

RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA



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# Association of Handicraft Artisans ARTI KRAFT

The members of the Association of Handicraft Artisans ARTI KRAFT, with their skillful craftsmanship in producing their handicraft objects are also active at many national and international fairs and events, such as:

- Days of Treshta – an event organized for the 13<sup>th</sup> time in Mostar, Bosnia And Herzegovina, where ARTI KRAFT President, Ms. Gordana Mitrovska, earned a third prize for producing the best souvenir;
- Meeting of Handicraft Artisans in Ulcinj, Montenegro;
- Days of Cultural Heritage held in Prishtina;
- International Fair of Old Crafts and Guilds in Uzice, Serbia, entitled "Craft is Golden"
- New Year's Day Fair of local products in Nikshich, Montenegro;
- Ethno Days in Pehchevo, marking the occasion of day of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles or Paul's Day
- New Year's Day Bazar of products from artisans held in Philip the Second of Macedon Square in Skopje.



To mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Macedonia's independence, under the sponsorship of the City of Skopje and organized by the Association of Handicraft Artisans ARTI KRAFT, on 6 and 7 September 2016, in the Museum of Macedonia at Suli An, located in Skopje's Old Bazar, a presentation of traditional folk dresses from the region of Skopje was held. The folk dresses were from the private collections of Ms. Dostana Karagjozova Stankovska and the members of ARTI KRAFT. Many fans and supporters of the development and conservation of the rich milieu of traditional folk dresses and handicraft objects attended this artistic event and expo of the Macedonian traditional embroidery.

In cooperation with the Foundation for Entrepreneurial Service for Young People, ARTI KRAFT organized a workshop on handmade embroidery on folk dresses and production of souvenirs for young people living in Kumanovo's Staro Nagoričane municipality. The project was funded by the European Union.



ARTI KRAFT initiated the establishment of national network of handicraft artisans and masters of old crafts.







## Activities implemented by the Elena Luka Foundation

### Activities for support of entrepreneurship of young people

In order to encourage creativity and innovation of young people, as well as the spirit of entrepreneurship and solidarity, the Elena Luka Foundation launched a competition for developing a design drawing of prom dresses. Secondary school pupils from all over Macedonia were eligible to participate in the competition. Taking into account the huge interest of young creative people and the numerous drawings arrived at the address of the foundation, the professional team of Elena Luka, in addition to the best three to be awarded with sewing machines, decided to award acknowledgments also to those who left the greatest impression. The humanitarian aspect of this competition is related to the decision to produce the prom dresses from the three best drawings at Elena Luka's for three socially disadvantaged female graduates.



*Competition awarded drawing, Zunka Atanasova, Secondary Municipal School Nikola Karev, Strumica*

### Activities for support of equal opportunities in education

The Elena Luka Foundation awarded five scholarships for five female students from the municipalities of Lozovo, Mogila, Centar Zupa, Chaska and Skopje as part of the Plan Your Future Project. Eligible candidates met the criteria prescribed in the published call and upon their ranking the grades of the female students and the monthly family income was taken into account. This Foundation has already awarded five scholarships for five female students from the same municipalities.



*Contracts for higher education scholarships were signed on 28 October 2016*

### Education on Human Rights

Twenty human rights workshops were implemented by the Elena Luka Foundation as part of the project 'Prevention of Gender-based Violence' with pupils from primary and secondary schools, young people and women and mothers. Workshops addressed topics such as gender equality, non-discrimination, and gender based violence. The workshops were carried out in 6 municipalities with about 400 participants. The objective is to create a society with equal opportunities for all.



*Workshop on prevention of gender based violence, Municipal Secondary School Slavcho Stojmenski, Shtip, 9 December 2016*



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## Project “EnerGain”

The project “Promotion of decentralized production of energy from renewable energy sources” which will be implemented by the Foundation for Local and IT Development – Gevgelija and Alliance of the Producers of Ecological Energy – BG aims to support establishment of an integrated approach in the Crossborder (CB) area of energy production of renewables and wide introduction of energy efficiency solutions. The realization of the project will stimulate local business and will contribute for optimizing overall energy consumption and costs. One of the key objectives is to improve the awareness and raise the interest of the target group and stakeholders from CB area on decentralized energy solutions utilizing the potential of RES and their main benefits: environmental; economic (reduced costs and energy independence); efficiency (power quality and resilience); resource conservation (using of RES); reliability and security. In this regards the project will aim to promote the concept, main technologies and benefits for individual houses, business and public facilities.

The project will be implemented through work program containing information and awareness raising campaign “Solar Rooftop” consisted of 6 information and awareness workshops; Solar Investment guides for three type of users –private households, SMEs and public institutions; Web portal – “EnerGain” containing advices and educational movies on improvement of online resources that will provide information and advices on modern solutions for energy efficient and environmental friendly home, business or a public building; Joint specialized trainings of RES technicians and engineers - part of the Capacity building, experience and exchange of know-how programme for professionals and practitioners in the field of RES and EE; as well as E-Learning Training Programme “EnerGAIN”.

All of the abovementioned will contribute for improving the capacity for environmental protection and sustainable use of common natural resources in the CB area.

This project was financed through IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Program Macedonia – Bulgaria.

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## Community Development Institute

### 1. Establishing the Local Action Group “LAG Skardus”

The Community Development Institute (CDI), within the framework of its programme activities, is implementing activities for supporting the rural development and improving the living conditions of the citizens living in rural communities. For this purpose, in cooperation with representatives of the public sector, the business community, citizen associations and individuals from the municipalities of Jegunovce, Tearce and Tetovo, it established a Local Action Group (LAG) “Skardus.” LAG Skardus’ objective is to mobilize local potential by means of setting organizational activities, training and support for improving the living conditions and the overall development of rural communities of Jegunovce and Tearce municipalities. CDI was active in the introduction of LAG Skardus, as a member of the coordination body, as well as in the provision of administrative and technical support for this LAG. The founding members of the association are:



representatives from the public and business sectors, citizen associations and individuals from Jegunovce, Tearce and Tetovo municipalities. The process of establishment of the association was supported by each of the representatives, during the course of eight workshops funded by the USAID Project for the Expansion of Small Businesses.



## 2. Initiative for Establishing a National Committee on Family Farming

The Community Development Institute from Tetovo, in partnership with the Rural Development Network and the Federation of Farmers of the Republic of Macedonia, launched activities related to an initiative for establishing a National Committee on Family Farming in the Republic of Macedonia. The objective of such an initiative is to introduce a National Committee able to identify any challenges family farms are facing, represent family farmers in Macedonia and advocate for the introduction of policies for their support and development. During the implementation of these activities a number of meetings with stakeholders, training,



workshops for strategic plan development, as well as a session of the committee's Assembly, are being envisaged.

## 5

## Rural Coalition – Kumanovo



Market Economy and Institutional Capacities supported by the Open Society Macedonia Foundation.

The project aims to establish a connection between the farmers and the country's agricultural and rural development institutional capacities, as well as to establish the levels of impact such institutions have and how their work relates to the establishment of a market economy in the country.

Overall project objective: Oversee the operations of key institutions in the agricultural sector and their input or failure to deliver market economy development in agricultural production.

Target group: farmers and rural population, as well as the

five key institutions who are active in the agricultural sector, such as the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Economy (MAFWE), the National Extension Agency – Bitola (NEA), the Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development (AFSARD), The Food and Veterinary Agency (FVA) and the State Agricultural Inspectorate.

Between August and December 2016, within the framework of the project activities, a field and a desk research was carried out regarding the work performed by the staff in the 5 key institutions of the agricultural sector, as well as how budgets are dispersed in each of these institutions and the legal framework which serves as basis for their work. The research also covered another target group, the farmers, the recipients of services provided by these institutions, i.e. their awareness of the responsibilities and duties of such institutions, their quantitative and qualitative perception relating to the services they receive from the institutions, the availability and access to such services, in terms of infrastructure and coverage with regional and local offices, etc. So far, the tabulated results from the research were presented at 3 public debates in Gostivar, Prilep and Struga where both representatives of the farmers and the institutions had an opportunity to comment and give their contributions, to be included in the final document. An institutional mapping exercise was also introduced in the document providing the farmers an illustrated presentation of the responsibilities of each of the 5 key institutions, which will serve as a map for identification of their domain of action.





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# Activities of the International Centre for Arts and Sustainable Development “Art Point – Gumno”

## 10<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of CELEBRATING THE PIREJ (28 August 2016)

The traditional event CELEBRATING THE PIREJ was held in the Village of Sloeshnica for the tenth time on the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, to mark the ten years of the eternal life of the great Petre M. Andreevski!

The programme of the event was highlighted by the poem ‘The Face of Words’ as a central thesis of the doctoral paper of Professor Vesna Mojsova-Chepishevska, who held the introductory oration for Petre.

The audience had an exclusive opportunity to see the world promotion of a fashion show of aprons designed by the German artist Gerlinde Pistner held at the Art Centre gumno. This fashion show was held in honour of the famous colourful grandmother’s apron where Petre M. Andreevski learned about his fatherland. Models were volunteers from the APG from Sloeshnica and actors from the National Theater Sloeshnica.



This was followed by a music performance of the young vocalist whose artist name is Eva Gordon, originating from Demir Hisar, as part of the PERIJA project.

The closing act of the event was the play ‘Tales from Sloeshnica’ based on tales of Grandfather Ilija Kochovski (the Marko Cepenkov of Demir Hisar). This premiere marked the foundation of the National Theater Sloeshnica – the play is now on the repertoire of Theater Comedy under the title ‘Tales of Forgotten Ancestors’. This event was partially supported by the Ministry of Culture of RM.

### 1. Art Residence ‘Art Point – Gumno 2016’

The art residence in Sloeshnica has a tradition of 13 years, and this time it was held in the period between 10 September and 2 October. On 24 September, the public had an opportunity to see works created at the time of the residence and to talk to the following artists:

- **Rosy Newman** from Cromarty Scotland. She is a painter, sculptor and she also works in film. She teaches at the University of Highlands and Islands in Inverness. Her creation is a process that starts with drawings and photographs that derive from the surroundings.
- **Kimo Ilonen** is a sculptor who lives and works on the island of Norrskata close to the southwestern coast of Finland. In his works, Ilonen often uses natural materials. For the dragon he created at Sloeshnica he chose oak – a very rare and precious wood in the North.
- **Sasho N. Alushevski** is a photographer and a friend of Art Point – Gumno. He mostly explores scenic photography and portraits. As a







guest at the art residence, he portrayed other artists and created author's photographs.

- **Dick Roberts** is an American artist who regularly stays at Sloeshnica. This year together with Sergej Andreevski they celebrated their jubilee – 20 years of friendship and working together.

The art residence was partially supported by the Ministry of Culture of RM.

## 2. Creative workshop within the framework of the project 'Linking People and Nature – strengthening and networking of civil associations in Macedonia' (27 September 2016)



The workshop was held as part of the third phase of the project supported by Plantlife from the UK and the International Union for Conservation of Nature – IUCN, coordinated by the Macedonian Environmental Society – MED. Under the mentorship of the international artists – guests at the APG residence, 15 pupils from the municipal Primary School 'Braka Miladinovci' created art works in the honour of the oak and the alder which are most widespread but most underestimated trees at the significant plant region of Ilinska and Plakenska Mountains, due to lack of information of the local population. Children made magnetic badges of clay, planted oak trees and painted three canvases to decorate the walls of the Municipality, their school and the MED office.

## 3. Pilot research of the river European crayfish in the region of upper Demir Hisar (26-27 September 2016)

Members of Art Point – Gumno volunteered to monitor the European crayfish (*Astacus astacus*) population in several river flows including the springs and the watercourse of the Crna River. The monitoring was part of a pilot project on identification of Natura 2000 regions in Macedonia and was carried out by a team of the Biology Institute at the Natural Sciences and Mathematics Faculty from Skopje



## 4. Promotion of the Project 'The Smell of Dreams' (December 2016)

The Smell of Dreams is a project in the field of creative industries, implemented with symbolic support by the Ministry of Culture of RM. The goal of the pilot project is to promote and revive traditional esthetic values of the folk art (inspired and/or derived from the cases/chests of our mothers and grandmothers) in harmony with folk medicine based on the magical power of plants in our region. Uniquely designed aromatherapy pillows were produced with natural filling, as a practical product for daily use thanks to the carefully selected formula (mix of plants) with power to relax the user from stress and to allow them to have a sound and peaceful dreams. It is expected for this project idea to be further developed to create opportunities for business and support of local development of rural areas in the Municipality of Demir Hisar and the surroundings.





## Days of Macedonian Beekeeping



In the period 15-18 October 2016, the association of beekeepers "Nektar" from Bitola held its national event **"Days of Macedonian Beekeeping"** traditionally, at Bitola's Shirok Sokak Street, for the 18<sup>th</sup> time. The event introduced some 30 honey and bee producers from Macedonia providing the visitors with the opportunity to meet directly with producers and seek advice, make cooperation, exchange experience and discuss or buy honey and bee products.

For the occasion of this event "Nektar" also published a competition for primary school students for producing illustrations and literary work on the topic of **"beekeeping."** A number of juries assessed more than 300 works and awarded the best ones with prizes, diplomas and acknowledgements, in a closing ceremony of the event.







## Rural Development Network's Third Call for Support of Project Initiatives

In February 2016, the third in a row call for support of RDN member organizations project initiatives was published within the Rural Development Network Project Mechanism. The RDN provided financial support from the USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture Project for implementation of 7 project activities within the framework of the capacity strengthening component.

In the period from May to November, 14 RDN members implemented the following project initiatives through partnership cooperation:

Name of project: **The Magical Road of Organic Production**

Applicant: **HORTI-ECO - Association of Garden and Flower Varieties**

Partner: **AGRO-VINKA - Association of Female Farmers**

**Summary:** This initiative had a goal to improve conditions for development of organic production in the region of Strumica and Vinica, as well as to raise the awareness of farm producers about the opportunities the region offers for development of organic production. More than 160 stakeholders, including farmers, food processing businesses and students were informed about the practices of organic production in the European countries and were given an opportunity to share knowledge



and experience on field trainings. Sustainability of activities after this project initiative ends will be ensured by means of an education film, developed on grounds of research made into the situation of organic production and identification of producers in the regions of Strumica and Vinica. The video material will contribute to building the capacities of pupils in the Secondary Agricultural Schools and will encourage many farmers to transfer their conventional production into organic.



Name of project: **Be a Beekeeper!**

Applicant: **AGRO-VINKA - Association of Female Farmers**

Partner: **POLIMAT 13 - Association on Development, Education and Environmental Ethics**

**Summary:** Both partner associations had a goal to use this project initiative in order to promote potentials for development of beekeeping in the regions of Strumica and Vinica, and





to encourage cooperation of stakeholders, such as exchange of experience, knowledge and skills in the field of beekeeping. Field visits and workshops were organized within the framework of the project at numerous locations, providing beginner beekeepers with an opportunity to learn how to increase yields and reduce risks of yield decline and reduction of the productive bee communities. As a result of the meetings, cooperation was established among 20 potential and active beekeepers from the municipalities of Vinica and Bogdanci.

Name of project: **Maleshevo Traditional Specialties**

Applicant: **Ambrosia – Association Centre for Medicinal Plants and Forest Fruits**

Partner: **Solza – Environmental Society**

**Summary:** The goal of these two partner associations from Pehchevo was to help preserve and promote traditional specialties from the Maleshevo Region with support of this project initiative, as a potential for development of rural tourism and improving the quality of

life in this region. With the support of the local population, 30 local traditional recipes were collected and printed into a cooking brochure promoted on the Pehchevo Paul's Day Ethno-Fair. Training was also organized within the framework of the project for preparing some of the traditional local specialties, attended by about 15 women from the Maleshevo and the surrounding regions.

Name of project: **Education of farm producers on environmental protection against excessive use of mineral fertilizers and pesticides**

Applicant: **Grashnica - Environmental Society**

Partner: **Enhalon - Environmental Society**

**Summary:** For the purpose of protecting the waters of Lake Ohrid and reduction of emissions of harmful gases, two training sessions were organized in the Ohrid-Struga region to inform the stakeholders, including 30 farmers, about the rules of good agricultural practice. The training was led by experts who advised farmers about periods they should avoid fertilizing the soil, as well as how to use fertilizers on steep terrain, on waterlogged soils, and on soils close to water streams, including the procedure on use of fertilizer and dosage. An education leaflet was developed on good agricultural practice regarding mineral fertilizer application in order to raise the awareness of a wider group of stakeholders.



Name of project: **BEEKEEPING – A PROFITABLE BUSINESS – Education and Support of Young Beekeepers from the Struga Region**

Applicant: **RURBANKULT – Association Creative Centre**

Partner: **MATICA – Beekeepers' Association**

**Summary:** This project was implemented in order to educate and support beginner beekeepers in the Struga





region, both those who have started recently, as well as those who plan or have interest to start working in this economic activity. About 30 beginner beekeepers from 8 settlements in the Struga region (Koroshishta, Prisovjani, Vevchani, Zagrachani, Brchevo, Tashmanurishta, Lukovo and Modrich) where natural conditions for beekeeping exist, participated at a workshop to learn from the experience of beekeeping experts and to get direct recommendations. A video and a brochure were developed on the techniques and stages of the beekeeping process to be used for informing and educating a wider group of stakeholders.



Name of project: **Better Environment**

Applicant: **Kladenec Environmental Society**

Partner: **Pehchevo Female Organization**

**Summary:** The two partner associations started an initiative to raise the environmental awareness of young people from the Maleshevo region, as a region with particularly great poten-

tials for development of rural eco-tourism. Therefore, as part of the project initiative they organized trainings for protection of nature and biodiversity in two primary schools and one secondary school in Pehchevo and Berovo. By implementing the activities, these associations encouraged young people in the region to become more active in preserving nature and to change their destructive behavior towards the nature.



Name of project: **Forest fires and their impact on rural development in the climate change context**

Applicant: **National Association of Private Forest Owners**

Partner: **Regional Advocacy Centre**

**Summary:** 30% of the total land under forests belongs to private forest owners and has a significant influence on the economic situation of people in this region. In order to address the significance of preserving this natural resource in the region of Pehchevo and Berovo, the two local associations started an initiative to raise the awareness on the dangers of forest fires and the significance of forests. Field workshops were organized to involve young people and forest owners in order to inform and teach them about forest fires prevention, the importance of forests in terms of biodiversity development, the link of forests with the traditions of the local population, as well as modern global trends in terms of forest management for strengthening their environmental, economic, social and cultural role with regard to rural development.





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## Session of the General Assembly of the Rural Development Network held



The Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia (RDN of RM), held the sixth General Assembly on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016, at the Hotel "Continental" in Skopje, attended by more than 50 representatives of 27 associations – members of the RND of RM

After attendees adopted the Agenda, the President of the RND, Petar Gjorgievski, held a short introductory speech stressing that during the last year, the Network worked on several issues, but most of all on promoting the measures on climate change adaptation in agriculture, within the framework of the USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture Project. He covered two areas of operations of the Network as most significant, as follows: the first was the Project mechanism that increases the degree of accountability between the members of the Network and the central office among other, as well as towards the final us-



ers; and the second was the training of associations – members to strengthen their capacities and to create enhanced links with local and rural areas. He also added that implementation of the Project Mechanism will continue in the future, focusing his calls more towards achieving the goals defined in the Network Strategy.

Vesela Lambevskva Domazetova, the President of the Management Board of the Network, presented activities the Network implemented in the period between March 2015 and December 2016. She announced future planned activities of the Network including activities related to establishing an National Committee on Family Agriculture, a process the Network plans to implement in cooperation with the FFRM and the IDC (Institute for Development of Communities). All associations and interested farmers will have an opportunity to become members of the Committee, in order to preserve and maintain family farming in rural areas and to allow for its sustainability that would encourage people to come back to or stay in rural areas. This process is in its inception stage, therefore details and future activities were additionally announced by Sreten Koceski, the IDC President in his presentation.

The attention of the attendees was kept by the presentation of Liljana Jonoski, the Project Mechanism Coordinator, who listed the advantages and the benefits of implementing the Project Mechanism, as a tool to improve project operations and building the Network capacities. Taking into account the past experience, she covered different fields and areas needing intervention and improving by the associations, in order to strengthen the quality and the impact of project mechanisms in the future to contribute to development of rural areas.





## LAG - from local initiative to leading concept for rural community development

On November 4<sup>th</sup>, in Shtip, the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia (RDN of the RM) organized the event “LAG - from local initiative to leading concept for rural community development” to promote 4 Local Action Groups (LAGs) initiatives created in accordance with the EU LEADER approach. Supported by the USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture (ACCA) project, RDN provided a comprehensive capacity building training program on EU LEADER approach specifics encompassing stakeholders of the public, civil and business sector from 17 municipalities in the Eastern and Southeastern region of Macedonia. As a result of this process, the four LAGs finalized 4 Local Development Strategies incorporating actions to improve stakeholders' inclusion in the decision making process for issues with relevance to their local community.

In his remarks, USAID Mission Director, Mr. James Stein, noted that “*The methods that we employ to protect our communities must focus on co-operation, integration, innovation and partnerships. We must use a bottom-up approach where local actors design the strategy and choose the actions, as they are the ones closest to the problem and therefore closest to the solution. LAGs are fundamental to successes in local rural development. It's this grass roots approach that unites local stakeholders and brings them together, to identify priorities and workable projects that achieve the results their regions desire. LAGs drive local development, and belong on the front lines for delivery of the local development agenda. I am proud that the USAID Adaptation to*



*Climate Change in Agriculture project incorporates inclusive and innovative approaches such as LEADER and the establishment of LAGs to address important issue such as climate change.”*

The President of the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia (RDN of RM), Mr. Petar Gjorgievski, the Director of the Center for Development of East Planning Region, Ms. Dragica Zdraveva and the representative of the Center for Development of Southeast Planning Region, Mr. Risto Chivchiev also gave remarks



before the presentations delivered by the representatives of the four LAGs initiatives.

*“When we talk about Local Action Groups and their Local Development Strategies, we always put them in the context of LEADER approach as basis for its further implementation. What is the most important and should be mentioned is that LEADER will be introduced as one of the new measures within IPARD II program. Hence RDN's expectations are even greater after the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy has started the process for the preparation of this measure and is ready together with its members to contribute in LEADER implementation. RDN has established partnership cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy and other governmental institutions at national and local level as well as with relevant stakeholders*





of NGOs and business sector, to further increase the rural communities' absorption capacity for new knowledge and experiences in relation to the LEADER approach", noted Mr. Petar Gjorgievski in his remarks.

In 2014, in the frames of the USAID ACCA project, RDN partnered with the Strumica, Vasilevo, Bosilovo and Novo Selo municipalities from the South-eastern region in addressing climate change adaptive measures through the regional Local Action Group (LAG) strategy. The local actors were involved in creation of a Local Action Group (LAG) as the central mechanism and structure for governance of the rural development in the targeted areas, and in creation of the Local Development Strategy as a central document which defines the set of priorities and measures for rural development, through a series of trainings, guidance and coaching methods. RDN worked with LAG constituents (rural communities, business and NGO sector) from these four municipalities on simulation of LEADER approach methodology and implemented three small scale rural development projects with emphasis on activities related to adaptation to climate change in agriculture. The LEADER methodology piloting through



the implementation of small scale rural development projects have proved to be very efficient tool in inducing rural stakeholders' responsiveness to issues relevant to climate change.

The positive experience from working with these municipalities, served as basis for development of activities in other municipalities in the Eastern and Southeastern Planning Region. Therefore, RDN carried out a capacity building process within 17 municipalities of the East and Southeast Planning Region, which resulted with creation of 4 LAG initiatives: LAG Bojmija (territories of Gevgelija, Bogdanci, Valandovo and Dojran); LAG Plachkovica (territories of Shtip, Karbinci, Konche and Radovich); LAG Bregalnica (territories of Probishtip, Makedonska Kamenica, Vinica, Kochani, Zrnovci and Cheshinovo – Obleshevo) and LAG Malesh- Pijanec (territories of Berovo, Pehchevo and Delchevo).

RDN of RM has a pioneering role in affirmation of EU LEADER in Macedonia as an innovative approach in the framework of the EU rural development policy to stimulate equality and unity of all stakeholders in the processes of policy



building, decision making and implementation of activities related to rural development. Thus, RDN, as a local organization, will continue, beyond the life of project, its assistance to the LAG initiatives and to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy in the process of launching EU LEADER as a future IPARD measure in Macedonia.





11

## Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project Round table:

# “Impact of the climate change on the beekeeping sector”

December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016

On December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project implemented by the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia, organized the Round table: “Impact of the climate change on the beekeeping sector”. The event was initiated by the Union of beekeepers` associations of the Republic of Macedonia.

Around fifty beekeepers from the whole country participated on the event which aimed at discussion of the current situation related to beekeeping sector in the Republic of Macedonia, as a result of the climate changes.

Ms. Ana Damovska, Project Leader provided the participants with information about the project, its aims and major activities, as well as the activities of the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia.

Mr. Mende Trajkovski, President of the Union of beekeepers` associations of the Republic of Macedonia presented the need for organization of such kind of discussions, as well as the objectives of the event.

Conceptually, the event consisted of two parts:

- Presentations on the impact of climate change on agriculture with special emphasis on beekeeping, the impact of climate change on the availability of food for bees and occurrence of bee diseases and
- Discussion with the presentation of experiences of beekeepers and conclusions and recommendations.

Ms. Irena Dzimrevska, PhD, emphasized that the climate changes directly affect the honeybees, particularly the biology and physiology of bees, such as their behavior, reproduction, life cycle. Indirect impacts of the climate changes include: disruption of the natural environment where apiaries are located, availability of pasture and water, the occurrence of bee diseases, negative effects of the substances for plant protection, as well as invasion and competition between new ecotypes, races and unfamiliar sub- species.







Prof. Hrisula Kiprijanovska from the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food from Skopje, underlined that alterations in the characteristics of melliferous flora as a result of the climate changes are: changes in the blooming phenophase, its shortening (explosive flowering), changes in the consistency of nectar (thickness) which complicates its availability for bees, occurrence of long periods without melliferous flora, changes in the production and size of the flowers, as well as the time of their opening. Thus, bees are facing shortage of nectar and pollen which is necessary for the development and normal functioning of the bee colonies.

Prof. Misho Hristovski from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Skopje focused the presentation on the influence of the climate changes on occurrence of bee diseases and pests. Apart from the syndrome of empty hives (Colony Collapse Disorder) which, among other factors, is a result of climate changes, the climate changes also have an impact on the more frequent occurrence of American foulbrood, varroosis which is becoming more aggressive and more resistant, the appearance of nosemosis and viral honey bee diseases. Also, climate change affect the appearance of new parasites and parasitic diseases such as: *Apocephalus borealis*, *Aethinia tumida*, *Tropilaelaps clareae*.





## How to Reduce Heat Stress Negative Effects in Livestock?

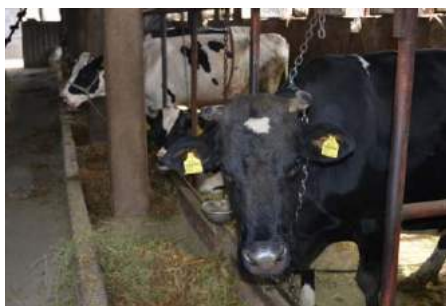
Consistent with recommendations for on-farm adaptation practices to climate change presented in the Study on livestock adaptation to climate change, the USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project implemented short term adaptive measures in different livestock sub-sectors such as poultry, pigs, dairy cows and adaptive feeding regime of lactating dairy cows in conditions of heat stress. In order to equip livestock stakeholders with knowledge for coping with and adapting to climate change, the project organized on-field trainings at project beneficiaries' farms where different adaptive measures were applied and tested.

On September 22<sup>nd</sup> in the village of Robovo, Strumica region, 43 livestock farmers and NEA advisors gathered at a dairy farm where cooling systems (fans and fogging) were installed to reduce heat stress effects in dairy cows. The daily milk controls carried out by the project expert, prof. Metodija Trajcević, PhD, showed minimal or absence of the daily milk yield drop during the warmest summer months, as a result of the adaptive measures implemented in this barn.

Another group of 29 livestock stake-

holders was brought at a poultry farm in the village of Kuchkovo, Skopje region on September 27<sup>th</sup>. There, Professor Dragoslav Kocovski, PhD, explained the negative effects from heat stress on egg quality and productivity and the heat stress combating interventions that were implemented, such as installation of ventilation and introduction of feed formulation modification. Compared to the heat stress results period (end of June, July) when egg production data expressed significant drop in egg production as a result of increased temperatures, the obtained egg production data in August show positive signs and trends of coming closer towards normal values that were recorded before the onset of summer high temperatures heat stress.

The most massively attended workshop was organized in Sveti Nikole region on September 30<sup>th</sup>, where 72 farmers and NEA advisors gathered to learn about heat stress adaptive nutrition in dairy cows and climate change adaptive measures for coping with heat stress in pigs. The workshop was held first at a dairy farm in the village of Erdzelija and then the group visited a pig farm in the village of Stanjevc.







# Presentation of the Results from Implementation of Climate Change Adaptive Measures in Livestock



On November 10<sup>th</sup> 2016, at the Business Hall of Skopje Fair, more than a hundred livestock breeders and NEA (National Extension Agency) advisors gathered to learn about the climate change influence in livestock and how to preserve the production from its negative effects. USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project, implemented by the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia, tested measures for climate change adaptation in pigs, poultry and dairy cattle. The results obtained from the application of the adaptive measures were shared at the event through the presentations delivered by the professors from the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, who worked intensively together with the project beneficiaries' farmers in the implementation of these useful and affordable measures and practices.

Prof. Dr. Metodi Trajcev, explained the negative effects of heat stress on milk yield in cows and presented positive results generated from demonstration farms where ventilation and fogging systems were installed. Prof. Dr. Srecko Gjorgjievski described the negative

impacts of climate change on animals' feeding practice, which causes decreased milk yield in cows. The expert promoted the tested measures for improved nutrition and feeding regime which produced excellent results in reducing these adverse effects. Some of the measures include: increased energy per kg of dry matter, decrease of raw fiber, partial replacement of corn with sorghum and inclusion of buffers. Prof. Vlado Vukovic, PhD, explained the impact of high temperatures in the pigs production. He highlighted some of the results that were gained from installing cooling panels (evaporators) in the target farms, such as: reducing the decline of conception rate in pigs for 10.8 % per month on average, increasing the number of live birth pigs to 0.1-0.3 piglets per litter, reducing the level of mortality during lactation by about 5-8%, minimizing the MMA (Mastitis, Metritis, Agalactia) syndrome and so on. In the end, the attention of the audience was kept by the presentation of prof. Dragoslav Kocovski, PhD, which provided guidance and recommendations to egg producers on how to reduce the negative effects of high summer temperatures on layers reflected in reduced number of eggs produced and reduced quality of produced eggs (weaker eggshell and lower inner quality of the eggs).

The USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project used this opportunity to share with all livestock stakeholders the project produced video material with recommendations on decreasing negative effects from climate change in dairy cattle, pigs and poultry.

This video was previously posted to the RDN's website ([www.ruralnet.mk](http://www.ruralnet.mk)) and Youtube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6scQK6DVUr0&feature=share>





## Close out of the USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project

On December 15th, at the "Aleksandar Palace" hotel, in Skopje, USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project celebrated the results from five – years of introducing simple and cost effective farm level adaptive practices that address an important issue such as climate change. The climate change adaptive measures and techniques implemented in 28 demonstration plots and farms have helped farmers to preserve their yields and increase the quality of products. The outstanding results from the adaptive practices tested in 6 project modules: orchards, vineyards, vegetables, soil loss, water saving and livestock, were summarized in brochures, studies and video materials which have contributed to increased knowledge and awareness of the agricultural sector in Macedonia. This project resulted with increased number of farmers implementing some of the adaptive measures such as: UV/anti hail nets in vegetables, application of benevolent fungus for increased water uptake, T-pruning in table grapes and application of calcium carbonate in vineyards, short pruning in orchards etc. In his remarks, USAID Mission Director, Mr. James Stein, noted that "In Macedonia, nearly half of the rural population is economically dependent on agricultural production. Preparing for and mitigating climate change's negative impact on crops and livestock requires practical adaptive methods and prompt local action. The methods that we employ to protect our commu-



nities must focus on co-operation, integration, innovation, and partnerships. We must use a bottom-up approach where local actors design the strategy and choose the actions, as they are the ones closest to the problem and therefore closest to the solution. I commend the Rural Development Network's grassroots development approach, which has pioneered innovative and affordable climate change adaptive measures to help small farmers preserve their source of livelihood". USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project CoP, Mr. Petar Gjorgievski, along with a project's technical expert, Prof. Dushko Mukaetov, PhD, a beneficiary farmer, Ms. Vaska Mojs-

ovska, a representative of Local Action Group, Mr. Stole Gligorov, a representative of National Extension Agency, Ms. Savka Markudova, and a representative from the Rural Development Network, Ms. Liljana Jonoski, also gave remarks. The Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia as implementer of the USAID Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture project, established a formal partnership with the National Extension Agency in order to strengthen capacity of Macedonia's agricultural advisors, who will contribute to implementation of climate change applied practices and ensure the sustainability of the project's cutting edge work over the long run.





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## Info Day on IPARD 2 – Measure 302 Organized

The Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Economy, on December 21<sup>st</sup> 2016, at the premises of the Ministry, organized informative presentation on IPARD 2 Measure “Diversification on Farms and Development of Businesses”. Representatives of the IPARD Sector, the Agency for Financial Support in Agriculture and Rural Development and beneficiaries of approved projects financed through this measure, held presentations at the event, which gathered almost 60 interested potential applicants.








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# The International Day of Rural Women – October 15 Celebrated

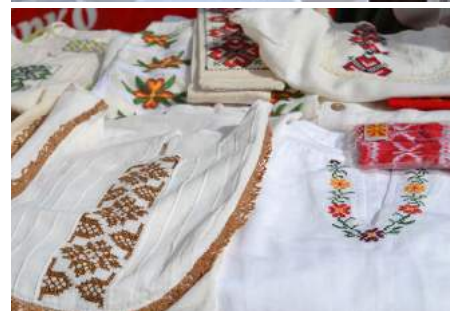
This year, the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia (RDN of RM) and the Federation of Farmers of the Republic of Macedonia (FFRM), traditionally celebrated the International Day of Rural Women – October 15 by organizing a manifestation in the village of Mogila, near Bitola. The event gathered around 120 women from different rural areas in Macedonia and the region, as well as representatives of scientific, educational and other institutions that cooperate with the rural population.

The audience was addressed by Ljubica Dzoncic, the national coordinator of the Network of Women Farmers of FFRM and Rankica Bozhinovska, a representative of the association «Moja farma» - a member of the Rural Development Network. They emphasized the importance of the role of women in agriculture and rural development and they called for greater activity and involvement of women in creation of policies for agriculture and rural development. Magdalena Gulevska, representative of the Foundation Elena Luka and local coordinator of «Plan Your Future»

project for awarding scholarships to high school and college students from rural areas, presented the activities of the foundation related to support of women in rural areas. Another interesting speech was delivered by the representative of the Shelter Centre, who informed about the activities conducted by the center.

This time a charity event was organized and the funds raised were donated to the Red Cross to help victims in flooded areas.

RDN of RM supported the manifestation through the USAID adaptation to climate change in agriculture project.







## Third Regional New Year's Fair of Local Products Held in Nikshic

During the period from December 16<sup>th</sup> to December 18<sup>th</sup> 2016, at the Sport Center, in Nikshic, the Third Regional New Year's Fair of Local Products was organized by the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Technopolis and the Municipality of Nikshic, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Montenegro and the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South Eastern Europe (SWG RRD).

The aim of this manifestation, where exhibitors from various parts of Montenegro and the region have an opportunity to promote their program and activities, and establish mutual cooperation, is to encourage, promote and support the production of traditional products and handicrafts.

More than 160 exhibitors took part in the three-day Fair, out of which 120 participants were from Montenegro while the rest represented countries from the region like: Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania and Slovenia. At the Fair, the Macedonian delegation was presented by 11 local producers, representatives of the member organizations of the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia. The Macedonian and Albanian stands were the most impressive according to the audience's assessment.

The program of the Fair was opened by the President of the Municipality



of Nikshic, Veselin Grbovic, who emphasized that this event enables direct insight in the production capacity of the municipality of Nikshic and the neighboring areas, promotion of food products, healthy food and handicrafts, and also motivates people to buy local products. The Fair is especially significant for establishing new contacts, exchanging information and knowledge on trends, and promoting the business efficiently.

During the Fair, art workshops for children were organized as well as a round table on the theme "Initiative for establishing a platform for preservation and promotion of traditional products of Western Balkan within the Area Based Development program of SWG RRD".





# PREPARE Gathering 2016 and General Assembly Held in Voskopoje, Albania

This year the PREPARE Gathering was held in Voskopoje, Albania, from September 13 - September 16. The Macedonian delegation composed of two representatives of the Rural Development Network of the R.M., a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Economy and one representative of the CSO FLORIT from Gevgelija, attended this four-day event. Together with around 80 participants from about 20 European countries gathered to exchange experiences and to learn from each other with a common objective: to contribute to networking for sustainable rural development.

The Gathering was organized within the ALTER project, implemented by 9 partners including: Rural Development Networks in Serbia (the leading partner), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro, the Development Foundation from Turkey and the two co-partners: Croatian Rural Development Network and the Latvian Rural Forum representing PREPARE Partnership for Rural Europe. The Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development in South-east Europe is a formal Associate of the project. ALTER project is focused on strengthening of the civil society organizations in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This was the first multinational thematic meeting organized by the project in order to ensure intensive dialogue with EU institutions and CSO networks with relevant experience within the EU.

The participants in the PREPARE Gathering had the opportunity to visit



some local producers and businesses, farmers and artisans from Korce region, during the Traveling Workshops organized on September 14. The key themes that were discussed on the following plenary sessions can be summarized as:

- Strengthening the capacity of CSOs and CSO Networks to participate actively in policy planning and implementation, to build a strong civil society in rural areas, and to enhance regional development through networking and cooperation.

- Building the partnership of CSOs and CSO Networks with public institutions and their involvement in decision-making and governance processes, for the well-being of rural communities in those countries.

On September 16, 17 PREPARE AISBL members gathered for the General Assembly of PREPARE AISBL. At the meeting, the organizational structure of PREPARE AISBL was established and Officers and members of Executive Board were elected.

As a result of the voting, the new President of PREPARE AISBL is Goran Soster, from the Slovenian Rural Development Network. Anneli Kana, from the Estonian Village Movement Kodukant is the First Vice President, while Petar Gjorgievski from the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia was elected for the Second Vice President. Dragan Roganovic, from the Network for Rural Development of Serbia is the new Secretary General and Anita Selicka from Latvian Rural Forum is the Treasurer of PREPARE AISBL.







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# TAIEX Multy-country Workshop on Using Measure Technical Assistance to Prepare for Implementing LEADER

The Macedonian delegation formed of representatives of the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia, the Managing Authority of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Economy and the Agency for Financial Support in Agriculture and Rural Development, participated at the Multi-country Workshop on Using Measure Technical Assistance to Prepare for Implementing LEADER, held on 15-16 November 2016, in Zagreb, Croatia.

The workshop was focused on the initial capacity building activities that could be financed under measure Technical Assistance to prepare the future implementation of LEADER ('Links between the rural economy and development actions'). As most beneficiary countries of the Instrument for



Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) are in the initial phases of establishing Local Action Groups (LAGs) but are interested to implement LEADER in the near



future, this workshop provided insight on the work to be done in the next 2-3 years. The workshop was organized by the Technical Assistance Information Exchange Instrument of the European Commission.



# “From Sustainable Economy to Sustainable Society” Regional Forum

On 23 and 24 September 2016, a regional forum ‘From Sustainable Economy to Sustainable Society’ on rural development was held in Baranja, Croatia. The forum was organized by the Rural Development Platform of Southeastern Europe whose members are the Croatian Rural Development Network - HMRR, the Creative Development Association – Slap, Desha – Dubrovnik, Odraž – Sustainable Community Development, IDA – Association for development of the Ibar valley from Serbia, CERD- Centre for Economic and Rural Development from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia.

In addition to the Platform members, the event was also attended by representatives of the Good Economy Platform, the Croatian Local Action Groups, towns, municipalities and regions, as well as other stakeholders.

At the first panel on ‘Trends and Perspectives’, representatives of the Good Economy Platform presented the participants with basic information on the concept and the development of good economy trends, as well as the opportunity for associating for the purpose of financial sustainability.



This theoretical part was followed by the second panel dedicated to examples of good practice. Vishnja Jelic Muk (Odraž – Sustainable Community Development) discussed European LAGs as drivers of development, and Branimir Blaic, Director of the Baths Ss Martin and Mura, presented his example as a model for business cooperation the Baths have with local producers. Other examples from Southeastern Europe were presented by the members of the Rural Development Platform: Petar Gjorgievski (Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedo-

nia), Bojan Chikic (CERD- Centre for Economic and Rural Development) and Tomislav Kovachevic (LAG Lika/HMRR).

Four different topics were discussed in the working groups: (1) Models of employment for young people in rural areas, (2) Sustainable rural tourism, (3) Social entrepreneurship in rural areas, (4) Models of business associations.

On the second day, participants had an opportunity to participate in numerous activities within the framework of Panon Fest in the region of Baranje.