

# GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF VLORA

## WATCHDOG REPORT

### VLORA YOUTH CENTER



## ➤ Introduction

Vlora Youth Center is a non-profit organization, established on November 12<sup>th</sup> 2002, operating in the region of Vlora for the empowerment of the community and mainly young people through the implementation of programs of education, awareness and advocacy for the promotion of human rights, democracy and volunteering. The organization possesses direct experience with participatory budgeting process.

Vlora Youth Center has in-depth knowledge of the context of Vlora region having prepared and implemented a regulation for the participatory budgeting process in the municipality of Vlora and Selenice and established community activist groups that constantly lobby and monitor the annual budgets of both above mentioned municipalities.

VYC has started working with gender budget in 2020 -2021 through the project “Evaluation of local policies and budgets from gender perspective” with the assistance of Gender Alliance for Development Center and the support of the Austrian Development Agency and SIDA. In the framework of gender policy analysis and local budget analysis with a focus on social services, Vlora Youth Center worked closely with the Strategic Management Group (GMS), the staff of the Economic Assistance and Social Care Directorate, and the Financial Planning and Budget Directorate of the Municipality of Vlora. Meanwhile, CSOs and citizens, mainly marginalized women and beneficiaries of social services from the Municipality of Vlora, were widely consulted on the findings of the study and received recommendations on how to overcome obstacles to include their needs in the local budget. The results and benefits of this project are multiple and structural, as well as citizen-oriented, women and girls in this case. The current situation assessment report with relevant recommendations regarding gender-responsive budgeting has been accepted and evaluated by the staff of the Municipality of Vlora as a document that will be supported in the future for the drafting of the annual budget 2022.

Through the implementation of the project, the following activities were conducted:

- ✓ Research and data collection from available sources
- ✓ In-depth interviews with municipal staff (SMG and finance and budget department) and local CSOs
- ✓ Assessment Report on local policies and budgets from a gender perspective (with a focus on social services)
- ✓ Awareness and informational meetings (three) with project beneficiaries to share findings and recommendations
- ✓ Advocacy activities through online media for the implementation and monitoring of recommendations

### GRB tools used are:

- ✓ Gender-based policy analysis
- ✓ Gender budget beneficiary assessment
- ✓ Gender budget effectiveness analysis

### Results:



- ✓ Monitoring of budget planning, execution and expenditures through the Assessment Report on local policies and budgets from a gender perspective (with a focus on social services);
- ✓ Promotion of Gender Responsive Budgeting tools in social services planning;
- ✓ Supporting local groups to engage in gender budgeting initiatives and advocate for gender related priorities to be included in the local plans and budgets.

## ➤ THE MUNICIPALITY OF VLORA

After the adoption of the Law No. 115/2015, “On Territorial-Administrative Division of the Local Government Units in the Republic of Albania”, the Municipality of Vlora is composed of five administrative units, which are: Vlora, Oriku, Qender Vlora, Novosela and Shushica. All these administrative units are part of the County of Vlora. The new municipality administers two towns, Vlora and Oriku, and 37 villages. The list of villages includes the island of Sazan. The city of Vlora is the head center of the municipality. The municipality’s territory includes three important centers of maritime tourism: Vlora, Radhima and Oriku, and a livestock buffer zone, such as Dukat. This area incorporates the coastal-maritime Sazan-Karaburun Park, unique in our country.

### A) Population:

According to the 2011 Census<sup>1</sup> the new municipality has a population of 104,827 inhabitants (Source: INSTAT). Yet, the civil registry of this municipality indicates that the population of municipality is 205,000 inhabitants (Source: Civil Registry 2021)<sup>2</sup>. The area size of the new municipality is 616.85 km<sup>2</sup>. According to Census data, the population density in this municipality is 169.9 residents per km<sup>2</sup>, whereas by Civil Registry data, this density is 314.73 residents per km<sup>2</sup>. Various data by administrative unit show that the urban part of the Municipality of Vlora is composed by the old Municipality of Vlora, which has increased while the population of administrative units has dropped, including Oriku, Novosela, Shushica, and Qender. The 2011 Census data reveal a gender structure of the resident population of an almost equal division, indicating that the migratory movements have not stabilized eliminating the irregular distribution of population by gender. Taking into consideration the territorial expansion of the Municipality of Vlora, the distribution of population according to the Civil Registry shows provides an overview of the city-village division. The urban areas, mainly in the city of Vlora, have 71% of the population, where the rural and semi-urban areas (Oriku) have 29% of the municipality’s population.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>The population of the Municipality</b>	198,000	200,574	201,834	202,791	204,500
<i>City</i>	141,000	142,876	143,932	144,744	146,000
<i>Administrative Unit</i>	57,000	57,698	57,902	58,047	58,500

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3070/12\\_vlore.pdf](http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3070/12_vlore.pdf), pg.84

<sup>2</sup> <http://vlora.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/1.2-Shtojca-e-udhezimit-vjetor-te-PBA-se.pdf>

<b>Average Age of Population</b>	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Number of Births</b>	718	606	661	643	215
<b>Number of Deaths</b>	659	659	691	819	540
<b>Number of Active Businesses</b>	4,600	4,703	5,155	5,260	5,324
<b>Number of Families</b>	60,000	62,366	64,035	65,484	66,000
<i>City</i>	45,000	46,370	47,627	48,751	49,000
<i>Administrative Unit</i>	15,000	15,996	16,408	16,733	17,000

### B) Unemployment:

The Census data indicate that the unemployment rate in the Municipality of Vlora is 27%, a little lower than the national rate of 29.3%. Also, unemployment rate among youth at municipal level is 51.5% vs 52.9% at the national rate. Youth unemployment rate of 54.1% in the city of Vlora is particularly concerning, which is higher than the national rate and that of other administrative units of the Municipality of Vlora. The increase of unemployment rate in the city is due to the population movement to the city. The 2011 Census data show that in the Municipality of Vlora women are most discriminated in regard to employment: 31.5% of unemployed are women compared to 24.3% of men.

### C) Employment:

Employment and distribution of employed in the new municipality as per the 2011 Census are assessed for the three most important sectors: industry by 26.7%, agriculture 31.1%, and services 60.2%. These data indicate not only the employment rate but also the 10 features of the regions that are part of the Municipality of Vlora. The sector of services employs most people in the city of Vlora, 68.4%. The administrative units with the lowest employment rate revealing social disparities are Novosela with 26.2% and Shushica with 30.9%. This distribution shows the characters of the areas, where the administrative units of Shushica and Novosela with over 50% of the employees work in agriculture, followed by the administrative units of Qender with 41.9% and Orikum with 30.3%, indicating the rural character of these units.

### D) Important Sectors of Economy and Industrial development:

The city of Vlora is a large demographic development and employment center, and the second largest port of Albania. This city is home to a fishing port and an industrial and commercial center that generates revenues from the service and manufactures. The city's economy is linked with the economy of the port, construction, tourism and other related services. A share of the urban area of the Municipality of Vlora is planned to become an industrial and petroliferous area.

E) **Development of tourism** is highlighted as one of the priority sectors for the municipality's economic development. Vlora's geographic location, including the former communes from the

Vjosa Delta up to the mountain of Llogara, facilitates a diverse tourism potential. The favorable geographic position, the two seas – Adriatic and Ionian- the many natural and cultural heritage monuments are some of the features that help to boost the balneal, agriculture, and fishing tourism. Development of tourism is one of the most important sources of economic development, where seaside tourism combines quite well with cultural tourism. Yet, the protection of cultural and environmental heritage (of national and international tourist attraction in the municipality) requires a change of model in tourism development pursued to date to guide it to a more social and environmental sustainability. This implies the creation of a diverse tourist offer to include the coastline and remote areas in the thematic itineraries as well as the well-preserved attractions and high-quality accommodation and services.

**F) Agriculture** is a priority sector for Municipality of Vlora's economic development. It is also defined in the General Local Plan. Administrative units of this municipality are oriented to local agricultural production. Due to the high agricultural production, fruit trees in general, some factories for the processing of olive oil, non-alcoholic beverage, winery, etc. have been built. In addition to agriculture, livestock is also developed. Other products include milk and its byproducts, eggs, meat, which have real potentials for further development of this sector. The Administrative unit of Novosela has a saltmarsh and factory, which is expected to increase its production and processing capacities and produce for export in the near future.

### 1. Budget of Vlora Municipality<sup>3</sup>

The table below shows the planning of the **last three years** budget of the Municipality of Vlora, and the division of the total budget for each year that is categorized in the main items coming from:

- 1. Resources of the State Budget which include unconditional transfers and specific transfers for the functions of the municipality.**
- 2. From its own local sources, which include tax revenues (from local taxes), non-tax (from fees for public services they provide and other local revenues).**

Year	Budget in ALL	Municipality incomes (local taxes/fees, etc)	%	Unconditional Transfers	%	Specific Transfers	%
2021	2,371,373,000	1,410,692,000	59.50%	548,229,000	23.90%	412,452,000	17.40%
2020	2,181,635,000	1,248,027,000	57.20%	543,546,000	24.90%	390,071,000	17.90%
2019	2,181,435,000	1,266,151,000	58%	529,833,000	24.30%	385,451,000	17.70%

According to the budget programs for 2021, the budget is as follows:

Chapter	Designation of the Budget Program	Amount in 000/ALL	% towards the budget
1	Executive and legislative bodies, financial, fiscal, and internal affairs	540,752,000	22.8%
2	General services	14,259,000	0.7%
4	Fire protection services	41,720,000	1.75%

<sup>3</sup> <http://vlora.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/BUXHETI-2021-VENDIM.pdf>

7	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	46,037,000	1.94%
8	Public services	160,529,000	6.76%
8	Road network	157,726,000	6.65%
10	Green	77,024,000	3.24%
10	Waste management	367,236,000	15.48%
11	Wastewater management	31,780,000	1.34%
15	Community development	39,156,000	1.65%
17	Street lighting	115,990,000	4.89%
19	Recreational and sports services	53,761,000	2.26%
20	Cultural services	66,836,000	2.81%
21	Basic and preschool education	392,171,000	16.53%
22	High school education	57,754,000	2.43%
24	<b>Social care for the sick and the disabled</b>	<b>14,534,000</b>	<b>0.61%</b>
26	<b>Families and children</b>	<b>41,007,000</b>	<b>1.72%</b>
	Reserve Fund + Civil Protection Fund	89,099,000	3.75%
	Foreign projects	64,000,000	2.69%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,371,373,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the planning analysis of the 2019-2021 budget, below we present the percentage of what the municipality spends on the social services sector, compared to the total budget.

Year	Total Budget	Social Services Budget	%
2021	2,371,373	55,541	2.34%
2020	2,181,635	49,097	2.25%
2019	2,181,435	42,522	1.95%

To compare the data between the planned and the actual budget, the table below gives the economic data according to the programs for 2020.

Emri i grupit : 146001		Shpenzimet e njësisë së vetëqeverisjes vendore - VLORE							Kodi i grupit : 00
Titulli	Emertimi	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(6)-(5) Diferenca	
		Fakti i vitit paraardhës Viti 2019	PBA Viti 2020	Buxheti vjetor Plan Fillestar Viti 2020	Buxheti vjetor Plan i rishikuar Viti 2020	Buxheti vjetor Plani i Periudhës/progresi	Fakti i Periudhës/progre		
1110	Administrata e Bashkise	436,420	569,370	569,370	632,130	512,749	454,752	(57,997)	
1320	Mb.Dekori + Varreza	12,753	14,272	14,272	15,065	14,283	14,029	(254)	
3280	PMNZSH	36,116	41,718	41,718	42,263	39,064	37,705	(1,359)	
4240	Ujitja dhe Kullimi	53,524	37,763	37,763	45,248	45,889	35,431	(10,458)	
4260	Menaxhimi I Pyjeve dhe kullotave	3,996	5,488	5,488	11,263	11,263	6,750	(4,513)	
4520	Rrjeti Rrugor	66,593	67,495	67,495	68,167	66,371	63,925	(2,446)	
4570	Parku Urban	25,719	13,700	13,700	13,700	9,250	9,204	(46)	
5100	Pastrimi	243,898	353,636	353,636	356,388	269,459	268,846	(483)	
5100	Gjelberimi	35,744	48,073	48,073	50,573	42,636	40,703	769	
5200	Ujesjellsi	36,832	32,000	32,000	39,500	37,100	36,833	(267)	
6260	Zhvillimi I komunitetit	184,136	232,312	232,312	243,044	126,997	119,936	(7,061)	
6440	Md. Ndricim Rrugor	75,156	134,309	134,309	141,809	70,390	68,905	(1,485)	
8130	Kl.Shumesportesh	30,942	50,053	50,053	50,053	48,689	47,083	(1,606)	
8230	Qendra Kulturore	31,667	31,192	31,192	31,192	28,292	28,057	(235)	
8280	Teatri Petro Marko	24,569	29,603	29,603	29,603	23,634	22,364	(1,270)	
9120	Arsimi Para Universitar (kopshte, Q)	312,721	404,641	404,641	461,803	350,506	298,561	(51,945)	
9230	Arsimi I mesem I pergjithshem	31,702	31,053	31,053	31,139	78,220	77,127	(1,093)	
9240	Konviktet e shkollave profesionale	21,925	25,769	25,769	34,189	34,189	20,372	(13,817)	
10140	Qendra PAK	11,071	13,577	13,577	13,577	13,207	13,056	(151)	
10430	Cerdhet + Qender	15,618	35,520	35,520	35,520	26,635	26,013	(622)	
	Fondi I kontigjences		18,000	18,000	18,000				
	<b>Totali</b>	<b>1,691,102</b>	<b>2,189,544</b>	<b>2,189,544</b>	<b>2,364,226</b>	<b>1,848,823</b>	<b>1,689,652</b>	<b>(156,339)</b>	

Law 139/2015, Article 24 defines the responsibilities of the municipality for social services, as follows:

- ✓ Establishing and administering social services, at the local level, for the categories in need, people with disabilities, children, women, women householder, abused women, victims of trafficking, mothers or parents with many children, the elderly, etc., as provided by law.
- ✓ Building and administering houses for social housing as provided by law.
- ✓ Building and administering centers that provide local social services.
- ✓ Establishing, in cooperation with the responsible ministry for social welfare, social fund for financing services, as provided by law.

On the other hand, Articles 36 and 37 of Law 121/2016, "On social care services in the Republic of Albania", define not only the role of the municipality in terms of social care services, but also the structures that must be established and operate in order to make the local community system of these services operational. According to law provisions, the municipality should have structures set up at two levels:

A structure responsible for social care services in the municipality:

- ✓ Needs assessment and referral unit, established at administrative unit levels.
- ✓ The tasks of the structure responsible for social care services, established within the municipality, should be:
  - ✓ Identify needs for social care services in the territory under the jurisdiction of the municipality.
  - ✓ Assess the need for social care services, according to the vulnerability map.
  - ✓ Draft the local Social Draft Plan by calculating the costs the necessary identified services, as well as prepare the respective annual and mid-term Budget Program, to be approved by the Municipal Council.
  - ✓ Plan the annual distribution calendar and ensuring the delivery of the basic package of social care services during one year.

- ✓ Providing social services through: i) contracting the realization of services by the private sector; ii) establishing and using public services.
- ✓ Establish and implement a service performance management system, based on local standards and national minimum standards, which are approved through Guidelines of the responsible minister for social affairs.
- ✓ Design and implement a system of performance measurement indicators, which also includes gender indicators.
- ✓ Establish a service supervision system in the territory of the municipality.
- ✓ Propose the beneficiary of social care services for approval by the Municipal Council.

This structure also performs functions related to:

- ✓ Administration of cash payments of economic assistance and disability, in accordance with Law no. 9355 (amended) for economic assistance.
- ✓ Child protection, in accordance with the Law "On the Rights and Protection of Children".
- ✓ Measures for protection from domestic violence, in accordance with Law no. 9669, dated 18.12.2006, "On measures against domestic violence" amended.

In each administrative unit depending on the municipality, with the exception of municipalities with less than 6 thousand inhabitants, the Needs Assessment and Referral Unit (NVNR) is established. To perform the defined functions, the LGU must have at least:

- ✓ One social worker for case assessment and referral for every 6,000 to 10,000 inhabitants;
- ✓ One child protection clerk for every 3,000 children;
- ✓ Social administrator.

In the economic assistance program, elements of gender budgeting are provided through the support of women heads of households who have social problems (specific conditions defined by law) as a special beneficiary category.

Year	Economic assistance fund Total / 000	No. of beneficiary / total families	Full help	Partial help	No. of women heads of households / receiving assistance	Distributed fund for this category
2019	552,474,416	2538	✓	n/a	208	n/a
2020	675,175,187	5744	✓	n/a	230	n/a
2021	14,534,000	5676	n/a	n/a	246	n/a

Table 1: Data obtained from the budget of the Municipality of Vlora on the website. The data for 2021 are just a plan.

As shown in the table, in the economic assistance program, there are attempts to include gender elements in the treatment of beneficiaries, as there are data on women heads of households who receive economic assistance.



But this data is not enough, the municipality should reflect on the budget programs, especially on how many of these have left the scheme and have been employed or strengthened.

Year	No. of women heads of households who receive assistance	Distributed fund for this category / 000
2019	208	n/a
2020	230	n/a
2021	246	n/a

Table 2: Data obtained from the budget of the Municipality of Vlora on the website. The data for 2021 are just a plan.

Meanwhile other data related to women in marginalized or categories in risks are not reflected in the budget document of the municipality of Vlora (see Table 3).

These data are very necessary especially on how the municipality, through its policies and programs, should provide for them.

Years	No. of women heads of households who receive assistance	No. of women in the divorce process who have applied for assistance	No. of women on protection orders	Nr of women who live alone	No. of women receiving disability benefits	No. of women who receive a payment as foster parent	No. of women who apply for economic assistance and do not benefit
2019		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2020		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2021		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 3: Data obtained from the budget of the Municipality of Vlora on the website. The data for 2021 are just a plan.

In the Municipality of Vlora, 4 special institutions have been set up and are functioning for the care of people with different abilities. These centers offer specific services.

### 1. The Center for PwD (PAK)

The Development Center for PWD Vlora is a state institution with dual dependence: the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, as well as the Municipality of Vlora. The center has a capacity of 24 people, currently in this center 31 residents receive services who are social and biological orphans and suffer from various syndromes, where in most cases there is an overlap of physical, sensory and mental disabilities. This center offers 24-hour service for residents of the age group up to 25 years.

### 2. Center for community services

The Center for Community Services is a structure set up within the project "Community Services for Children with Disabilities" by the association "Help Life" and Save the Children for a period of three years and after this period the center has passed into the administration of the Municipality of Vlora as one of the project collaborators. The center offers services from a multidisciplinary team for children with disabilities, with their comprehensive focus on kindergartens, schools and the community. From the beginning of the project until December 2019, the center has offered and offers services for 83 children and 3 adults (40 F and 46 M), aged 2.5-21 years.

### 3. Multifunctional center

The function of this center is to empower families, abused women, children in street situations and other vulnerable groups but also the education, counseling and psycho-social development of children and families in need in the Municipality of Vlora.

During this three-year period and after this period, funds will be allocated from the state budget and partly from the Municipality of Vlora until the center will be fully funded and under the administration of the Municipality of Vlora.

#### 4. Orphanage

The orphanage provides residential service for abandoned infants and children, biological or social orphans. It also provides daily service for babies and children in need. The services offered are various, starting from medical treatment, psychosocial treatment for babies, counseling for mothers, etc. The capacity of this institution is 30 and currently the number of children receiving services in this institution is 22.

Name	2019	2020	2021
The infant's house	12,232	13,577	14,534

Table 4: Data obtained from the budget of the Municipality of Vlora on the website. The data for 2021 are just a plan.

Table no.5 gives an overview of the number of persons receiving services but there is no gender disaggregated data.

Name	2019	2020	2021
Centre for PwD	2538	5744	n/a

Table 5: Data obtained from the budget of the Municipality of Vlora on the website. The data for 2021 are just a plan.

The data presented above are incomplete and do not provide the full framework for the directorate of social care in services of the whole community and in the implementation of tasks set out in laws and regulations.

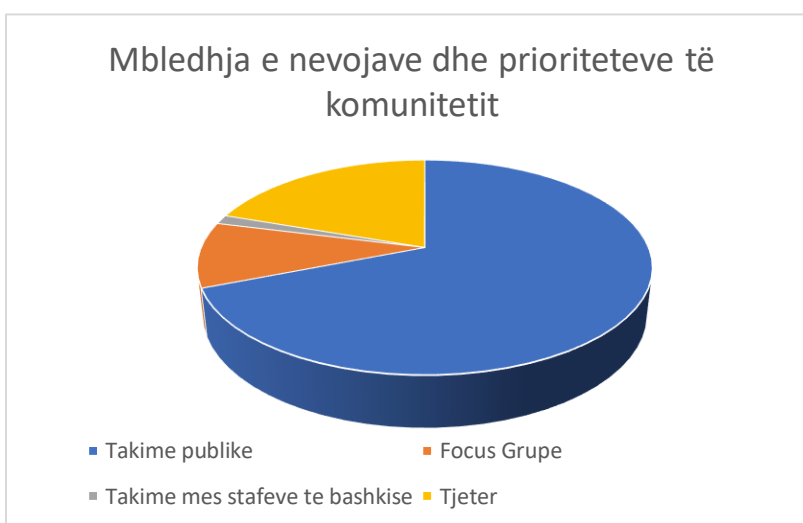
#### ➤ Mapping Groups of Interest

Groups of Interest	Needs	How can GRB assist them	Benefits
<b>1. Women in rural/urban areas</b>	1. Transport 2. Women employment	1. Offering transport lines with fixed and more frequent schedules, after 18.00 2. Women / girls to be supported with vocational education programs by the municipality.	1. Providing women in rural areas this service will increase their possibilities to find employment in the city in addition to reducing the commute hours 2. Women / girls learn and are trained in crafts that enable them a decent job. Currently the municipality has opened a center where training courses are offered, but there is still no data on

	3. Kindergartens for children. 4. Applying for social housing	3. Kindergartens in order to address the needs of women for employment. 4. Women seek facilities to benefit from social housing programs.	how many women / girls have benefited. 3. Kindergartens will provide better services in rural areas for women who need to work. 4. Social housing empowers women and gives them the opportunity not to become victims of domestic violence.
<b>2. Girls/women with special needs</b>	Support services for families with children with special needs	Increase the number of beneficiaries and the services provided by the Municipality for this category.	Early assistance to families in need of services in this category, increasing the range of services and the number of beneficiaries, but also fixing the infrastructure by adding ramps in the city.
<b>3. Women Entrepreneurs</b>	Financial support for their business	Through funding and support schemes both in urban and rural areas	There are a lot of women who started their own business and some of them are even investing in areas such as climate, STEM. Therefore, supporting their business is beneficial for all parties (women, The government, the community, etc).

➤ **Main findings from Focus Groups**

Civil society organizations as well as local staff think that public meetings (70%) are the most effective tool for identifying and meeting the needs and priorities of the community in the participatory and gender budgeting process. 20% of them who have been part of meetings and consultations with the municipality or municipal council, say that in many cases they are the voice and conductor of the needs of citizens, thus highlighting the inalienable role of CSOs in this process. Based on these priorities and needs, the budget should be built according to different items and categories. Representatives of local civil society organizations are divided equally on whether or not women and men benefit equally from the budget dedicated to social services so necessary to citizens. Half of them think they benefit equally and the rest do not, while 60% of them say that gender issues are addressed in the social services budget.



Responses suggest social services for the community, especially for vulnerable categories and groups in needs. More specifically, the following is required:

- Psycho-social counseling, training with women and girls on gender equality issues, including domestic violence, women's empowerment and increasing their participation in local decision-making.
- Providing free transportation for women in need attending vocational courses
- Data collection and identification of gender-based needs and issues of the Roma and Egyptian communities
- Equipping PwD with vehicles (men and women), providing hygienic-sanitary facilities according to the specifics of disability, providing information and legal representation for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, participation of members in projects to increase their capacity and address cases that need immediate intervention.
- Orient members to the procedures they need to follow to get the services you need.
- Provision of social services for young people (boys and girls) - (not supported by the municipality for the services it provides).
- Participation in the disciplinary group for domestic violence, psychological assistance for children at risk, etc.
- Providing speech therapy services (not supported by the municipality services).
- Placing stamps in schools for PwD regarding transportation and housing rent bonus (supported by the Municipality)

#### **Some of the challenges that need to be addressed in the future.**

- Lack of funds that can be used to identify problems of gender-based violence in villages or suburbs where the Roma and Egyptian community is focused
- Lack of infrastructure for PwD, both on the streets and in institutions, which complicates their daily life and the chance to receive services.
- Lack of knowledge of booklets for members who should benefit from free public transport.
- Housing problems for individuals and members who have applied for social housing but have not yet benefited.
- The need for budgeting for social services for young people
- Need to open a day care center for people with disabilities

### **3 Recommendations for the 2022 budget**

- ✓ In the analysis of municipal budget programs, both in the annual budgets and in the MTBP, it is recommended to unify the budget program for social care, as well as to include all expenditures for social services (such as services for centers or civil society organizations), as well as services performed by the municipality itself, but also the salaries of employees in this service).
- ✓ Budget documents (annual budget or MTBP) should reflect services, activities and priority measures, which are a reflection of sectoral documents. The Municipality of Vlora has a Social Plan approved with calculated costs for specific services, but in the budget documents these items are not found nor included.

- ✓ It is recommended to increase the capacity of human resources mainly GMS members and budget teams in each relevant structure / directorate for GRB and gender mainstreaming in the budget.
- ✓ The Directorate of Social Services should be the responsible structure (administrative and financial) for all responsibilities, functions and services in the social field.
- ✓ Involving women in stakeholder consultation is very important, but not always easy to implement. What usually happens in administrative units, most village meetings and public hearings are attended mainly by men. Specific facilitation measures for women's participation should be provided by the municipality.
- ✓ Ensure that women's priorities are included in the planning. For this it is important that women are represented in decision-making bodies (GMS or program management teams) and that men decision-makers are open to listening to the views of women and girls, so as not to lose their voice in final prioritization. A good experience in this regard is the fact that the Mayor of Vlora is a woman.
- ✓ Include women's priorities and measures that promote gender equality in budgets and avoid activities that promote gender inequality. Budgeting is an important process and what is budgeted should be what can be implemented in the end.
- ✓ Citizens generally have little knowledge about budgets and especially about the participatory budgeting process that takes place in the Municipality of Vlora. Budgets need to be simplified and realistic. Often local self-government units have difficulty predicting what their budget will be for the next fiscal year and work out budgets much higher than they can finance.
- ✓ Ensure that the budget is designed and implemented for the benefit of both parties, men and women. During the implementation phase there are quality issues that need to be considered, for example in infrastructure some important issues that need to be considered are: the procurement process to be transparent, the material to reflect the standards, transparency in the execution of funds, etc. There are even experiences in which citizens are involved in monitoring implementation.
- ✓ Budgets need to be assessed before preparation and implementation, and this assessment should be done by the community itself (men, women, young people) on how it has actually been spent and who has benefited from it through various forms and means.

