Kars Municipality Institutional Assessment
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Municipality of Kars, located in east Turkey near the borders of Armenia and Georgia, is strategically important as the gateway to the Caucasus Region. Although the area is struggling against a depressed economy and a high level of outmigration, the Municipality demonstrates potential for economic, institutional, and social development.

The Christensen Fund sponsored this project to assist the Municipality of Kars in assessing its capabilities and needs in order to enable it to plan and manage revitalization strategies and action plans focused on valorization of its heritage, social inclusion and local economic impact. A major effort was spent on fostering an understanding of the need for outreach, participation, and partnership with residents and communities as the cornerstone of sound urban management. The study team worked jointly with the local authorities over the course of six months through site visits, meetings with the Governor and the Mayor, working sessions with senior officials, and discussions with NGOs active in Kars, business leaders and communities in the neighborhoods affected by the revitalization project.

This report documents the existing situation and integrates the information collected into a cohesive assessment of needs and a set of recommendations reflecting the requirements mandated by the new Municipal Law adopted in June 2005. At every step the Mayor and senior officials were consulted and involved in the assessment and recommendations were jointly developed and approved by the Mayor.

Review of the GHF Sponsored Revitalization Plan of the Ottoman Historic Center

The Ottoman historic center lies primarily within the boundaries of the Kaleiçi mahalla, a socially diverse but physically deteriorated neighborhood. Despite the recognizable historic character of Kaleiçi Ottoman houses, their cultural and touristic value has been underestimated. The public and private sectors have instead focused on the renovation of the nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings in the Russian district which is well serviced with infrastructure. Apart from the Ottoman houses, the Ottoman district is home to a number of historic buildings, including the tenth century former Church of the Apostles, a sixteenth-century stone bridge, and the Kars citadel. Hammams, mosques, and other bridges, while not listed on the national register, nevertheless contribute to the general scenery and possess touristic value.

Most of Kaleiçi’s residents have migrated to the city from surrounding rural areas. This outmigration started 90 to 100 years ago, with the more recent settlers living at the top of the steep hill near the citadel. Although many have been granted tapu certificates from the government confirming their right to use their plots of land, the majority are still considered squatters. We believe that national tapu holders in lower Kaleiçi can be mobilized to participate in revitalization projects in their neighborhoods. Community members with whom we spoke expressed interest in investing in the rehabilitation of their properties provided that they receive technical assistance and guidance.
The Global Heritage Fund has supported the preparation of a new plan to restore and protect the Ottoman historic center. At GHF’s request, team member Dr. Samir Abdulac met with Ali Nejat Sert to discuss this Master Conservation Plan and give comments and recommendations. Most of these recommendations, presented in Section 2 of the report, have been accepted by the GHF team. The plan is currently undergoing revisions that we believe will greatly enhance the project’s capacity to attract donor funding and private investment.

**Development Dynamics and Prospects**

Kars currently faces the interlinked challenges of a depressed economy and high levels of outmigration as young people leave the area in search of employment. Rural-urban and transnational migration have increased dramatically in the last fifteen years compounded by globalization of the world economy and improvements in transport and communications. The departure of Kars’ affluent population has had a devastating impact on the local economy as it has led to a loss in purchasing power, while the closure of the border with Armenia increased the cost of energy adversely affecting the manufacturing sector.

Even with the rural-to-urban movement of the 1960s, the Kars Province remains predominantly rural with 77% of the population working in the agricultural sector. New business development in other sectors is not an easy task. Established business owners cite harsh climate, remoteness, high cost of fuel and transport, lack of skilled labor, and difficulty in accessing credit as factors threatening their financial viability. Unemployment is high as a result.

Despite these impediments, sectors with development potential include agro-processing, ecological and cultural tourism, and manufacturing for export. For these sectors to develop further, however, the Province and the Municipality must jointly promote the Province, its assets, and its products. First, resources must be channeled toward improving the marketing of potential exports. Local entrepreneurs note that a marketing strategy for the Province’s and the region’s products is sorely lacking. Kars-based enterprises have a vested interest in improved transborder relations. Opening the border to trade would provide a regional market for Kars’ products and enhance their economic viability.

**Institutional Assessment**

The purpose of this assessment was to direct the attention of the Mayor and Senior officials of Kars Municipality toward building a strategic planning capacity and introducing modalities for community participation, especially in light of the new Municipal Law passed in Parliament in July 2005. This law mandates local government to prepare a strategic plan for the municipality and a financial plan with performance targets for a three-year time period. It also requires that municipalities institute processes for citizen participation.

Kars is in a unique position to serve as a model for introducing new concepts of participation and partnership. It has a progressive mayor who is actively promoting economic and social development and establishing links with regional, national, and foreign partners. However, instruments and processes for participatory urban management adapted to Kars’ social structure and diverse cultures have to be developed and institutionalized. The Mayor holds regular open
meetings to respond to the concerns, grievances and requests of residents. In addition, Kars has a
dynamic advisory “city council” set up under UN Local Agenda 2 composed of representatives
from civil society, the private sector, and local government. This council works through its
several commissions to promote principles of sustainable development, human rights, pluralism,
participation, and accountability of local governance. The UN Habitat representative in Turkey
considers Kars’ civil society entities among the most active and effective in the country.

Kars Municipality

The existing municipal organizational structure includes 17 departments under the Mayor and the
Municipal Council, with 16 directorates and four chief offices. This framework is unwieldy
because of the wide span of control and vertical hierarchies without formal horizontal links. The
Municipality is also working under a very tight budget that provides little revenue for
discretionary expenditures. In light of the current situation and the recent passage of the
Municipal Law, our recommendations to improve the efficiency of local governance were guided
by seven considerations:

- Avoid changes requiring lengthy approval processes
- Refrain from requests for new financial commitments
- Establish channels for horizontal communication
- Allow for the progressive build up of capacity
- Introduce strategic planning and management concepts independent of the passage of the
  Municipal Law
- Institute a capacity for community outreach and participation
- Foster an understanding of the importance of monitoring and evaluation of municipal
  projects and programs.

We proposed the addition of a separate strategic planning unit to develop a coherent framework
for the Municipality’s economic and social development. An external relations unit will manage
Kars’ expanding scope of participation in external networks and initiatives as well as city
promotion and partnership with foreign donors and investors. Both of these units would be
directly under the mayor. Three standing committees composed of department heads from the
existing 17 departments will provide coordination in plan preparation and project implementation
at the senior managerial level and will offer needed feedback for the strategic planning and
financial planning tasks. A local initiatives team will be responsible for community outreach and
fostering community-based development projects. Finally, MIS/GIS capability is needed to
monitor change and development in the Municipality. The proposed changes in the organizational
structure will enhance the functional efficiencies of the Municipality, expand its capacity to work
with the private sector and civil society, and facilitate community participation in municipal
initiatives.

Kars has an opportunity to secure funding for projects in its low-income neighborhoods through
the World Bank social mitigation project providing grants for microcredit, employability training,
temporary employment, community social services, infrastructure upgrading, or the provision of
social facilities. We met with the responsible Bank officials in Ankara who were very
appreciative of the work accomplished in Kars so far and recommended that the Municipality
apply for a $500,000 Community Development Grant. We prepared a preliminary draft
application for this grant including infrastructure improvement, employment of residents, social facilities, and a city-wide program to enhance opportunities for women.

Civil Society in Kars

A striking feature in Kars today is the lack of civic community-based organizations (CBOs). The NGOs working in the Municipality are branches of national organizations. The most active of these are:

- Anadolu Kültür, an organization helping to restore Ottoman cultural heritage and planning cultural activities in the city;
- The Foundation for the Promotion and Protection of the Environment and Cultural Heritage (ÇEKÜL), which fosters nationwide awareness of and builds a social network for the preservation of Turkey’s environmental resources and cultural heritage;
- The Association for the Promotion of Modern Life (CYDD) which focuses on providing scholarships to children from poor families and promoting employment generation.

The need to develop local CBOs is a major challenge. NGOs worry about the lack of local capacity on which they can rely to implement projects. However, capacity can be developed through a proactive “learning by doing” approach. Grassroots groups can coalesce into associations to confront challenges and press demands. To establish a CBO where none exists needs community organization and development skills that NGOs, not municipalities, are equipped for. Community groups and informal associations need to be nurtured and strengthened to develop into effective CBOs. This is again a task that NGOs must take on to enable local constituencies to play an active role in shaping the future of their communities. Partnership and community-based initiatives are today the hallmark of sustainable local development.

The lack of CBOs adds importance to the Kars City Council. Some of the Council’s activities include promoting the conservation of Kars historic and cultural heritage and fostering opportunities for citizen participation in Kars’ development. The Council currently comprises 15 commissions, two of which are very active: the Commission on Commerce, Industry, and Relations with the Caucasus Countries, whose views were significant to the discussion on development and transborder relations presented in Section 3, and the Youth Commission.

The Youth Commission holds particular import given the rapid outmigration of young people from the region. This commission is composed of students in high school and university who often stay in Kars for only a few years before relocating to other urban centers with greater opportunities for employment. Though they serve as part of the City Council, the youth do not expect to have a voice in ongoing projects, let alone local governance, and were surprised that we took time to solicit their views. A small participatory project we initiated with the Youth Commission demonstrated the potential benefits of engaging the energies and creativity of youth. The group was given a digital camera and told to photograph Kars’ heritage they felt was important. They presented their selections, their reasons for choosing particular buildings and the use or reuse they recommended to the GHF project director who took great interest in their ideas.
Social Assessment

The lack of a baseline social survey made it necessary for us to undertake a limited social assessment to solicit information and opinions from Kars residents. The objective was to provide us with badly needed socio-cultural inputs, promote a better understanding among local officials of issues facing the urban poor, their needs, concerns and perspectives on the future, and demonstrate to the Mayor and the senior officials the importance of building a capacity for social outreach and community development. We limited the survey to the three communities in the Municipality most affected by the changes proposed in the Master Conservation Plan. Meetings were held with residents of the Kaleiçi mahalla as well as with community members from Üçler and Sukapi, two of the most underserviced mahalle affected by the revitalization project. Initially, we met with the Muhtar, public mahalla authorities who act as liaison officers between the people and the government. With the assistance of the Muhtars we organized well-attended community meetings with men and women separately so as to allow the women to speak more freely and voice their particular concerns.

The men expressed their anxiety over issues of employment and the need for opportunities to engage in productive activities using the skills they have. The other predominant concern was the lack of infrastructure and services in their neighborhoods (improved roads, solid waste collection, playgrounds and new schools for their children). Üçler residents in particular complained about inadequate water supply, drainage and sewerage, as well as hazardous conditions on the steep slopes.

The women spoke primarily of the lack of financial security. Most were anxious that their husbands find secure employment, but also wanted to use their skills to bring in an independent source of income. Many wanted to learn marketable skills. They cited the need for workspace to produce handicrafts, kilims, carpets, and traditional foods as well as daycare services to give them more time to invest in income-generating activities.

The community meetings were supplemented by a survey of 50 households, the bulk of which were done in Kaleiçi as it encompasses the majority of the Ottoman historic center. The surveys showed that overall, residents of Kaleiçi are better off than those living in Sukapi and Üçler, but community members of all three mahalle are largely dissatisfied with the lack of services in their neighborhoods. Regarding individual houses, Kaleiçi residents were far more likely to like their houses and to have invested in housing improvements than residents of Sukapi and Üçler, largely because of land tenure issues.

Evaluation

The challenges we faced in completing this institutional assessment stemmed mainly from the importance we placed on undertaking this task as a joint activity with the Municipality. At every step issues and proposals were discussed at length with the Mayor and his senior staff. Meetings were organized by them and field activities were undertaken jointly and their results assessed in working sessions. The resulting sense of ownership of the project and concurrence with the findings and recommendations far outweighs, in our view, the delays arising from our insistence on joint review and assessment of data and information and joint formation of proposals despite competing demands on the time of the Mayor and senior officials.
The new Municipal Law No. 5393 passed by Parliament in June and published in the official gazette on July 3rd, 2005 mandates municipalities to institute strategic planning, financial management and participation processes we recommended. However it does not define participation procedure, letting each local government adopt the approach best suited to its particular situation. Kars will now have to determine how best to fulfill this mandate. Our social assessment fieldwork has demonstrated the benefits of engaging residents in shaping the future of their neighborhoods and their city and laid the groundwork for sustained outreach and partnership in community-based initiatives. This is the fundamental building block for institutionalizing a productive interface between the municipality and the different communities within its jurisdiction. The development of CBOs will be vital to this process. Access to the World Bank grant will reinforce this approach and provide an opportunity to operationalize this policy and develop the skills needed to work with residents, grassroots groups, and NGOs on joint initiatives and programs.

Finally, TESEV who has received a World Bank grant to assist municipalities in implementing the new Law with a special emphasis on its participatory component has requested us to present to them our work in Kars and on the strength of this work included Kars among the first three pilot municipalities whose experience will provide the basis for the preparation of a manual to guide municipalities in meeting the mandates of the new laws. Our report’s recommendations allow the municipality to institute changes and launch activities on which there is broad consensus while working with TESEV to prepare the strategic plan, financial plan and participation process as mandated by the Law.

The Mayor’s approval of the recommendations proposed in this assessment is the first and most important step toward increasing the Municipality’s efficiency and its performance as a local government. The Municipal Law mandates reform in the operation of local government. Its implementation will prompt reluctant bureaucrats to accept change. Building the Municipality’s capacity to apply the recommendations of the assessment is facilitated by the involvement of senior staff in their development. Nevertheless it will take about two years before the strategic planning and partnership units, the coordinating committees and the local initiative team we recommended establishing are smoothly operating on their own. Under the best of circumstances, capacity to operationalize the reforms called for by the Municipal Law will take no less than three years to develop. This is the challenging task that TESEV will be taking on.

We consider the outcomes of this assessment to represent the best evaluation of our achievements. TCF funding of our activities will have leveraged a substantial additional contribution to the institutional capacity building of the municipality and laid a sound basis for its future development.
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Municipality of Kars lies at the crossroads of traditional trade routes linking Anatolia through west central Asia to the Middle East and the Silk Route. It is of strategic importance as a gateway to the Caucasus Region. Its population of 80,000 includes the highest concentration of Azeris in Turkey.

Kars’ cultural heritage testifies to its long history as one of the oldest settlements in Anatolia and at the intersection of Ottoman, Persian and European cultures and conflicts. The Kars region encompasses significant ecological and cultural assets. The natural landscapes and rich biodiversity of the region attract some ecotourism. Within the Kars province, the archeological site of the medieval city of Ani is on the World Heritage list for its unique monuments, citadel and ramparts. Despite the presence of an airport allowing international connections via Ankara, Kars has yet to capture a share of the Turkish tourist market.

1.2 Purpose

Preserving the integrity of historic centers in countries experiencing population growth and economic restructuring is a daunting task. In Turkey, the Ministry of Culture is responsible for monuments and archeological sites while Municipalities are in charge of preserving walls,
Preserving Cultural Heritage in the Municipality of Kars, Turkey

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Aqueducts and fountains and managing non-monumental buildings. These buildings are in private ownership and their owners are exempted from the real estate tax. Nevertheless, owners have been moving out and letting the houses fall into disrepair as a result of misuse and/or neglect.

This situation is not unique. The historic urban fabric is being lost at an alarming rate even in sites on the World Heritage list. Economic and social change, vast improvements in communications, unprecedented mobility and the rapid pace of technological innovations have altered lifestyles and affected perceptions and aspirations particularly among youths. Furthermore, decentralization has multiplied the number of institutional actors involved in the management of cultural and natural heritage while ongoing democratization of local governance and the growing role of civil society have broadened the range of stakeholders with different perspectives on the value and use of these assets.

Local authorities are the main custodians of the architectural and urbanistic heritage as well as natural sites that are within their jurisdictional boundaries. Their ability to protect this heritage is undermined by the increasing complexity of regional and urban dynamics, the deficiencies in the existing legal, regulatory and fiscal frameworks and the inadequacy of technical, managerial and financial resources.

Kars’ dynamic mayor is eager to revitalize the economic base of the city and realize its touristic potential. Restoring its architectural heritage is central to enhancing the city’s attractiveness and its capacity to entice tourists to extend their stay beyond the overnight included in the guided tours of the region. Linking Kars to its surroundings through thematic touristic routes will help attract a broader range of tourists who stay one or more nights. The Global Heritage Fund and the Christensen Fund are assisting the Municipality to prepare and implement a conservation plan for its historic center. Work has started on pilot buildings.

Worldwide experience has demonstrated that restoration of individual buildings is necessary but not sufficient to trigger revitalization of the surrounding urban fabric. Nor does it generate a permanent employment base capable of injecting vibrancy in older or economically distressed neighborhoods. To achieve these objectives, the municipality must develop the capacity to manage preservation with change and generate the resources needed to pump prime the revitalization and local development process.

The goal of our project was to assist the Municipality of Kars in assessing its capabilities and needs in order to enable it to plan and manage revitalization strategies and action plans focused on valorization of the cultural heritage, social inclusion and local economic impact. A major effort was spent on fostering an understanding of the need for outreach, participation, and partnership with residents and communities as the cornerstone of sound urban management. This
entails that it be given equal importance as links and partnerships with national and foreign entities. The next step is to institute participatory processes that build on and expand beyond the role of the Muhtar and the Local Agenda 21 bodies, namely the city council and its various commissions. Recognizing the role of different stakeholders and the legitimacy of different viewpoints regarding the city’s current development patterns and its future is fundamental to democratic local governance.

The study team gathered information for this report over the course of six months through site visits, working sessions, discussions with the Governor and the Mayor, senior officials, NGOs active in Kars, business leaders and communities in the neighborhoods affected by the revitalization project.

Working sessions were held with senior officials of the Municipality in the strategic planning departments to discuss their objectives and operations and assess their needs. Particular attention was given to issues of local development, land management, infrastructure services, property tenure, housing, municipal finance, and social inclusion. The assessment was discussed with the mayor and his senior officials. Recommendations to enhance the functional efficiency of the Municipality in a progressively decentralized administrative framework were jointly developed and approved by the Mayor. These recommendations also enhance the municipality’s capability to drive the revitalization effort and respond to opportunities in a competitive market.

During field visits the team discussed with residents and local business owners their views on Kars’ development potential, the importance of its cultural and natural heritage, perceived obstacles to investment productive activities, real estate and the renovation of properties in the historic center. The inputs by these different stakeholders contributed an important dimension to the assessment.

This report documents the existing situation and integrates the plurality of views and inputs into a cohesive assessment of needs and a set of recommendations reflecting the requirements mandated by the Municipal Law adopted in June 2005. Implementation of these recommendations will lead to a strategic approach to capacity building by:

- Promoting an understanding among Kars officials and key stakeholders of the different activities needed to prepare a local development strategy.
- Developing a capacity to prepare an action plan for the revitalization of Kars’ historic center and the upgrading of marginalized settlements that is socially inclusive and relies on outreach and involvement of residents.
- Promoting a preliminary understanding of Kars’ urban dynamics and the management of urban growth.
• Examining potential approaches to the institution of participatory processes that meet the requirements of the new Municipal Law.
• Enhancing the managerial capabilities to enable the municipality to implement multiple interventions with different strategic partners. A critical mass of mutually reinforcing activities is required to attract private investment in Kars.
• Developing an immediate action plan to restore the economic viability of the historic center and work to alleviate the institutional and financial blockages that impede investment, recognizing that the municipality may not have the authority to address some of these blockages on its own.
• Building a technical capacity to assess the impacts of public and private investments on municipal finance particularly as regards the revitalization of the historic center, and the benefits to mahalla residents and citizens at large.
• Establishing a reasonable monitoring system to document the dynamics of change in the municipality.

July marked the end of field activities and included the evaluation. The team had to integrate the requirements of the new Municipal Law in the recommendations developed over the previous three months. The Law’s demands are very ambitious and exceed the changes that the team felt could be readily implemented based on the current capabilities of the municipal administration without strong outside support. TESEV has received a grant from the World Bank to provide such support in six pilot municipalities including Kars and prepare a manual based on this experience. Nevertheless a degree of accommodation of these requirements which are not well understood at the local level had to be integrated into the recommendations.

A new round of meetings with the Governor, the Mayor and senior officials was needed to promote an understanding of the Law and the impact it will have on local governance. Finally the report’s recommendations allow the municipality to institute changes and launch activities on which there is broad consensus while working with TESEV to prepare the strategic plan, financial plan and participation process as mandated by the Law.
2 REVIEW OF THE GHF SPONSORED REVITALIZATION PLAN FOR THE OTTOMAN HISTORIC CENTER

2.1 Kars Kaleiçi Ottoman Historic Center

The Ottoman historic center lies mostly within the Kaleiçi mahalla. It is a socially diverse but physically degraded neighborhood. Its original inhabitants have moved to the Russian district and the new urban extensions starting 90 to 100 years ago and have been replaced by rural settlers. The most recent settlers are generally located on the upper slopes near the citadel. The army evacuated the citadel 30 years ago and newcomers found it easier to settle on government land nearby. Although the majority of the neighborhood residents have been granted tapu certificates by the municipality giving them secure occupancy, they are still considered squatters. Property owners on the lower part of the hill more frequently possess tapu certificates issued by the national government giving them registered legal usufruct titles recognized by the courts.

It is commonly believed that these residents are unable to engage in renovation activities. However, a local shopkeeper mentioned that he was ready to invest in the construction of a "pension", an inn for the accommodation of visitors, in an "Ottoman" architectural style defined by the municipality as part of the revitalization project, provided that he receives some assistance on how to proceed. He also knew five other persons in the neighborhood who were ready to invest in similar projects.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Refer to Annex 1 for descriptions of interviews completed for this report.
Architects in Kars have had no opportunities so far to restore Ottoman structures and do not have the necessary training. They would, however, welcome partnerships with outside architects if opportunities arose. Furthermore, it would be difficult to find local skilled workers for this type of restoration work and out-of-town workers from Erzurum or other locations would have to be recruited.

2.2 The Master Conservation Plan

The most recent conservation and urban plans for the old Ottoman District were prepared in 1995 and 2002. The Erzurum Regional Commission approved both of them for the Preservation of Cultural and Natural Assets. The Global Heritage Fund is sponsoring the preparation of a new plan entitled "Kars Kaleiçi, Revitalization of the Ottoman Heritage, Master Conservation Plan".

The Master Conservation Study Area including the citadel covers 353,500 m2. An "archaeological area" with about 4,500 inhabitants includes 857 houses and encompasses at least 556 legal urban plots. An additional 90 located on the upper part of the hill are to be demolished and their inhabitants resettled in new housing estates constructed by the Mass Housing Co.

The Revitalization Plan includes a printed report with a general presentation of the current situation. It is a serious but sometimes unfocused analytical study that encompasses a wide range of urban, historical, cultural and development ideas. Relevant institutional and juridical information is provided including land use and land ownership information that had to be assembled, processed, and digitized to produce maps.

The rationale underlying the maps of "planning decision" and "spatial organization" is rather summarily presented. The justification for creating a public park at the expense of existing housing in the Study Area is not stated. Replacing the existing urban fabric with public parks and open space is not necessarily the best solution either from a touristic, cultural or social viewpoint. The majority of urban monuments were not designed for such a setting. More detailed proposals were prepared in December 2004 complemented by a map and a large set of 3D views without explanatory text.

The Master Conservation Plan has been submitted for approval to the Regional Committee for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage as well as to municipal, provincial and national governments.
2.3 Historical and Touristic Assets

The Ottoman historic center contains a number of historic buildings. Some are classified as monuments (the twelfth century citadel, the tenth century former Church of the Apostles and the sixteenth century stone bridge); others are not included among listed monuments (the two hammams, the mosques, the Beylerbey palace, the Ottoman houses and other bridges). Several are included in an "archaeological" protection area delineated in accordance with the boundaries of the historic walled city, while others are outside this protection zone in the old Ottoman “extra muros” suburbs.

Visiting the former Church of the Apostles and the citadel is already quite interesting for tourists. Other places (like hammams or Ottoman houses) are not yet ready to receive visitors. Many mosques have lost their original authenticity. However, all these structures are important as part of the general scenery. While some ruins (city walls and outer churches) have a limited potential for enhancement, the cultural and touristic value of Ottoman houses seems somewhat underestimated.

The old Ottoman districts on both sides of the river have lost much of their original splendor and character. During the late twentieth century, some inhabitants invested in several unattractive concrete buildings. The worst visual impact, though, can be attributed to two public buildings: a large school touching the ruins of the Beylerbey palace and a power plant located between the former Church of the Apostles and the river bank. Though some might argue the contrary, from a foreign visitor's perspective gecekondu don't necessarily look disgraceful or shameful. They may even seem picturesque and colorful from a distance.

Kars’ unique scenery is one of its most...
valuable touristic assets. The site itself, with a river bordered by steep hills dotted with small scale housing structures and topped by a citadel, has become the municipality’s emblem. The view from the citadel is impressive, but the landscape of the citadel surrounded by steep hills is still more outstanding from across the river.

The new "Russian" district includes many interesting buildings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is unusual to find such a northern heritage in a Mediterranean country like Turkey. A master’s thesis on this period’s architecture was written by Mrs. Asuman Ciftci (AYDIN), an architect originally from Kars but now living in Ankara. Paradoxically, attitudes are more positive towards the Russian architectural heritage than the surviving Ottoman structures. The municipality has already rehabilitated an old Russian-style building to be used by its city council, and has purchased another to be restored by a businessman. Even the municipality’s main building will soon be transformed into a hotel through a BTO-type agreement. A wealthy businessman (originally from Kars but living in Ankara) recently rehabilitated a "Russian" house, and another is being turned into a “boutique hotel”. It seems to be much easier to encourage and support private investments in rehabilitation in the "Russian" district where they have already begun.

The museum building is modern and nicely arranged with archaeological collections on the ground floor and traditional crafts above. Unfortunately, it is located far from the city center on the road to Ani, and because of budget constraints it cannot be heated in wintertime. It received 3,000 foreign and 4,270 Turkish visitors in 2002, while the Ani archaeological site that is listed on the world heritage list received 8,150 foreign and 3,490 Turkish visitors in 2002.

According to desk employees, the SIM-ER Hotel with a capacity of 310 beds, receives only 3,500 clients annually with an average stay of two nights per client. There are four other national "certified" hotels with 248 beds in Kars. According to the Province director of tourism, Kars hotels had 42,650 (including 7,300 foreign) overnight stays in its "national level" hotels and 18,300 (including 874 foreign) in its "municipal level" hotels. Most of the visitors come in the summer months from June to October when the Sim-Er and other hotels are full. The hotels receive national subsidies under a program encouraging investments in touristic facilities in remote areas. These subsidies allow them to operate despite the seasonality of their occupancy. Nearby Sarikamis ski resort has three hotels with 500 beds and three more with an 800-bed capacity are planned soon.

2 "Dwelling Architecture in 1978-1918, during Russian Conquest Period in Kars".
3 Tourism dropped in 2003 because of the US war against the Republic of Iraq.
The Master Conservation Plan would add 300 to 400 additional rooms to be completed over the next four years in the Kaleiçi area. A careful assessment of the present situation is therefore needed before undertaking any large-scale investment in hotel facilities in Kars. A Tourism Master Plan was prepared in 1992 by Turan Barlas, a city planner, but it is basically an inventory study that is now obsolete.

There is a vibrant cultural life in Kars with Turkish and Kurdish poetry, songs and dances, but the Ottoman Kaleiçi neighborhood is physically disconnected from these activities. Once a year, however, during the museums week, a drawing and painting competition on Ottoman architectural heritage is organized among schoolchildren.

### 2.4 Municipality Projects

The Municipality has different responsibilities regarding the Kaleiçi area, particularly in terms of safety, equipment and housing conditions. Houses located on steep slopes are unserviced and may be damaged by falling stones and mudslides. Providing water and sanitation to the upper part of the hill is technically difficult and costly.

The Municipality gives construction land (usually far from the city center) to the Mass Housing Company and receives in return a specific number of dwelling units for beneficiaries chosen by the Municipality. A survey of Municipality-owned land should be compiled to assess the location and importance of these land exchanges.

A recent agreement between the Mass Housing Company and the Municipality will make available a total of 750 dwelling units to the Municipality over the coming two to three years. In the first phase 90 to 150 settlers are to be removed, mostly from the upper part of the Kaleiçi area. Most of the affected families have already agreed to move to new housing projects.

There are 205 parcels located along the "cultural axis" and to the west of it, 70 of which are owned by public institutions (the Municipality, the Ministry of Finance, the Vakfs authorities, etc.). Most of the future "tourist area" will be located here and provide medium scale lodging facilities averaging 30 rooms. No building permits are presently being issued in the study area until the Master Conservation Plan is adopted.

The European Union is already providing some assistance to the Municipality and sponsors training in tourism services and management. Turkish private foundations led by *Anadolu Kültür*...
and Çekül are ready to study any new cultural project presented by the Municipality. Foreign foundations including GHF, TCF and the Crest Foundation are already active in preserving the cultural heritage in Kars. Others can be attracted to sponsor specific activities.

Recent tax legislation provides municipalities with incentives to invest in enhancing their historical heritage. The tourism-oriented approach is rather new to Kars and relates well to the strategic new role that the Governor and Mayor strive to give this Province as a gateway to the Caucasus from the West and a gateway to Turkey and Europe from the East. However, the mechanisms to generate the dynamic economic process required to operationalize this ambitious vision are yet to be defined, agreed upon by the Province, the Municipality, their key partners and other stakeholders, and implemented.

As the Kaleiçi district is small in size but highly valued, the Municipality project has publicly announced the launching of the revitalization project. The Mayor has recently reaffirmed his commitment to fulfilling the promises he has made to his constituency regarding the improvement of their living conditions and the allocation of new “free” housing to those that have to be relocated.

2.5 Comments on the Master Conservation Plan

At GHF’s request, team member Dr. Samir Abdulac was asked to meet with Ali Nejat Sert to discuss the Master Conservation Plan and offer comments and recommendations to improve the plan. These comments have been grouped under four headings presented in the following sections.

2.5.1 Architectural Aspects

The lack of an architectural survey of ottoman buildings (houses, hammams, etc.)⁵: plans, sections, facades, details, construction techniques, etc is currently being addressed by the GHF and Anadolu Kültür teams. However, a historical, functional and typological analysis of Ottoman buildings in Kars to provide a sound basis for the plan is still lacking. We were told that a Ph. D. thesis is being prepared by a non-resident student. Furthermore, a general archaeological study of Ottoman urban and architectural remains in Kars is also lacking. We understand that there was no Ottoman map or cadastre of the Kaleiçi mahalla in existence today to help determine the relationship between existing houses and Ottoman foundations and provide answers to questions such as: Are the existing garden walls Ottoman? Did the Beylerbey Palace have a large garden and if so where was it in relation to the existing remnants?

A "Synthesis" map in the Master Conservation Plan presents the shape and location of 5 categories of historical buildings graded from B1 to B5, the last category labeled "building to be reconstructed in the original form". Yet there is not explanation about how this rating was developed and applied or how the original form is to be determined in the case of collapsed or radically transformed buildings.

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⁵ At the beginning of 2005 the Global Heritage Fund commissioned Yavuz Özkaya, an architect specialized in restoration, to work on Namik Kemal House and later on other Ottoman houses.
A policy for the protection and enhancement of the monuments and the conservation area should be clearly stated and discussed before embarking on any project. In particular the rationale underlying any decision to remove or rebuild so many buildings in different parts of the district must be clarified. The existing urban fabric and even the original Ottoman plot layout as advocated by Can Kubin should be protected. The conservation area should comprehensively include all Ottoman remains, even if they are physically degraded. The removal of *gecekondu* is primarily a social project, not a touristic one. Its scope in the Conservation Plan should be very limited. Many individual houses are colorful with a picturesque quality, even if they house poor residents and do not conform to either the Ottoman or Russian styles.

Urban regulations (such as street widening to 6 and 10 meters or more along the canal) would be inappropriate and unnecessarily destructive to the old urban fabric, as new and differently-sized emergency services equipment now exists and are widely used elsewhere in the world. Building regulations (designed for the protection of concrete buildings from earthquakes) may also be inappropriate when an ottoman building is to be rebuilt. Moreover, demolition and rebuilding should be avoided as much as possible. New architectural regulations should be developed after a full debate of the issues by the Turkish specialists and foreign experts including the GHF project director. Architectural and technical guidelines should be produced, published and made available to architects, building professionals, civil servants, schoolteachers and the general population.

The former Church of the Apostles was not originally designed to be a freestanding monument in a public park but to be imbedded within an urban fabric. The "cultural" axis and its green park are based on theoretical design concepts whose validity has been challenged since the mid 70s. Generally, the idea of replacing built areas surrounding monuments by green "recreational parks" should be questioned. It is unclear how can a public garden can serve as a "cultural axis". Moreover, such an endeavor does not seem to be a high tourist priority.

Feasibility studies should be undertaken for the reuse of selected traditional buildings. Cost estimates for purchasing, restoring, rehabilitating or renovating may help in organizing priorities or choosing between alternatives. Practical training courses should be organized and provided to craftsmen in the building trades in order to give them the skills needed to work on historic structures of the Ottoman and Russian periods. A small field unit may monitor projects and provide advisory services, including offering architectural and administrative assistance to the community.
The appropriateness of a massive tourist project within the "conservation area" should be questioned from cultural heritage and sustainable development viewpoints as well as from the potential absorptive capacity of the area. The development of a highly concentrated cluster of tourist facilities in the immediate vicinity of a major heritage monument such as the former Church of the Apostles seems excessively disruptive. For other reasons, even cafés and restaurants should not presently be located too close to mosque entrances. A map of tourist assets showing the nicest views and walks should be prepared and made available at all tourist facilities. The Master Conservation Plan should highlight the routes that already exist or should be protected and enhanced for tourists and inhabitants alike. Tourism would be particularly enhanced by the arrangement of urban landmarks, panoramas, walks and public spaces within a comprehensive urban project.

Local crafts production (such as kilims) should be improved. Existing know-how can be transmitted and new skills developed. The conditions for setting up or moving workshops to the Ottoman district in appropriate architectural structures should be explored. These workshops can qualify for funding under several NGO-led initiatives and foreign-funded projects. A rehabilitated Ottoman building may be used to promote, train workers and market traditional crafts. Vocational training for women deserves particular attention. It is discussed in the social assessment section, 6.2.2.

The scale of projects should be kept small in the conservation area so as to be affordable to individual investors from the local community. Although subdividing larger projects into small packages implies higher administrative costs, these are fully justified by the dynamism created through engaging the energies and resources of Kars residents.

Awareness of the cultural value of the heritage should be significantly increased among the general public and particularly school children. Regular activities designed to sharpen their sensitivity to the value of the architectural and urbanistic heritage around them would contribute significantly to their preservation. All cultural activities (dances, ceremonies, feasts, etc.) deserve special support when they are physically related to the conservation area.

A phased tentative calendar for implementation of the revitalization project should reflect the local priorities and stakeholders' possible inputs. The overall process may take longer than the initially estimate of four years.

2.5.3 Social Aspects

The lack of a baseline social survey of the existing population in the Ottoman historic center was disconcerting. Information on origin, length of residence, household composition, social and economic activities, income, and expenditure patterns are important to the formulation of a revitalization strategy. Information on land ownership or occupancy status, housing conditions, structural soundness and maintenance, repair expenses, investment in improvements, land and building transactions and costs and living arrangements provide the social underpinning of a
revitalization plan. Financially as properties are more expensive and land ownership is more secure on the lower parts of the hill, property transactions and acquisitions will be more difficult and costly to the municipality.

Relocating a significant number of residents away from the city center will lead to a partial disruption of the fabric of the community and the social and economic networks that have developed over the years. Every opportunity for job creation in the neighborhood should be explored, especially as related to traditional crafts, building rehabilitation and restoration, tourism and income-generating opportunities for women.

The guidelines for rehabilitation should be kept as simple as possible to avoid imposing undue burdens on property owners and local investors. The required investments for housing improvement should remain accessible to the community. A renovation fund may be set up to provide small and micro loans for housing improvements and the development of small-scale tourist services.

2.5.4 Recommendations for Immediate Action

At GHF’s request, comments and suggestions on the Master Conservation Plan were transmitted to Ali Nejat Sert by Samir Abdulac in December and April of 2005, including the following recommendations for immediate consideration and inclusion in the plan.

- To shift the focus of the plan to an attractive "ensemble" combining the old stone bridge, the two hammams, the Namik Kemal House and the Ottoman houses along the riverside. We strongly recommend that the revitalization project start with this cluster rather than the area below the citadel wall as originally planned where displacement and the design of the oversized open space in the central spine are contentious issues that have to be resolved.

- To postpone some major strategic and investment decisions until all the recommendations of the various studies had been thoroughly discussed by the partners, the Project Advisory Committee, the new GHF project director (whose appointment was then expected and has since been made), and decisions had been presented and discussed with the Turkish authorities.

- To focus on sensitive and appropriate urban landscaping for the riverfront, to be later enhanced by a pedestrian pathway along the canal and a convenient route towards the citadel's entrance.

- To study and rehabilitate one or two ottoman buildings as pilot projects with an on-site training workshop for craftsmen in the building trades.
3 DEVELOPMENT DYNAMICS AND PROSPECTS

3.1 Economic and Demographic Challenges

Promoting local development in the Kars region has to confront two major interlinked challenges: a depressed economy, and depopulation with a steady out-migration of youths. With a population of about 80,000 people, Kars is the capital of the land-locked province of Kars, a sparsely settled area of 9,594 square kilometers with an estimated population of 350,000. The Kars Province exhibits demographic and economic characteristics common to the East Anatolia region of Turkey. It is a remote predominantly rural province that is experiencing a large out-migration. Sharp population movements occurred in two different periods. The first in the ‘60s and ‘70s involved rural/urban migration to cities within the Province and elsewhere in Turkey. This is a worldwide phenomenon that different developing countries experienced at different times from the 1950s on. The second major change occurred in the 90s and involved a redistricting that made Ardahan and Igdir separate provinces from Kars. The exodus of both urban and rural populations continued as residents sought opportunities to make a decent living elsewhere. They headed for Turkey’s major urban centers or emigrated to Germany (where a large Turkish community was already well-established) or to other E.U. countries. Globalization of the world economy compounded prior national decisions and regulations that adversely affected the rural sectors to cause this exodus which hit the Eastern Anatolian region particularly hard. In Kars Province the rural population was particularly affected with a net loss of 279,000 persons.

Illustration 3.1: View of urban development in Kars Municipality.
Nevertheless, the whole region remains predominantly rural in character with no less than 71% of the population still working in the agricultural sector. This proportion rises to 77% in Kars Province and is reflected in the prevailing land use patterns shown below (tables 1 and 2). While the expansion of human settlements have consumed fields and orchards particularly on the periphery of Kars city, the sparse settlement pattern has helped conserve land in agricultural use which represented 36.3% of the total area in 1999 and together with grasslands and grazing lands accounted for 70%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.1: Employed Population by Sector (in thousands), 2000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture, hunting, forestry, fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, stone quarry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electricity, gas water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale, retail, restaurants, hotels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication, transport, logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial institutions, insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community, social, and private services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undefined activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: State Institute of Statistics, Kars 2000 Report*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2: Kars Province Land Use (in thousands of hectares), 1999</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Land Use</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grasslands and Meadows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests and Orchards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-agricultural Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: State Institute of Statistics, Kars 2000 Report*
Businesses operating in Kars identified key constraints hampering their economic performance and threatening their financial viability, namely harsh climate, remoteness, high cost of transport, lack of skilled labor, and difficulty in accessing credit.

Kars benefits from law 58-4 granting subsidies to industries setting up factories in provinces where the economy is lagging. Globalization widened the gap between buoyant and laggard areas, sharpening disparities within Turkey between the economically depressed Northeast and the vibrant south and west. The number of provinces qualifying for subsidies rose from 13 to 40 out of a total of 87 provinces. Other than government subsidies, the businesses operating in Kars find it particularly difficult to access credit.

Unemployment is high and there are two vocational schools to train the unemployed youths. Skilled workers even in the construction sector have to be brought in from elsewhere in Turkey, mainly from Istanbul and Ankara as local skilled workers have been leaving the region in search of better opportunities.

The long harsh winters and the remoteness of the area make it a high cost area for production, unless the products can also be sold in the region. Lack of marketing skills hampers the development of export markets. As things now stand, the only sectors that can successfully develop in Kars are agri-processing, ecological and cultural tourism, and manufacturing with an export potential.

Two meetings were held with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry with the president of the Chamber and some members to review the situation in Kars. The overall picture is sober but not defeatist.

- An entrepreneur who manufactures furniture thought he could benefit from cheap labor and the availability of wood from Sarkamish and Gli. He imported machines from Italy and could have employed 50 workers at his factory. However, there was not enough demand locally to sustain his operation. He moved the idle machines to Kaysen and established a new factory there.
In contrast, another entrepreneur established a chemical plant that manufactures ISO 2000 quality household cleaning products. He has managed to export part of the production to Georgia. The owner set up his business in Kars for family reasons. He started with 10 employees but is now ready to expand. He could employ 45 workers if his transborder market continues to grow.

Discussion during the meetings underscored the importance of marketing and transborder relations. Local entrepreneurs recognize that a marketing strategy for the province’s and the region’s products is sorely lacking.

3.2 Transborder Relations and Economic Prospects

The importance of transborder relations should not be underestimated. It is critical for the future of the parties concerned: Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. Historical legacy and geopolitical considerations have disrupted ancient trade patterns inflicting hardships on local populations and raising the cost of living and production in the border provinces.

All parties stand to gain from opening the border to trade, a development that the EU is promoting. At this time export/import transactions are cumbersome burdened by unwieldy bureaucratic regulations.

Productive capacity in the manufacturing sector has been diminishing, hampered by two major factors.

- High fuel costs exacerbated by the closure of the border with Armenia a decade ago. The rail and freight traffic from Russia that crossed Armenia and Turkey brought coal to Kars. Today the coal comes via the Black Sea through Trebizond requiring transshipments that raise prices.

- Outmigration of the more affluent groups leading to the gradual erosion of purchasing power. According to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, one million persons of Kars origin live today in major Turkish cities or outside of Turkey altogether.

The majority of the entrepreneurs that remain in Kars have a rural-based activity and operate agri-processing businesses. Two associations have been formed, strongly encouraged by the Mayor, to help producers market their products.
• The Association of Bee-Keepers and Honey Producers grouping 100 members out of a total of 500 small producers market a honey brand appreciated in Turkey. However, they were unable to obtain a recognized trademark from the EU because of practices that compromise the regional integrity of the product, namely the transfer of local hives south to the Aegean Coast in the winter months and the additives included in processing.

• The association of cheesemakers that produce a Kasseri type of cheese popular in Turkey and available in specialized markets in Europe and US as Kars cheese.

If this trend of organizing producers can be complemented by technical support to improve agriculture and agro-processing practices, local production could increase and local producers could obtain labels that can be recognized and marketed outside of Turkey.
4 INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Illustration 4.1: Restored building housing the Kars City Council.

The cultural heritage project for the revitalization of the Ottoman historic center served as the starting point for the assessment of the municipality’s current capabilities and the requirements needed to build its capacity.

As the level of government closest to the people, municipalities have an increasingly pivotal role in engaging citizens and working with civil society to promote development within their jurisdictional boundaries.

When the project started, the Municipal Law which finally passed in June 2005 mandating municipalities to prepare strategic plans as a structural framework for their social and economic development was still in draft form undergoing reviews in Parliament. Nevertheless, the gist of the law was known and guided our proposals. Any process of decentralization entails changes in central/local relations. In Turkey, the EU model based on the principle of subsidiarity has to be adapted to the existing distribution of statutory powers in a traditionally very centralized administrative apparatus and introduce some requirements for the institution of participatory processes and financial discipline in local governance.

The Municipal Law affects both provinces and municipalities. However governors are appointed while mayors are elected entailing different relationships of empowerment and accountability. These relationships are filtered through the overlay of the cultural and ethnic composition of society in a remote region as well as the strategies, messages, and promises of elected
representatives. Among this complex web of interlinked concerns, a dominant mandate is to address issues of unemployment and poverty as wages and living conditions in the cities are further depressed by a steady inflow of rural migrants and persistent economic recession.

4.1 Municipal Institutional Framework

The Municipality of Kars is uniquely positioned to become a laboratory and a model for introducing new concepts of participation and partnership. It has a progressive mayor actively promoting local economic and social development and eager to work with Turkish and foreign partners. He has been actively establishing links with foreign partners and participating in regional and global networks that can help promote Kars, access resources and attract grant funds and private investment to foster the growth of sectors ranging from agriculture to manufacturing to tourism.

Kars’ ethnically diverse population includes four main groups: Kurds who account for about half the population and Azeris and local Turks or Yerli who account for twenty-five percent each. The Azeris, many of whom came to Kars as refugees during the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, consist of a Shia majority and a Sunni subgroup, the Teremeke. Initiatives in Kars can demonstrate how a diverse society can live in harmony and work together to shape a better future for all. Partnerships with outside entities should enrich this diversity and reinforce the collaborative spirit.

Both the province and its municipalities have a vested interest in transborder relations as these have a major impact on the local economy and can equally affect incomes and living conditions in urban and rural areas. While the economic issues loom large in the Mayor’s policy agenda, there is a genuine desire affirmed by his election platform and often reaffirmed since, to improve the lives of gecekondu dwellers and initiate programs that address the needs of women.

4.1.1 Municipal Finance

Kars Municipality is operating under very tight budgets. The Mayor is looking to balance three major demands on scarce local resources, namely:

- General administration and other operational expenditures
- Obligations for joint activities and partnerships
- Capital Investments and major repairs and replacement expenditures
The municipal 2003 budget shows that there is little revenue for discretionary expenditures. The average per capita annual share of local expenditures is $190.00. To upgrade services or fund a needed capital expenditure like expansion of infrastructure systems or the acquisition of land or buildings the Mayor has to generate new revenue or secure outside funding.

The Financial Management and Control Law of 2003 is still awaiting the promulgation of executive regulations. The legislation under which municipalities have been operating will now be superceded by the new Municipal Law of 2005. When it became clear by March 2005 that parliament would pass the Municipal Law in this session, we decided that issues of financial management should be addressed once the new legal mandate and associated executive regulations are issued.

Accumulated tax arrears and other charges owed to or guaranteed by central government are taken out of the budget for the year following the period in which these liabilities were incurred. Most Turkish municipalities, Kars among them, are running budget deficits and have to cope with preemption of their central transfers to settle outstanding accounts.

In the face of a very tight budget the Mayor decided to increase the hiring of lower-skilled labor in the municipal services and on specific projects. Conversely he reduced the salaries offered to technical staff. He felt that it was more efficient for the municipality to obtain technical services through outsourcing to undertake specific tasks rather than retain higher paid technical personnel providing more jobs for the unskilled. The Municipality is currently seeking credits from foreign sources and the Provinces Bank, the Turkish municipal bank, as well as exploring potential foreign sources to fund private provision of solid waste management and disposal.

The Municipality has moved to better equipped offices on the fourth and fifth floor of a new building. The Mayor wants to convert the old historic building which housed the municipal offices into a revenue producing use. The Municipality will grant a 49-year lease to investors and is inviting tenders for the refurbishment and management of the hotel. The Municipality will receive use of a designated number of rooms for the accommodation of its guests. Given the tradition of hospitality in Kars, the cost of lodging visitors has increased with the expansion of the Municipality’s links to the outside world.
Table 4.1: Kars Municipality Budget, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>Turkish Lira (YTL)(^6)</th>
<th>US Dollars (thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tax revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share from the Government Budget</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>7,407.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Taxes</td>
<td>1,255</td>
<td>929.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Municipal Fees</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>583.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tax-exempt income</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Monetary Contribution</td>
<td>3,121</td>
<td>2,311.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds of Institutions and Enterprises</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Earnings</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue from Municipal Assets</td>
<td>2,176</td>
<td>1,611.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages and Charges</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>77.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fines</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>148.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Revenues</td>
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<td>1,482.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Welfare and Funds</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds</td>
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<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>20,818</td>
<td>15,420.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| EXPENSES                                     |                           |                        |
| General Cost of Administration               | 1,566                     | 1,160.0                |
| Municipality Police and Fire Administration  | 896                       | 663.7                  |
| Cleaning Work                               | 4,339                     | 3,214.1                |
| Health, Social Assistant and Solidarity     | 18                        | 13.3                   |
| Public Works                                | 2,739                     | 2,028.9                |
| Transportation and Maintenance              | 6,018                     | 4,457.8                |
| Agriculture and Veterinary                  | 514                       | 380.7                  |
| Education and Culture                       | 100                       | 74.1                   |
| Expropriations                              | 200                       | 148.1                  |
| Contribution Dues                           | 50                        | 37.0                   |
| Fiscal Transfers                            | 3,280                     | 2,429.6                |
| Social Transfers                            | 54                        | 40.0                   |
| Loans                                       | 750                       | 555.6                  |
| Other                                       | 294                       | 217.8                  |
| **TOTAL**                                   | 20,818                    | 15,420.7               |

\(^6\) The New Turkish Lira was introduced on January 1, 2005 and is equivalent to one million old Turkish Liras. The exchange rate with the US Dollar is approximately 0.74.
4.1.2 Considerations Guiding the Assessment

The existing municipal organizational structure includes 17 departments under the Mayor and the Municipal Council. There are 16 directorates and four chief offices. Three are affiliated to directorates and one, the Legal Affairs office, is directly under the Mayor. The directorates are as follows:

- Public Works
- Technical Works
- Municipality Police
- General Editor
- Accountancy, including real estate, Property office and Revenue office.
- Cleaning Work
- Fire Department
- Management of Water, Bus, and Slaughterhouse
- Parks and Gardens
- Economy
- Public Relations
- Media and Press
- Machine and Servicing, including Electricity office
- Cemeteries and Morgue
- Personnel/Staff
- Town Clerk

Quite apart from the capabilities of each department, an institutional framework with such a wide span of control and vertical hierarchies without formal horizontal links is unwieldy. Seven basic considerations guided the development of our proposal’s framework to improve the efficiency of local governance:

1. Avoiding the need for changes that required lengthy legal approval processes particularly since the Municipal Law was expected to pass in the current session of parliament.

2. Refrain from requests for new financial commitments since the municipality is already overextended and lacks adequate funding to meet current obligations. Additional commitments would only encumber future budgets with burdens that can limit the municipality’s options and compromise its operations.

3. Establish channels for horizontal communication to foster integrated strategies and coordination in the implementation of programs and projects.

4. Allow for the progressive build up of capacity, working with the current staff supplemented as needed by short-term outside experts.

5. Introduce strategic planning and management concepts anticipating the passage of the municipal law without relying on its enactment to implement the proposed changes.
6. Institute a capacity for community outreach and participation with a view to promote joint city/community initiatives

7. Foster an understanding of the importance of monitoring the dynamics of change in the municipality and appraising the impacts of planned and proposed programs, projects, and other interventions as a fundamental component of sound planning and management.

There is no substitute for building effectiveness and self-reliance among the permanent staff of the municipality. Improved capacity to deliver should be nurtured and fostered by gradual delegation of authority to grant a minimum degree of empowerment in administrative rules and procedures. Reliance on permanent support of outside experts should be avoided. Long term experts tend to be considered part of the municipal staff over time leading to a counterproductive dependency on external inputs that can be suddenly withdrawn when outside funding for their services is no longer available.

4.1.3 Impact of the Municipal Law: Building a Strategic Planning Capacity and Instituting Participatory Processes Suited to Kars’ Socio-Cultural Characteristics

The enactment of the Municipal Law is going to introduce major changes in the way the municipalities including Kars currently operate. It includes a stipulation concerning participation without mandating a specific procedure for its implementation. Local authorities are therefore given a margin of discretion in how to set up such processes to fit their particular situation.

The mandate concerning strategic planning and financial management is much more prescriptive. Each local authority is to prepare a development strategy and plan for the locality including performance targets for a time frame of three years similar in structure to the format used by local governments in E.U. countries. The plan once adopted by the local council becomes a legal document regulating development and providing the framework for municipal financial management. A three-year rolling financial plan and capital improvement program provide the inputs for the preparation of the annual budget. The three-year capital expenditure plan and budget have to be forwarded to the ministry of finance and condition the central transfers and the projects that the municipality can implement. The focus on instituting a measure of financial discipline in municipal management is a clear intent of the Law. A new accounting system based on functional programmatic categories is introduced. These reforms aim to control the tendency to run perennial deficits that prevails among Turkish municipalities.

The Chairmen of the elected Provincial and municipal councils complained about constant changes in the legal and administrative regulations. These elected bodies are not sure what exactly their responsibilities are at the present time, particularly as relates to financial matters. The head of the 23 member Provincial assembly is worried about imbalances in the distribution of budget allocations in the region and considers the improvement of physical and social infrastructure to be the highest priority. He wishes to have sufficient funding to purchase new...
trucks for public works and put one computer in each village. Currently computers are only provided at the county level.

In many ways, these legal mandates require technical and managerial capacities that most municipalities, including Kars, lack. Furthermore, the Law gives a time frame of six months from the local elections for the governors and mayors to prepare strategic plans for their jurisdictions, clearly an unrealistic deadline. At present, the municipality has no planners or architects among its permanent staff, so meeting this target will entail widespread outsourcing thereby diminishing the internalized benefits of going through the process in-house. This is regrettable since it will waste an opportunity to establish a formal community/municipality interface and launch a structured and meaningful process of community participation in local governance. While consultants are needed to shore up Kars’ capacities to undertake the demanding tasks mandated by the Law, it is important that they be confined to a supportive role and not be allowed to drive the process.

The assessment sought to direct the Mayor’s and senior officials’ attention towards improving capacity and performance with a special focus on:

- Creating a strategic planning capacity by establishing a team of senior officials who would be involved in the formulation of a development strategy. It was recognized that the municipal team needed technical support from an outside consultant preferably a planning professional who could assist in the preparation of the strategic plan. In accordance with the Law the head of this entity should hold the position of deputy mayor. This stipulation politicizes the office and underscores the need for strong technical support for this task.

- Understanding the need to institutionalize a participatory process involving all the different stakeholders, including NGOs active in Kars and CBOs that may be formed.

4.1.4 Existing Participation Modalities

Aside from the representation of resident views and concerns through their Muhtars, the Mayor meets regularly with citizens. He holds open meetings in the municipal council room to hear grievances and requests and to answer questions. The meetings reflect well the social structure in the region and the understanding people have of the role and responsibility of local government. In addition to a long line of elderly and widows requesting financial assistance, there are requests for mediation in unresolved disputes, intervention to right grievances or solve outstanding issues. The Mayor listens to the requests and gives instructions regarding how they should be addressed. Senior officials and department heads attend the meeting and are called upon as needed for consultation and instructions.

Questions and suggestions are answered directly and range from simple requests for information to somewhat pointed questions. The tone is never confrontational as it rarely is in cultures where deliberation and consensus building rather than debate and voting is the accepted modality of decision making. In this system the Mayor is viewed as a leader and given the same attributes as
the traditional family patriarch. Suggestions are rare probably due to a reluctance to devote the expense and time needed to attend in the absence of a grievance or urgent request.

This open meeting tradition should be continued. A large segment of the population needs it and it gives them access to the local leadership of the senior officials of the municipality to solve their problems and address their concerns. However, it is not a substitute for outreach particularly to the poorer segments of the population, women and households in outlying districts. Furthermore, it does not provide a structured process for citizen participation in local governance, but then it was never conceived for this purpose.

4.1.5 Proposed Organizational Framework

Recommendations regarding changes in the organizational structure of the municipality were discussed at length with the mayor and approved. These changes establish a separate strategic planning unit and an external relations unit directly under the mayor, institute a community initiative support unit, and create interdepartmental committees to ensure some horizontal coordination at the managerial level. It also introduces concepts of participatory processes in the planning and management functions.

We understand that the new law requires that the strategic planning unit become a department headed by a deputy mayor. The external relations unit will be very busy keeping up with the many international events and transborder activities. It will also be involved in the activities initiated jointly with foreign sponsors and partners. It will have to work collaboratively with the Strategic Planning Unit on structuring partnerships and seeking funding for new projects.
Diagram 4.1: Proposed Organizational Structure

- **Existing Municipal Entities**
- **Recommended additions**
- **Existing Civil Society Entities**
Preserving Cultural Heritage in the Municipality of Kars, Turkey

The composition of each of the standing committees was discussed with the mayor and senior staff and is shown in the diagram below.

Diagram 4.2: Proposed Composition of Standing Committees

Structuring an interface between the Municipality and the communities can build upon but should extend beyond the traditional role of the Muhtars. We propose starting by establishing a community outreach team to work with communities and their Muhtars and foster community-based development initiatives sponsored in part by the Municipality by itself or with other partners including national NGOs. Lower Kaleiçi is an ideal site for a pilot activity. It will serve a dual purpose: training the team and supporting the revitalization project.

The World Bank initiated a social mitigation project in Turkey in 2003 that should be of great interest to Kars. The project provides grants for different categories of initiatives that have an impact on social development:

- Microcredit. $100,000 to microfinance institutions (MFIs) to finance income generation. Loans of $3,000 to 5,000. The MFIs repay the credit over four years with a grace period of one year.
• Employability training. $50,000 per grant to NGOs to provide training for illiterate adults and youth who drop out of school.

• Temporary community employment. $75,000 per grant to public authorities and NGOs in order to provide jobs earning minimum wages for a period of six months.

• Community social services. $200,000 to NGOs or local authorities in collaboration with NGOs to provide social services in underserviced lower-income communities.

A fifth category was instituted grouping activities under all of the above categories. Only municipalities can apply for this Community Development Grant of $500,000. It is very flexible and can include citywide programs as well as pilot projects in a designated lower-income community. It also covers both infrastructure upgrading and the provision of social facilities.

We met with the World Bank officers in charge of the social mitigation project. We presented the work accomplished so far in Kars. He appreciated the fact that the proposed activities, including the program for the enhancement of opportunities for women, were based on the results of a social survey. He recommended that Kars apply for a Community Development Grant. There were very few municipalities able to put forth an eligible application and our work provided a sound basis for a convincing proposal by Kars.

An alternative favored by Anadolu Kültür was to divide the activities and present separate grant applications with NGOs as partners. Anadolu Kültür would take on the program for the enhancement of opportunities for women.

From our meetings with the Bank, we understand that over 3,000 applications for small grants have been submitted by NGOs all over Turkey. The web-based applications are processed by the Social Solidarity Foundation in Ankara and there is a large backlog of outstanding requests. As of June 2005 there were only three community development proposals submitted and Kars stood an excellent chance of getting its proposal funded. Because it was one of the selected pilot municipalities for the World Bank Technical Support Program for the implementation of the new Municipal Law, Kars would receive special consideration for this grant.

As a transition activity upon completion of the institutional assessment, we helped the municipal senior staff prepare a draft application. Since the World Bank excluded from consideration sites where any resettlement was planned or contemplated, we suggested they consider a settlement on the urban fringe and visited Aydinlikevler with them to discuss the different components of the Community Development Grant as they apply to a specific site. The women’s opportunity enhancement program was included as a citywide initiative but the Municipality had to finalize the selection of a pilot area for infrastructure upgrading and community development before filing the application.

4.1.6 Monitoring Change and Development: Acquiring an MIS/GIS Capacity

Monitoring change in the urbanized area requires an MIS/GIS capability that Kars at present lacks. Affordable technology for small systems is now available and municipalities like Kars
have been acquiring it. In developing countries where equipment is imported and expensive foreign support has often been sought to help defray the cost of the equipment. However, equipment is not the only bottleneck. The training and retention of technicians capable to operate the machines, transfer information and records to an electronic database and handle the link between the databases and the geographic mapping and display system is an even greater challenge in a remote, middle-sized city.

Turan Atalay, the Director of Public Works, had looked into this issue because of its importance to the management of infrastructure. The cost of the equipment needed is about $6,000. To operate the unit, a minimum of two technicians are needed (a cartographer and a computer technician). In addition a professional planner is needed to manage the information gathering and processing for the databases and the mapping. Without adequate direction, the MIS/GIS system becomes a mapping device rather than an instrument of municipal management.

Kars finances do not allow it to consider the purchase of expensive equipment at present. Outside funding will have to be secured for this. Conversely, the challenge for the municipality will be to attract, train, and keep the three technical staff members. The original system setup and the organizational databases can be outsourced to specialized firms in Istanbul or Ankara but there has to be a local capacity to manage the system and keep the information up to date. We asked TESEV to consider providing Kars with the equipment and training needed to establish a MIS/GIS capability that is badly needed to monitor the dynamics of development.

4.2 Civil Society in Kars

A prominent feature of the civil society in Kars is the absence of local community-based organizations. The organizations that are active in the city are all branches of national NGOs. The three leading organizations are:

1. Anadolu Kültür which participates in the restoration of the Ottoman cultural heritage and sponsors cultural activities in the city, enriching its social and intellectual life. It is a TCF and GHF partner in the revitalization project and also a Chrest Foundation partner in this and other cultural projects and activities.

2. The Foundation for the Promotion and Protection of the Environment and Cultural Heritage (ÇEKÜL) fosters nationwide awareness and builds a social network for the preservation and protection of Turkey’s environmental resources and cultural heritage. In Kars, ÇEKÜL plans to restore a historic building in the Russian district.

3. The “Association for the Promotion of Modern Life” which focuses on:

   - Education of children and youth by providing scholarships to children of poor families. Priority is given to promoting girls’ access to education so more scholarships are granted to girls than boys, particularly since lower-income families are more inclined to endure hardships finance hardships to finance their sons’ educations. Of the scholarships for elementary and secondary education since the association’s Kars branch was established,
600 went to girls and 150 to boys. The scholarships are funded by various private sponsors and include 180 by Turkcell.

- Promoting employment generation and income-producing activities. The association stresses the changes in the city’s socio-economic structure brought about by migratory flows.

Of special concern is the issue of opportunities for women since the majority of those engaged in these traditional handicrafts are women (estimated to number about 1000 persons) working from home. They produce kilims, socks, embroidery (crochet) and dolls in traditional clothes. The Association tries to market the products but there does not seem to be a structured effort to improve their quality with a view to enhancing their marketability.

The women members of the association attending the meeting were educated and included a teacher from Izmir that had come to Kars two years ago and was teaching tourism management. They all emphasized that the highest priority should be placed on income-generating activities. A community center could be housed in a publicly owned building and include workshops for handicrafts and space for training. Training programs should strive to modernize production methods and improve productivity. They pointed out that the older people in Kars do not understand the “psychology” of tourism and do not know how to interact with people. This point was echoed by the youth during the meetings held with the Youth Commission.

The women members also stressed the need to provide dormitory space for female students in the schools which would greatly enhance the impact of the priority given to girls in the award of scholarships for schooling beyond the primary level. They also raised the issue of the homeless and the children working on menial occupations on the streets. Because they number no more than 50 the issue can be addressed and resolved. Collaboration among NGOs in Kars would coordinate action and have mutually reinforcing impacts.

The Association is promoting greenhouse agriculture and seeks to convince the Governor and the Mayor to establish a market space where handicrafts and agricultural produce could be sold. They would like to have land along the river designated for agricultural use.
The promotion of urban agriculture is an excellent idea that should be further studied. The land belongs to the state (Amlak Department) and need not be transferred to the Association. Community-based groups can be organized into micro-cooperatives or associations that can be granted a tapu or right of utilization. Community gardens do contribute to improve the nutrition of vulnerable groups and the produce can also be sold in the mahalla to generate income for families.

The lack of willingness on the part of NGOs to partner with the municipality is disconcerting. The response generally given is that NGOs have different activities and funding sources than public authorities. Furthermore, headquarters apparently do not want their branch offices to work jointly with local authorities because of the latter’s political affiliations. They want the municipality to give them land and buildings but not to get involved in the project for which the assets are needed and the use to which they are being put.

The need to develop local CBOs is a major challenge. NGOs worry about the lack of local capacity on which they can rely to implement projects. However, capacity can be developed through a proactive “learning by doing” approach. Grassroots groups can coalesce into associations to confront challenges and press demands. To establish a CBO where none exists needs community organization and development skills that NGOs, not municipalities, are equipped for. Community groups and informal associations need to be nurtured and strengthened to develop into effective CBOs. This is again a task that NGOs must take on to enable local constituencies to play an active role in shaping the future of their communities.

NGOs are concerned about the scarcity of technical and managerial expertise among municipal staff and the lack of predictability regarding local budgets and politics. These are justifiable concerns but should not detract from the reality that increasingly no entity can go it alone and hope to have an impact in the longer term. Municipalities have statutory powers that can give strong backing to local initiatives while NGOs have the necessary flexibility to innovate and adapt to changes in context. This complementarity of roles underpins public/private partnerships and makes them particularly effective. Furthermore programs can be structured to minimize risk and avoid politicization of issues. Partnership and community-based initiatives are today the hallmark of sustainable local development.

4.2.1 Kars City Council and its Commissions

The lack of genuine CBOs gives special importance to the civil society commissions created under the UN Local Agenda 21 initiative.

The LA 21 assembly, called the Kars City Council (Kent Konseyi) is housed in a historic building in the Russian district purchased and restored by the Municipality. The assembly’s name can be confusing. In Turkey, the term “Municipal Council” (Belediye Meclisi) is used to refer to the elected local government council with statutory authority. The Kars City Council, in contrast, is the multi-stakeholder advisory body grouping civil society, private sector, and local government representatives from various sectors. The 307 delegates are organized in commissions and
directed by a General Secretary. The Mayor of Kars is the Council’s president\(^8\). An executive committee meets monthly to discuss issues on its agenda\(^9\).

The Council’s primary tasks are to coordinate actions plans and policies that promote Local Agenda 21 principles of sustainable development, human rights, pluralism, participation, and accountability of local governance. In addition, the Council promotes the conservation of Kars’ historical and cultural heritage, and fosters opportunities for citizen participation in Kars’ development. The group accomplishes these objectives by:

- Actively communicating with civil society
- Offering management courses, currently an EU sponsored series on the management of touristic services
- Promoting the conservation of cultural and historic structures by placing signposts near the buildings
- Sponsoring and organizing youth social activities
- Restoring playgrounds for children
- Participating in international activities
- Establishing socially-oriented programs

A major contribution of the City Council is the introduction of the concept of participation (albeit in an advisory role) cutting across ethnic and religious lines. However, lower-income populations are underrepresented in these structures mainly due to the lack of CBOs and organized citizen groups in the different \textit{mahalle}. The Kars City Council is considered one of the best in Turkey by the LA 21 national Program Coordinator.

Initially, the City Council was composed of 25 Commissions, some of which gradually merged to arrive at a manageable organization more in line with the city’s size. As of June 2005 there were 15 standing commissions. As part of this reorganization, the commissions on Trade and Industry and the commission on Relations with Caucasus Countries were merged, thereby underscoring the link between economic development and transborder trade. The current 15 commissions are composed of 20 to 25 elected persons each. Commission members meet regularly, on a weekly or a monthly basis, and report to the City Council. The Commissions are the following:

- Commission for Advising on the Mayor’s Activities
- Commission for Monitoring Human Rights
- Commission for Trade, Industry, and Relations with Caucasus States
- Education Commission
- Health Commission
- Development Commission
- Agricultural and Livestock Commission
- Environmental Commission
- Culture, Art and Tourism Commission
- Transportation and Traffic Commission
- Work Safety Commission
- Youth and Sports Commission

\(^8\) \textit{Interview}, General Secretary, Kars, Feb. 2005.

Illustration 4.6: Meeting with the Youth Commission

The two most active commissions are: 1) Youth; and 2) Commerce, Industry and Relations with the Caucasus Countries. The remaining commissions’ productivity has been largely disappointing, and the overall number will soon be reduced to 10 to increase their effectiveness.

Several meetings were held with the Commission on Commerce, Industry and Relations with the Caucasus Countries and their views were incorporated in the discussion of the existing situation and the prospects for economic development in Kars presented in section 4.2.

4.2.2 Kars Youth Commission

This commission deserves special importance given the sustained migration of youth from the area. Comprised primarily of high school and university students between ages 15-25, the group is connected to the National Youth Parliament set up in 2004 to fulfill Local Agenda 21 objectives. The coordinator of the Kars Youth Commission also serves as the representative to the National Youth Parliament, facilitating a link between the concerns of youth from Kars and the concerns of youth at the national level. Irrespective of where they come from, the views of this age group are critical to the future of Kars and other remote areas of North East Turkey. The young people are painfully aware that this region has few opportunities to offer. Irrespective of their field of study, they are interested in joining EU funded training in accounting, tourist services, and other courses that open up possibilities of gainful employment. The women members of the youth council lamented the inequality of opportunity among girls and boys since girls were not allowed to attend meetings outside the city.

The young people like the beauty of the natural environment and are well aware of the touristic potential of both the cultural and natural heritage in the area. They think people in Kars do not really understand the importance of tourism for the local economy. They point out that it is only in the past four years that awareness of the value of the city’s heritage has started to be mentioned. They credit the renovation of the city council building as a turning point that had

great impact in terms of raising awareness. When funds are made available for restoration people tend to view the old buildings as having some intrinsic value. Dilapidated buildings give such a bad impression of the city that they felt that the buildings should be either restored or demolished. Owners unwilling to cooperate in the rehabilitation should be expropriated.

We organized a photographic project with the youth council to elicit their views through an active participation approach. A digital camera was given to the council and members were asked to photograph Kars’ cultural heritage and explain the reasons underlying their choice of buildings. They were also asked to advise on the best use/reuse of the buildings they selected. The students presented the project to Dr. John Hurd who found their ideas most interesting and spent a long time discussing with them their choices and recommendations.

They referred specifically to the Ottoman houses along the river since they walked by them everyday to and from the university campus. They felt the first two could be restored and the third was too dilapidated to be salvageable. In the final presentation John Hurd told them about the restoration project and they were very pleased.

Around the University, they suggested reusing vacant buildings for restaurants, internet cafes and other services needed by students. In the Evliya Mosque area uses should cater to domestic tourism. They felt the hammams are an important use in Turkey and should be left functional for both their historical value and their community use. They pointed out that the public hammam had leaked on nearby houses and needed infrastructure repair.

Their attention to detail and their research into the recent history of each building was remarkable given the time limitation on the project. Their sensitivity to particular situations was interesting. They thought old buildings should not be used as primary schools but could be used as secondary schools since they thought the psychological effect on children of a new modern and colorful setting would enhance their introduction to education.

They wanted to see the old shopping areas, abandoned by shop owners who moved their operations to new buildings, restored and put back to commercial use. Regarding the two major monuments the Qalaa and the former Church of the Apostles were particularly interesting. They felt different parts of the Qalaa could be used for touristic services including the Russian prison with its 20 rooms and tunnels. One student suggested the reuse of the Oslo Fort in Norway as a model. The reuse of the Church of the Apostles generated a lively and at times heated debate. How to balance the relative importance attached to its original use, absence of a Christian community in Kars, current use and symbolic value was quite difficult. In the end, the majority view was that it should be restored and used as a museum because it is a dignified civic use.

Illustration 4.7: A hammam in Üçler.

Illustration 4.7: A hammam in Üçler.

Illustration 4.7: A hammam in Üçler.
This small participatory project demonstrated the potential of engaging youth in the planning and improvement of the cities where they live, even if it is for the few years they are attending college or university. They were surprised to learn of the importance we attach to engaging youth and discussing their views and opinions with them. They said no one had solicited their views or asked them to take an active part in a project before. Yet, their views are important in charting a development strategy towards a better future. The same could be said of youth in the rural settlements. The range and modalities of participatory activities is such that the approaches can be shaped to fit the particularities of each situation.
5 SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

Initiating an interface with the communities affected by the revitalization project has several objectives.

- To demonstrate to the Mayor the need for the municipality to develop a capacity for social outreach aimed at engaging citizens in shaping the future of their communities and their city;

- To initiate activities promoting participatory processes in municipal management;

- To promote an understanding of social inclusion and community empowerment as a concept different from the political mobilization associated with local elections;

- To support the revitalization project by generating basic social information that was sorely missing due to the lack of a baseline survey as part of the project preparatory documentation.

Meetings were held with the Muhtars and residents in the three mahalle affected by the revitalization activities. These meetings elicited information on the needs, aspirations and expectations of the communities living around the Ottoman heritage. A follow up survey of 50 families distributed across the three mahalle was undertaken. The bulk of the interviews were conducted in Kaleici which encompasses the larger part of the Ottoman historic center.
The results of the meetings and the survey yielded information that led to the development of proposals for programs for infrastructure improvements, house connections, employment promotion and the enhancement of opportunities for women. These initiatives qualify for funding under the World Bank social mitigation project. The municipality was encouraged to apply for the $500,000 community development grant.

Demonstrating the benefits of a targeted outreach effort provided a most convincing argument regarding the necessity for the municipality to develop and institutionalize a social capacity by establishing a community initiative support unit within its organizational structure.

5.1 Meetings with the Muhtars

The Muhtars are elected representatives of the people living in the mahalle. To select the Muhtar and five delegates, one of whom acts as a deputy, elections are held every five years. There are 104 mahalle in Kars Province of which 21 are within the Kars municipal boundaries. In addition to their administrative role, the Muhtars have traditionally acted as liaison officers between people and the central government, represented by the Governor. They described their role as “listening to the people and to their requests” and “helping them, in particular the poor”. For example, they distribute food and coal, subsidized by the Central Government, to poor families and elderly people.

Two meetings were held first with the Muhtars of the three mahalle directly affected by activities included in the Master Conservation Plan. Participants in this interviews asserted that it was the first time that a meeting was held in the mahalla to solicit their views and discuss at length with them their immediate needs and hopes for the future.

The Kaleiçi Muhtar took great pride in the historical and cultural importance of his mahalla and felt that the area around the Evliya Mosque and the mausoleum should be cleared and landscaped to welcome pilgrims and visitors, a trend he foresaw expanding. The mahalla had a total of 800 resident households. He estimated the number of houses that needed to be removed for technical reasons or to accommodate new development to be around 60. He was aware of the revitalization project but had not idea as to the content of the plan beyond the fact that some monuments were to be restored and the access road to the citadel was to be upgraded and illegal settlers relocated.

The Muhtar of Üçler estimated the number of families in the mahalla to be 120. He described the families living in the upper unserviced area as poor, marginalized and in need of social assistance.
He felt that mitigation of hazardous conditions and improvement of inadequate infrastructure were the top priorities for his mahalla.

The Muhtar of Sukapi estimated that 300 families lived in the mahalla. He stressed that they were poor, living on pensions and social assistance from the wilaya. They had no school or mosque and the infrastructure was inadequate. He said that the vast majority (90 to 95 percent) wanted to move to a new location while the Üçler Muhtar stated that the preference in his mahalla was for new houses in the same location. The Sukapi Muhtar argued that relocation would give overcrowded and extended families sharing accommodations as a result of inheritance or large size an opportunity for each nuclear family to get an apartment. Interestingly in the community interviews the majority of the participants in the meetings disagreed with this view since many felt this situation applied only to some households including the Muhtar’s.

5.2 Community Meetings

A meeting with the Muhtars was first held in the municipality building to explain the purpose of our visit and the importance we attached to holding meetings with the communities. We asked to sit with the men and women separately. Meetings were held in the three mahalle affected by the heritage revitalization project and associated touristic development. Mona Serageldin and Mustafa Gönen conducted this activity. Funda Erdem attended the women’s meeting since the municipality was interested in improving the condition of women. The meetings were organized by the Muhtars who attended with the men and accompanied us for some follow-up visits to families who invited us to their houses. We focused the community meetings on Sukapi and Üçler, ranked among the five poorest and most underserviced areas in the city, since the bulk of the household interviews were to be conducted in Kaleiçi. The meetings were well attended and yielded interesting insights into the structure, the concerns, and the needs of lower-income families in Kars. They demonstrated the social cohesiveness of the mahalle and clearly showed the rural links maintained by migrants with their home villages.

5.2.1 Men’s Concerns and Requests

The men’s concerns reflected the extent of their interaction with the world outside the confines of the mahalla. Their prime concern is with employment since the majority of those attending in both Sukapi and Üçler mahalle were unemployed and claimed that unemployment was prevalent since both the sugar factory and the milk factory had closed down. They pointed out the pervasive inequalities in terms of access to infrastructure and services. They wanted improved roads and a new school to give their children the education needed to get ahead in the
Preserving Cultural Heritage in the Municipality of Kars, Turkey

Center for Urban Development Studies, Harvard University
Cambridge, MA

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...world. Uçler residents were the most underserviced. The mahalla needs a mosque, a playground, a clinic and upgraded infrastructure. Out of 93 houses with a tap in the house 25 did not have enough pressure to have water except a few hours a day. There is no sewerage and solid waste management is very defective.

Although the mahalla housed predominantly poor families and housing conditions were inadequate, the Uçler and Sukapi families wanted to stay in their locations. They understood the problems of living on environmentally hazardous plots in the upper reaches of the mahalla. They knew infrastructure networks could not be extended on these steep gradients. They complained about icy pathways, exposure to mudslides and falling rocks that damaged roofs. As a matter of fact, many houses had polyethylene sheets stretched over their damaged roofs and held down by stones. In the summertime, houses built against the face of the cliff were infested with scorpions. People living in the upper areas had to be resettled for their own safety. They had heard about a resettlement program and the mayor’s promise to give them new housing. They wanted new houses but preferably within the mahalla. Since there is no space to build in the mahalla and the existing houses are overcrowded, the feasibility of on-site relocation of the inhabitants in the lower part can be assessed but in any case would entail the development of a different housing prototype. There are of course exceptions as some people simply wanted new houses that they understood they would be given free of charge.

Lacking jobs, men wanted to use the skills they already have to earn income right away. Some had come from the rural areas and wanted land suitable for agriculture outside the mahalla for them to farm. They also wanted workshops to produce carpets, textiles and apparel since both men and women could work in these occupations and could improve their skills through training. The cost of heating in the winter adds to the urgency of finding ways to generate income.

5.2.2 Concerns and Aspirations of Women

The women’s meeting in Sukapi and Uçler were well attended. The participants ranged from grandmothers in their 60s to young women in their 20s. The majority were young and middle-aged housewives in their 30s. Many of them came to the city straight from their village as a result of marriage. Of those who were born in Kars only a minority were actually born in the mahalla and married within the resident community.
The women’s prime concerns relate to financial security. There are few jobs to be found and husbands are mostly unemployed. In the absence of social insurance the families have no stable source of income. Among older women and widows the hope for relief lies with access to welfare assistance from the municipality. A major issue is the outmigration of sons and daughters who leave Kars in search of economic opportunity. Although they send remittances whenever they can, they are no longer here to assist with daily chores and problems that arise.

Among the younger housewives, the highest priority is placed on job opportunities for currently unemployed husbands. Most women stated that their great desire is to have an independent source of income that they could apply towards meeting their families’ urgent needs as they see it. Those above 35 years of age said they had skills and wanted opportunities to apply their skills for income generating activities. Those of rural origin could make kilims but lacked equipment and space in their houses to produce items for sale.

Almost all women make handicrafts, embroidery, and knitting for home decoration, linen, and clothes. They also prepare baked goods and pastries at home and mostly for family and close relatives on special occasions. They raise poultry, particularly geese, and plant vegetables even if only a small space is available. When space allows for a small shed on the plot, they also keep sheep. Only in rare instances have younger women held a job before getting married. Yet many young women wanted to learn new skills.

In general women rarely go out of the mahalla, once every two weeks or so to visit relatives or sick family and friends in the hospital. The children go to school in the mahalla itself or in the case of Uçler in the adjacent mahalla.

The women identified four priority needs, namely:

- Workshop space with the furniture and equipment necessary to produce all of the items they already know how to make;
- Training to enable them to improve their skills and acquire new skills;
- Day care to give young mothers time to engage in income-generating activities or attend training sessions;
- A youth club for older children and after school activities.

Younger women were undecided about whether improving skills like sewing that could help them meet some of their families’ immediate needs was more important than learning new skills that could help them find remunerated employment if it were possible for them to leave home. It is a logical option given the urgency of addressing unmet needs and the remoteness of the probability
of employment not too far from home. However they wanted their children to learn computer skills and hoped that schools would teach these skills since private training institutions were very expensive and unaffordable to limited-income families.

Women living in the unserviced areas of the mahalle stated that their priority is house connections to water and sewerage. They complained about having to walk up and down steep slopes, icy in the wintertime, carrying water for household use. They also complained about the lack of sewerage and public toilets and baths for women. This issue imposes a severe hardship on them as problems generated by inadequate sanitation are more difficult to handle for women and girls who have to preserve “their dignity” at all times. Those who have a space for a bucket latrine on their plot have to empty the contents in the river everyday. When accommodations are too crowded, they have to find a secluded spot to relieve themselves. The old municipal hammam no longer in use as a public bath provided an enclosed space giving some privacy to poor women in Upper Sukapi and Uçler.

5.2.3 Meetings in Kaleiçi

In Kaleiçi, the more socially and economically diverse prevails. In the upper reaches just below the citadel walls there are shacks where the relatively more recent arrivals from the countryside have settled 10 to 15 years ago. These unserviced areas cannot be serviced due to the steep gradient. The established community in the lower part of the mahalla is fully serviced by water supply and sewerage.

The meeting with the Muhtar and his assistant were ahead of the household survey which would focus on this mahalla. This mahalla is at the core of the historic center of Kars and encompasses its Ottoman heritage. In support of the project to revitalize the Ottoman heritage of Kars, it was decided that the bulk of the 50 household surveys covered in the following section (6.3) would be concentrated in this mahalla. The families visited had members born in the mahalla, siblings, relatives and friends living in the mahalla.

Two meetings were held with the Muhtar and his assistant. The Muhtar is a businessman who owns a greengrocer shop on the main street leading to the “Evliya” mosque. The assistant is a former teacher and speaks English. She is one of the very few women representatives among the 83 mahalle in Kars.

Community concerns and needs in Kaleiçi reflect the commercial character of its economy, the centrality of its location, its touristic potential and its special status as the site of the citadel, the
Evliya mosque and the mausoleum of the revered Mevlana teacher that attracts pilgrims as well as local visitors.

Regarding infrastructure, the main needs mentioned were street lighting, paving and drainage improvements, and solid waste management. They criticized the encroachments on the public right of way that gradually have reduced the side streets to narrow alleyways, a deplorable code violation that usually happens before elections when fear of action by the municipal inspectional services is reduced.

Social facilities needed included a daycare center (crèche), playgrounds (the existing one is small and inadequate), a park and a landscaped public place in front of the Evliya mosque and the mausoleum. A small clinic was also needed as women avoided going to the hospital except for serious medical conditions.

Workshops in the mahalla for men and women’s productive activities were needed because courses offered in the city were too expensive and too far for women to attend. In addition to the products previously mentioned, men in Kaleiçi could produce wood carvings and toys. The necessity to provide computers in the schools was stressed. Because of its commercial activity, men in the mahalla are able to find employment in the services sector. They can repair appliances, automobiles, do electrical work, and offer personal services.

The top three priority needs were identified as the health clinic, a center to train unskilled young people in languages and computer skills and train people for jobs in touristic services and a police station in lower Kaleiçi or very close on the main street. Interestingly this is the only mahalla where the need for improved security was mentioned despite good social relations among neighbors for the most part. As a popular commercial area, the mahalla attracts youth (14 to 18 year-olds) who hang out and disturb the families. They use the open spaces around the historic monuments that are dark and deserted in the evening to smoke. They did not cause violence as would organized youth gangs in other cities worldwide. Rather when individuals ran out of money they tended to pickpocket. The situation existed before and had expanded to the point where it disturbed the families particularly in the vicinity of the former Church of the Apostles around which the young people congregated. Because of this nuisance, a Sufi sect was authorized to use the church as a mosque. Their vigilance led to a marked improvement. However the place is not widely used by mahalla residents given its proximity to the popular Evliya Mosque and it seems that the annoying situation is resurfacing though far from reaching its previous scale.

The youth groups that caused the problems are in no way associated with the Science High School for Boys located in the mahalla. The student body is diverse coming from all parts of
Turkey. The entrance examination is difficult and the boys work very hard to get the grades needed to enter university. The residents like these “well-behaved” young men and think that the presence of this national school adds to the status of the mahalla.

All of the findings of the community meetings were discussed with the mayor. He pledged to look into the needs and concerns and develop recommendations for consideration in follow-up meetings. He was particularly concerned about the issue of security in Kaleiçi and said he was going to act immediately to stop this situation before it developed any further. He stressed that Kaleiçi must be an attractive place for residents and tourists, pilgrims and other visitors to walk in during the day, evening or night. The city was committed to this objective.

5.3 Social Survey

5.3.1 Overview

This survey comprises a total number of 50 interviews, 7 in Üçler Mahalla, 8 in Sukapi Mahalla and 35 in Kaleiçi Mahalla distributed across the Ottoman historic area and immediate surroundings as shown in the following map. In Kaleiçi Mahalla, 20 interviews were conducted with households living in houses improved during the last ten years. A total of 18 interviews, 6 per mahalla were undertaken with households living in unimproved houses. Although economic activities are scarce outside of lower Kaleiçi, eight shops owners, one from Üçler, two from Sukapi and five from Kaleiçi were also interviewed.

5.3.2 Socio-economic Aspects

The survey shows that in general, families living in Kaleiçi are better off than households in Sukapi and Üçler as the latter have a higher concentration of poorer families, with average household expenditures mostly below 500 YTL and in no case exceeding 1000 YTL (see Table 5.1). In Kaleiçi, household income is not only higher but also much more diversified. Household expenditures are mostly for food and heating and in families with children for schooling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>District</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KALEİÇI</td>
<td>SUKAPI</td>
<td>ÜÇLER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 YTL or less</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>85.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(500-800]</td>
<td>37.14%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(800-1000]</td>
<td>8.57%</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 1000</td>
<td>2.86%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8.57%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL # OF HOUSES</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CUDS survey (2005)
There is typically one family living in each house or two when grandparents are part of the household. In Kaleiçi there is an average of 4.1 persons per house, in Sukapi 4.8 and in Üçler 4.6. The number of wage earners per family is at most 1 since retired people even when they contribute to household income are not considered wage earners. This figure reflects the high rate of unemployment in Kars. Wage earners are usually salaried people working in the services sector. Residents of the three mahalle walk to work and children typically walk to school.

The survey shows that the residents of each mahalla form a well established community. Social relations in the mahalle are characterized by interdependence. Families maintain close relations with neighbors and friends and people help each other and offer mutual assistance in difficult times. The poorest families and widows are helped by the mahalla residents socially and sometimes economically.

The three mahalle have a majority of long term residents. Most of the residents are migrants that came from the surrounding villages or counties like Akkaya, Kağızman and Digor. The reason for migration is mainly high unemployment in those areas or in the case women marriage. 88.2% of all the residents interviewed have lived in their mahalle for no less than 10 years, and 61.43% of them for 20 years or more. In Üçler, 85.7% of the residents have lived in their houses for 20 years or more and the rest have been there for at least 10 years. The longer term residents, people that built their gecekondu more than 20 years ago tend to be concentrated in the lower areas and the areas along the river banks (see Table 5.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of residency</th>
<th>Kaleiçi</th>
<th>Sukapi</th>
<th>Üçler</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of h. hlds</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Yr or less</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20 Yr</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Yr or more</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expressed Needs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Infrastructure</th>
<th>Kaleiçi</th>
<th>Sukapi</th>
<th>Üçler</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of h. hlds</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>68.57%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>85.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Infrastructure</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Playgrounds</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes their Mahalla</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Length of Residence and Needs by District

Source: CUDS survey (2005)
5.3.3 Living Environment and Housing

There is widespread dissatisfaction regarding urban environment in the three mahalle. Infrastructure improvements, particularly paved and wider access roads and connection and water and sewerage networks, are the most pressing needs (see Table 5.2).

Overall, only 12.38% of the families interviewed asserted that they like their mahalla, but this proportion increases to 37.1% in Kaleiçi. The majority of residents, 84.8%, think that physical infrastructure (including roads, water and sewerage) needs to be improved in their neighborhood. In Kaleiçi mahalla, due its better environmental condition, the need for social facilities, services and programs, vocational training, playgrounds, police stations, etc. was raised by 48.6% of all the residents interviewed and the need for parks and recreational areas was mentioned by 45.7% of the residents.

In Sukapı and Üçler mahalle, where most of the households are unserviced or not connected to the existing infrastructure networks, improvement of infrastructure services is the main concern for the vast majority of residents (100% and 84.8% respectively). In general, people assert that they would like their mahalle to look like the good districts of the city, either the city center or the new residential areas. The lack of basic services and facilities is the reason why most of the residents would like to be moved to better served districts.

In the three mahalle, ownership is linked to regularization undertaken in the past and is based on the tapu tahsis system which allows municipalities to regularize occupancy by issuing titles that are kept with the municipality (see Table 5.3). Among non owners, 26.5% are renters and 9.5% live in their accommodations rent free.

In Kaleiçi 64.05% of the households own their houses, which accounts for the better condition of homes in general. However living space is limited and 51.4% of houses haves a combined toilet/bath space within the structure. Overall this percentage drops to 30.8% while 9.5% have toilets outside the premises. Kitchens are usually outside the house and 22.6% of all houses have no space allocated specifically for cooking.

In Kaleiçi 81.2% of all the residents interviewed asserted that they like their house including 52.1% of those living in improved houses and 63.6% of those living in houses that have not been significantly improved. The percentage of people who like or are satisfied with their homes drops to 25% in Sukapı and to 14.3% in Üçler.
### Table 5.3: Services and Tenure Patterns by Mahalla

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>No. of h. hlds</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>No. of h. hlds</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>No. of h. hlds</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaleiçi</td>
<td>(35)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WC+Bath</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>51.43%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>30.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Kitchen</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>22.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only WC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.43%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WC Outside</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>9.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45.71%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>71.43%</td>
<td>64.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Rent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>9.52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CUDS survey (2005)

### 5.3.4 Improved Housing

A total of 26 interviews, 24 in Kaleiçi *mahalla*, 1 in Sukapi *mahalla* and 1 in Üçler were undertaken with households living in houses improved during the last ten years. Families typically self-finance the improvements and sometimes they contribute the labor as well. Some of them bought or rented a previously improved house. Due to the harsh winter weather and deficient insulation repairing roofs and insulating windows account for 41.7% and 37.5% of all the housing improvements respectively in Kaleiçi *mahalla*. Heating is a key concern too. Expanding the living space is the next highest ranked need with 29.2% of improvements devoted to adding rooms. In most cases, these additions are built without a municipal permit and include expansions that encroach on the public right of way on both sides of the roads.
Table 5.4: Housing Improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Repair</th>
<th>KALEICI Improved Houses</th>
<th>KALEICI Unimproved Houses</th>
<th>SUKAPI Improved Houses</th>
<th>SUKAPI Unimproved Houses</th>
<th>UCLER Improved Houses</th>
<th>UCLER Unimproved Houses</th>
<th>Total Improved</th>
<th>Total Unimproved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facade</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.78%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof</td>
<td>41.67%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>13.89%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add rooms</td>
<td>29.17%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>76.39%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door/entrance</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>4.17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WC</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.78%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # Of Houses</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CUDS survey (2005)

Table 5.5: Household Monthly Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>KALEICI Improved Houses</th>
<th>KALEICI Unimproved Houses</th>
<th>SUKAPI Improved Houses</th>
<th>SUKAPI Unimproved Houses</th>
<th>UCLER Improved Houses</th>
<th>UCLER Unimproved Houses</th>
<th>Total Improved</th>
<th>Total Unimproved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500 YTL or less</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
<td>54.55%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>79.17%</td>
<td>70.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(500-800]</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
<td>36.36%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>21.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(800-1000]</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>4.17%</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 1000</td>
<td>4.17%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.78%</td>
<td>3.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # Of Households</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CUDS survey (2005)

It is difficult to determine the cost of the improvements undertaken, given the high rate of inflation prevailing in Turkey in the past two decades. In Kaleiçi, the households that improved their houses comprise a more diverse group with average monthly expenditures ranging from 500 YTL to over 1000 YTL, while the households that did not improve their houses are lower income families whose monthly expenditures do not exceed 800 YTL. In Sukapi and Üçler the number of interviews is too small to allow for correlations (see Tables 5.4 & 5.5).

Despite the fact that roof leaks, flooding and lack of heating are the most common problems, people living in unimproved houses do not seem to be willing to improve them. There are several reasons for this. First is the lack of stable sources of income and the precariousness of the economic situation of families. Second is the fact that renters are reluctant to spend on houses they do not own and worry that the landlords might never reimburse them for the expenses. The third reason is linked to the widespread uncertainty regarding the future of the area. Some households are simply waiting to be relocated to new houses by the municipality. Others who want to stay in the mahalla are refraining from investing scarce resources in buildings that might be demolished in the near future. They are waiting for the municipality to announce its plans for the area.
KARS HISTORIC CENTER: SERVICED AREAS

1 KALEIÇI Mahalla
2 SUKAPI Mahalla
3 ÜÇLER Mahalla

--- Water Pipes
--- Su hatti
--- Sewerage Lines
--- Kanalizasyon Hatti

Surveyed Household

↑ N
6 EVALUATION

The assessment of Kars Municipality’s institutional capacity was carried out from December 2005 through June 2006. Winter weather caused some interruptions in the field work. Unusual circumstances arising from the closure of the Center for Urban Development Studies at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and the establishment by the Center’s team of a new nonprofit entity, the Institute for International Urban Development, outside the University during July and August caused a cumulative delay of three months in the delivery of the final report.

The project team worked with the Municipality to assess their current capabilities. The objective was to outline areas where their capacity needed strengthening in order to enable them to plan and manage local sustainable development. The project for the revitalization of the cultural heritage was used as a catalyst for learning through fieldwork while contributing to an understanding of the urban dynamics and the management of development and change in the historic center.

Finally, as a transition activity, we helped the municipality prepare an application for a World Bank funded grant to undertake a comprehensive community development project. This $500,000 grant would significantly improve the lives of residents in selected informal settlements and launch a citywide program for the enhancement of opportunities for women and girls. After our last team visit, the mayor and senior staff were to review the prepared application and finalize the selection of potential project areas that would benefit from the grant. We hope that Kars will not miss this funding opportunity for which our work has produced the supporting documentation and outlined the key components.

Some of the challenges to be faced in institutional development projects that require close interaction with public officials were underestimated. The Mayor gave generously of his time and the senior staff took time to organize site visits on short notice, to set up meetings, prepare materials and respond to follow up requests. However due to competing demands on the Mayor’s schedule, the assessment took longer than originally planned. The Mayor’s eagerness to develop the managerial capacities of the Municipality and take on the growing responsibilities devolved to the local level with the increasing decentralization and democratization of governance in Turkey led him to discuss our proposals at length during evening hours. He worries about the demands placed on local government by the new laws and feels he cannot delegate many decisions to senior officials and assistants.

Given the economic conditions in the region the Mayor rightly feels that he cannot miss opportunities to promote the city and put it on the map hence the importance he attaches to participation in national and global networks and foreign initiatives. These activities are very time consuming and require commitment of senior staff time as well as financial resources.

Improved time management and greater delegation of authority is needed at the senior managerial level for the municipality to improve its functional efficiency. We sincerely hope that the implementation of the recommended changes in the organizational structure of the municipality will contribute to this objective. These changes have been approved by the Mayor and do not need concurrence from higher levels of government.

The weaknesses that erode the efficiency and productivity of the municipal staff will also affect the implementation of the recommendations contained in this institutional assessment or any other actions unrelated to this project. Every step will require new meetings with the Mayor and
the Mayor giving instructions to senior staff. Therefore when the Mayor is out of town or occupied with another pressing matter decisions are postponed and no action can be taken. We are disappointed to learn that the application for the community development grant has not been submitted to date since other activities, including the festival of the Caucasus absorbed the Mayor’s attention and the time and energy of the senior staff who needed to move the process forward.

Overcoming these challenges will require more than changes to the institutional framework. It will require changes in deeply entrenched attitudes and behavior and managerial style within local government. This will take time and some interim measures need to be developed.

The concept of participation is another area where more work is needed. The concept is accepted but interpreted differently by the different stakeholders. The new Municipal Law mandates participation but does not define the instruments and processes by which it is to take place. Each local government will have to determine the methods that best suit its particular situation. Kars’ social and cultural structures will shape its response. The interaction with civil society will be greatly facilitated by the emergence of CBOs. In any follow up work in the region, priority should be placed on fostering this objective. The involvement of national NGOs is needed but these NGOs should be encouraged if not mandated to help form and train CBOs and build their capacities to perform. The ultimate objective is that CBOs acquire the capacity to become full partners in local development and true agents of change and development in the community.

Throughout the project, findings and recommendations were discussed at length with the mayor, the senior municipal officials and stakeholders. Some were readily accepted while others generated much discussion and many iterations before reaching a consensus. All substantive recommendations and suggestions that could have an impact on the revitalization of the historic center were communicated to the GHF team in the field right away. Following each mission, an interim report was written, submitted to the municipality and circulated to the Christensen Fund and its partners to ensure timely dissemination of information among the parties working on Kars projects.

The GHF team led by a highly experienced professional concurred with our approach to the revitalization of the mahalle and was very appreciative of the community outreach and participation effort. The renovation project, which is undergoing some final revisions, will include ideas derived from the results of our activities. These revisions will enhance the project’s ability to attract donor funding as well as investors in tourism.

To demonstrate the potential benefits of outreach and participation, community meetings were held with the Muhtars and residents (men and women) in the three mahalle affected by the revitalization project. To remedy the lack of social data, a follow up survey of 50 families distributed across three mahalle was undertaken. The survey yielded information that led to the development of proposals for programs for the installation of house connections and for the enhancement of opportunities for women. These initiatives qualify for funding under the World Bank grant program. In an effort to minimize unnecessary relocation associated with new development and foster transparency in the allocation of new housing units delivered by the Mass Housing Co. to the municipality, a set of objective criteria was developed for the priority ranking of applicants and beneficiaries. We also initiated an activity with the Youth Committee of Local.
Agenda 21, to enable young people to express their views about Kars and its cultural heritage. The group representatives made an interesting presentation to the GHF project director in June.

The new Municipal Law, No. 5393, passed by parliament after lengthy debates in the first week of June and published in the official gazette on July 3rd, 2005 now mandates municipalities to institute the strategic planning and financial management procedures and the participatory processes that we recommended to Kars. The lack of capacity among Turkish municipalities and their limited experience with participatory processes in local governance prompted the World Bank to give a national NGO, TESEV, a two year grant to prepare a manual to guide municipalities in the implementation of the law. The manual is to be developed based on the experience of six pilot municipalities. At TESEV’s request we presented to them the work accomplished in Kars. On the strength of this work, TESEV decided to include Kars among the first pilot localities together with Sivas and Yalova. TESEV has also requested our Institute to provide them with technical support on strategic planning and participatory processes and is seeking funds to cover this cost.

The Mayor’s approval of the recommendations proposed in this assessment is the first and most important step toward increasing the Municipality’s efficiency and its performance as a local government. In general introducing changes in the institutional framework or operational processes of a bureaucratic organization has to overcome inertia and resistance among employees unwilling to change the “way things have always been done.” However, the Municipal Law mandates reform in the operation of local government. Its implementation will prompt reluctant bureaucrats to accept change as inevitable and alter their attitudes from obstruction to cooperation. Building the Municipality’s capacity to implement the recommendations of the assessment is facilitated by the involvement of senior staff in their development. Nevertheless it will take about two years before the strategic planning and partnership units, the coordinating committees and the local initiative team we recommended establishing are smoothly operating on their own. Under the best of circumstances, capacity to operationalize the reforms called for by the Municipal Law will take no less than three years to develop. This is the challenging task that TESEV will be taking on. However, internalizing the spirit of these reforms will take even longer.

We consider the outcomes of the assessment to represent the best evaluation of our achievements. TCF funding of our activities will have leveraged a substantial additional contribution to the institutional capacity building of the municipality and laid a sound basis for its future development.
7 ANNEXES

Annex 1: Interviews

Rana Zincir

Ms Zincir was the first person interviewed during this mission. She provided an introduction to actual and potential major stakeholders from Istanbul who were interested in the revitalization project.

Kars is traditionally more progressive than Erzurum, its regional neighbor. It is considered a pilot city by many Turkish decision makers and its Mayor ranks among the most dynamic. However, major Municipality decisions are only discussed with a small group of councilors. The future opening of the border with Armenia will certainly boost the city economy.

The institutional territorial organization in Turkey involves regions, provinces and cities. Mayors are elected but local elected assemblies have limited powers. The region level has been recently created with support from Europe, but it is still weak.

Anadolu Kültür is an important Turkish foundation that undertakes many projects. It opened an independent arts center in Diyarbakir and it is running Bilgi private university in Istanbul. Its proposal for an arts center in a Kars hammam is on the shelf for the moment due to other urgent priorities.

TESEV is a Turkish social and economic foundation. It often acts as a think tank for the government, but actually has a particular concern for the 3rd sector (civil society, as different from public or private activities).

Ms Zincir organized meetings for us with the Mayor, Mr. Toksöz and Mr. Ekinci as well as a visit to the Fener-Balat rehabilitation project. She also introduced us to Baris Altan, a young architect who acted as a guide and interpreter for us in Istanbul.

Naif Alibeyoğlu

The Mayor wished to understand what service Harvard University would additionally bring to the project. He was also worried about possible delays and even of lack of continuity if the Harvard role would end too soon. He was therefore very glad to learn that another member from the Harvard team would soon follow and that the team would continue to on the project after May 2005.

This meeting was also attended by Osman Kovala, Hayrettin Kilic, Funda Erdem and Rana Zincir. Mr. Alibeyoğlu was away during the rest of our mission.

Fikret Toksöz
We met Mr. Toksöz at his office at TESEV headquarters. He originally studied economics, presented a master in Public Administration and became a specialist in local governance issues. He was once a Kaim Makam and held other positions at the Ministry of Interior. He used to be a Deputy Mayor for Ankara and the Chairman of the Turkish Union of Historic Cities.

He explained to us that the Culture and Nature Regional Preservation Board includes architects, art historians and university members. The government provides the Board with some secretarial assistance but no specific technical manpower. It has to approve any urban plan or building permit and may meet in Kars if needed.

Mr. Toksöz has been contributing to the preparation of the recent July 2004 Municipality Law. This law provides financial incentives devoted to the protection of historic properties. It includes a 10% addition to real estate taxes that is transferred to Province Governors who will allocate them according to criteria prepared by the Ministry of Culture, even to private projects. Another incentive included in this law implies personal or corporate tax exemptions for individual or corporations when they acquire a historical building.

The "Act for the preservation of unmovable cultural entities" was earlier legislation and included a 10% addition on the housing tax as an "aid to the preservation of unmovable entities", transferred to the Municipality to be used for maintenance, restoration and rehabilitation. This act is mentioned in the "Kars Kaleiçi 2004 diagnostic report ("Revitalization of the Ottoman Heritage", Ali Nejat Sert et al, p 84)

The local chamber of architects, local universities and NGOs may attend the sessions of Municipalities' specialized commissions, but they may not vote.

Kars is a partner in the Agenda 21 program. Different City Konseyi were set up for this purpose. A Strategic Plan has to be prepared at regional level and a regional development agency should be set up later.

Kars has become much less isolated. Besides daily flights to Ankara, it also benefits now from several weekly direct flights to Istanbul.

**Oktay EKINCI**

Mr. Ekinci is the Chairman of the Turkish Chamber of Architects and is originally from Kars although his architectural practice is based in Istanbul. He comprehensively studied the Russian town (285 buildings) of Kars two years ago. For him this is the core of Kars heritage, as ottoman remains are quite limited.

He believes that no practical ideas are coming out so far. The Municipality does not have the budget to wipe out the ottoman district, conserve it, nor rebuild it.

Local residents would not be able to manage boutique hotels, but home pensions (bed and breakfasts) are more within their reach.
As far as he knows, there is no existing architectural and/or typological study of the ottoman residential area.

**Mustafa GÖNEN**

A comprehensive architectural study allocated to Ali Nejat Sert, to be carried on simultaneously with the Master Conservation Plan, was originally scheduled but not commissioned. Sert’s offer was half as expensive as his competitor’s. However, their team suffered from a lack of direction since Mark Goodman passed away about two months ago.

Mr. Gonen used to be a member of Ali Nejat’s planning team. On December 8, they made a presentation in Istanbul in front of the Mayor, the Rector and professors from Bilgi University, (Osman Kovala, Oktay Ekinci and Rana Zincir). They didn't receive many reactions or comments.

Traditional dresses as well as Caucasian and Kars Kilims are produced in Kars.

Many detailed analyses and figures are already provided in the Kars Kaleiçi recent report.

Asuman AYDIN, an architect who is originally from Kars, has prepared a study on Russian architecture in Kars. Her husband teaches at Ankara Ghazi University.

**Ali Nejat SERT**

Mustafa Gönen arranged a meeting with Mr. Sert, Seda Ünlü and Can Kubin at Mr. Sert’s office. Mr. Sert, who is in charge of the Master Conservation Plan explained that all *gecekondu* are going to be wiped out above a horizontal line (or ditch) below the citadel where construction did not exist previously before the 1950’s. Among an estimated population of 1,600, 1,000 would stay and 600 would be moved out.

The Kaleiçi protected district is not an "urban conservation area", but an "archaeological conservation area". The situation is practically identical.

In the previous plan new roads would cross the existing urban fabric, with no consideration for existing blocks and lots. Thanks to Can Kubin’s involvement on the team, the present project is much more sensitive to the existing urban fabric, with the exception of street minimum widths due to traffic regulations. Streets have to be 7 or 10 meters wide according to their importance and construction should be 7 meters distant from the canal axis.

An architectural study of the ottoman neighborhood was originally considered, but has not been undertaken. We were given a set of 3D bird's eye views of the proposed project.

**Yeni AKCAY**

Center for Urban Development Studies, Harvard University
Cambridge, MA
Though he is a businessman, Mr. Akçay is very well-read regarding Kars history. He stresses the importance of Sayh Ebul-Hassan-I Harakeni, who was the spiritual teacher of Mevlana Celal al Din al Rumi. A kulliyet was built in Kars around his tomb.

Mr. Akçay would like to own an ottoman house and would love to see Kars become a "garden of religions".

Cengis SIKLI

Mr. Sikli is the local representative of a cultural foundation called ÇEKÜL (Cevra ve Kültür Degelimi Koruma ve Tanıtma Vakfı). He has no present activities, but is willing to contribute to any future projects.

Israfil PARLAK

Mr. Parklak has been running the Municipality’s cultural activities on a voluntary basis for the past 20 years. In particular, he organizes Transcaucasian festivals featuring examples of Turkish, Kurdish, Azeri, Armenian and Georgian poetry, song, music and dance.

Turan ATALAY

Mr. Atalay is the Municipality’s Director of Construction. His sector employs a dozen individuals but lacks architects and city planners. The computer models are obsolete. The undertaken activities are slow, but salaries are low as well. After learning new skills many of his employees leave for higher paying jobs outside the Municipality.

In the Kaleiçi neighborhood all inhabitants have access to electricity and water. Those located in the North are probably not provided with a public sanitation system. 42 "gecekondus" are located on the highest part above the old ditch. There are 80 lots to the west of the "cultural axis". The Municipality is intending to buy the land and the buildings.

About 205 parcels around the cultural axis would be affected by the renewal project. Mr. Atalay would welcome the implementation of tourist facilities there.

The most recent planning studies are the 1995 development plan and the 2002 conservation plan. As the Municipality is waiting for the new Master Conservation Plan, all building authorizations have suspended. Only small repairs are allowed. A Tourism Master Plan was produced by Turan Barlas in 1990-91.

Mr. Atalay believes that residents will be happy with the proposal to move into new dwellings provided by the mass housing agency. He would also eventually like to remove gecekondus located across the river, southwest of the site.

Unfortunately, the agency has no permanent representative in Kars, although an agreement was reached with the Mayor. When it comes to its own projects, the Municipality is already familiar...
with passing calls for tender and investigating bid offers. Land is provided by the Municipality to the housing agency in exchange for its involvement.

The Municipality is ready to move to a recently completed, larger and more convenient town hall building. The present one, dating back to the Russian period, would then be turned into a hotel thanks to a BOT (Build and Operate Transfer) procedure.

The Economic Directorate employs about 5 people, and is primarily in charge of price and quality control.

**Ali Ihsan ALINAK**

Mr. Alinak is the Chairman of the Kars Chamber of Architects which includes 11 members. Six are in private practice, one is employed in Mr. Alinak’s office, one belongs to the public sector and three do not practice as architects.

They do not specialize in the restoration of old buildings but would be interested in participating in such a project. Decisions such as these cannot only be made in Istanbul. An architectural office has to be set up in Kars for this project.

The idea of an association of Kars architects and outside specialists seems appealing to him. This would provide an opportunity for capacity building.

Mr. Alinak gave some information on traditional construction techniques, such as terraces supported by a wooden structure and covered by a 40 cm of dammed earth, or masonry using Tugla bricks and rendering with Tasin quality (see drawing detail).

There are 300 to 400 stone-built structures in the Russian neighborhood. However, original Armenian masons are gone. Present ones come from Artvim and Gumusaneh.

Wood is used structurally as well as for decorative purposes. Skilled carpenters come from Artvim, Savset or Yusufeldi. Georgia is also reputed for its carpentry knowledge.

If Mr. Alinak had to prepare a call for tender, he would feel more comfortable dealing with a large construction company rather than individual craftsmen.

**Omer BAGCI**

Mr. Bagci is in charge of the Public Relations department of the Municipality.

The Mayor was elected with 60% of the vote. Only two members of the Municipal council out of 18 belong to the opposition. The Mayor holds regular meetings with the public and the press about three times a week, and owns one TV channel. Three radio stations belong to his brother. There are also eight local newspapers too.

People usually complain about electricity rates or ask for refunds. As the Kaleiçi project has already been publicly announced by the Mayor, people now frequently ask when it will be
implemented and when gecekondu will be removed. People are anxious to leave the
neighborhood and the Mayor had to extend to all residents his offer to move to the new mass
housing buildings.

The agreement with the agency is for the construction of 570 dwelling units, but this should later
be raised to 3,200.

The tourism dimension is a major one in the project. However, no one is asking practical
questions about how to participate in an individual tourism project, as if such an endeavor would
be out of reach for ordinary citizens.

The mill owner wants to open a café on the riverside and the former Church of the Apostles may
be given a cultural function instead of remaining a prayer hall, as it is now. A recent suggestion is
to link the citadel to the lower part of the site through a telepheric.

Sengul SEZDIN

Ms. Sezdin was formerly Director of Culture in Artvim (near the Georgian border), before
becoming the Province Assistant Director of Culture. She set up a project for the development of
traditional weaving crafts in Artvim. The activity was organized in a restored ottoman
caravanserail. An older woman taught her skills to younger ones.

There are two sorts of kilims in Kars: Bardiz and Cafcas. The sector is not strong, but it would be
easy to find a teacher and repeat the experience Ms. Sezdin had in Artvim. However she has not
found enough support in Kars or from Ankara. Would UNESCO provide any help?

Kenan BEKIS

Although Mr. Bekis is the Province Director of Tourism and Culture, he is not a member of
Erzurum regional commission for cultural and natural sites. He forwards the reports prepared by
the director of the museum to Ankara.

State-owned monuments, including vakf properties, need repairs. The Beylerbey palace’s
physical condition is dangerous for the schoolchildren. Funding requests have to be addressed to
Ankara. Reports concerning private properties are addressed to the regional level. The province
Governor may also give a grant to restore a private property.

Previously, entrance tickets to the Ani site had to be purchased in Kars. They are now directly
sold in Ani.

Tourism in 2003 was significantly less important than previous years because of the invasion of
Iraq.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Turkish clients</th>
<th>Foreign clients</th>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>32,553</td>
<td>5,059</td>
<td>37,612</td>
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<td>Municipal hotels</td>
<td></td>
<td>16,776</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>17,392</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Center for Urban Development Studies, Harvard University
Cambridge, MA
Preserving Cultural Heritage in the Municipality of Kars, Turkey

National hotels 2002 36,350 7,300 42,650
Municipal hotels 17,355 874 18,229
National hotels 2003 21,000 555 21,555
Municipal hotels 18,405 800 19,205

Hotel guests in Kars province (including Kars and Sarikamis)

The province hotels are few, but very recently their number has been consistently increasing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Rooms</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Restaurants (seats)</th>
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<td>KARS</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Karabag - 2*</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simer - 4*</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>140</td>
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<tr>
<td>SARIKAMIS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camkar - 3*</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>116</td>
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</table>

National registered hotels in Kars province – December 2004

Several hotels are under construction in Sarikamis. Some of them will open very soon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Rooms</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Restaurants (seats)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SARIKAMIS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedeman - 3*</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>160</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dokar - 4*</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topra – 5*</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hotels under construction in Sarikamis – December 2004

Sarikamis ski resort is quickly developing. It may be proposed as a site for the Winter Olympics. There is also a proposal to turn Sarikamis into a National Park.

Berha TIMAR

Ms. Timar is an Agenda 21 elected city council member. There are 16 Agenda 21 commissions devoted to education, culture, environment, women, transport, publications, etc.

Grants provided by the United Nations and through the Istanbul secretariat only cover travel and accommodation expenses.

She chairs the youth commission. They have had many meetings so far, but few concrete projects. As little information is available from the Municipality, she wonders how they can connect with the Kaleiçi rehabilitation project.

Nemire OYGUN

Ms. Oygun is on a visit to Berha Timar and is a member of an association supporting modern life (e.g. human rights, education for girls, help for the disabled). They get grants from private donors, such as Turkcell, HSBC, GM, Lion's Club, etc.
Her association would like to encourage the production of traditional dresses, kilims, plates or woodcrafts. They have willing teachers but lack funding.

Necmettin ALP

Mr. Alp is not only the Kars Museum director, but also the Province Director of Antiquities. He attends Erzorum Commission for cultural and natural sites when it meets in Kars.

The previous museum was located in a former Russian church. The new museum was built in 1981, in one of the city outskirts on the way to Ani. It has a modern design with large spaces. The first floor is devoted to archaeology while the second one includes traditional crafts. However, it is not heated in the winter, presumably because of budget constraints.

We were provided with 2002 and 2003 visitor's statistics. Only the former ones are significant. Turkish visitors seem more interested in the Museum and foreign tourists in the Ani site.

<table>
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<th>Location</th>
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<th>Turkish visitors</th>
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<td>ANI</td>
<td>tickets</td>
<td>7,830</td>
<td>2,702</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>guests</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSEUM</td>
<td>tickets</td>
<td>2,769</td>
<td>3,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>guests</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visitors to Ani site and to Kars Museum on 2002

There is a Museum week every year in May. On this day, students are allowed to visit the museum for free. Seminars and slide shows are presented in primary and secondary schools. A drawing award is also organized in schools and the best works are presented to the public in the museum hall where we saw them.

Mr. Alp is against the idea of moving his crafts collection to the Kaleiçi district. He points out that a minimum floor area of 2,000 m² is necessary to open a new museum. Moreover, permission from the Ministry of Culture is necessary.

He is interested in the ottoman neighborhood rehabilitation project as he hopes to have the old city walls unearthed and restored. Other digging projects would also be beneficial for a better understanding of Kars' past.

The Museum has good relationships with the French Institute for Anatolian Studies in Ankara and Istanbul. A Ph.D. student, originally from Kars, has been studying Kars architecture at Van University department of art history.

Arif BAYSAL

We met the Assistant Rector of Kars University, Mr. Baysal, as we heard that training in building rehabilitation techniques may be provided there. Unfortunately the Rector was away at the time of our visit. We were told by Mr. Arif Baysal that the university had departments of economy,
fine arts and music. No leaflet was available. Any further questions would have to be written
down beforehand and addressed to the Rector.

We were not convinced that this university would be the best place to provide professional
training in rehabilitation.

**Dursum ERDAGI**

We met the Municipality Accountability Director in order to have an overview of the
Municipality income and expenses. Mr. Erdagi provided a copy of the last Municipality budget
that was translated by Mustafa Gönen (see annex).

There are three types of local taxes:

- Cleaning: 100% goes to the Municipality
- Land: 100% goes to the Municipality
- Building authorizations: 84% goes to the Municipality, 15% to the Central Government
  and 1% to the directorate in charge of sports.

Municipality buildings are not submitted to the latter tax. The contractor may have to pay it. The
Mass Housing Agency may get tax exemption.

Mr. Erdagi confirms that regarding cultural heritage, there are exemptions on built properties and
income tax deductions for efforts undertaken to protect it.

**Dunyamali DEMIR**

Mr. Demir is a technical assistant to the Mayor. The Municipality gives land it owns to the Mass
Housing Agency who builds 5-floor apartment buildings. The new dwellings are allocated to
residents designated by the Municipality, regardless of their actual title of property.

Government or municipal tapu give the same ownership rights to their holders. Residents keep
asking when they will be moved out of the Kaleiçi neighborhood.

**Muzaffer KEPENEVCI**

The Mass Housing Agency has already produced some 450 apartments in Kars. A down payment
is requested from future owners and the rest is paid in 10 years. Buildings are designed according
to a model "prepared for the Kars region".

The Municipality and the Agency are presently discussing a protocol of agreement. The Agency
will soon publish a call for tender. A recent bid for 753 dwelling units was cancelled. In the long
term the Agency may produce up to 5,200 dwelling units in Kars.

**Ismet DEMIREL**

Center for Urban Development Studies, Harvard University
Cambridge, MA
As a shopkeeper, Mr. Demirel’s shop location is strategic, right after the former Church of the Apostles on the way to the school. He would also like to leave the neighborhood, but if the municipality has a tourist development project he would be eager to invest in a small hotel, even with an Ottoman architectural style. He knows of five other persons in the community who would like to do the same. He would, however, need assistance and guidance.
Annex 2: Field Visits

Kars

Weather conditions, cold and ice didn't allow us to take a comprehensive tour of the Kaleiçi neighborhood. However, we were able to reach the citadel and walk along the main streets. We particularly enjoyed the panorama from the hill opposite to the citadel. We admired authentic ottoman monuments (bridges, hammams, etc.), but many mosques have lost their authenticity and the Beylerbey palace ruins are unimpressive. Ottoman houses are in very bad condition. Some of them expose a stone and wood structure that is rather unusual compared to other parts of the former empire. Newer one or two-storey houses have a picturesque quality with colors ranging from white to pastel. What are most shocking visually in the Kaleiçi area are the modern facilities. The citadel eventually deserves a specific enhancement project.

We observed several rehabilitated or re-used structures in the Russian city. We even visited an old Russian house being transformed into an eight-room boutique hotel by a local investor. Although it was wintertime, we wondered about the financial viability of the brand new 300-bed Simer hotel.

We were alone when visiting Ani where monuments are a witness to the interrelationship of civilizations. Armenia is so close that Kars might not really benefit from the expected flow of Armenian tourists visiting the site.

Istanbul

We were interested in practical examples of urban physical rehabilitation in Turkey that could be used as positive or even negative references for future projects in Kars. We were able to identify and visit three contrasting ones in Istanbul:

- Ortaköy neighborhood,
- The "French street",
- The Fener-Balat district.

Ortaköy

Ortaköy used to be a small traditional village along the Bosphorus, about five or seven km to the northeast of the Golden Horn. It had a multi-ethnic past of which remains synagogues, churches and mosques, particularly the Büyük Mecidiye Camii built in a baroque style.

Today it is a vibrant and fashionable place with many restaurants, cafés, art galleries and antique shops. On weekends and summer days its narrow streets are filled with thousands of visitors including tourists. Istanbul is a large metropolis and millions of tourists come to visit it. Many facades still have distinct ottoman shapes, but the atmosphere is so cosmopolitan that it could be located in other regions around the Mediterranean.
**French Street**

Mehmet Tasdiken, a young Turkish businessman, recently bought a whole steep street in the lower part of old Beyoğlu. The poor population that lived there received compensation and left the area. The rehabilitation work lasted from October 2002 to July 2004. Architectural character was globally preserved and colors were added. The houses were turned into small hotels and many cafes were opened at ground floor. Some artworks were displayed in public open spaces.

The street plates keeps the original name of "Algiers Street", but istanbulis now call it the "French Street". Employees tried in the beginning to restrict access to the street to clients only, but the Municipality prevented what may have become a privatization of public space. If such endeavors continue, large sections of Beyoğlu and Galata may no longer remain residential neighborhoods.

**Fener-Balat**

The districts of Fener (a former Greek quarter) and Balat (a former Jewish quarter) originally date back to the 5th century AD. They are contiguous and located to the west of the Golden Horn. Both lost their waterfront when a wide strip of construction was razed to be replaced by inappropriate green areas more than 15 years ago.

The study area includes 16.2 hectares, with 1,401 plots and 1,267 buildings. The population numbers about 12,000 inhabitants, with 4.5 inhabitants per household and 750 inhabitants per hectare. Properties are occupied by 60% tenants and 40% owners (including 45% in joint ownership). Many buildings require substantial (13%) or moderate (30%) rehabilitation. Interviewed inhabitants expressed their wish to participate in the rehabilitation of their neighborhood.

During the Habitat conference in 1997, UNESCO and Fatih University emphasized the importance of a large-scale residential rehabilitation project in Fener-Balat. As Istanbul is on the World Heritage list, UNESCO subsidized preliminary studies (1997-1998). An action plan followed with funding from the Municipality and the European Union who allocated 7 million Euros to the project, including 3.85 for housing rehabilitation.

Three sorts of surveys were undertaken:
- an architectural survey,
- a general survey of local community structure,
- a detailed social survey of the inhabitants of each house.

Four separate goals were defined for the Project:
1. Improvement of at least 225 residential buildings with a minimum of comfort (25% of the 902 buildings that require rehabilitation);
2. Establishment of social facilities in the district: mother care education center, post schooling center, center for resocialization of drug addicts;
3. Providing an employment and vocational training activity, such as a craftsmen's house and a technical institute of textiles;
4. Making the district habitable through the improvement of infrastructure, public services and the urban environment.
In 2002 the EU made a call for tender for a service contract to select a technical assistance team (TAT) to manage the program. Meanwhile, UNESCO restored a building in Fener to serve as a "Heritage House", providing community services. It was later used as the office of the Project’s local team.

This is where we met Güven Birkan, the Turkish coordinator who complained about the weight of European procedures. A complete folio with very detailed drawings and specifications has to be produced for every single building and a call for tender has to be prepared for each group of 25 buildings.

We were provided with a complete presentation brochure and the web site (www.fenerbalat.org) continues to update its information since last December. This last project is therefore much better documented than the other two and it is the only one that aims at such a high and comprehensive level of architectural and social achievement.
Annex 3: Municipal Law

Law No. 5393: Municipal Law

(Published July 3, 2005, Official Gazette No. 25864)

*Articles referring to Strategic Planning, translated by Mustafa Gönen.*

**Article 18-a**

*Duties of Municipal Council*

One of the duties of the Municipal Council is to discuss and approve the strategic plan, load chart and investment program.

**Article 34-a**

*Duties of Borough Council*

One of the duties of the Borough Council is to examine the strategic plan, budget, final accounts, and deliver an opinion to the Municipal Council.

**Article 38-b**

*Duties of Mayor*

One of the duties of the Mayor is to run the city according to the strategic plan by creating a corporate strategy for municipal administration, setting the budget, determining municipal work and staff according to the strategic plan; and applying, monitoring, assessing and reporting progress to the Municipal Council.

**Article 41**

*Strategic Plan and Performance Programme*

The Mayor must prepare a development plan and programme and a strategic plan which corresponds with the regional development plan (if one exists) within 6 months after the local elections. The annual performance programme has to be submitted by the Mayor to the Municipal Council before the beginning of the year in which the strategic plan starts.

The strategic plan should be prepared taking into account the input of the university, chambers, and related NGOs.

Municipalities with a population of 50,000 and below are not required to prepare a Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan and Performance Programme is the framework for the annual budget and must be discussed and approved by the Municipal Council before approval of the annual budget.
Article 56

Annual Report

The Mayor, according to Law No. 5018, Article 41/4 (Public Finance Administration and Monitoring), must prepare an annual report that examines the goals and their fulfillment according to the performance criteria, any deviations, reasons for deviations and municipal deficits. In the annual report, information and assessments about partner institutions, enterprises and partners should also be mentioned.

The annual report is submitted by the Mayor to the Municipal Council before April meeting of each year. One copy of the report is sent to the Ministry of the Interior, and the report is open to the public.

Article 61

Municipal Budget

The municipal budget is prepared according to the Strategic Plan and Performance Programme for the fiscal year and estimates of revenues and expenditures for the next two years.

Temporary Article 4

The Strategic Plan, mentioned in Article 4, is prepared within one year of the publication of this law.

Article 86

This law takes effect on the date of its publication