from advancing a particular cause or ideology" (Cigler and Loomis, 1998, pg 8-9). Another viewpoint that is important to consider is that some

individuals may choose to be involved because the time they spend for the organization becomes a benefit, and not a cost, through personal satisfaction (Hirschman, 1982).

All of these benefits are important to understand why citizens may become involved and also how an organization maintains membership. Organizations in developing regions such as Kosovo need to understand the constituents that are interested in the organization's goals and what type of benefits may entice them to be more involved. Benefits may also be important for organizations competing for membership from a similar group of citizens (Cigler and Loomis, 1998).

Government actions also have influence on interest groups and citizen participation. For example, programs sponsored by government through legislation often require citizen participation or give funding for paid staff (Cigler and Loomis, 1998). However, at times government funding discourages the need for volunteers and/or members. Cigler and Loomis explain that "increasingly, groups have appeared that are essentially staff organizations with little or no membership base" (1998, pg. 15).

Additionally, if a citizen has an interest in an issue it does not necessarily mean he/she will take the initiative to find an organization with which they want to be involved. At times, citizens do search out organizations based on strong interests often spurred by market trends, policy failures, or even natural disasters. However, to keep a consistent membership base and active volunteers, organizations need to find effective ways to not only communicate to decision-makers but also to citizens in order to inform them of government actions, what the organization does to influence government decisions, planned actions and events, and how citizens can become involved.

Organizations may contact citizens through fliers in the mail, by phone, email, a website, a newsletter, door to door, ads in magazines, on the T.V., or radio, or personal contact at events. According to Cigler and Loomis, “direct mailing advertising is the most important method of contacting nonmembers and encouraging them to join...All but the smallest organizations tend to use direct-mail recruitment, despite the fact that a very high volume of mail is required to compensate for low responses” (1998, pg. 59). This conclusion is from information gathered in the United States and may not be similar in other countries due to differences in culture and levels of development.

The above generalizations about interest groups are useful for a general understanding. This information is provided to understand a range of views on the interactions and importance of interest groups and as examples of how they have functioned in other societies. A more in-depth analysis of interest groups in the United States is often not applicable to other countries and populations. Though there may be viable comparisons, this research is not meant to impose views of how citizens are supposed to participate in interest groups and how those interest groups work within the political system. Such literature will not be included in this research. Additionally, examples of activities in Eastern Europe and other developing regions will be used for illustration of the development of civil society activities, their experiences, successes, and barriers in public participation.

### **C. International Perspectives of Civil Society Building**

In the international community, the World Bank has become a major player assisting developing countries civil society organizations (CSOs) through funding and supporting different activities and/or programs which address many of the issues facing the countries citizens. Civil society is defined as “a network of voluntary associations comprised of private individuals independent of direct state control influenced by public policy” (Gordon and Durst, 2004, pg xiii). Interest groups would be one type of organization that makes up a civil society.

In the 2005 World Bank document, *World Bank—Civil Society Engagement: Review of Fiscal Years 2002-2004*, it is explained that:

Policies and programs on civic engagement and participation expanded and consolidated across regions and countries. The definition of these concepts was further refined to include the notion of *social accountability* and the promotion of an *enabling environment* for civil society participation, which are two key elements of the Bank’s new social development approach to promote institutions that are responsive and inclusive and that empower poor and vulnerable people to participate effectively in development (pg. xiii).

One region in which the World Bank is actively supporting civic engagement, participation, and social responsibility is Africa. An example of one successful initiative is the *Local Level Institutions* action research programs which were active in “Burkina Faso, Chad, Kenya, and Niger. In the Chad/Cameroon pipeline project, a Local Level Institutions pilot project is encouraging CSOs to carry out bottom-up planning, improve their poverty reduction efforts, and expand monitoring activities to ensure government accountability” (World Bank, 2005, pg. 33). In Nigeria, programs supported by the World Bank have assisted in raising primary school attendance and completion for girls in twenty-seven local communities. Nigeria has also been a major recipient of funding for

AIDS prevention, one third of which is directed to CSOs for AIDS education and other prevention projects (World Bank, 2005, pg. 34).

In East Asia and the Pacific region, the World Bank has been integral in the growth of civil society and supporting efforts that assist the CSOs capacity building and networking abilities. Networking of the organizations could become a vital tool as CSOs continue to grow and take on new projects; shared resources and knowledge can make these projects very useful. For instance, this would be very helpful in Cambodia, which has seen a growth in local CSOs from 150 in 1995 to 500 in 2004 and 180 international nongovernmental organizations (World Bank, 2005, pg. 34).

In Europe and Central Asia, CSOs have been particularly important in the development of civil society and assisting communication between society and government. CSOs in Kazakhstan are a good example. They “organized public consultations attended by farmers, government officials, and environmental experts on the draft Environmental Impact Assessment of the Nura River Clean-Up and Reforestation Project” (World Bank, 2005, pg. 36).

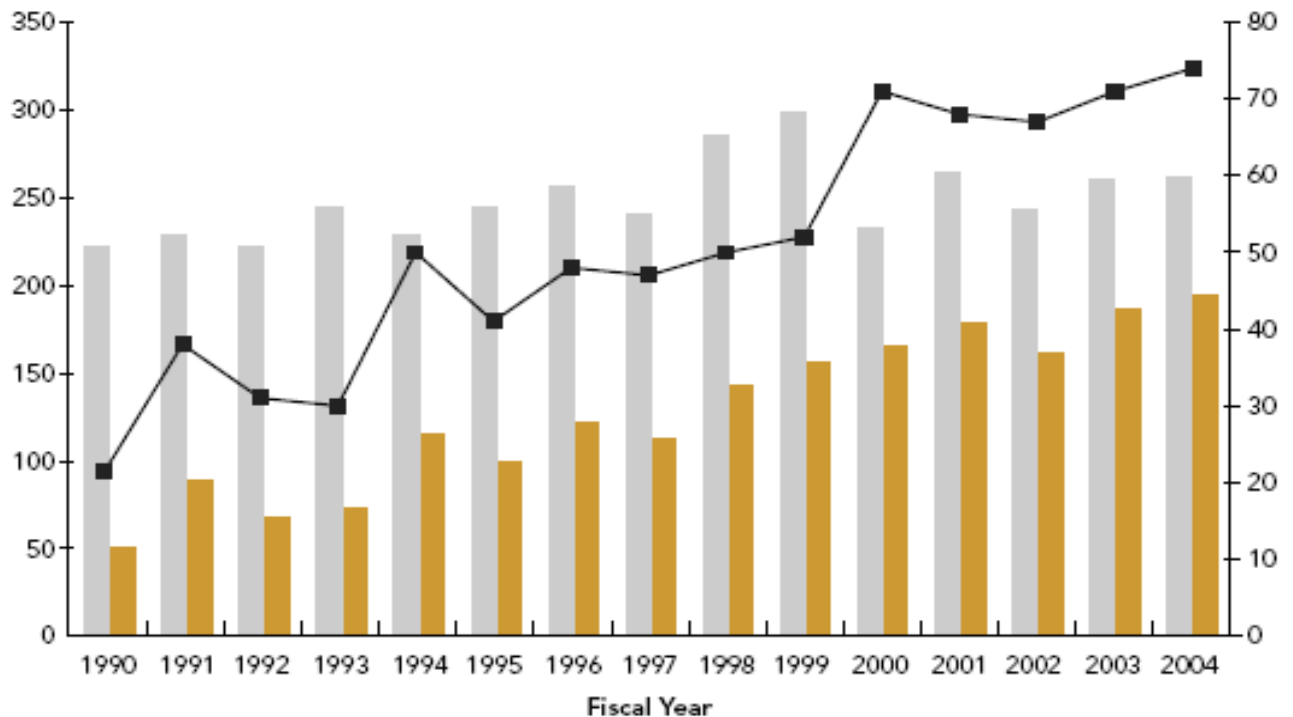
The World Bank’s activities in India have also been highly successful in the area of empowering women. For example, a workshop was held which focused on the reduction of gender inequality and how India and society can better support “women’s rights for economic growth and poverty reduction” (World Bank, 2005, pg. 41). In another initiative to connect citizens and government, the Gender Platform was formed. Consisting of government officials and CSO leaders, “the platform developed terms of reference and an action plan, which led to public consultations and negotiations with the



inter-ministerial Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Task Force” (World Bank, 2005, pg. 41).

The World Bank, one of the world’s most respected organizations for developmental aid and assistance, values the outcomes of public participation and society’s role in the decision-making process. This is evident from the span of activities around the world, only a few of which have been identified in this paper. The valued importance of civil society can also be seen in Figure 1 below, illustrating the World Bank’s increased funding for CSO projects and activities.

**Figure 1: Civil Society in World Bank Projects, Fiscal Years 1990-2004**



Source: Desk review of World Bank documents conducted by the World Bank’s Social Development Department.

Note: The gray columns indicate total number of new IBRD and IDA loans each fiscal year, and orange columns indicate the loans that reported involvement by civil society in the identification, planning, and appraisal phases. The transversal line indicates the percentage of the orange in relation to the gray columns, which represents, in turn, the percentage of World Bank projects with CSO involvement each fiscal year.

(World Bank, 2005, pg. 18).

The development of Kosovo's civil society has also been supported by many of the international organizations that have been active in Kosovo since the end of the war. For example the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission in Kosovo is an international and administrative organization of Kosovo which among other objectives focuses on the development of civil society. Agon Demjaha and Lulzim Peci summarize their knowledge and research of Kosovo's civil society in a chapter of Dane R. Gordon and Davic C. Durst's book, *Civil Society in Southeast Europe*, titled "The Development of Civil Society in Kosovo After The "Kosovo Conflict." Demjaha and Peci explain Kosovo's history with organizing groups in the face of oppression, but have since not been able to develop and adjust to the many changes the society is facing. They state:

During the 1990s, emphasis was placed on a small number of well-organized alternative political, health and educational organizations, providing unity and discipline essential under the conditions of political oppression. But since the conflict in 1999, some of these organizations have had difficulty adapting to the new circumstances of competition and diversification normally associated with civil society... Unfortunately, relatively few avenues of popular self-expression exist; during the years of repression, public media was in the hands of political parties and umbrella organizations. Apart from the emergence of new media, no real alternatives exist for promoting citizens' concerns and understanding civic values (2004, pg 68; 71).

In the chapter, the effects of Kosovo's unique parallel government with international rule are also discussed. Demjaha and Peci argue that the opportunity cost of the interests and development of the international community in Kosovo is that fewer citizens have been available to develop locally driven organizations and interest groups. These actions will not support a sustainable civil society once the international community begins to leave Kosovo. Explained further:

A paradox in the presence of the international community in Kosovo is given in the fact that it draws individuals with great talent and leadership away from local Kosovar organizations. This inhibits the development of NGOs and other organizations of civil society at the local level. If the international community is to make a real difference in Kosovo, it must avoid forming local structures which cannot maintain themselves. A viable strategy for promoting peace and democracy must be based on effective local organizational structures (2004, pg. 69).

A developed civil society is important to local sustainability and democracy; especially in a developing country. In *Civil Society in Democratization* it is stated that “in developmental debates, it is argued that the growth of civil society, in its modern form at least, can play a crucial political role not merely by...contributing to the establishment and maintenance of a democratic polity, but also by improving the quality of governance within that polity” (Burnell and Calvert, ed., 2004, pg. 13).

Patrice C. McMahon, author of the “Building Civil Societies in East Central Europe: The Effect of American Non-governmental Organizations on Women’s Groups” a chapter in *Civil Society in Democratization*, agrees with Demjaha and Peci that advocacy organizations such as interest groups must be locally driven in order to be sustainable. She states:

As the *voluntary* associational realm that lies between the family and the state, civil society organizations, by definition, are created and sustained because of citizens’ interests and support. Given the traditional grass-roots trajectory of civil society, external actors must take great care to ensure that a domestic advocacy network is created. This network includes three main components: support among local elites, autonomous, contextually rooted organizations, and culturally specific ideas (2004, pg. 258).

The above literature lays the foundation for understanding how a developed civil society can support democratic principles in a developing country. Citizen participation in local interest groups is one form of civic engagement and therefore it is important to research its current development in Kosovo. Particularly keeping in mind the potential

effects of the international community, Kosovo is an interesting case analysis to understand how citizens become engaged with interest groups, what role citizens believe they should play in the policy and political processes, and if they view civic engagement as important.

#### **D. Technology and its Potential Impact on Public Participation**

Technology has been credited with increasing communication, efficiency, access to information and many other benefits to different sectors within societies, including government. Most recently, the potential of E-government has emerged as the newest utilization of “information and communication technologies (ICT) to transform government by making it more accessible, effective and accountable” (Center for Democracy and Technology, 2002, pg. 1). Already many governments in developed and developing countries maintain websites with policy information and ways in which citizens can contact their public officials. Others include even more advanced technological communication methods such as posting boards and the ability to directly chat with policy decision makers; all new methods to entice greater public participation in the political processes.

According to the Center for Democracy and Technology’s publication, *The E-Government Handbook for Developing Countries*, E-government is not only accessible to Western, developed nations as many may argue. The handbook states that “some of the most innovative uses of the Internet in governance are appearing in the developing world, as ICTs are being used to streamline government and connect it more closely with the

people it is supposed to serve” (2002, pg. 1). Some of the proposed benefits of E-government are:

- Providing greater access to government information;
- Promoting civic engagement by enabling the public to interact with government officials;
- Making government more accountable by making its operations more transparent and thus reducing the opportunities for corruption; and
- Providing development opportunities, especially benefiting rural and traditionally underserved communities.

(Center for Democracy and Technology, 2002, pg. 1).

As seen in the description of E-government, there are many ways in which technology can empower citizens. However, ICTs involving virtual interaction, such as chat rooms, which are associated with E-government are not explored in this research of Kosovo’s public participation. Instead, more basic uses of technologies for ICT to enhance interest group and governmental connection with citizens are explored. For example these technologies could include television, phone, informational websites, or email.

Technology is imperative to communication and the distribution of information necessary for interest groups to contact potential organization members, current organization members, and political officials. In the report *Cities in a Globalizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements 2001*, HABITAT discusses the role of ICT in civil society building: “the Internet can facilitate citizen involvement in local public affairs and help inform voters” (p. 60). However, one example provided in the HABITAT report of the use of the internet to increase public participation in Amsterdam, called Digital City, also states that the degree of increased participation has not met initial expectations.

Further explained:

The real influence of virtual debates on traditional politics has been minimal. Most visitors are young, well-educated and highly computer-literate, a profile which corresponds to only a relatively small segment of society. Although the project's direct political impact is not yet what its planners envisioned, the Digital City has helped bring Dutch citizens on-line, enabled them to find other citizens with similar interests or concerns and provide them with a format for exchanging information and taking action (2001, p. 60)

There is much debate over the use of the Internet as an information and communication technology which is predicted to have a great affect on public participation and democratic development to include citizen input in decision making.

Ferber, Foltz, and Pugliese (2005) state:

The introduction of various technologies such as radio, television, and computers has been accompanied by predictions that they will change the nature of democracy. Such claims are in the air again, as advocates of cyberdemocracy see the Internet and Web sites as the salvation for the shortcomings of democracy. Public participation, in particular, is projected to increase due to the interactive nature of this new medium (402).

There are arguments for and against the Internet's affect on democracy and public participation. For example, Bruce Bimber does not believe there is a strong relationship between increased ICT and public participation or the development of democracy, but instead it will increase pluralism and alter the political power structure (1998). Others, such as Benjamin Barber view the Internet as a means that will provide citizens with increased information for a stronger role in governmental decision making (1984). These relationships will not be explored in Kosovo as they are topics which require a more in-depth analysis of the Internet in Kosovo than this thesis includes.

The technological issue explored in this thesis is how technology is used by interest groups to contact citizens and decision makers. This is described by Ferber, Foltz, and Pugliese (2005) as technology which promotes interaction, including websites with issue based information or contact information. In order for citizens to become concerned

about an issue and learn about potential policies political officials are considering and how those decisions may affect society, they need information. Information can be distributed through media, political officials reaching out to citizens, and interest groups providing citizens with their views on an issue. It is important for an emerging democracy to develop these methods for informing citizens and for government and organizations to understand the most effective ways in which to reach their citizens.

In *Diffusion of Innovation*, Everett M. Rogers explains his theory of how information is disseminated to citizens through the process of diffusion. Within a social structure there are many individuals that can influence change and diffusion. Rogers describes these individuals:

Opinion leaders are members of the social system in which they exert their influence. In some instances individuals with influence in the social system are professionals who represent change agencies external to the system. A change agent is an individual who influences external innovation-decisions in a direction deemed desirable by a change agency. The change agent usually seeks to obtain the adoption of new ideas, but may also attempt to slow down diffusion and prevent the adoption of undesirable innovations (1995, pg. 27-28)

These change agents and opinion leaders are often members of interest groups, knowing that their combined influences result in a desired change that is typically more effective. Change agents are important for citizen motivation through distributing information and promoting policies and/or changes that support their organization's beliefs.

Many organizations and individuals around the world can be considered change agents through their use of different forms of technology to spread information and encourage citizens to become engaged in an issue. Technology used in these instances

may include local newspapers, communication through mailings, the phone, emails, newsletters, television commercials, or web pages.

Throughout history, societies, or change agents, have often used technology as a means of economic and social development. This may mean industrialization or even more efficient ways of communication and sharing information. Currently, the developed nations utilize technology every day for business, trade, communication and even social life, which continues to advance at a high rate. However, developing nations typically do not utilize all or in some cases any of the technologies available in the developed world due to costs, lack of access, poor or no necessary infrastructure, cultural differences, and even lack of knowledge of how to use the technologies.

Manual Castells in a United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) discussion paper called *Information Technology, Globalization and Social Development* explains,

The crucial role of information and communication technologies in stimulating development is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, it allows countries to leapfrog stages of economic growth by being able to modernize their production systems and increase their competitiveness faster than in the past... On the other hand, for those economies that are unable to adapt to the new technological system, their retardation becomes cumulative. Furthermore, the ability to move into the Information Age depends on the capacity of the whole society to be educated, and to be able to assimilate and process complex information. This starts with the education system, from the bottom up, from the primary school to the university. And it relates, as well, to the overall process of cultural development, including the level of functional literacy, the content of the media, and the diffusion of information within the population as a whole (1999, pg. 3).

Castells continues to discuss the importance of information technology to development as it brings power, knowledge and creativity. In many cases, there is also a difference of knowledge and underlying ability to utilize the technology within a country. Particularly in developing regions, rural areas are commonly higher in poverty, lower in



educational standards and outcomes, and are typically more focused on maintaining their basic needs. This is often even the case in developed nations.

The division of the haves and have-nots of technology is commonly referred to as the digital divide. More generally in society, this division of economic classes can be called a dual society. Donald D. Evans explains in *Appropriate Technology in Third World Development* that “the majority of principally rural citizens remain in an income stratum that may be several times lower than the economic class of those employed in the foreign-technology-based industry of the urban [society]” (Ghosh ed., 1984, 29).

This is not to say that technology would necessarily solve all of the social problems of rural or urban areas of developing regions. However, as Castell further explains:

The availability and use of information and communication technologies are a pre-requisite for economic and social development in our world. They are the functional equivalent of electricity in the industrial era. Econometric studies show the close statistical relationship between diffusion of information technology, productivity and competitiveness for countries, regions, industries and firms. They also show that an adequate level of education in general, and of technical education in particular, is essential for the design and productive use of new technologies (1999, pg. 3).

One should keep in mind that technology can prove to be an asset or cause problems within society. For example, technology may create dependence of a community on an industry or another community, or more positively it may increase the connections and abilities of a community (Sclove, 1995). In *Democracy and Technology*, Richard Sclove emphasizes the importance of community control of technology development (1995). Community control can be especially important in developing regions which are greatly influenced by the Western world; the technology should still support the local culture. Sclove continues:

The purpose is not to block cultural evolution or technological transfer, but to ensure that cultures develop along paths of their own choosing, preserving from the past that which they consider essential. Through translocal or intercultural federated politics, local communities and cultures must also be empowered to resist technological imperialism (1995, pg. 149).

The dual society between urban and rural areas, a more general need for greater economic development, and a better educated society is highly relevant to Kosovo.

Technology has begun to infiltrate into the urban areas and limited development has been begun, mostly due to the international community presence. This raises concern that society, particularly the rural areas, is not significantly involved in the development of the technology in their region. Nonetheless, given Kosovo's developing state, technology could be highly beneficial to the networking of civil society organizations, citizens, and government as well as other economic and social development benefits.

Perhaps the most advanced use of ICT, E-government incorporates many of the Internet-based concepts already discussed. The Internet has become a powerful tool "for educating individuals, stimulating citizen participation, measuring public opinion, easing citizen access to government officials, offering a public forum, simplifying voter registration, and even facilitating actual voting" (Davis, 1999, pg 20). Therefore, the Internet has allowed change agents to reach out to citizens and other constituents easily and more cost effectively for those in the targeted population who have access to the Internet.

To maximize the success of these activities, *The E-Government Handbook for Developing Countries* identifies three important factors: collaboration, civic engagement and infrastructure. These three factors also are fundamentally important to any program having the general purpose of increasing public participation. The Center for Democracy and Technology's handbook explains these factors and their importance further:

Collaboration among government entities, private enterprises and NGOs can assist policymakers in crafting meaningful reforms and can expedite the implementation of e-government... To decrease skepticism in local communities, directly involve local leaders by making them representatives, and by teaching them IT skills they can pass on to their communities... The success of e-government initiatives depends on an engaged citizenry and, to that end, efforts to foster civic engagement are critical. The concept of e-government revolves around the citizen. E-government is not just a cost-cutting or efficiency initiative, but rather is directed at bettering the lives of ordinary people... Many developing countries, even if possessing the will, do not have the infrastructure necessary to immediately deploy e-government services throughout their territory. These governments, such as the Andhra Pradesh state in India, must include in their e-government strategies efforts to build out their ICT infrastructure, developing novel approaches to solving the problem of remote connectivity in order to support e-government efforts (2002, pg. 9; 11).

Although the infrastructure in Kosovo is still limited in many areas, especially in rural areas, use of the Internet and other technologies is growing. Below, Figure 2, 3 and 4 display the increased access to local newspapers, television and radio stations, and telephones in Kosovo, respectively. It is believed that capacity to use these and other technologies has still grown since 2003, however current statistical data is difficult to find for Kosovo due to the lack of a census since 1991 (Archer, 2003).

**Figure 2: Number of Newspapers in Kosovo, 2003**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Periodicity</b>		
	<b>Daily</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Monthly</b>
<b>Albanian</b>	7	0	0
<b>Serbian</b>	0	1	1
<b>Turkish</b>	0	1	0

Source: Temporary Media Commission  
(SOK, 2004, p. 19)

**Figure 3: Number of TV and Radio Stations in Kosovo, 2003**

Type of Spreading	Language					Total
	More than One	Albanian	Serbian	Bosnian	Turkish	
	TV Stations					
Kosovo	1	2	0	0	0	3
Local	0	13	6	0	0	19
Total	1	15	6	0	0	22
	Radio Stations					
Kosovo	1	3	0	0	0	4
Local	16	45	20	3	1	85
Total	17	48	20	3	1	89

Source: Temporary Media Commission  
(SOK, 2004, p. 19)

**Figure 4: Telephone Capacity in Kosovo, 2003**

Subject	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Post and Telecommunication in Kosovo:*</b>				
<b>Capacity of Telephon Centrals</b>	137,000	127,000	139,000	158,000
<b>Number of Connected Phones</b>	81,000	95,000	104,000	101,000
<b>Rate of Capacity Use</b>	59%	74%	75%	64%
<b>Total Impulses (in 1000)</b>	70,000	66,000	75,000	65,000
<b>Vala 900 and Mobtel:</b>				
<b>Number of Mobile Phones (mid 2003)</b>	...	...	...	315,000

\*Without Telecom Serbia  
Source: PTK and Mobtel  
(SOK, 2004, p. 38)

Internet capacity and use is growing in Kosovo, although statistical information was unavailable. However, BBC News identified an environmental organization using the Internet to provide citizens and organizations with an electronic network of environmental information specific to Kosovo and were encouraged by the increase to four local Internet providers for the region in 2002 (Hermida, 2002). Although Internet access and other forms of communication are still limited by the infrastructure and high poverty levels, technology is still increasing and playing a role in the future of Kosovo.

The role of interest groups as change agents and supporters of citizen engagement is evident. This is a crucial time for Kosovo as local development continues and internationals as well as regional policy makers discuss final status. Gaining a better understanding of how Kosovo citizens view their involvement in the political process, how communication and other information sharing activities are accomplished, and how organizations reach out to citizens is an important policy question for Kosovo and the surrounding region.

### ***III. Methodology***

#### **A. Analytical Framework**

The main purpose of this thesis is to further the understanding of citizen participation through interest groups and the use of information and technology communication related to citizen participation. Topics explored include Kosovo citizen views of the importance of public participation, how citizens become involved, and what barriers hinder their involvement. In-country research was conducted in Pristina, Kosovo to explore these issues through the first-hand experiences of Kosovo interest groups and citizen volunteers.

Before information was collected directly first hand from Kosovo citizens, sources of information for the main topic areas were researched, expanding the literature review. This knowledge base of the general theories of citizen participation in interest groups and the role of technology provides a foundational understanding of the research that has primarily been focused on developed regions for comparison to Kosovo. This process was not done in order to create a preferred method of how the process should

work in Kosovo, as each country and its citizens will approach participation differently. The theories discussed provide a basis for understanding the importance of the citizen's role in the policy and political processes. The literature review also assisted in defining boundaries and meanings that are a primary focus of the research such as defining what is meant by engagement in the policy and political processes.

The literature review was also used to assist in identifying the theoretical foundation for analyzing the information and communication links between citizens, interest groups, and public officials/government although most of this theoretical foundation arises out of Western based experience. Comparatively, the in-country research provided the information for identifying information and communication links between citizens, interest group and public officials in Kosovo. These links were used to create a visual comparative analysis of the citizen's role in the policy and political processes.

To answer the question: How do Kosovo citizens participate in the political process through interest groups and the use of technology, interviews of Kosovo interest group directors and citizen volunteers were conducted in Pristina, Kosovo. The Rochester Institute of Technology's Center for Multidisciplinary Studies (CMS) and the American University in Kosovo sponsored the travel and research expenses. Research in Kosovo was conducted for approximately one week; November 12-21, 2005. My Thesis Advisor, Dr. Elizabeth Matthews of the RIT Political Science Department, also accompanied me on this trip to Kosovo to assist in the interviews.

Organizations were identified through an OSCE and UNMIK list of registered non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which included their mission statement and

contact information. This list was compiled by the UNMIK NGO Registration Office and consists of all NGOs that completed the registration process (Biserka Ivanovic. Personal Communication, February 23, 2005). In order to be recognized as an NGO in Kosovo, all local organizations and international NGOs wishing to open a branch in Kosovo must complete a registration application with the UNMIK office and inform the office with any changes in contact information or operational status, as required under the UNMIK Regulation 1999/22 (Lirije Ajeti, UNMIK NGO Liaison, Personal Communication, March 23, 2006).

Further assistance was given by international and local individuals active in Kosovo civil society and knowledgeable of local organizations to narrow the list and identify currently active organizations. A cross-section of organizations was targeted in order to receive view points from many different interests of Kosovo society. Contact with organizations was attempted by email, phone, and fax conversations to explain the research and ask for their participation.

Many interviews were set up before traveling to Kosovo in order to make best use of the in-country research time. Other organizations were contacted once on the ground in Kosovo to gain additional data and increase the sample size. Throughout the week, representatives of eight local NGOs and two international organizations were interviewed. Within these organizations, both organization managers and citizen volunteers participated in the interviews for a total of fourteen interviews. Further information about the organizations and interviewees is provided in Table 1 below.

The interviews were later analyzed for common themes of citizen participation in Kosovo for a qualitative analysis as well as a quantitative analysis of answers to the

interview questions. Supplementary information was also identified through documents and publications provided by the organizations. The analysis and conclusions from the literature review, interviews, and documents is provided in the following sections.

**Table 1: Kosovo Interview Participants**

<b><u>Interviewee</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>
Ms. Biserka Ivanovic	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Mission in Kosovo (OSCE)	Program Assistant, Local Governance Support Team, Democratization Department
Mr. Senad Šabović	International Crisis Group (ICG)	Research Analyst
Mr. Ibrahim Makolli	Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF)	Director
Mr. Ngadhxjin Isufi	CDHRF	Volunteer
Ms. Ulpiana Lama	Institute for Social and Policy Studies (SFERA)	Director
Ms. Krenare Maloku	SFERA	Volunteer
Ms. Vjosë Retkoceri	SFERA	Volunteer
Mr. Shpend Lila	SFERA	Volunteer
Mr. Luan Shllaku	Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society (KFOS)	Executive Director
Mr. Rikalo Nenad	Future System Network	Executive Director
Ms. Vjollca Krasniqi	Center for Research and Gender Policy	Director, Research Analyst
Mr. Visar Jasiqi	IPKO Institute	Head of IT Programs
Mr. Zef Shala	The Kosova Humanitarian and Charitable Society “Mother Tereza”	Director
Mr. Nexhmedin Shaqiri	Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC)	Director of Department of Producers Associations



## **B. Data Collection Techniques**

Initially, local Kosovo organizations were identified through a list provided by the OSCE and compiled by UNMIK of registered NGOs in Kosovo<sup>1</sup>. Due to time constraints, identified organizations were narrowed to those located in Pristina, Kosovo or close proximity. Of the 2,671 registered NGOs on the list, 1,087 were located in Pristina. A large number of organizations are active in Pristina or at least have an office located in the Pristina, the capital city and hub of international and local political activity.

The list of Pristina, Kosovo NGOs was then coded using the mission and activity statements on the list to determine whether the organizations' main interest was in one of the following categories: Agriculture, Albanian, Arts, Business, Community Development, Democracy, Disabled, Economic Development, Education, Elderly, Environmental, Health, Human Rights, Humanitarian, Infrastructure, Labor Rights, Media, Minority Groups, Property, Religion, Science, Serbian, Sports, Technology, Veterans, Vocation, Women, Youth. Further explanation of these categories and number of organization in each category in Pristina and all of Kosovo is included in Table 6 of the Kosovo Interest Groups Section below.

Although emphasis was placed on contacting organizations that were run primarily by local citizens, this information was difficult to access before setting up the interviews. For these reasons, individuals active in international and local organizations were targeted to narrow the list further and to limit the focus to organizations that are

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<sup>1</sup> The list of registered Kosovo NGOs used in this study was created by the UNMIK NGO Registration office. The list was provided by Mr. Senad Sabovic of the International Crisis Group on September 20, 2005, who received it from an OSCE Mission in Kosovo representative. The list states it was most recently updated April 15, 2005. Due to its extensive length this list will not be included in this report. Please contact the author through the RIT Public Policy Department for more information.

currently in operation. The narrowing also included organizations that represented a cross-section of categories. From the OSCE/UNMIK list, there were a number of organizations contacted that did not respond. This could be due to incorrect contact information or because the organization is no longer active. Names and contacts for these organizations were also gathered from the Internet as well as the citizen and organizational associates. This time consuming process made random selection of organizations impractical and the recommendations by other organizations located in Pristina extremely important.

The interviews were structured to ensure that each organization member was asked the same questions and so that the data comparisons could be made. Below (Figure 6) is a list of interview questions that were used and approved by the RIT Institutional Review Board. In some interviews, locally provided interpreters were used in the interview. Dr. Elizabeth Matthews accompanied me to each interview to assist in the questioning and note-taking. Each interview also was tape recorded with permission of the interviewee. Interviewees signed an informed consent document, giving permission to use the information he/she provided and use of his/her name. The document also included contact information if he/she had any concerns or questions.

**Figure 5: Kosovo Interest Group Interview Questions**

1. What do you see as the goal of this organization?
2. What are the benefits of those goals (to Kosovo, citizens, etc.)?
3. What are some barriers to the organizations accomplishing those goals?
4. Are there many other organizations interested in the same issues and goals that are active in Kosovo?
  - a. What makes your organization unique?
5. Where does your organization receive funding from?
  - a. Is funding for your organization's goals difficult to find?
  - b. Do you expect that your funding will continue or decline as international organizations leave the Kosovo region?
6. What made you decide to get involved in this organization?
7. What activities is a member of the organization generally involved in? What is expected?
  - a. Are there positions within the organization that members can hold (volunteer or paid)? Are these positions appointed or elected?
  - b. How else can members be involved in organization activities?
  - c. Do they have access to decision makers in the organization?
  - d. Is input on issues and decisions that are of interest to the organization encouraged from general members?
8. Does the organization you are involved with hold regular meetings?
  - a. Are all members notified and invited? How?

9. What other activities and events does your organization hold?
  - a. Are all members notified and invited? How?
10. How does the organization make decisions on how to act and influence the political process?
11. Do you think that government officials (or others) make decisions based on influence from your interest group?
  - a. What level of government are those that your organization is most interested in influencing?
12. Do you think that government officials (or others) make decisions based on influence from any interest groups?
  - a. Which interest groups?
  - b. What else influences their decision making?
13. Is there a particular group within the general public your organization is most interested in reaching with information?
  - a. How successful has your organization been at reaching this group?
  - b. What methods do you use? Why?
  - c. Do you gain many new members for your organization using these methods? Why or why not?
  - d. What method is the most successful in recruiting new members to be involved?
14. As Internet access and capabilities increase in Kosovo:
  - a. What impact will it have on your organization?
  - b. What impact will it have on general society?
  - c. What impact will it have on government?
15. In your opinion, does the general society of Kosovo know how to use technology such as the Internet and/or email? Why or Why not?

An attempt was also made to gather information by implementing a survey of those participants that were interviewed. The survey was designed to provide additional information from each interview due to limited time in each interview. However, the surveys that were completed did not provide any additional information of value and only a small number of those interviewed completed the survey due to time constraints. Therefore the surveys were not used for any purposes in this thesis.

Surveys are also a more difficult data collection tool than interviews and do not offer the same in-country and in-person experiences and information. Particularly when conducting research in other countries and dealing with language barriers and cultural differences, personal interaction provides the best circumstances to obtain the most complete and in-depth information. For the purposes of this research, the in-country interviews were extremely informative and no information was lost due to the incomplete surveys. Benefits of the interviews were the ability to re-word and clarify questions, experience the culture, living situation and workings of the interest groups and citizens, as well as the ability to include perceived expression and emotions from the interviews into the analysis.

It is important to reinforce that quality information was collected from the fourteen in-country interviews that was highly valuable to determining how citizens become involved in the political process. Although the sample size, ten different organizations with a cross section of interests, is small in comparison to the total number of Kosovo interest groups, many common themes were found within the interviews creating generalizability. However, one must also recognize the limitations of a small sample size. If more time were able to be spent conducting interviews in Kosovo more

information would be added to the analysis, strengthening the common themes and perhaps would provide further information on the motivation, barriers and other information related to citizen participation. Nonetheless, the common themes identified within this thesis provide highly valuable information on public participation through interest groups and the uses of technology in Kosovo.

### **C. Analysis**

Interviews were analyzed for themes using coding and then written up in a qualitative format which includes specific statements made in the interviews. The coding process included using color coding techniques to highlight interview statements that represented the themes below. Common themes were combined for a qualitative discussion of citizen participation in Kosovo. Additionally, some statements have been quantified to provide information on the overall viewpoints of the organizations. The themes used in the coding are as follows:

- impediments/barriers to participation
- motivation for participation
- technology/communication/information
- sustainable activism (not just money)
- development of the NGO society
- education
- minority issues
- political representation
- women
- economy
- political influence
- bureaucracy
- media
- good reputation = funding
- final status
- information know-how
- impact
- youth
- volunteer participation

A brief introduction of the Kosovo interest group society was completed by analyzing the registered NGOs in Kosovo included on the OSCE/UNMIK list, comparing the organizations in the city of Pristina to the other cities of Kosovo. Interest group categories were created and then each registered NGO was coded based on statements made in the mission and activity sections of the list; (See Table 2 in the Kosovo Interest Group section.) The organizations were then sorted based on their categories. Bar graphs were created to display quantitative analyses.

Analysis was also done to identify the linkages between citizens, interest groups, and public officials in Kosovo to create a communication systems diagram. This was also accomplished through the theme coding of the interviews and using the information provided about interest group and citizen ability to communicate with government and their role in the decision making process. From this information a flow chart was made to illustrate the linkages and lines of information and communication. This Kosovo flow chart was then compared with another that was created using theoretical information described in the literature review of how citizens, interest groups and government are connected. Causal loop diagrams were also used as an illustrative tool to connect the citizen participation theories, Kosovo society barriers to participation, and policy recommendations.

The quantitative and qualitative analysis, as well as the communication systems diagrams and causal loops, furthers understanding of how citizen engagement through interest groups is developing in Kosovo, what involvement in the policy and political processes means to Kosovo citizens, and what role technology plays in this development. This analysis, along with documentation provided by the organizations, is the primary

information used for the following sections. From this analysis, policy conclusions, recommendations, and areas in need of further exploration were identified and included in the Conclusions and Recommendations section.

#### ***IV. Kosovo Interest Groups***

Analyzing the types and numbers of NGOs in Kosovo gives insight into important societal issues. Some of the categories in which there is a great number of NGOs, and assuming therefore that there is a great number of citizens involved, suggest areas in which citizens have great concern for the Kosovo region. The following analysis also shows some difference in issues between the main city of Pristina which is dealing with more urban issues and is greatly influenced by the international involvement there versus the rest of the Kosovo region which largely deals with more rural-based issues and concerns.

Table 2 below includes the different categories used in coding the NGOs and a description of what the organizations' mission or activity statements generally included to fit this category. Although many organizations could have been integrated in more than one category, each was placed into the category that best matched the stated interests.

**Table 2: Category Description**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
Agriculture	Organizations dealing with the support and advancement of agriculture and farmers.
Albanian	Organizations with the specific purpose of supporting the Albanian culture.



Arts	Organizations which support and promote art, music, dancing, design, and other activities in Kosovo.
Community Development	Organizations interested in supporting the development and advancement of particular communities/areas of Kosovo. Includes, economic, political, cultural, etc. but within a specific location.
Democracy	Organizations that are interested in supporting activities related to the development of democracy in Kosovo. Includes supporting citizen participation, political education, law, activities of international decision making, local power, and other policy issues.
Disabled	Organizations that provide support specifically for the blind, deaf, or mentally disabled.
Economic Development	Organizations interested in supporting the advancement of the Kosovo economy through supporting the transition to a market economy, more open business communication and reporting, support of small and medium enterprises, long term sustainable growth initiatives, and more.
Education	Organizations with the main purpose of increasing the quality education in Kosovo. Includes efforts for youth education in primary and secondary schools, university students and support for various adult education efforts. Also organizations that support increased cultural education and social issues.
Elderly	Organizations supporting activities and needs of the elderly
Environmental	Organizations supporting the protection of the environment and wild animals, as well as environmental education
Health	Organizations supporting increased education of health issues and increased capabilities and skills of health providers
Human Rights	Organizations promoting greater awareness and respect of basic human rights.
Humanitarian	Organizations providing a variety of different social services to the Kosovo population. Includes supporting the return of displaced persons, reconstruction, assisting the poor/hungry, etc.
Infrastructure	Organizations supporting the transportation, building of roads, and energy sectors.
Labor Rights	Organizations advocating for greater awareness and respect of the rights of workers.
Media	Organizations advocating for better quality news reporting, greater exchange of information. To protect journalists rights.

Minority Groups	Organizations that support a voice and/or services for specific minority groups in Kosovo (groups other than Albanian and Serbian).
Property	Organizations that support property rights.
Religion	Organizations that support the rights and education of different religions in Kosovo.
Science	Organizations that support research opportunities in Kosovo in different fields of science (including chemistry, physics, bio-chemistry, and social sciences).
Serbian	Organizations that support the rights and education of the Serbian people and culture in Kosovo.
Sports	Organizations that support a variety of sports and other club activities in Kosovo.
Technology	Organizations that support the increased access to and use of technology in education, information access and communication.
Veterans	Organizations that advocate for the rights of veterans and offer support services.
Vocation	Organizations that advocate for services and rights of various vocations not already mentioned in another category.
Women	Organizations that advocate for the rights of women, gender issues, women's role in society, and offer education and other services for women.
Youth	Organizations that support youth-based initiatives and the role of youth as leaders in Kosovo's future.
Not Coded	Not categorized due to lack of information.

Table 3 displays the number of NGOs registered in Pristina, in other major cities in Kosovo, and the total number of NGOs in Kosovo for each category. The column labeled “The Rest of Kosovo” generally includes the areas in and surrounding Gjilan, Mitrovica, Peja, Pristina, and Prizren. These cities are typically less developed and considered more rural than the capital city of Pristina. This division was created in order to display the difference in categories and quantity of NGOs registered in Pristina, where international and local government are more present and active, versus the rest of the countryside. This division is also used throughout the remainder of this section.

**Table 3: Number of NGOs in Kosovo by Category**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number in Pristina</b>	<b>Number in Rest Kosovo</b>	<b>Total NGOs</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Category</b>
Agriculture	20	136	156	5.8%
Albanian	2	8	10	0.4%
Arts	70	86	156	5.8%
Community Development	14	14	28	1.0%
Democracy	62	64	126	4.7%
Disabled	21	16	37	1.4%
Economic Development	46	38	84	3.1%
Education	61	54	115	4.3%
Elderly	3	1	4	0.1%
Environmental	33	41	74	2.8%
Health	43	22	65	2.4%
Human Rights	19	18	37	1.4%
Humanitarian	162	250	412	15.4%
Infrastructure	3	1	4	0.1%
Labor Rights	4	1	5	0.2%
Media	17	11	28	1.0%
Minority Groups	11	40	51	1.9%
Property	2	0	2	0.1%
Religion	9	8	17	0.6%
Science	15	2	17	0.6%
Serbian	2	3	5	0.2%
Sports	58	102	160	6.0%
Technology	12	10	22	0.8%
Veterans	2	1	3	0.1%
Vocation	39	30	69	2.6%
Women	38	73	111	4.2%
Youth	71	90	161	6.0%
Not Coded	248	464	712	26.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1087</b>	<b>1584</b>	<b>2671</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 6 displays the breakdown of the categorized NGOs located in Pristina, Kosovo. Identifying the categories with high quantities of registered NGOs reflects the interests of great concern to Kosovo citizens. These categories include: humanitarian concern, youth, development of democracy, economic development, education, health, women, and vocational skills. Humanitarian organizations greatly outnumber the rest, which is not surprising given the war, high rate of unemployment and poverty and many other humanitarian issues in Kosovo. Youth is the next largest category of organizations in Pristina. Demographic data also suggests that youth are a major concern for Kosovo due to the fact that “over 50 percent of Kosovo’s population is under 25 years old” (Archer, 2003, p. 36).

Democracy and Education are two other categories very high in number of organizations and again not surprising based on the many discussions of the development of democracy and education in the NGO interviews. The low number of ethnic-based organizations located in Pristina may be due to the continued high ethnic tensions in Kosovo, the lack of international funding for specific ethnicities based on many other major issues in Kosovo, or the restrictions on Serbians to leaving their enclaves. All of these will be further discussed in the following analysis sections.

Unfortunately, it is doubtful that all of the organizations included in this analysis are still active in the community. Once the international community entered Kosovo to assist with its redevelopment, money from international organizations and foundations also flowed in to provide grants and program support. It is likely that some organizations began only because of the presence of this money and shortly thereafter disappeared.

Nonetheless, Figure 6 indicates there are a variety of organized interests among citizens in Pristina.

**Figure 6: Breakdown of Pristina Based NGOs**

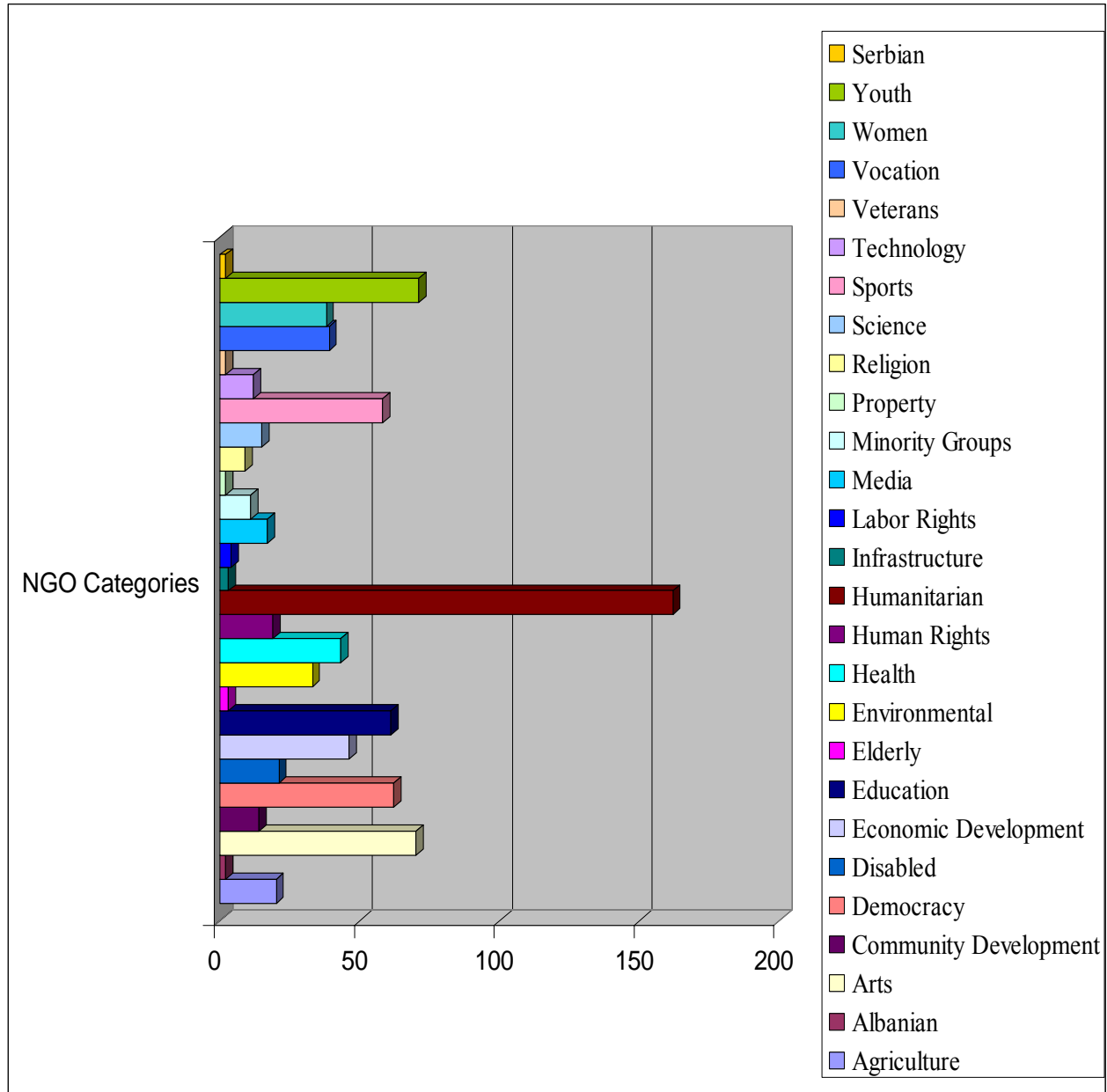


Figure 7 displays the breakdown of the categorized NGOs located in the rest of Kosovo. As in the breakdown of NGOs in Pristina, the rest of Kosovo has a high number of NGOs focused on youth, women, humanitarian, education, economic development and democracy. One significant difference is the higher quantity of agricultural organizations:

136 in the rest of Kosovo versus 21 in Pristina. This fact illustrates a difference in interest between urban Pristina and the rest of Kosovo which is generally more rural. Another difference is the increase in minority groups: 40 in the rest of Kosovo compared with 11 in Pristina. Again, this most likely illustrates the lack of freedom of movement of minorities and a lack of minority interest within Pristina. Figure 7 also indicates there are a variety of organized interests among citizens throughout the other cities and surrounding Kosovo communities.

**Figure 7: Breakdown of NGOs in the Rest of Kosovo**

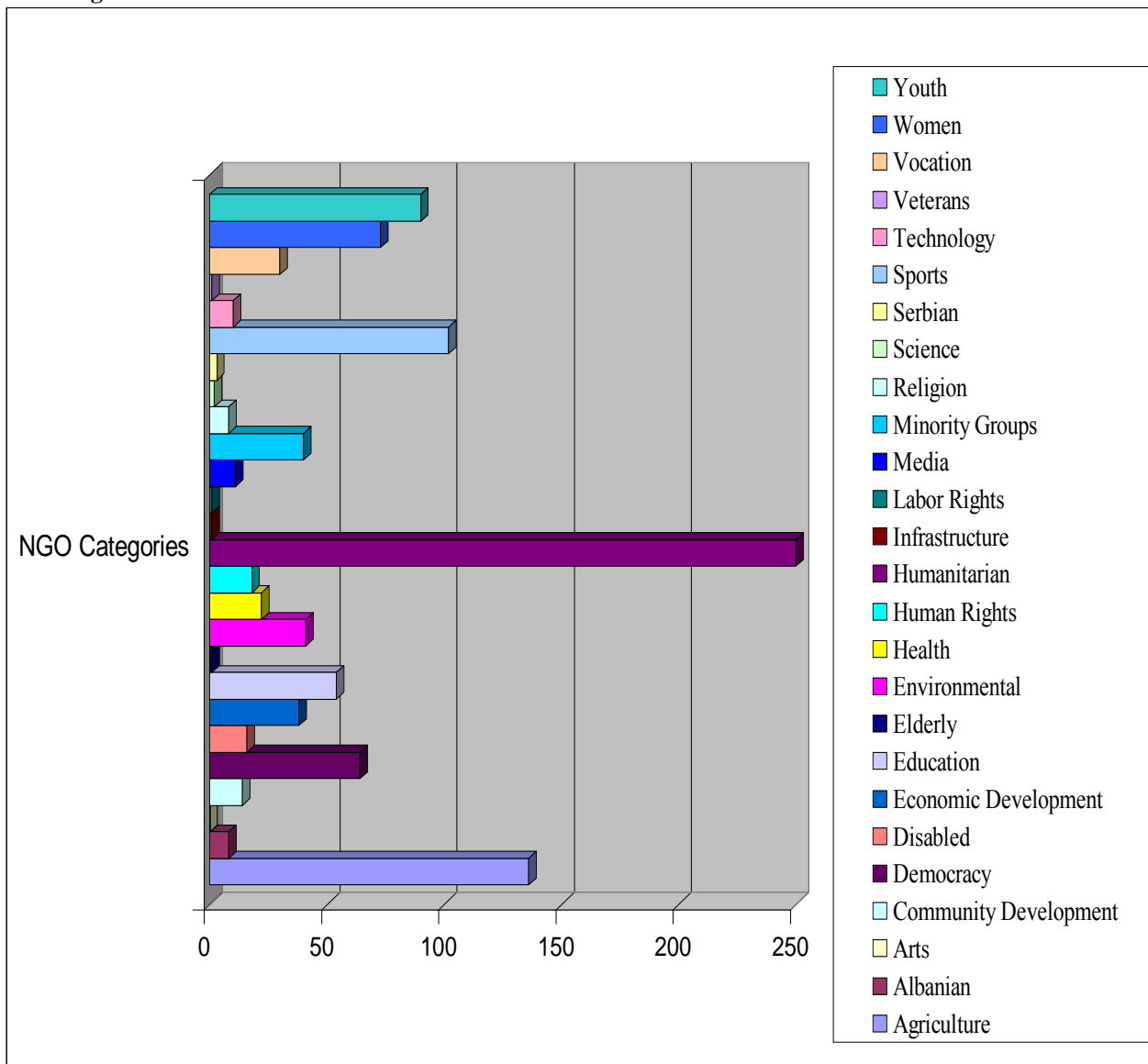


Table 4 includes a list of each NGO interviewed and represented in the analysis as well as their matching category. The two international organizations have been labeled “International” along with a corresponding category relevant to the discussion in the interview. Again, the organizations may have other interests and goals that match with other categories. The category they are labeled with matches their main interest according to the mission and activity statements.

**Table 4: Interviewed Organizations and Categories**

<b><u>Organization</u></b>	<b><u>Category</u></b>
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)	International, (Meeting—Serbian)
International Crisis Group (ICG)	International (Meeting— Democracy)
Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF)	Human Rights
Institute for Social and Policy Studies (SFERA)	Democracy
Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society (KFOS)	Democracy
Future System Network	Serbian
Center for Research and Gender Policy	Women
IPKO Institute	Technology
The Kosova Humanitarian and Charitable Society “Mother Tereza”	Humanitarian
Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (OEK)	Economic Development

During some of the interviews it became apparent that many of the activities of the organizations crossed into other categories, such as youth, education and other major categories seen above. The different organizations interviewed represent many of the identified interests in Kosovo. These interests will be further explored in the following sections along with the identification of barriers and motivation of citizens to become volunteers for these organizations. Additionally, many of the organizational representatives identified their beliefs regarding how well they are able to communicate their interests to government.

## ***V. How NGOs Operate in Kosovo***

Interviewing local NGOs in Kosovo was truly a wonderful and informative experience, providing many realities of citizen participation in Kosovo. Citizens and organization leaders are faced with many challenges, particularly due to Kosovo's status situation, economy, high youth population, minority issues, and many other areas of concern that affect civil society. For this reason it is important to first fully understand how NGOs operate in Kosovo before focusing on citizen participation. This section includes a brief introduction to each of the local NGOs interviewed as well as past actions of the different NGOs interviewed, their impact, political influence, funding, organization, and interaction with media.

Not all of the organizations interviewed take action using citizen volunteers. Some interest groups were more research focused and accomplished their goals with a paid staff. Another group was a local grant giving organization which again functioned without the use of citizen volunteers and organized its decision making and other actions through an executive director and a board. However, others relied heavily on volunteers to perform tasks, participate in trainings and programs, educate others, and accomplish the goals of the organization.

The following is a description of each of the organizations interviewed as well as the organization's structure, funding sources, degree of involvement with volunteers and citizens, and degree of involvement with government. The groups are listed in no particular order or ranking.



## **A. Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms**

*Mr. Ibrahim Makolli, Director*

The goal of the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF), as stated by the Director Mr. Ibrahim Makolli, is the protection and promotion of human rights. Some of the activities CDHRF performs include gathering information to prosecute human rights violations, education and training of volunteers about human rights issues and civil society skills, and sponsoring conferences. In order to best address all of these issues, CDHRF is divided into six different departments: human rights, education promotion, children and women's rights, minorities, legal aid, and monitoring political processes. CDHRF has conducted activities within these departments for over sixteen years.

Mr. Makolli stated that it consistently has more than 2,000 volunteers and 150 activists working on different projects throughout their 30 offices around Kosovo. Mr. Makolli also explained that the organization opens its doors to all citizens that would like to be involved. During the last Kosovo elections the organization used approximately 3,000 volunteers to assist with monitoring.

To continue so many different activities and programs for society, CDHRF receives funding from a number of different international organizations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the European Union (EU), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Soros Foundation, and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). Mr. Makolli explained that since the organization has been conducting activities for sixteen years it is viewed by funders as experienced and well known. Therefore, at times funding is offered

to CDHRF without even asking. However, he is aware that the amount of international funding will most likely decline as the international community continues to leave Kosovo.

CDHRF is well known for their activities within Kosovo and the media often cover their programs and activities. Media attention is also a very effective method for the organization to gain volunteers. Mr. Makolli claimed that the organization is in the newspaper or other forms of media almost every day. They also hold press conferences and once published a quarterly bulletin but due to funding limitations the bulletins are now only posted on the organization's website. CDHRF is also well respected and influential within local government. Parliament often invites the organization to present opinions, information, and share documents concerning certain issues and laws according to Mr. Makolli.

He feels that his organization, along with the citizen volunteers, have a great impact on government and society. Additionally, Mr. Makolli believes that all of the "NGOs [in Kosovo] have played an important role in the development of civil society...people are beginning to understand that they must play an active role." Some citizens that have been involved with CDHRF have even left the organization in order to become more involved in politics. Mr. Makolli does not mind losing those volunteers and workers as he believes they are all adding to the democratic processes in Kosovo.

## **B. Institute for Social and Policy Studies**

*Ms. Ulpiana Lama, Director*

The focus of the Institute for Social and Policy Studies (SFERA) is policy research to assist government in decision making and for public awareness. According to the SFERA Institute website, the mission of the organization is:

SFERA is a local non-profit institute consisted of a group of Kosovar and international intellectuals and activists gathered with the aim of contributing in helping governing institutions to meet international standards, have a closer picture of what the needs of the grass root level are and improve the current image of the region in the eyes of the youth abroad (para. 1).

SFERA conducts research on different political and social issues and holds open sessions to raise awareness of the issues within society and government. Ms. Ulpiana Lama, the Director of SFERA, explains that these open sessions are also very successful since many politicians attend to gain more information and they often receive media coverage. Unfortunately, Ms. Lama also explains that much of the research SFERA has been funded to conduct is driven by donor interests and often not determined by need within society. SFERA's funding comes mostly from international donors such as Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society (KFOS), OSCE, USAID, and UNDP.

SFERA also depends on volunteers for many of their training programs. Training is offered through a youth debate program in which youth are taught different debate styles and participate in forums focused on many current local issues. Ms. Lama noted that she has found youth to be more excited than adults about involvement in the programs. Many of the organization's volunteers are youth participants who were eager to find an active and dedicated organization to fill free time after school.

For the youth program, word of mouth was identified as being the most effective means to communicate information about activities and for general involvement in the organization. The students felt that if fliers are posted, few people pay much attention to them. Ms. Lama agreed with the student volunteer statements, explaining that “word of mouth is the most successful. It is important to have first hand experiences, then citizens become more willing to cooperate.” She also stated that general media attention focused on their research also informs potential volunteers.

Ms. Lama views SFERA as a “watchdog” for society and government, sometimes taking the form of advocacy and working to “get people together to make change in ourselves and spread that change to reality.” She believes that it has an impact on civil society but it takes time and is an ongoing process. Ms. Lama made a statement that resonates with many other interest groups and NGOs around the world, “Success is not measured by funds, but by the change made.” Although SFERA has limited funding, she feels SFERA has still been successful in its actions.

### **C. Future System Network**

*Mr. Rikalo Nenad, Executive Director*

Future System Network’s (Future) mission, explained Executive Director Mr. Rikalo Nenad, is to build a greater community through addressing many different community problems within Gracanica, a Kosovo-Serbian enclave. To meet this goal and address community issues, Future organizes different activities such as technical training, promotion of private businesses, and building communication between Serbians and Albanians. Future does not depend as directly on volunteers to perform functions, but similar to SFERA, volunteers are recruited for different programs when they are offered.

Future operates with four staff members and approximately 10-20 volunteers depending on the program or activity.

Future officially began work in Gracanica in February of 2002, though activities were initiated since 2001. It receives funding from organizations such as the European Union, European Agency for Reconstruction, Balkans Trust Fund for Democracy, the Kosovo Ministry of Youth, Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society (KFOS), and the Finish Foundation for Human Rights. At times the organization has found it difficult to raise funds depending on how well the priorities of the funding organizations meet Future's goals. Funding from KFOS however has proven to be the most flexible for program needs throughout each year, whereas other funding organizations are stricter on application dates and purposes.

Citizens of Gracanica are made aware of Future's activities mainly through personal contact within the community although media such as television and radio are sometimes used. Unfortunately, using media has not proven to be as easy or successful to spread information since there is only one Serbian radio station in the village and only three others broadcasting from Belgrade and Mitrovica. Future has found that using media to attract volunteers may produce a high quantity, but personal contact within the community produces better quality volunteers and activities.

#### **D. Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society**

*Mr. Luan Shllaku, Executive Director*

The Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society (KFOS) does not use volunteers since its main mission is to serve as a local grant foundation under the direction of the Soros Foundation. All different groups are invited to apply for KFOS funding for their

programs. KFOS depends mainly on Soros Foundation funding but also receives some matching funds from the British Department for International Development (DFID), UNDP, and other international agencies. The organization website provides further information about the types of local programs KFOS has supported:

The Kosova Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) works to strengthen government institutions and to further develop an open society within Kosovo. Its programs have focused on issues surrounding minorities, arts and culture, public administration, legislation, and education.

Among the activities supported by KFOS are:

- training civil servants;
- advancing education reform, including increasing access to programs for teachers and administrators;
- establishing access to electronic resources such as the Internet and libraries;
- organizing conferences for Kosovo's ethnic communities;
- helping to distribute guidelines for standard judicial practices as well as international human rights documents;
- emphasizing the rights of children, women, and minorities; and
- helping increase cooperation among civil society organizations and regional NGOs.

(<http://www.soros.org/about/foundations/kosova>)

KFOS has been a major contributor for many of the organizations interviewed as well as many other successful organizations in Kosovo. For example, KFOS has funded the Kosovo Education Center (KEC) as well as Forum which is a main debate conference in Kosovo organized by an NGO called Riinvest. Among those interviewed, KFOS provides funding for CDHRF, SFERA Institute, and Future System Network.

In general, funding decisions are made by a local board and the executive director, not by the international foundations. This allows the organization to better tailor its decision-making to local understanding of Kosovo needs and priorities. To inform local organizations about funding opportunities, information is posted on the Soros

Foundation website. They also advertise in the newspaper and send out email notices.

Executive Director Luan Shllaku believes that through its funding and support, KFOS has had an impact on civil society and influence in government.

#### **E. The Center for Research and Gender Policy**

*Ms. Vjollca Krasniqi, Director*

The Center for Research and Gender Policy (CRGP) is organized with the purpose of advocating for and promoting research on gender policy. CRGP does not use volunteers to accomplish its goal. Instead it operates with a limited staff and experts as needed depending on the projects undertaken. Ms. Vjollca Krasniqi, Director, states that its projects are not currently set up with volunteer opportunities and this unfortunately makes money always necessary and projects more difficult to execute. The funding it does receive generally comes from the OSCE and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

Ms. Krasniqi realizes that CRGP's funding will most likely decrease as the international community leaves, but she believes the organization will stay strong. She stated that organizational "sustainability should not be seen as only financial, but also through engagement, participation, and activism." A similar statement was made by Ulpaina Lama from the SFERA Institute, providing a sense of true belief in the power of grass roots organizations and dedication in the purposes of increasing public awareness, participation, and informed governmental decision making.

CRGP has been successful in having its voice heard to ensure women's interests are accounted for in political platforms through a good relationship with many of the political parties and to have women's issues recognized in the media. Ms. Krasniqi does

believe that her organization and other's actions have assisted the development of civil society. She states that in general there has been "positive movement as NGOs are more active. Not yet to a level that is satisfactory, it has potential for the future."

## **F. IPKO Institute**

*Visar Jasiqi, Head of IT Programs*

IPKO Institute, shortened from Internet Program Kosovo, is also not a volunteer-based organization but an educational organization for information technology and management training. Operating since 2001, IPKO strives to accomplish its goal of meeting the need for training and competence of Kosovo society, particularly in information technology, in order to facilitate Kosovo's development and economy. Instead of recruiting volunteers, it recruits students for the IPKO programs. Students pay tuition in order to make IPKO self-sustainable.

IPKO also conducts other activities to increase the technological capacity and infrastructure of Kosovo by providing computers and free Internet to schools, NGOs, hospitals, and other public organizations. The IPKO website further explains its mission and activities:

The Institute was founded in July 1999 by Akan Ismaili, Theresa Crawford and Paul Meyer with the help of the International Rescue Committee. IPKO introduced and drove Cisco Programs throughout the Kosovo educational landscape. Our CISCO Students have worked successfully throughout the local and international organizational framework. The Free Connections program has been enormously successful, dramatically increasing the number of institutions, interest groups, citizens and businesses connected to the Internet. The IPKO Management Program has introduced a highly successfully, innovative Project Management methodology and approach to civil society that has had a dramatic impact upon students and their present and future work environments and opportunities. IPKO provides opportunities for people to participate in the civil



society by helping citizens acquire the skills needed in a knowledge-driven economy (<http://www.ipkoinstitute.org/about/>, para. 1,2,3).

Visar Jasiqi, Head of IT Programs, explains that IPKO not only influences society through greater skills and knowledge but also influences governmental decision making concerning information and communication technology policy. He explains that parliament and politicians come to IPKO for advice; IPKO does not have to lobby them. Its good reputation also is known in society since they do not need to advertise much to fill its IT or management courses. It does provide announcements for course offerings on their website and sometimes in the newspaper. Primarily it relies on word of mouth and the high quality institution name IPKO has developed to recruit new students

#### **G. Mother Tereza Society**

*Mr. Zef Shala, Director*

Mr. Zef Shala, Director of The Kosova Humanitarian and Charitable Society “Mother Tereza”, explains its direct reliance on volunteers since May 10, 1990. The Mother Tereza Society began before the war during a time when the Kosovo society was oppressed and citizens had few educational, medical, or other basic needs services available to them. At that point the organization worked with more than 7,000 volunteers to provide over 900,000 beneficiaries with a free mobile clinic, food, school materials, and much more. Immediately after the war Mother Tereza Society worked with 56 international donors to assist over one million people with emergency relief.

Mr. Shala explains that the purpose of the organization is still the same: “to build peace, tolerance, and understanding between nations and help people in need” However, it has added to its mission the goal of developing civil society. Now Mother Tereza

Society has almost 5,000 volunteers that are active in projects throughout Kosovo. It has not been easy for them though as the organization has met great challenges more recently with decreased governmental and international funding.

Since the Mother Tereza Society has been active in Kosovo society for over ten years and assisted so many people, it is very well known and relies mostly on word of mouth to gain volunteers and participation in its projects. One main event that many people participate in is their annual Mother Tereza week. On the first day of this event the Assembly of Kosovo is also invited, providing the organization a great opportunity to raise greater awareness of the continued needs of the Kosovo people. Mr. Shala believes the organization is influential within society and government but could have a greater impact with more financial support.

#### **H. Kosovo Chamber of Commerce**

*Mr. Nexhmedin Shaqirir, Director of Department of Producers Associations*

The last local Kosovo NGO that will be discussed is the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC) which was established for the protection of business interests and to promote a better economic environment in Kosovo. Its main activities are further explained on its website:

- Improvement of business operations.
  - Stimulation of research and development.
  - Business information.
  - Organization activities in the field of economic relations with foreign countries.
  - Improvement of business operations in the field of private entrepreneurship.
  - Representation of interests of its members both at Kosovo authorities in the field of economic system, development and economic policy.
  - Encouraging of good business practices and business morality.
  - Other activities in the interests of its members.
- (<http://www.kosovo-eicc.org/oek/>)

KCC receives funding only from its member businesses, more than 5,000 currently active. Encouraging businesses to become members is a new concept for the organization since during the communist government it was mandatory. It is now a voluntary decision to become involved. KCC provides Kosovo businesses with training, trade fairs, networking, and lobby government for laws which better support local business and trade. Media is also used for governmental influence and to inform the public of KCC findings and interests.

Mr. Nexhmedin Shaqiri, Director of Department of Producers Associations, explains that in order to gain members the KCC needs to utilize personal contact so that the businesses understand the benefits of the organization. The KCC is well known and influential he explains, particularly through the influential membership base of the largest 1,200 Kosovo businesses. Members are also major decision makers of the organization, electing a governing board from active members.

In summary, all of the organizations interviewed represent a wide variety of interests within society and use a range of methods of operation. All of the organizations play a role in the development of the Kosovo civil society, providing many different services and opportunities for citizens. NGOs in Kosovo also meet many barriers in their work and have different views on citizen participation, minorities, technology, education, the economy and many more issues which will be further discussed in the following sections.

## ***VI. How and Why Citizens Become Involved***

A main point of interest in this research is what motivates Kosovo citizens to want to become involved in an interest group and how they find the information to choose an organization that meets their interests. In the interviews, citizens were asked why they became involved, whether through volunteering or a paid position within the organization. Information about what methods each organization uses to inform citizens about issues or activities they are involved in was also included in the interviews. This and other information is incorporated to reveal the citizen's view and motivation for public participation in Kosovo.

The following table (Table 5) explains the reasons citizens stated they become involved, or reasons organization directors have heard their volunteers become involved, created from direct statements made in the organizational interviews. Table 5 also includes the number of citizens that stated the reason and is organized by the most popular reason to become involved to the least. The following text describes each reason.

**Table 5: Why Kosovo Citizens Become Involved in Interest Groups**

<b>Stated Reason for Involvement</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Interest in a Specific Issue	5
Desire for Training/Skill Building	5
Sense of Affiliation	3
Status Through Involvement	1
To Increase Level of Influence	1

### **A. Interest in a Specific Issue**

The Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF) typically depends on the mobilization of citizens around a specific issue or project. Human rights issues have been and continue to be major issues in all of Kosovo. This is an issue that often deeply affects an entire family and provides motivation to act. Mr. Ngadhxjin Isufi, a CDHRF volunteer, claims that he became involved because he has “always been interested in the issues and knew that gross violations had occurred.”

Another organization that mobilizes around a specific issue is the Center for Research and Gender Policy. Ms. Vjollca Krasniqi of the Center explains that there is a “lack of gender sensitivity [in Kosovo]. There is an attitude that men are the actors in society, government, the UN, and other international structures.” Knowledge of this stereotype is a motivator for this organization to fight for political empowerment of women through seminars and encouraging women to become more involved in the media, NGOs, and political parties.

Mr. Visar Jasiqi of the IPKO Institute agrees that there is a stereotype in Kosovo against women in society. He sees this in the low enrollment of women in IPKO’s information technology program. Mr. Jasiqi claims that IPKO Institute is trying to change this mentality by increasing its marketing to women. One woman that the IPKO Institute IT program is very proud of is a female student that was selected out of 500,000 students worldwide as the best Cisco student of the year and she has continued on to be very successful. This case, Mr. Jasiqi explains, is often used as an example with current and potential female students and is a great motivator for them. Although it is not volunteer based, students choose to become involved in the Institute because of their interest in the

field of IT or management, as well as in some cases the advancement of women in these fields.

As discussed in the Literature Review, authors Cigler and Loomis categorize three different types of organizational incentives in their book *Interest Group Politics*. The first incentive category which relates to interest in a specific issue is called “expressive rewards” which are “those derived from advancing a particular cause or ideology” (1998, pg. 8-9). Cigler and Loomis’s finding of “expressive rewards” is comparable to the finding in Kosovo that citizens are motivated by an interest in a specific issue. The other two categories are explained in *Interest Group Politics* are “material benefits” and “solidary incentives” which are explained in the following motivation categories to which they are related.

## **B. Desire for Training/Skill Building**

The CDHRF volunteer, Mr. Ngadhxjin Isufi, also stated that he was motivated to participate because of the training sessions the organization offers. CDHRF’s Director Mr. Ibrahim Makolli explained that this reasoning is a common motivation for many of their over 2,000 volunteers. They allow volunteers to be involved in decision-making activities for forums and debates, they build skills in training sessions such as lobbying, and Mr. Makolli feels that recently citizens are showing a greater interest.

Providing training is the main purpose of the IPKO Institute and therefore also the main motivating factor for most of the students that attend. It is still a voluntary action for students to decide to become involved in the IPKO Institute and they do so because they believe that gaining the skills IPKO provides them with will enhance their futures.

All three of the youth volunteers at SFERA Institute also commented that other organizations that they had been involved with were not consistent with their activities and volunteers left. SFERA provides them with more opportunities and training in areas such as debate. When speaking of the training and skills they have gained, the volunteers were excited and eager to share that this is a main motivational factor for their involvement. The third volunteer interviewed, Shpend Lila, commented on the benefits of his training: “lots of [youth] would like to get the knowledge but they are not motivated to take action. What I get are indirect profits and can get money in the future with these skills.”

All of these comments relate to what Cigler and Loomis describe as “material benefits.” These are described as, “tangible rewards of participation, such as income or services that have monetary value” (1998, pg 8-9). In many cases, volunteers could use these skills in the future for advancement in vocational positions and add to his/her monetary value as an employee.

### **C. Sense of Affiliation**

Three youth volunteers were interviewed from the SFERA Institute. One volunteer, Vjosë Retkoceri, explained that she was motivated to participate because there is a lack of activities after school and she had a lot of free time. Krenare Maloku, another volunteer, agrees that she was also looking for something to do after school and adds a motivating factor for her was “that people do not want to feel like they are alone, they want to feel supported” and involvement in SFERA activities with other youth fills her free time and need for affiliation and encouragement. This type of motivation relates to

the third category Cigler and Loomis describe which is solidary incentives. These are described as: “the socially derived, intangible rewards created by the act of associations, such as fun, camaraderie, status, or prestige” (1998, pg 8-9).

#### **D. Status Through Involvement**

Another organization with a large volunteer base is the Mother Tereza Society. However, as a humanitarian organization action is in the form of assistance and aid to the general population and not mobilizing around a specific issue. Zef Shala, the organization’s director, believes that a main motivation for citizens to become involved in Mother Tereza Society is the organization’s work before the war. The organization became very well known and respected before and during the war and this has continued to the present time. During the field research in Kosovo, I also found this to be true as anyone that was asked on the street for directions to “Nana Terez” knew of the organization.

Zef Shala continued to explain that the organization has used its good reputation to its advantage by creating membership cards for all the volunteers. He believes this is an incentive for volunteers because they hold an identification card that proves their membership and earns them respect within their community and all of Kosovo. Due to costs of these cards and as a fundraising technique, members are asked to pay a fee of €1 per month. According to Cigler and Loomis’ definition, gaining status by affiliation with the organization would also be categorized as a solidary incentive (1998).



### **E. Increased Level of Influence**

Still other organizations, such as the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce, increase participation in their organization by mobilizing a large group of members with a status that potentially provides a high level of influence in governmental decision making. One key aspect of the organization that Mr. Nexhmedin Shaqiri explains is that 1,200 of Kosovo's biggest companies are members of the KCC and this provides influence that is attractive to many other businesses and motivates them to also become members.

In this case, members are the citizens that own and manage Kosovo's businesses and are inspired to influence the region's economic environment. Mr. Shala explains that the KCC works to increase international networking and foreign cooperation for Kosovo's markets which is an issue of great interest to this target population and the members have come to understand that their actions are more effective as a collective group. This is similar to motivation by specific issue. However, the difference is the main motivation for becoming involved is by means of the collective group and the membership base of prominent Kosovo businesses, members join because they feel the organization can be highly influential in governmental decision making and everyone wants to play a role in the public voice of the business community.

Cigler and Loomis do not specifically categorize motivation due to the level of influence of the organization and its members. Rather, one can conclude this reason for involvement is a combination of the three: material, solidary, and expressive. Incentive to become involved does contain some potential monetary benefits from economic decision making and strategies for the region which relates to the material benefits; the influence of the organization and interacting with prestigious businesses provides status benefits

which would categorize the incentive as solidary; and the members have joined in the interest of advancing various economic development policies which is associated with expressive rewards. No matter the term, it is common that citizens will become motivated to join in the actions of an organization if the organization has a high potential for influencing decision makers.

## **F. Methods of Communication**

Even if a citizen becomes motivated in one of the ways discussed above, unless they are aware of an organization which meets their needs and also know how to contact that organization, it is unlikely that the citizen will follow through on their interest. Most of the organizations discussed use methods of notification to citizens by means of fliers, newspaper ads, media coverage, and emails. However, the most commonly stated and decidedly successful method for Kosovo is notification by word of mouth. The SFERA Institute, IPKO Institute, Mother Tereza Society, Future Systems Network, the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce, and CDHRF all rely on the spread of information through personal citizen to citizen contact to notify the public of their organization and activities. Ulpiana Lama from the SFERA Institute explains, “word of mouth is the most successful [method]. It is important to have first hand experiences, then citizens become more willing to cooperate.”

Over time, Kosovo organizations have also adjusted the populations that they target once they find success in motivating a specific group to participate. In the case of the SFERA Institute, the Director Ms. Ulpiana Lama, has begun to target the large youth population for a number of reasons. One she explains is that youth demographics show

that over 60% of the Kosovo population is under the age of 25 and that is a large population of citizens that can make a difference. Another reason Ms. Lama states is that “young people do not feel that powerless” and they recognize the “power of group”. SFERA Institute has had great success so far in motivating youth with a youth volunteer base increase of 900% since January 2004.

Of all the interviews, the three SFERA youth volunteers were positively the most energized about their experiences with the organization and the benefits that can come to individual citizens and society through public participation. Collectively they agreed that the best way to continue to increase SFERA’s volunteer base is through word of mouth from those that are currently active. They believe that the personal explanation helps otherwise uninterested citizens to think differently and better motivates them to become involved.

None of the organizations stated that they use what Cigler and Loomis claim to be the most popular and important method for U.S. based interest groups in *Interest Group Politics*, direct mailing advertising (1998, pg. 59). This may be due to two major differences between U.S. based organization and Kosovo based organizations. One being the size and population of Kosovo, about 10,877 km<sup>2</sup> and 2 million people (SOK, 2004, pg. 6;9), compared to the United States, about 9,600,000 km<sup>2</sup> and 300 million people (CIA World Fact Book, 2006). With the small population and geographic area it is much easier and more realistic for word of mouth to travel throughout the region. Another reason that mailings may not be currently utilized in Kosovo is the high costs of developing, printing, and mailing a mass advertisement. Many interest groups in the United States are more developed, have a greater membership base and have access to a

more sustainable source of funding. These differences were expected due to the developmental differences of Kosovo and the United States as well as the size and population differences just mentioned.

Once citizens are involved, these lines of communication between citizen and organization continue to be vital. As discussed, citizens often become involved in an interest group because they are motivated around an issue and want to take action toward change, often through influencing government. If government did not pay attention to the needs and actions of the citizens, they would have little motivation to spend their time supporting societal, environmental, economic or governmental change. In order to ensure citizen action and governmental influence, government, interest groups, and citizens need to establish lines of communication. The main purpose of these lines of communication is to share knowledge and stimulate informed action and decision making. Therefore, the ability of citizens to participate and feel motivated depends greatly on whether or not they are informed and if they feel as though they can create change within society. This then becomes another important concept to discover in Kosovo: how do Kosovo interest groups connect with and influence government, and do citizens feel empowered by this connection?

In the most general sense, those interviewed felt that government was responsive to their information and actions and that their organization has the power to influence decision making. Many of the larger organizations, such as IPKO Institute and CDHRF have been directly invited by government to attend meetings and provide information for decision making. Others, such as SFERA and the Center for Research and Gender Policy hold forums that political officials regularly attend. Five out of eight (62.5%) of the

organizations stated that they also often turn to the media to raise greater awareness within society and influence officials. These statements support that there is a direct relationship which allows for communication and the transfer of knowledge from interest groups to government.

The following diagrams, Figure 8, Figure 9, and Figure 10, display lines of information and communication created from interview comments and the literature review discussion. Figure 8 illustrates the complete lines of communication from government to citizens in Kosovo. Figure 9 provides a closer look into the methods of communication between Kosovo interest groups and citizens. Figure 10 provides a comparative understanding of methods of communication between interest groups and citizens in the United States. This comparison is used in these charts not to provide preconceived notions of how lines of communication are supposed to connect citizens and government, but rather as theoretical perspective of developed democracy.

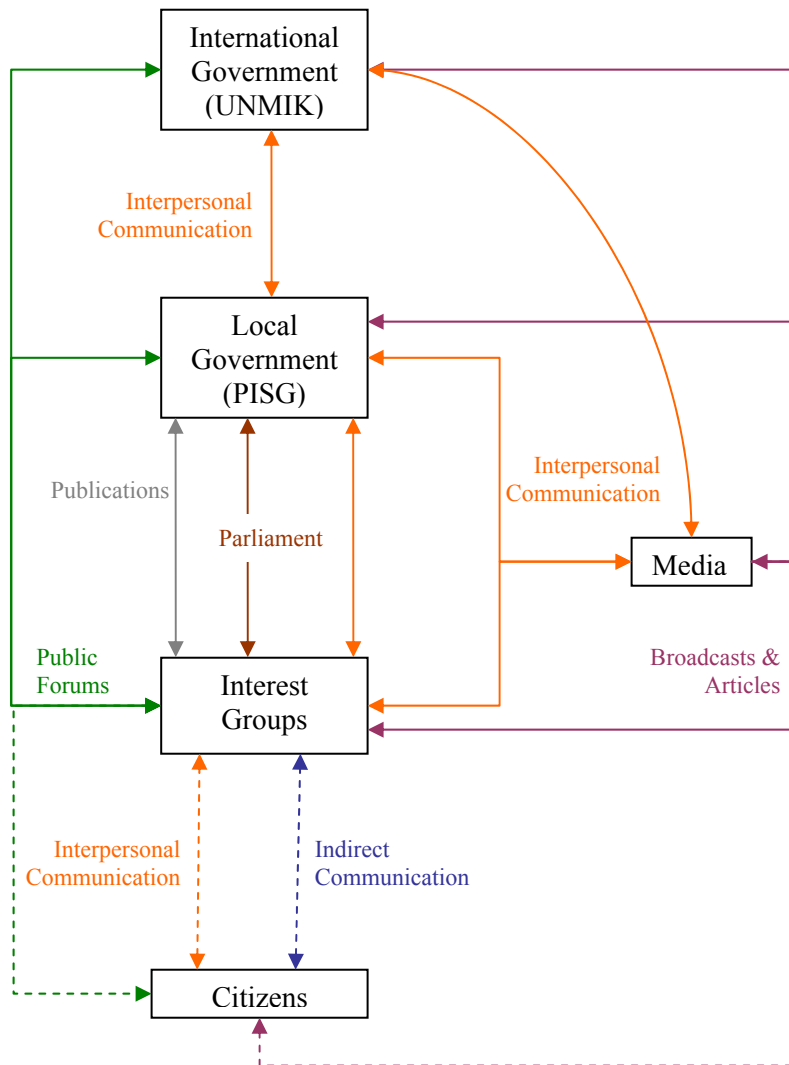
The main civil society actors included in Figure 8 for Kosovo are: International Government (UNMIK); Local Government (PISG); Interest Groups; Media; and Citizens. The main method of communication which ties together all of the displayed actors is interpersonal communication, displayed in orange, in which information is given directly from one person to another. Media, the purple lines, also connect all of the other actors together by receiving and reporting information in television broadcasts and paper articles. Citizens, interest groups, and government also may interact in public forums that are held by either interest groups or government and displayed in Figure 8 (green).

From the interviews, many of the interest groups mentioned that they were able to communicate to government. Besides interpersonal communication and the use of the

media to bring attention of issues to government, interest groups also mentioned that they communicate through publications (grey) and testifying in parliament (brown).

Communication lines between citizens and interest groups are dashed because the communication methods interest groups use to reach out to citizens do not capture the entire population. Additionally, many citizens do not have access or the know-how to check an organization's website for information or receive emails. In Figure 8, the lines described as interpersonal communication (orange) and indirect communication (blue) are dashed due to the limited population of citizens the information and communication reaches. A more complete description of this communication is displayed in Figure 9 and described further below.

**Figure 8: Complete Lines of Communication--Kosovo**



Replace the “International Government” with “Federal Government” and Figure 7 would be very similar to an example of lines of information communication in the United States. Therefore, a separate complete lines of communication chart for the United States is not included for the theoretical comparison. This proves that lines of communication

between Kosovo governmental bodies and organizations seem to match those of a developed nation. The “missing links” that would not resemble the United States are instead in the communication to the citizen. Figure 10 provides a comparative example of lines of communication between citizens and interest groups in the United States. The United States is a more developed democracy in which the majority of public participation literature is written and is used in this case to illustrate similarities and differences in Kosovo’s ability to connect with citizens.

Figure 9 displays all of the methods of communication stated in the organizational interviews between citizens and interest groups in Kosovo. All of the lines are dashed because the communication methods interest groups use to reach out to citizens do not capture the entire population. Particularly since the main method of information to Kosovo citizens is interpersonal communication through word of mouth, only citizens that are networked with certain groups of locals will receive the information on how to participate. Interpersonal communication is bolded since word of mouth was identified to be the main method of communication. The other methods are ones that were all identified by organization directors and citizen volunteers.



**Figure 9: Interest Group to Citizen Lines of Communication--Kosovo**

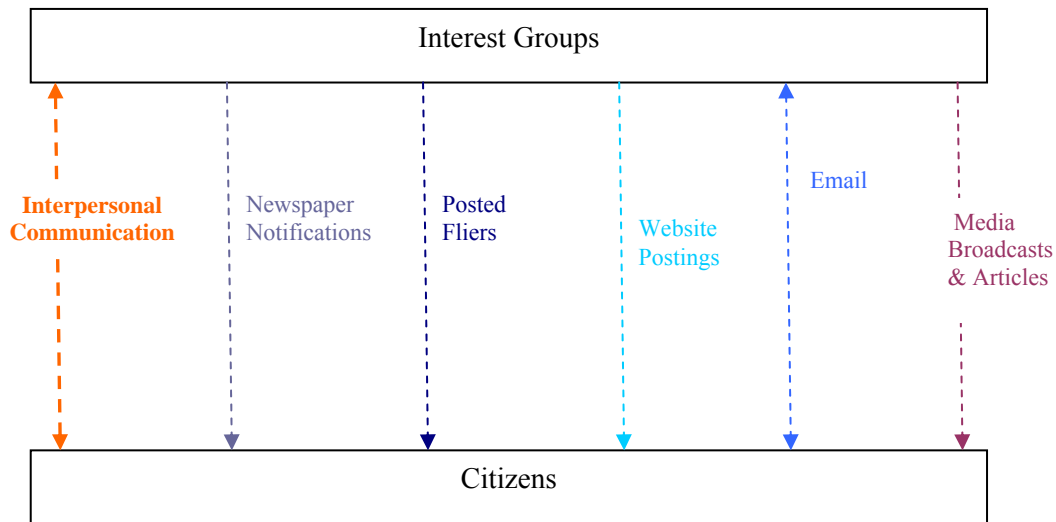
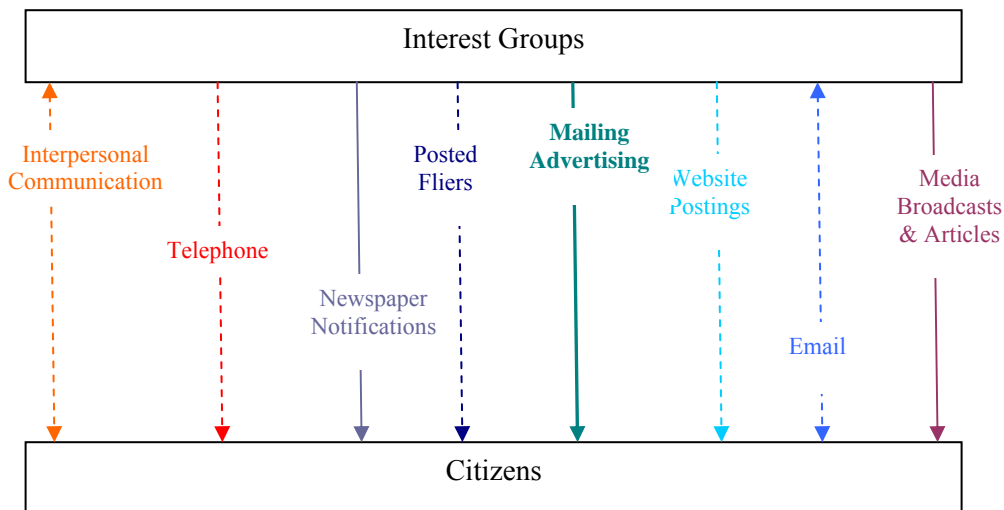


Figure 10 displays all of the methods of communication for the United States that were identified in the literature review. Mailing Advertising is bolded in this diagram since it was described by Cigler and Loomis as the most popular and important method for U.S.-based interest groups in *Interest Group Politics* (1998, pg. 59). Additionally, mailing advertising, media broadcasting and articles, and newspaper notifications are solid lines since they are more likely in the United States to capture the entire population. Often, mailing advertisements are sent out to large populations at a time and typically all citizens have access to receive mail and also access to the media.

Interpersonal communication, telephone communication, and posted fliers are still dashed lines since they typically target specific communities or populations. Additionally, interpersonal communication still requires that citizens be networked within certain groups of citizens in order to be included in this contact. Website postings and email are also dashed due to the issue of digital divide in which typically lower income citizens do not have access to a computer or the Internet and therefore are not included in these methods of communication. Nonetheless, even though some of these lines continue

to be dashed, Figure 10 shows that the United States has developed more lines of communication which are also more inclusive of the population due to a more developed infrastructure.

**Figure 10: Interest Group to Citizen Lines of Communication--United States**



Other findings from the interviews identified not lines of communication but functions within government as a cause of some citizens feeling as though they do not have the power to influence change. Ulpiana Lama explains that even though she feels SFERA Institute has had an impact on civil society, it is at times very difficult because both the local and international governments in Kosovo have limited responsibilities. In addition to the limited power for governmental action she explains: “The local government considers civil society but UNMIK does not. The international government doesn’t create their own agenda. They act on the recommendations of the international community.”

The international community in this circumstance is not UNMIK but other United Nations and European Union officials and other regional representatives who advise UNMIK and who are not directly connected to these local lines of communication and information. Therefore issues that make up the government's agenda may be very different from the interests of the local community. Competing with the international community for a regional agenda could be very intimidating to a local citizen. From this viewpoint, the international community, which has the goal of institutionalizing a democracy in Kosovo, may actually be hindering citizen participation.

Figure 8 does demonstrate though that the basic lines of communication exist in Kosovo which is essential in providing initial factors for motivation and methods for citizens to find organizations that meet their interests. Methods of motivation in Kosovo range from citizen interest in a specific issue, desire for skill building and training, and even public respect for being a member of a certain organization. It was also found that direct citizen to citizen contact was the most effective technique for local Kosovo organizations to stimulate public participation.

Unfortunately, those that are connected to these lines of interpersonal communication and many of the other methods are most likely those that are educated, employed, or already have an interest in the political process. These citizens would be networked through their educational institution, business, political party affiliation, or friends that are involved in similar activities. Although many of the organizations have found interpersonal communication to currently be an effective method to spread information and motivate citizens to participate, it is neither an efficient nor sufficient method to inform and inspire Kosovo civil society at large.

According to Figure 8 and based on the NGO interviews, lines of communication in Kosovo seem to be adequate to promote informed decision making through the NGO community passing on information to the government. Although, as stated, the international and local PISG government often follow their own agenda, access to these decision makers is available. Additionally, some organizations felt as though they have influenced governmental decisions. The only area of concern is the dashed lines of direct communication and indirect communication between citizens and interest groups. These concerns could be the result of many different social or economic circumstances that will be discussed further in the following section as impediments to involvement.

The dashed or broken lines in Figure 8 and Figure 9 do not necessarily mean that Kosovo organizations have not had success in gaining citizen involvement through these methods. Whether directors, researchers, volunteers, or all of the above, all of the Kosovo citizens interviewed believed that the organization they are affiliated with was providing positive change and assisting in the development of civil society. However, when facing major impediments to involvement such as a poor economy and continued mentality that the government will take care of all citizen needs, informing citizens of the social and personal benefits of volunteering is vital for the development of civil society. These and more impediments are discussed in the next section.

## ***VII. Impediments to Public Participation***

There are many dedicated and inspirational organization directors, staff and volunteers committed to motivating citizens to become involved in the political and policy decision-making processes. These citizens are truly “change agents” for their society. Unfortunately, these organizations are often hindered by great barriers within society, the economy, and government which make motivating citizens and accomplishing developmental goals an overwhelming and at times discouraging task. However, these impediments are important to take into account in order to set appropriate goals, plans of action, and to understand the challenges that will be met in Kosovo’s civil society development.

The following table (Table 6) explains stated reasons why organizations find it difficult to motivate citizens to become involved and also reasons citizens have heard from their peers. Table 6 also includes the frequency that each reason was stated. The following text describes each reason, broken down into sections. Some of the reasons are interconnected to others, such as funding and the economic situation, and therefore are included together in one section.

**Table 6: Impediments to Public Participation in Kosovo**

<b>Stated Reasons for Non-Involvement</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Mentality Against Voluntary Activity	9
Poor Economic Conditions	6
Lack of Funding	6
Lack of Local Governmental Power	5
Bureaucracy	3

Final Status	2
Gender Inequality in Society and Government	2
International Government	1

#### **A. Poor Economic Conditions, Funding, and Gender Inequality in Society and Government**

One major barrier that was identified from the interviews is the economy. The most recent Statistical Office of Kosovo data estimates Kosovo's unemployment rate at 55%, the number of families receiving social assistance benefits 42,359 (2.23%), and the average household income € 375 (\$452) (Statistical Office of Kosovo, 2004, pg. 21; SOK, November 2005, pg 16). .

A two day conference was held in July 2004 by Forum 2015, a Kosovo NGO.

This conference was organized with the purpose to:

...gather a diverse group of people representing different bodies such as the Provisional Institution of Self-Governance (PISG), minority communities in Kosovo, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the business community and the Kosovar and international civil society to critically examine where does Kosovo stand today with respect to pressing political, ethnic and socio-economic challenges and address the essential question of where should it be going in the future (2004, pg. 105).

One of the presenters at the conference and Advisor to the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Mr. Behxhet Haliti, explained his view that the economic situation and the political environment create a “viscous cycle” against one another. He states, “the lack of political stability hinders economic development and at the same time, the lack of sustainable economic development impairs political stability” (Forum 2015, 2004, pg. 142). Political stability not only includes a diverse and motivated governmental system

with adequate checks and balances but also power for the citizens to express their views and be involved in the political process. This theory reinforces that the economic conditions of Kosovo hinders citizen involvement, the development of civil society, and the relationship between citizens and political decision makers.

Some of the organizations interviewed identified one way in which the poor economic conditions of Kosovo affect civil society development, funding. Six out of eight (75%) of the organizations interviewed stated that they have found some degree of difficulty in finding funding. For example, Mr. Shaqiri at the KCC mentioned the difficulty in connecting with current and potential members around the region due to the lack of funding to purchase and maintain cars.

The two organizations that did not mention difficulty in finding funding were the IPKO Institute which operates only on tuition payments from students and KFOS which is an organization set up by the SOROS Foundation to disperse grants and funding dollars, not initiate activities and citizen participation. Therefore, essentially 100% of the organizations interviewed which rely on outside funding found obtaining sufficient funds difficult.

The Center for Research and Gender Policy reported that their main barrier is the lack of gender sensitivity and value placed on women's organizations. This social and governmental mentality has greatly affected their funding, explained Vjollca Krasniqi, since she competes with other male-run NGOs for funding and often experiences that women-run NGOs get less. She explains further that since the Center for Research and Gender Policy does not have activities suitable for volunteers, funding is always necessary and difficult.

One organization that seemed particularly discouraged by the funding issue is the Mother Tereza Society. Although they are one of the larger organizations and also one of the longest running, Zef Shala explains that the organization has been greatly affected by the underdeveloped economy and decreasing involvement of the international community. He reasons that as the international community continues to leave and decrease funding in Kosovo that the local government will need to support organizations. However, the local budget continues to be inadequate to assist in these areas of society.

Instead, Mr. Shala believes that organizations would be better assisted by donations from local and international individual contributors. The main barrier for this situation that Mr. Shala has dealt with is there is no policy which allows donors the incentive of a tax deduction for their contribution to non-profit organizations. If government truly wanted to better support civil society, Mr. Shala believes that his and other organizations would be more successful in seeking operational funds if citizens had greater incentive to contribute.

## **B. Mentality Against Voluntary Activities**

Many of those interviewed believe that these poor economic conditions effect how citizens view spending their time. Ulpiana Lama describes the social phenomena as a “mix of post modern values in a traditional society.” She continues, “The concept of volunteerism has changed. [Citizens now] economize their time, time is money. They are not keen to give time to voluntary work...or do something else other than gaining money.”



Vjose Retkoceri, a SFERA volunteer, agrees with Ms. Lama as she claims she is often told by others: “you’re wasting your time and you’re not being paid.” Ms. Biserka Ivanovic, OSCE, explained that this is also her view of the majority of Kosovo society. As so many people are barely able to care for their families they believe that if you volunteer you must have an alternative motive. She explains further, “Before the war there was not a need for citizen organized activities because the state was taking care of you.” She believes that changing this mentality will be a difficult process, especially in the rural areas and Serbian enclave villages where she explains the thought process of citizens as: “‘I have no electricity, no job, and no money’, so they question, ‘do I really want to volunteer.’”

The Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC) has also met barriers in society and the economy which have hindered their activities and volunteers. Since the KCC is solely dependent on funding from its membership it is a main activity for the organization to recruit new businesses to join. Voluntary membership is a new concept in Kosovar society, contrasting the previous socialist mentality in which the government takes care of everything. At that time, membership was required so now significant time and energy is spent convincing businesses to believe and support the organizations.

### **C. Lack of Local Governmental Power, Competing Interests in the Agenda of the International Government, Final Status, and Administrative Bureaucracy**

All of these issues are grouped together because during citizen interviews, it at times seemed difficult for one issue to be discussed without connection to one of the others. In fact it is easy to see the connections between all of these issues. The Kosovo

Local government has a lack of power due to limited responsibilities being handed down from UNMIK. The local government and citizens therefore contribute their lack of power to final status issues. The international government is limited in its abilities to hand power down to the local government or sometimes listen to and address citizen needs because they are also influenced by the international community at large. In addition, with so many governmental actors and interests, governmental bureaucracy increases and makes civil society actions more time consuming and complicated. Therefore, it is easy to understand how these governmental actions create barriers to public participation by reinforcing the mentality that citizen actions do not matter. These connections are further explained in the organizational statements below.

As discussed in the preceding section, the insufficient lines of communication between interest groups and citizens, and the lack of local governmental power are major challenges for motivating citizens to volunteer and participate in the political process. Senad Sabovic, a research analyst for the International Crisis Group, explains his belief that “people don’t feel they have power. Kosovo is run by UNMIK and there is little possibility for citizens to express their opinions and create change. Since Kosovo is not a country, there is no direct link between voters and government.” Ulpiana Lama explains her view of the situation: “The local government considers civil society but UNMIK does not. The international government doesn’t create their own agenda. They act on the recommendations of the international community.”

Luan Shllaku of the Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society understands many of the issues Kosovo is facing and believes Kosovo’s citizens are able to make a difference, but again inadequate links between citizens and government make the process difficult.

He states, “There are big issues: status, development, unemployment, etc. We need united efforts of Kosovar intellectuals. Government is weak and decision makers are not able to do it themselves without civil society. It is one of [KFOS’s] biggest challenges to put together Kosovar intellectuals to do more about the big issues of society.”

A major barrier that Ibrahim Makolli explained CDHRF is often faced with is the administrative bureaucracy of UNMIK and PISG and unsupportive laws for many human rights situations. He explains further that “There is a lack of readiness of people working in [local] institutions to create space for our work. For example we are interested in monitoring the situation in prisons because in these places there are human rights violations, but we do not have access. The problem is bureaucratic obstacles which hinder our work. The lack of laws is also an obstacle because we do not have a number of laws needed.”

The SFERA Institute also has been hindered by bureaucracy from international foundations and by inadequate linkages between local citizens and internationals. Ulpiana Lama states that “donors decide what you are going to do...local perspectives are often different from what donors see...you must know exactly what they want to hear. It does not meet reality, but you must respect the rules in order to get money.”

These bureaucratic and poor communication issues may be related to the issue of final status for Kosovo. As Kosovo’s future is uncertain and currently dependent on meeting standards set by the international community, the local government has little power and is currently viewed by some of the organizations as passive. Ms. Lama believes that for the last three months they have simply been “waiting for action from negotiations for final status.” The inactivity of government provides organizations with

little opportunity to communicate interests or viewpoints on issues to local or international government. The lack of communication, activity, and local power stifles the development of Kosovo's civil society and further impedes the already difficult path to public participation.

Another speaker from the Forum 2015 conference, Ms. Carne Ross of the United Nations, discussed the issue of final status and called on the citizens of Kosovo to take actions within civil society. She states:

The longer I live in Kosovo, the more it seems clear to me that the solutions to the problem of final status are not to be found in the UN Security Council, or Washington, or Paris, or Belgrade, but here... My proposal is that people in Kosovo find the answer themselves. And by that I emphatically do not mean declare independence, haul up the Albanian flag and erect statues of war heroes in the carpark of UNMIK HQ. By this, I mean start producing the answers to the questions that exist in the heads of those bureaucrats in Paris, London and Washington (2004, pg. 184)

This is a direct call to those active and dedicated organizations in Kosovo to continue to fight the social, economic, and governmental barriers for the sake of the future. It is also a call to those who are inactive to join these organizations in the development of Kosovo. Although the message for society to become more active and stimulate necessary changes within their society is excellent, Ms. Ross does not seem to fully take into account the immobility that the international community has itself created in Kosovo and the many additional impediments citizens of all ethnicities are faced with.

At times these issues that organizations find to be barriers to motivating citizens and stimulating social action are the same issues the organizations are working to change within society. This impediments discussion provided by the local Kosovo organizations presents a reality of Kosovo that is unfortunate but important to recognize. These challenges and how they are interconnected must be understood so that the organizations

can identify the best ways to connect to government and motivate citizens to become involved in these issues and influence positive change within society.

### ***VIII. Minority Issues in Public Participation***

One aspect that has not yet been discussed in the previous sections, but is a very important aspect of Kosovo's current social and political situation, is the issue of minorities. The societal divisions within Kosovo are truly a unique aspect to the geopolitical Balkans region of which Kosovo is a part. During the in-country research it became apparent that, due to these divisions, the citizen participation and interest group experiences of the Kosovo-Serbian minorities were drastically different and required separate analysis and discussion.

To first provide a historical understanding of the current situation in Kosovo, under the communist Yugoslav rule of Tito, Kosovo was granted autonomy, meaning "they would carry out all the tasks of a republic apart from those tasks which were of concern to the republic of Serbia as a whole" (Malcolm, 2002, p. 325). However, after Tito's death and the rise to power of Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia, Kosovo's autonomy was brought to an end (Malcolm, 2002). Serbia took "control over Kosovo's police, courts and civil defense, as well as such matters as social and economic policy, education policy, the power to issue 'administrative instructions' and the choice of an official language" (Malcolm, 2002, p. 343).

During Milosevic's rule, Kosovo endured a number of economic and social hardships, including attempts to force Albanians out of Kosovo and create a Serbian dominated region through human rights abuses and other policies of repression (Malcolm, 2002). After the NATO bombings of Serbia and returned autonomy to Kosovo through UNMIK rule, Serbians began to be pressured out of Kosovo and hate crimes arose. Serbians that continue to reside in Kosovo primarily live in North Mitrovica or in various Serbian enclaves. They experience limited freedom of movement, at times requiring military escort, and typically do not interact with Kosovo-Albanian citizens and businesses in the main cities of Kosovo.

These struggles from outside forces and between the two main ethnic groups of Kosovo, Albanian and Serbian, have established a division within society that creates much of the current social, political, and economic unrest and instability. Today's population statistics in Kosovo reveal that out of almost two million people, 88% are Albanian, 7% are Serbian, and the remaining 5% are, among others, Roma, Montenegrin, Turks, and Croats (ECMI, 2003). This section focuses discussion on motivation and barriers of involvement for Serbian citizens and interest groups to participate in the Kosovo political process as they are very different and important perspectives to take into account.

These perspectives are drawn from two of the organization interviews: first hand accounts of Mr. Rikalo Nenad, Executive Director of Future System Network; and second hand accounts of Ms. Biserka Ivanovic's, OSCE, work with Serbian interest groups. Below, Table 7 lists the motivation and Table 8 list the barriers discussed for Kosovo-Serbian public participation:

**Table 7: Motivation for Kosovo-Serbian Public Participation**

<b>Motivation</b>
Ability to Influence Community
Desire for Society, Economic, and Governmental Change
Desire for Peace

**Table 8: Barriers to Kosovo-Serbian Public Participation**

<b>Barriers</b>
Inadequate Infrastructure
Lack of Freedom of Movement
Limited Information
Limited Organizational Networking
Limited Influence/Connection to Government
Limited Media
Mentality Against Volunteering
Poor Economic Conditions
Poor Education
Political Leaders Do Not Represent Public Interest
Public Disinterest in Inter-Ethnic Activities

Mr. Rikalo Nenad, Executive Director of Future Systems Network (Future) located in the Serbian enclave Gracanica, Kosovo, shared many of the same goals and issues as other interviewed Kosovo organizations: fighting unemployment, educating people to find jobs, promoting private business, assisting people with disabilities, and working with the formal education system as it is currently not believed to meet the needs of the population. However, one other activity was mentioned that when asked, most of

the other organizations did not prioritize was that of increasing communication between Serbian and Albanian people. Unfortunately, since the events of March 2004 discussed below, little interest has been shown by citizens for reconciliation activities. Most of the success in this area has been with youth through an art project activity.

Mr. Rikalo Nenad explains that there are many barriers to Serbian public participation. The main impediment to which many others are linked is the lack of freedom of movement for Serbians living in Kosovo. Due to hate crimes that have happened since the end of the war and the more recent March 2004 riots, many Serbians do not feel comfortable moving throughout Kosovo or integrating into cities and communities that are majority Albanian. There are some Kosovo-Serbians, such as Rikalo Nenad, that have begun to travel but he states that he travels with the realization that there is risk. The majority of Kosovo-Serbians stay within their communities in which there is little development or infrastructure.

The March riots were an uprising that began on March 17, 2004 with many Kosovo-Albanian's violently expressing their anti-Serbian and anti-UN feelings (ICG, 2004). These feelings of discontent with the United Nation's rule in Kosovo and policies toward final status and economic development finally came to a head with this unorganized and violent outburst of frustration (ICG, 2004). "The rampage left nineteen dead, nearly 900 injured, over 700 Serb, Ashkali and Roma homes, up to ten public buildings and 30 Serbian churches and two monasteries damaged or destroyed, and roughly 4,500 people displaced" (ICG, 2004, p. *i*). The actions of the March riots and the continued uncertainty within all of Kosovo reinstated Kosovo-Serbians' fear of leaving



one's community and their future in Kosovo. Rikalo Nenad stated: "At any moment you could get a call that 15,000 Albanians are coming to destroy the village."

This inability to freely move throughout Kosovo and interact with general society hinders public participation and the activities of organizations within the enclaves since it is then more difficult to receive information, network with other organizations, or connect with the Kosovo or international governments. Unfortunately, due to these obstacles, it requires Kosovo-Serbian organizations and citizens more time and energy to be successful in their efforts. Ms. Ivanovic provided the example of a few Kosovo-Serbian women's organizations that attempted to network themselves for information. She explained that they understood they needed it, but could not follow through because they were afraid to drive. This reinforces how difficult it is for Kosovo-Serbians to stimulate Kosovo-wide action.

In the rest of the interviews, the organizations were primarily run by Kosovo-Albanians living in Pristina. There were some examples of programs these organizations developed to increase communication and interaction between Kosovo-Serbians and Kosovo-Albanians. However, they were typically programs that were not sustained over time nor were they programs that were a main focus for any of the organizations. All of the organizations claimed to not discriminate and were welcoming to any volunteers or assistance from minority groups. For example, CDHRF's elections monitoring program mobilized over two thousand five hundred volunteers, six hundred of which were Serbian. The KCC claims that they have tried to cooperate and include some Serbian-based businesses into the organization but the effort was unsuccessful due to opposition from the Serbian government.

One of the SFERA Institute volunteers, Shpend Lila, discussed a program he had participated in, not affiliated with SFERA, in which Kosovo-Serbian and Kosovo-Albanian students were taken to Italy for a workshop. The students shared living quarters, ate together, and interacted together to discuss problems in Kosovo. He claims that in the beginning he “thought there would be no agreement between the students, but he made good relationships with many of the Kosovo-Serbian students” and still keeps in email contact with seven of them. Consistent with the example Nenad Rikalo gave of successful inter-ethnic programs, it is youth that are able to overlook the past and any differences.

One similarity that was found in all of the organization interviews, including Future, was the discovery of a mentality against volunteering. The mentality is again linked to the same issues, the poor economy and disbelief in the ability to create change. Ms. Biserka Ivanovic explained that another outcome of the limited movement, communication, and information is that people feel that it is possible to influence one’s own community or the communities directly surrounding it, but the influence is not Kosovo-wide or listened to by government. A statement she has heard many times within enclaves is “I have no electricity, no job, and no money, so they question, ‘do I really want to volunteer.’” Ms. Ivanovic continued that citizen activity is not in their culture because the state was taking care of you. Mr. Nenad has found it difficult to mobilize people for his programs, he states, because there is a “physiological condition that there is no hope for them.”

Rikalo Nenad provided further explanation about Kosovo-Serbians’ limited ability to connect with and influence government from the enclaves. There are eight Serbian political representatives throughout Kosovo who are recognized by the

international community. However, he explains that the people do not recognize these leaders since there have not been local elections within the enclaves for eight years and these leaders do not express the interest of the people but their own. Mr. Nenad also does not believe that the political leaders have adequate training since they are doctors or engineers by training and show many weaknesses in their politics.

There is also a reduced connection of Kosovo-Serbian citizens to both the international and Kosovo governments since they have not had local elections to provide adequate representation and also did not participate in the most recent Kosovo elections. In the 2004 elections, the total voter turnout dropped from 64% in 2001 to 53% (BBC News, 2004). Reports provided information that this drop was largely due to the Serbian boycott and intimidation to not participate in Kosovo's political autonomy (Kosovo News, 2004).

Concerning this non-participation of the Serbian population, UNMIK head Mr. Jessen-Petersen commented "Obviously some decided not to vote and that's their democratic right. Others obviously have had their democratic right to vote hijacked, who may have wanted to vote but were afraid" (BBC News, 2004). However, neither the reporters nor UNMIK voiced the opinion that Rikalo Nenad shared, that the "people are boycotting because of their conditions of life, we don't agree with the situation. It has been eight years with no local elections. We don't have political leaders. Eight years and no democratic ways are found here."

Mr. Nenad stated his opinion that the "international community is creating conditions for a new war through instability and long term problems." Conversely, this is not what the Kosovo-Serbian community wants. Ms. Ivanovic does not believe that

Kosovo-Serbian and Kosovo-Albanian interests are very different. She observes, “They both want a normal life, employment, education, health and other services.” Mr. Nenad agrees with her commenting, “The extremist voice [in both cultures] is loud and aggressive and drowns out the majority who want a normal life, to live in peace, and integration with European Union.”

All of these barriers facing the Kosovo-Serbian citizens as well as the dramatic change in lifestyle and a hope for a better future motivated Rikalo Nenad to become involved with Future. He states that before the war Kosovo-Serbians were young and living in the city of Pristina. “After 1999 they were forced to come to the village, it was a big change moving from the urban life to rural with no freedom of movement, no access at all to information until 2001, no electricity, no clothing to buy. Only the bare necessities.” He used to be a Deputy Director in the Youth Ministry for Kosovo, but left to focus more on Future and to stimulate change within his community.

As stated by most other organizations, word of mouth was still stated to be the best method to inform the community of the organization’s activities. They do also use media sources such as the radio, television, and newspapers to provide the community with information. However, this has not proven as successful and there are limited media sources available. A total of four radio stations are located in the region which broadcast in Serbian, one within the Gracanica enclave and the rest are from Mitrovica and Belgrade. Flyers are not usually used by Future as they have not proven to be successful and are a waste of money.

In order to receive information, Future is connected to the Internet which greatly expands their information access and abilities. Unfortunately, Mr. Nenad explained that

this is not typically the case. The Internet is still expensive, discussed below, and the infrastructure and technical know-how is not adequate. These developments are just beginning to happen within the enclaves. With Future's access and know-how, they are working to expand these abilities to other organizations by holding small sessions on basic computer skills and website design.

Even among public school students technological know-how is low. Mr. Nenad explains that there is little technology with the Serbian schools and the teachers are not qualified. He reasons that after 1999 many Serbians left Kosovo, including many of those who were educated and qualified for positions such as teaching. "Since 1999 the quality of education has decreased for Kosovo-Serbian. The motivation level of students and professors is low due to the closed society." This greatly concerns Mr. Nenad and other community members because these students "won't have the skills or education to compete. The current [working] generation finished their education before 1999. [The educational system] will be a huge problem for this community in the future."

All of Kosovo will need to deal with these minority issues and it has been an issue of great debate but little action within government. It is a topic which is socially sensitive and no amount of debate will create an easy answer or erase the terrible crimes committed before, during and after war. However, both discussion and action are necessary in order for both Albanians and Serbians to have a future in Kosovo. The Forum 2015 conference is one which spurred greater discussion on minority issues, though primarily from the international speakers and not the local participants. Ms. Laurie S. Wiseberg, UNMIK Minority Rights Advisor, spoke at the conference and identified aspects within society that do not support ethnic integration or tolerance and

calls on both local politicians, leaders and all of civil society to create this change. She states:

Prime Minister Rexhepi, in his opening remarks this morning, said there are many problems that have to be faced in Kosovo and 'not even the most delicate issue should be left aside.' Let me begin, then, with one very delicate issue. The issue of ethnic hostility, the lack of tolerance, some might even say racism. One of the speakers this morning said 'do not call our liberators criminals.' Clearly, I am here on various dangerous ground. But in a multi-ethnic society that has gone through the wars and conflicts that Kosovo has gone through, one person's liberation fighter is not everyone's hero. In my short time here, all around me I see symbols, posters, flags that are not likely to inspire confidence in other ethnic communities. This leads me to my first observation, that there needs to be a real investment on the part of political leaders and by civil society in the education system, in teaching a respect for diversity, for acceptance of ethnic diversity. There needs to be investment in a culture of human rights...Preaching ethnic tolerance may not be what is needed, but the political leadership must make a real commitment to building a society where all members of all communities can live in the absence of fear or threat; where all communities are able to access services essential to their economic, social and cultural well-being (2004, pg. 168).

As illustrated in Tables 7 and 8 and throughout this section, the barriers facing Serbian minorities are much greater than the motivation for public participation, creating an uncertain and bleak future for all of Kosovo. Even the organizations that have found the motivation and desire to assist their community, do not actively influence any political process or decision making in Kosovo; local, national, or international.

Technology and better infrastructure are just beginning to become part of life in the enclaves, however democracy is not. Public participation is an unheard of term among the Serbian enclaves. Local officials are not elected by their affiliated communities, do not represent their interests and no level of government seems to hear what the majority is saying: we want peace and to once again be a part of Kosovo.

## ***IX. Uses of Technology in Civil Society***

Information and communication technology (ICT) is essential to mobilizing the public around the political and public policy processes. As discussed in the literature review, in order for society to become concerned about an issue and learn about potential policies political officials are considering as well as how those decisions may effect society, citizens need to be given information. Information can be distributed through media, political officials reaching out to citizens, or interest groups providing citizens with their views on an issue. This can be done by means of many types of technology including newsletters, newspapers, television or radio reports, postings on a website, email notifications, or even phone conversations. It is important for an emerging democracy to develop these methods for informing citizens and for government and organizations to understand the most effective ways through which to reach their citizens.

Technology has been credited with increasing communication, efficiency, access to information and many other benefits to different sectors within societies, including government. Currently, the developed nations utilize technology for every day for business, trade, communication and even social life which continues to advance at a high rate. However, developing nations typically do not utilize all or in some cases any of the technologies available in the developed world due to costs, access, infrastructure, cultural differences, and even lack of knowledge to use the technologies.

Manual Castell in a United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) discussion paper called *Information Technology, Globalization and Social Development* explains his belief that technology is vital to a country's development process. This is not to say that technology would necessarily solve all of the social

problems of rural or urban areas of developing regions. However, Castell explains: “The availability and use of information and communication technologies are a pre-requisite for economic and social development in our world. They are the functional equivalent of electricity in the industrial era” (1999, pg. 3).

Access to the Internet is growing in Kosovo, although primarily only in the urban areas. However in the capital city of Pristina, Internet cafés are available on almost every block. Although not as many, there are even some in Prizren, another city in Kosovo. The picture below (Figure 11) is of one Internet café located in Prizren, Kosovo.

**Figure 11: Internet Cafe Located in Prizren, Kosovo**



Unfortunately, many of the interviewees identified the Internet cafés as used only for chatting and game purposes and rarely for information or educational purposes. The student volunteers interviewed at the SFERA Institute explained that

they would be more likely to use the Internet for information or educational purposes if they had access to it at home, and they believe others would as well. However, the cheapest home Internet access is €30 a month for dial-up which is well above an acceptable price range for the general population. One of the three students has access at home and only one of the three has limited access at school. Six out of the thirteen interviews (46%) specifically stated the high cost of home access to the Internet a primary reason for its limited use in Kosovo.



Additionally, seven out of the eight organizations interviewed have a website, although currently two of the websites are not working. The one organization that did not have a website, the Center for Research and Gender Policy, stated that they were in the process of creating one. Both of the international organizations interviewed have active websites. Even though Ms. Upiana Lama of the SFERA Institute claims that the use of the Internet is vital for her, she does not think it is common for general society to use it for purposes other than chatting and games.

It does not seem as though it will be far in the future that information communication technology will develop to a point where most of the urban population of Kosovo has greater access in their homes, schools, or other public places. However, many interviewees pointed out that there would be a difference in the access available in urban areas and the access available in rural areas. The Statistical Office of Kosovo (SOK) reported figures in 2004 which show the continued developmental divide between urban and rural communities:

Almost 99% of all Kosovo households own their own house or dwelling and have electricity. Compared to the situation in urban and rural settlements however, the housing situation in Kosovo shows partly considerable differences: only 48% of households in rural settlements have their own flush toilet (urban: 90%), only 36% are connected to a central water pipeline (urban: 94%), 11% of houses in rural settlements have still walls of mud or stones (urban: 7%) and only 3% garbage is collected by trucks (urban: 25%) (2004, p. 23).

From these statistics it is apparent that there are greater priorities of development in many of the rural areas of Kosovo than information communication technology (ICT). However, these rural areas account for a large proportion of the Kosovo population and the development of civil society is just as important as in urban areas so that organizations in these regions can better connect with citizens, other organizations and

government. As ICT continues to develop in urban Kosovo, additional effort will need to be given to the rural sections as they progress. In *The E-Government Handbook for Developing Countries*, the Center for Democracy and Technology argues that ICT is accessible to many developing regions, not just the developed world. The handbook states that “some of the most innovative uses of the Internet in governance are appearing in the developing world, as ICTs are being used to streamline government and connect it more closely with the people it is supposed to serve” (2002, pg. 1).

Another very important insight for Kosovo as ICT develops in both urban and rural areas is whether or not the population has the know-how to use a computer and to what degree they are able to utilize programs necessary for greater public participation. Interviewees were asked their opinion on the population’s ability to use a computer and the Internet. From comments made in the interviews, six out of twelve of the interviewees believed that citizens living in the rural areas of Kosovo would not have the know-how; five out of twelve of the interviewees stated that citizens would need to have knowledge of the English language to be able to utilize the computer which many of the older generation citizens do not have; and eight out of twelve of the interviewees stated that in general the youth of Kosovo would have the know-how to utilize the computer and Internet access.

Visar Jasiqi commented on the inability of the rural regions in Kosovo stating that “a large percentage of the countryside will of course remain without IT. We need to institute a major project to cover all of Kosovo.” Krenare Maloku from the SFERA Institute further describes the challenges society will face adapting to and utilizing the Internet. She states, “The problem with the Internet is that you need to be able to speak

English. Our parents don't speak English. It is a problem of most older generations. English is also not commonly known outside of Pristina and they do not yet have access to the Internet.”

A general sense from most of the interviews was that many citizens were looking to their youth to utilize technology for development in many different sectors of Kosovo, including civil society. Unfortunately, many were also disappointed in the education system and school resources. Only one of the high school students interviewed at the SFERA Institute had access to a computer at his school, and this was only during class. Another high school student interviewed at the SFERA Institute, Vjosë Retkoceri, explained that her school's computers were vandalized and her class which teaches programming and IT skills is now taught only from a book.

Nenad Rikalo from Future is expecting an even worse future for the Serbian minority due to the poor education system at present time. He states, “The current generation won't have the skills and education to compete. The current generation finished school before 1999. Now there is no good educational basis and it will be a huge problem for this community in the future.”

Ulpiana Lama strongly believes that schools need to increase the use of computers because there are so many benefits involved. She explains one area that schools could use computers, teach skills and strengthen the curriculum is teaching students how to do proper research. Ms. Lama comments, “in such a small country, [published] translations are slow. The Internet allows you to stay updated and practice your English. Every school needs to have computer facilities. Government should provide loans to buy computers.”

In *Information Technology, Globalization and Social Development*, Manuel Castell describes the essential role education plays in the development of society, economy and the ability to utilize ICT. In the literature review, a quoted section of Catell's article explains that in order for ICTs to be useful in the development of a society the population must be educated and have the capacity to use the technologies (1999). He believes that countries must begin the development process by increasing education from primary schools to universities (Castell, 1999).

Despite the low level of access in rural areas, the English language requirement, and insufficient resources and curriculum in the school system, some do have hope for technology and its role in increasing public participation in Kosovo. Luan Shllaku of KFOS states his views that "technology is being used more and more because technology is 'in'. Without support of technology, we couldn't do what we do." KFOS has funded over twenty organizations to build websites in thirty-three different municipalities in Kosovo. Mr. Shllaku believes that information and technology creates reform in administrative practices and increases public awareness. He continues this belief to the increased activity of citizens stating: "information technology brings every citizen closer to what is happening. [ITC] has an impact in two ways. One impact is that citizens are more informed and the second impact is that people have a better chance to have a say. It allows every Kosovar to be more participatory."

Another positive viewpoint is held by Visar Jasiqi of IPKO Institute. He believes that there are three pillars of democracy: "government, business, and civil society." He explains that without communication between these three sectors there is no democracy. He believes in the power of information technology to provide fast communication and

information necessary for a democratic society. Mr. Jasiqi views youth as having the ability to quickly grasp the necessary knowledge and the society will quickly adapt. He also views the Kosovo youth's growing technical knowledge and ability to use computers as an export opportunity for Kosovo's economic development.

Mr. Ibrahim Makolli of CDHRF sees both positives and negatives of greater Internet use in Kosovo. A negative effect could be that it would cause people to stay inside more rather than being active in society. However, despite this potential negative, he would "prefer a greater role for the Internet in society because people will be able to do things much faster." He hopes that greater efficiency will provide citizens with more incentive to become involved, as he states that in the current situation "it is time consuming to come here." All three of the SFERA Institute youth volunteers and the CDHRF volunteer agreed that if Internet access was more readily available then more citizens would become involved.

Information communication technology could provide citizens and interest groups great assistance and benefits to network with each other, share experiences and information, and connect with government. There does seem to be potential for many of these benefits to be realized in Kosovo, primarily in the urban areas and among the youth. However, the youth need greater structure within the school system in order to build the necessary skills. Additionally, the rural areas of Kosovo need an immense amount of assistance from urban citizens, civil society, and government in order to increase the education, development, and potential for technological benefits. There does seem to be a great potential for increasing ICT and creating a stronger civil society through the use of these technologies in Kosovo. The development that has already occurred in the urban

areas, the interest of the youth, and the use of web-based technologies by interest groups is promising the future of civil society and public participation in Kosovo.

## ***X. Analysis and Recommendations***

### **Analysis:**

The diagram below (Figure 12) displays the theoretical role a network of information and communication plays in supporting public participation. This network of ICT could be established by organized interest groups with a society, as discussed in the literature review and throughout the discussion of the Kosovo interest group interviews. The theoretical model displayed in Figure 12 describes the feedback structures that exist between public participation and information and communication technology.

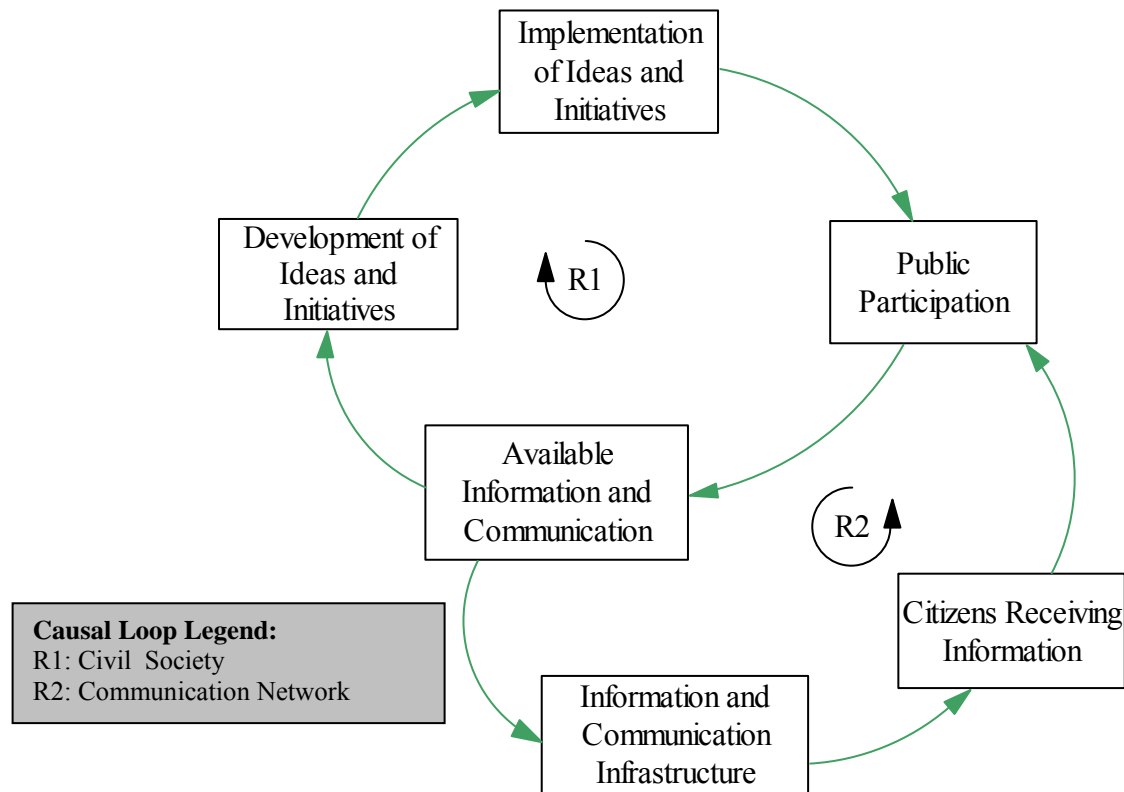
Following the arrows in R1: Civil Society, an increase in available information and communication leads to the development of ideas and initiatives to influence decision makers. These ideas then lead to their implementation by the citizens that are involved in this network of information and become motivated to increase their public participation. A more active and participatory society then leads to more information and communication. This is a representation of a reinforcing loop and could also be viewed in the reverse in which less information and communication resulted in less public participation through fewer development and implementation of initiatives.

The next loop, R2: Communication Network, shows that public participation increases when an increased level of available information and communication reaches

an increased network of citizens through the information and communication infrastructure. This is also a reinforcing loop. Viewed conversely, a decrease in available information and communication would lead to fewer citizens receiving the information and again result in decreased public participation.

When applying this theoretical description of the potential for the development of civil society in Kosovo, it is apparent that the available information and communication infrastructure in Kosovo is not adequate to reach an increased number of citizens, many of which live in communities that have little or no infrastructure and are not in constant interpersonal communication with citizens that can provide this information through word of mouth or any of the other methods described in Figure 9. Therefore, under current circumstances in Kosovo, one could predict that the Communication Network Loop either stays stagnant or grows very slowly since there is not an adequate network to distribute the information throughout society.

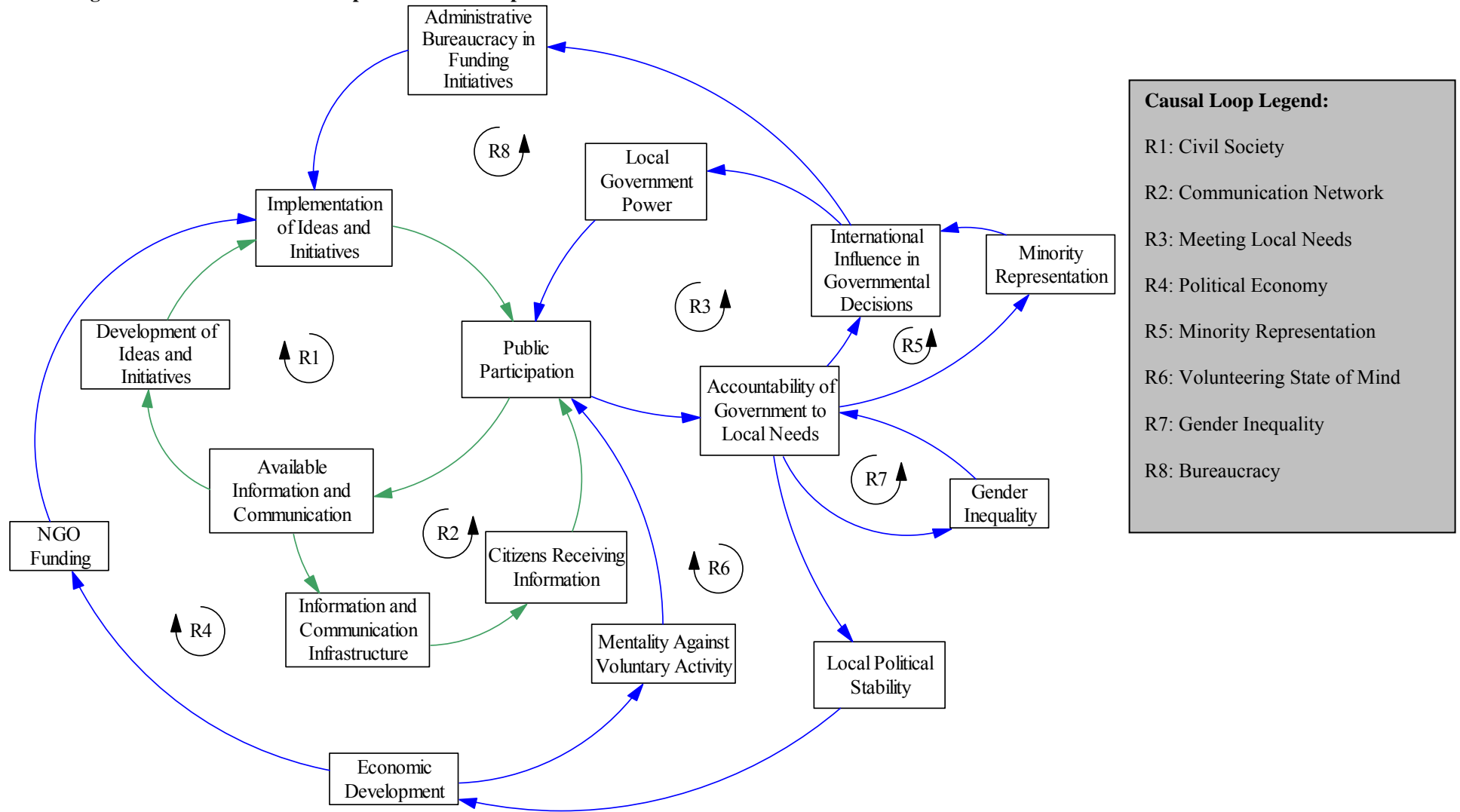
**Figure 12: Civil Society Development Causal Loop**



Currently, the network that provides the available information and communication in Kosovo functions primarily through word of mouth. While this can often be effective due to personal interaction, it is highly inefficient at providing the information in a timely manner to a large population of citizens in order to inform and motivate participation from the greatest number of people in many diverse communities. Many additional barriers were described in the Impediments to Public Participation section. These barriers were identified in the citizen interviews. Figure 13 displays the negative effects these social, political, and economic barriers have on the foundational Civil Society and Communication Network loops displayed in Figure 12.



**Figure 13: Kosovo Public Participation Causal Loops**



Each of the blue loops displayed in Figure 13 contains a barrier to public participation in Kosovo identified in the Kosovo organization interviews. This systems model provides an understanding of how all of these factors within Kosovo's society, political environment, and economy affect one another and ultimately affect public participation. Loops R1 and R2 are the foundation for the diagram, explained in Figure 12, displaying the core feedback structures that exist between public participation and information and communication technology.

Beginning with R3: *Meeting Local Needs*, two identified barriers are represented: local governmental power and international influence in governmental decisions. In Kosovo's situation, the high level of international influence and low level of local governmental power causes a decrease in public participation and therefore a decrease in the accountability of government to local needs. The low accountability of government to local needs creates a reinforcing relationship in loop R5: *Minority Representation*. The loop functions the same as R3 until it expands out after the decreased accountability of government to local needs which causes a decrease in minority representation. The decreased representation and participation of minorities in Kosovo then causes the international community to increase their power and influence in Kosovo, with the intention to change this relationship. Instead their actions only further decrease local governmental power as well as minority and majority public participation.

Gender inequality was another barrier identified in the interviews and is illustrated in loop R7. If accountability of government to local needs decreases, then social gender issues would not be taken into account and gender inequality would increase; leading again to a decreased accountability of government to local needs.

In the Impediments to Public Participation section, the economy was identified as a major barrier by interview participants. Additionally, Mr. Behxhet Haliti, Advisor to the Prime Minister of Kosovo, was quoted as stating that the unstable political situation in Kosovo and the poor economic environment create a “viscous cycle” (Forum 2015, 2004, pg. 142). This cycle and its effect on public participation is illustrated in loop R6:

*Volunteering State of Mind.* As local political stability decreases, the economic development in Kosovo also decreases. Due to these unstable and difficult political and economic conditions, it was identified there was a mentality against voluntary activity, as citizens felt that volunteers needed to be receiving individual benefits from their activities, which leads to a decrease in public participation. Again, the decreased public participation leads to less accountability of government and a decrease in local political stability and economic development.

The economic environment and local political stability also affect another identified barrier, NGO funding, illustrated in loop R4: *Political Economy*. Once again, as the accountability of government to local needs decreases, so does local political stability and economic development. Less economic development decreases the available NGO funding and the ability of organizations to implement their initiatives, therefore decreasing public participation and accountability of government.

In the loop, R8: *Bureaucracy*, the last identified barrier is illustrated. In the organizational interviews the bureaucracy of the international funding agencies were described as funding projects of their own interest and not those identified by the local community and organizations. The loop also demonstrates this relationship. As the international influence in governmental decisions increases, the bureaucracy in funding

initiatives also increases, decreasing the implementation of local initiatives. Fewer initiatives decrease public participation, therefore decreasing the accountability of government to local needs and further increasing the international influence.

The causal loops illustrated in Figure 13 provide a systems understanding of the linkages between the many different social, political, and economic issues facing Kosovo and the issue of public participation. Understanding these feedback structures provides decision makers with a greater understanding of the effects of their actions and policies. Additionally, the feedback structure created in the causal loops can assist in the formulation of policies which change Kosovo's currently negatively reinforcing loops to a situation in which they positively reinforce public participation.

### **Recommendations:**

Policy recommendations have also been created for the purposes of this research (Table 9), based on the interview analysis of Kosovo interest groups, citizen motivation and barriers to public participation, the effects of the region's minority issues, the potential of technology, and the systems connections illustrated in Figure 13. These recommendations are made with the underlying goal of further stimulating public participation in Kosovo. As stated by former President William Clinton in a speech given at the Rochester Institute of Technology on December 14, 2005, "The power of private citizens to do public good is greater than ever before." It is strongly believed that the citizens of Kosovo already do and can increasingly have a strong impact on social, economic, environmental, and political issues. The following is a chart of recommendations for Kosovo interest groups, the local PISG government, UNMIK, and

the international community and the related causal loop that each recommendation will have a direct effect on. Each recommendation is also further explained in the subsequent text.

**Table 9: Recommendations and Affected Causal Loops**

#	Recommendation	Causal Loop(s) Directly Affected
<b>Kosovo Interest Groups</b>		
1	Increase communication to citizens, particularly using the mobilization techniques found to be the most successful by Kosovo citizens: providing information and motivation for action around a specific issue and providing training and skill building activities.	R1: Civil Society R2: Communication Network R6: Volunteering State of Mind
2	Increase outreach efforts to rural areas and Serbian enclaves to spur the diffusion of information, development, communication, and technology to these areas.	R2: Communication Network R3: Meeting Local Needs R5: Minority Representation
<b>Local Government (PISG)</b>		
3	Increase general curriculum standards and funding for local school systems and agencies and organizations assisting the educational system, both urban and rural.	R1: Civil Society R2: Communication Network
4	Facilitate the addition or enhancement of necessary infrastructure and equipment in secondary schools and higher education facilities.	R2: Communication Network
<b>UNMIK and PISG</b>		
5	Create community public spaces located in educational and other open access facilities which provide computers, Internet access, and computer training programs. These “public techno-spaces” should be located throughout the region with emphasis on access to rural and underdeveloped communities.	R1: Civil Society R2: Communication Network

6	Subsidize the costs of home Internet to increase access to information and communication technologies for Kosovo citizens living in both urban and rural regions to meet the needs of the locations' standard of living.	R1: Civil Society R2: Communication Network
7	Support NGO interests through continued funding and initiatives which sustain donor funding in Kosovo for activities which are focused on the increased diffusion of information and skills throughout the region.	R1: Civil Society R2: Communication Network R4: Political Economy R8: Bureaucracy
<b>International Community</b>		
8	Provide the Kosovo region with greater autonomy, under UNMIK administration until final status decisions state otherwise, to allow Kosovo to develop and experience greater democratic processes such as increased citizen connections to government and influence in the agenda setting and decision making processes.	R3: Meeting Local Needs
9	Provide Kosovo NGOs with greater autonomy to develop research, projects, and activities which meet the local understanding of social needs instead of imposing the desires of the international community.	R6: Volunteering State of Mind R8: Bureaucracy

Beginning with the recommendations for the Kosovo Interest Groups, which undoubtedly includes citizen volunteers, they should focus their mobilization techniques to inform and motivate citizens around a specific issue and providing training and skill-building activities. The organizational interviews revealed these approaches to be the most successful in providing motivation for citizen participation. Many citizens claimed that they became involved in their affiliated organization due to an interest in a particular issue that potentially had a direct or indirect effect on their lives. Citizens also became interested in volunteering with an organization that provided training and the ability to

gain new skills. Techniques to better motivate citizens directly affect the foundational causal loops R1 and R2 by increasing the ability of organizations to provide ideas and initiatives and interest citizens and directly increase public participation.

This second motivational technique also relates to the social issue of the poor educational system and apparent citizen desire to enhance the systems shortcomings with supplementary training. Building upon statements from the interest group interviews, educational desire is primarily among the youth population of Kosovo that are either in school and/or wish to improve their chances of finding a well paid, quality job. Due to the demographics in Kosovo in which approximately 60% of the population is under the age of 25, targeting the youth population provides organizations with a large group of citizens that have been described as being more optimistic about Kosovo's future than older citizens and therefore easier to motivate.

Additionally, focusing on the method of providing citizens with training and new skills may be one way to overcome citizen mentality against volunteering. It is common for citizens to want to gain more from their efforts than the benefits received by the general population. This issue was discussed in the literature review as the "free rider" issue. Kosovo organizations that provide citizens with increased skills that can only be gained by participating in voluntary activities has a high potential for increasing public participation while also assisting in the informal education of Kosovo citizens and overcoming the issues of the "free rider" and the mentality that volunteering provides citizens with no benefits.

This barrier is represented in causal loop R6 of Figure 13. If these methods are used to increase public participation, the mentality against voluntary activity is affected

by increasing government accountability, local political stability and economic development. Affecting the mentality against volunteering will undoubtedly take a significant amount of time. Political stability and economic development are factors which will most likely increase slowly and are also dependent on many other factors which are not represented in this model. For example, political stability will also require the development of political parties and politicians to be less concerned about their own agendas and interests and more concerned about the good of the citizens. Additionally, economic development is also dependent on incentives for potential internal and external investors and an educated workforce. Increasing public participation alone will not increase political stability and economic development. However, it will build a well organized citizen base necessary to reach these goals by increasing government accountability and becoming more informed as citizens.

The second recommendation for interest groups is to increase outreach efforts to rural areas and Serbian enclaves in Kosovo. Although some of the organizations had offices throughout Kosovo, efforts were mostly focused in urban areas and attempted little to no outreach to Serbian communities. With the current poor infrastructure available to these regions of Kosovo and little communication currently taking place between Kosovo-Albanian and Kosovo-Serbian populations, it is a responsibility of interest groups to provide increased means of information, participatory activities, and communication to decision makers. Increasing the lines of communication and mobilization of citizens in these areas may also enhance the diffusion of information and infrastructure, economic and technological development. This recommendation again directly affects the foundational R2 loop by increasing the available information and the



information and communication infrastructure to reach more citizens and therefore increase public participation.

Citizen to citizen contact between Kosovo-Albanian and Kosovo-Serbian communities is also a primary goal of the international community. Currently, ethnic relations between Kosovo-Serbians and Kosovo-Albanians continue to be divided in all senses of community, and Kosovo-Serbian interests are not well represented in the local Kosovo government. Therefore, causal loops R3 and R5 are also directly affected by this recommendation and related to barriers of public participation, final status and low levels of power within the local government. Increased communication and cooperation between Kosovo-Albanians and Kosovo-Serbians would decrease International Influence and increase local power, accountability of local needs, and minority representation. As stated, it is a goal of the international community to increase relations between Kosovo-Albanians and Kosovo-Serbians in order to achieve a final status decision and a representative government for Kosovo. With respect to the fact that the ethnic issues are still sensitive and at times tense for both communities, organizational activities are a good forum to begin this communication and collaboration around issues of mutual interest.

Better relations will be slow to develop, possibly even requiring new generations of Kosovo citizens who have not been through the same experiences as the current Kosovo-Albanian and Kosovo-Serbian citizens. However, Kosovo cannot wait generations in order to increase political stability, economic development, and increase local governmental power. Therefore although it will undoubtedly be a difficult task,

organizational activities to increase Kosovo-Serbian and Kosovo-Albanian communication and minority representation in government are vitally important.

The next recommendations are focused toward the local Kosovo governmental body (PISG) which manages administrative and legislative functions as power is handed down to them from the international governmental body, UNMIK. It is recommended that the government increase general curriculum standards and necessary resources for both urban and rural schools. This also includes increasing funding for local school systems as well as agencies and organizations assisting the educational system. PISG does have some decision-making power over the Kosovo educational system through the Kosovo Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Although the Kosovo budget is small and there are many pressing issues competing for government funding, education is the crucial factor that will determine success in the region's economic, environmental, institutional, and social development.

Education is essential in the development of civil society, particularly for citizens to be able to utilize technological means such as the Internet to increase their knowledge and involvement. Therefore, the recommendation to increase educational standards will increase the number of citizens networked and interested in participating in interest group activities (R1) as well as increase the ability of those students to utilize available information and communication technologies to become more informed citizens (R2). It was stated that there is an essential "know-how" necessary to use the Internet or email as a tool for increasing information and communication. For example, citizens need to be able to understand English and use many aspects of the Internet.

Rural and Kosovo-Serbian schools are greatly lacking in their overall educational curriculum, delivery, and resources. Although the urban school systems are an improvement from the rural school systems, according to the organizational interviews, most still are not able to provide students access to computers for educational purposes. As a result, Internet cafés located in many urban areas are only used for gaming and chatting purposes, and not for gaining knowledge or mobilization efforts. Increasing educational standards not only directly influences causal loops R1 and R2 but could also have an indirect effect on economic development by increasing Kosovo's educational workforce.

However, in many rural and Kosovo-Serbian communities, the infrastructure is fails to provide any computer or Internet capabilities. This leads to the next recommendation for PISG in their educational efforts: Facilitate the addition or enhancement of necessary infrastructure and equipment in secondary schools and higher education facilities. This recommendation is again illustrated in causal loop R2 of Figure 13. Increased information and communication infrastructure leads to more informed citizens and greater public participation.

However, increasing the infrastructure in Kosovo, particularly in rural areas that do not even have proper sanitation systems, will be a very costly project and it is doubtful that many private companies will have an interest in providing these citizens with the necessary ICT tools if it is unlikely they will be able to pay for them. In order to eventually lead to infrastructure development in these areas the government must first increase educational standards and provide schools with ICT tools to become more

informed, networked and to increase development activities in these areas. As the knowledge and skills grow, so will social, economic, and civil society development.

Similarly, with the same goal in mind of increasing Kosovo's information and communication technology infrastructure and citizen access, it is recommended that UNMIK and PISG work together to create community public spaces located in educational and other open access facilities which provide computers, Internet access, and computer training programs. These "public techno-spaces" should be located throughout the region with emphasis on access to rural and underdeveloped communities. As stated in the previous recommendation, the development of the necessary infrastructure to all homes located in rural and underdeveloped communities in Kosovo will be a costly process and will realistically not happen quickly, continuing to leave these communities disconnected from civil society.

Nonetheless, this goal should not be dismissed. As infrastructure develops in these sections of Kosovo, the government must be committed to providing access for information and communication to these citizens until further development and economic means permits individual access. Again, causal loops R1 and R2 are directly effected by this recommendation, increasing infrastructure for citizens to receive information about local issues and interest group activities. As this information is available to more citizens, more ideas will develop and public participation will increase. The suggested method to provide this increased access is through open access public techno-spaces. A main challenge that these public techno-spaces will meet will be the motivation of citizens to utilize these spaces for civil society information and communication purposes. However,

the facilities should also provide regional NGOs with meeting and training facilities to increase their outreach and promote public participation to citizens in these locations.

For areas of Kosovo in which the infrastructure is sufficient for information and communication technology, UNMIK and PISG should partner with the business community to subsidize the cost of home Internet access, which was stated in the organizational interviews to be a main reason for its limited use in Kosovo and an indirect barrier to public participation. The cost of the Internet must meet the locations' standard of living. Once more, the foundational causal loops are directly effected by the increased infrastructure and should provide even more possibilities for citizens to become informed, networked, and involved in the political and policy making processes of Kosovo.

Providing more affordable Internet access to society also benefits the government and business sector in the long term by increasing the workforce's technological abilities. If the Internet is more widely available in one's home, citizens will be more likely to spend time using the technology for educational purposes, rather than just recreational purposes, which can potentially add to skill sets and increased networking among local and international citizens, the public sector and the private sector.

However, this will certainly be a high cost project for the Kosovo governmental budget to accommodate. Unfortunately this is not likely to happen in the region since neither the local or international governments highly prioritize information and communication abilities of Kosovo citizens, despite the widespread benefits that could result. UNMIK and PISG must not forget the important role of the local interest groups and continue to support their efforts to disseminate information to citizens. Especially as

international donors continue to leave Kosovo over the next few years, many of these organizations that have been successful in their activities but struggle with funding, will need increased regional governmental support. This support could be through subsidized internet costs, direct governmental project grants, or through policies and legislation that would entice local and international private donors to provide organizational funding.

Currently, Kosovo does not provide local donors with the ability make tax deductible donations to non-profit organizations according to statements made in the organizational interviews. The ability to deduct donations from one's taxes provides great incentive for private citizens and businesses to choose to spend money by financially supporting organizations and activities of interest or concern to them. This is not a costly or difficult recommendation and directly impacts many of the causal loops illustrated in Figure 13 (R1, R2, R4, and R8). Meeting these continued financial needs of the local NGO population is crucial to the diffusion of information and ability to motivate the public to participate in the political and decision making processes, illustrated in loops R1 and R2, and must become a priority for UNMIK and PISG's efforts to develop civil society. Additionally, the increased incentive to donate to Kosovo interest groups directly affects the NGO funding variable illustrated in loop R4: *Political Economy* and also may decrease international funding bureaucracy and support more local interest group initiatives illustrated in loop R8: *Bureaucracy*.

Lastly, the role of the greater international community has been established through its influence in the region's UNMIK administration and also through donor activities. As discussed above and illustrated in causal loop R8, the organizational interviews revealed that at times they felt pressured to meet the requirements of the

international donors which often differed from the local needs. Additionally, in general, the interest groups that were interviewed felt they had the ability to influence PISG. However, since PISG still only has limited responsibilities compared to the international influence on governmental decisions as illustrated in causal loop R3, this influence often did not alter local agenda-setting or decision-making. Instead, the interest groups felt the agenda setting and decision making power came from the international community's influence on UNMIK. Therefore, the main decision-making body for Kosovo is viewed as external rather than internal, thus decisions are not being made by citizens that understand the issues of Kosovo and must live with these decisions.

The international community must provide Kosovo with greater autonomy under UNMIK administration until final status decisions state otherwise. Equally important, the international community must provide greater autonomy to the local NGO community to more freely make decisions in their research, training, and other activities based on their perception and understanding of the local needs. These actions will directly affect causal loops R3: *Meeting Local Needs* and R8: *Bureaucracy*, decreasing international influence and ultimately increasing the accountability of government to local needs and the implementation of local initiatives.

As the goal of the international community for Kosovo is to assist in its free and democratic development, this greater autonomy is essential to allow Kosovo to develop and experience greater democratic processes such as increased citizen connections to government and influence in the agenda setting and decision making processes. This would also indirectly assist in fighting the mentality that Kosovo citizens are powerless, and instead provide citizens with an additional incentive to participate in the political

process through empowerment of local decision makers. Although this may seem like a risky move to the international community due to the unstable environment, currently the international influence is only hindering local political stability, creating a general public that does not understand their role in the public policy process and is not assisting Kosovo in developing and society, economy, or government which is accountable to the citizens. Again, it should be reinforced that more autonomy does not mean independence, but instead the development of a society that is better prepared for future status decision making.

## ***XI. Conclusions***

All of these recommendations would assist in creating a more networked, informed and motivated civil society. From the information provided by the local interest groups and citizen volunteers, it is apparent that many citizens recognize the importance of these issues and the need for citizens to play a role in changing the many social, political, economic, and environmental problems plaguing the region. The citizens that were interviewed understand the importance as a result of their previous involvement and established connection to receive and share information with other active citizens and decision makers. The prime reason for their involvement seems to be their access to information. This not only means access to information about current issues in Kosovo and information about organizational activities and events, but also information about the benefits of volunteering one's time with organizations that influence the political process.



This information cannot, and should not, come from international officials but from within Kosovo, from the citizens, organizations, and politicians who believe in the power of the citizen. This is also where there is a missing link in Kosovo's civil society. Kosovo is missing its full ability to create a network for sharing information and communicating to the general public throughout the entire region and to all of the ethnic populations living in Kosovo due to its lacking ICT infrastructure and instead focusing on spreading information through word of mouth. The inadequate infrastructure and other barriers to public participation are illustrated in Figure 13: Kosovo Public Participation Causal Loops. Using the increased systems understanding of these issues and barriers to public participation in Kosovo, recommendations have been made for the local organizations, PISG and UNMIK government, and also the international community. Some of these recommendations are more likely to happen than others due to costs and priorities of the international government and some are issues which will take more time to develop due to deep rooted social and economic issues.

If only a limited number of the recommendations are followed, it is difficult to predict if there will be enough of an impact to change the loops to positively reinforce public participation rather than the current negative reinforcing situation. The recommendations listed in the above section have direct impacts on not only the theoretical foundational loops (R1 and R2) which increase information and communication technology to create a more informed and active society, but also directly affect many of the loops created from the stated barriers to participation in Kosovo. These loops are also important to address these difficult barriers unique to Kosovo's circumstances and are important for the international and local governments to recognize.

Many aspects of the above recommendations are also connected to many other social, economic, and political issues in Kosovo. Each issue is not independent but instead greatly affected by other issues such as education, economic development, dual societies, gender sensitivity and many more. These issues require further research and analysis to better understand their full affects on public participation and local government accountability. However, in general, by improving the networks and capabilities of civil society through improving the information and communication available to all citizens, no matter the location or ethnicity, these other issues should also see continued development over time.

The recommendations made also will assist the currently active citizens and interest groups, who should be commended for their hard work and dedication to Kosovo society. From the interviews conducted, one can conclude that these individuals are committed to action and change for the many issues citizens are facing. Sociologist Everett M. Rogers (1995) would describe these individuals as change agents. Every single organizational director, research analyst, and citizen volunteer who was interviewed for this research is a change agent for Kosovo. These individuals continue to be important since there will be a great many changes coming in the future of Kosovo. These actors and many more citizens will be needed to assist in the adoption and diffusion of actions and innovations which are desirable as well as preventing those that are not.

This is a vital time for Kosovo citizens to gain as much support as possible from fellow citizens and the local and international governmental bodies involved. Citizens, including Kosovo-Albanian, Kosovo-Serbian, and all other ethnicities living in Kosovo,

should not wait for the international community and other regional actors to decide on final status. No matter the decision or outcomes, the region will need a strong civil society to assist in increasing the quality of life, the ability to communicate with one another and share information, and to support greater public participation. In the words of former President Clinton, “the power of the private citizen to do public good is great.” However, the power of a networked and informed collective group of citizens to do public good is even greater.

The findings of the international community’s negative influence on public participation in Kosovo, illustrated in Figure 13: Kosovo Public Participation Causal Loops’ R3: Meeting Local Needs, may also be applicable to other regions of the world. Further investigation of public participation should be explored in regions which are in a similar developing state and have experienced direct governmental, economic, and/or social international influence. From this further research, lines of communication charts and causal loop diagrams may also lead to similar conclusions as those for Kosovo in this thesis; else, best practice cases may be identified for ways in which international influence may support public participation. This research could provide valuable information for the international community on democratic development around the world.

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