

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA



## ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN AGRICULTURE PROJECT





## **USAID ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN AGRICULTURE PROJECT**

Since April 2012, The Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia (RDN of RM) has begun implementing the Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture Project, supported by USAID – United States Agency for International Development.

The goal of this project is to promote adaptive agricultural practices and to raise the awareness of agricultural producers, as well as the general public, on the challenges and effects of climate change in the agricultural sector in the Republic of Macedonia.

Project implementation is located within the Mediterranean zone, which includes the Povardarie region with parts of Strumica and Gevgelija regions and is most affected by climate change. The project will consist of two main components.

The first project component is testing and demonstrating innovative agricultural practices for adaptation to climate change, which will minimize some of the expected unfavorable impacts of global warming to cultures such as viticulture and fresh fruits and vegetables. The target group of this component is family farms and individual farmers who sell their surplus products at the domestic markets.

The second component is directed towards raising the awareness and development of capacities of parties interested in climate change, and will include implementation of information campaigns at local and national level. It also includes development of technologies tested within the first component into advisory packages to be distributed to target groups at a series of workshops and other appropriate media. The target group in this component is the rural population in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as relevant institutions that have a mandate to develop and implement rural development programs.

The planned activities of the RDN to be implemented within the Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture Project are pioneer steps in the area of adaptive measures on farms, which will significantly contribute to improving sustainable practices within farming systems in the Republic of Macedonia.



# REDUCING THE CO<sub>2</sub> THROUGH EXCHANGING THE FOSSIL FUEL WITH BIOMASS – WOODEN WASTE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE WOOD OWNERS  
NA "PRIVATE WOODS"



project activities realization, project partners are SNV Macedonia and Municipality of Berovo. The total project fund is 61.087,00 USD and the end term for realization of all planned project activities is by 31.05.2013.

This project will contribute to realization of the goals of GEF PMG project in the central area: climate changes. This will be achieved by exchanging the fossil fuel with a sustainable energy resource, and at the same time by introduction of more efficient heating system that would reduce the effect of the emission of harmful gasses in the atmosphere. This project will also contribute to the rural economy development by involving private wood owners from Berovo in the production and distribution of wooden chips that would be used as fuel for obtaining warm water for heating the public buildings of local self-government.

The goal of this project is to replace the existing heating system in the village of Dvorishte Berovo Municipality, where currently fossil fuel is used for heating. The exchange will be realized by installing a system that uses wooden chips that will be produced and provided by the members of NA PWO. With the accomplishment of the project, the emission of CO<sub>2</sub> will directly be reduced for an amount of 14 to 16 tons per year.

This project is sustainable because it provides savings of several thousands of dollars on annual level, which will be a stimulus for other organizations in the same or other municipalities for realization of this project.

This project will provide income for the NGO and the rural inhabitants (private wood owners, small saw mills) in the way that they will sell the wooden waste or debris that remains after the primary wood processing. It also provides benefit for the local community in reducing the heating costs and CO<sub>2</sub> emission. (healthy living environment)

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2011 started the realization of a project about reducing the CO<sub>2</sub> through exchanging the fossil fuel with biomass – wooden waste organized by the National Association of private wood owners "NA Private Woods" with headquarters in Berovo. Besides the financial support of GEF-PMG (Global Ecology Found – Small Grants Program), half of the financial needs for





# "LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOW OF BETTER TOMORROW"

RDN in accordance with the annual program, continued with members support. In accordance with its priority "Economic empowerment of women in rural areas" and with the cooperation with "Etno Beba" from Kumanovo, organized a caravan dedicated to the International Day of Rural Women. The caravan was organized in villages of Pcinja and Mlado Nagoricane. All women entrepreneurs from rural areas and women farmers from the Kumanovo region were invited. Inside the event many smaller events were organized, as well as a presentation of the role of women in rural households. Also there was a presentation of the possibilities of the rural women in entrepreneurship and the importance of exploiting the resources of the cultural and natural inheritance as one of the ways of improving the quality of living in rural areas.

Also, in village of Pcinja were planted 500 seedlings of white pine, and a representative of Kumanovo Peoples Museum presented the culture and tradition of this region. Also there was a presentation of the possibility for agriculture, especially for sunflower production, for which this region is very well known. In the village of Mlado Nagoricane, women from rural areas of Northeast mountain region held a meeting with a topic "Looking through the window of better tomorrow". On this meeting more than 150 women members of women organization from Macedonia were present; among them being the humanitarian association "Esma and Stevo Teodosievski". The participants concluded that there is a need of representing and lobbying for providing better conditions for starting business for women in rural areas. They also prepared traditional food from this region that was served in "Ethno village" complex in Mlado Nagoricane.







## “CHERISH THE TRADITION AND THE CULTURE” – Tourism development in Krushevo

The mission of “Cvet” is to help Krushevo women emancipate in all spheres of social living, grow financially stronger and to help with the economy inside the family. Since our NGO was established we promote Krushevo culture and tradition through various events, tv promotions from foreign production, visiting foreign embassies or financed by organizing ethno fairs etc.

The goal of “Cvet” project, financed by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, is to educate young people, that would inherit our organization, since our membership is quite aged. With this, educated youth will continue our centuries-old specific culture and tradition which is very interesting for foreign and domestic tourists that are more and more present in our town with every day. To mention that tourists find our food, folklore, hand-made items and the traditional Krushevo room-tradition for centuries, very interesting.

Activities of our organization are a form of education, preparing of a brochure “Krushevo cook book”, founding a small folklore dance group that would revive the old Krushevo dances and folk songs. For this folk dance group we have tailored special authentic dresses that will be identical to an actual dress that has been given as a present to our organization and is 150 years old. With these dresses young members of the group would take part at the fairs like “Krushevo welcome” and the promotion of “Krushevo traditional room”.

We are convinced that these activities will attract greater number of tourists. Education-training had three goals:

- Training of young people for knitting design and embroidery following the modern trends, performed by experts. Trained people would make hand-made

items that would not have high prices. These kinds of hand-made items are attractive to tourists, and give the young people a chance to open a small business;

- Training of young people for cooking all Krushevo traditional dishes, that are very specific and interesting for the tourists but that are not served in the local restaurants;
- Training of young people about the local folklore and traditional music;
- Making a brochure with recipes of traditional Krushevo dishes;
- Tailoring dresses according to the model from 19<sup>th</sup> century, that will be made by women volunteers.

In the course of the workshops 15 scarfs have been knitted according to a model that has been in our possession, and is an original old scarf used for the needs of the folk group.





# THE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF LEADER AND COOPERATION

*Source: European Network for Rural Development*

Over the 20 years of implementing the LEADER approach, Local Action Groups (LAGs) have sought to learn from one another in both formal and informal ways. As the experience of working cooperatively has grown, so has the complexity of projects and also the complexity of the funding packages used to deliver them.

The cooperation measure under axis 4 of the Rural Development Policy for 2007-2013, funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) in accordance with article 65 of Council (EC) Regulation 1698/2005, enables LAGs to undertake joint actions with another LEADER group or with a group taking an approach similar to LEADER in another region, EU Member State, or even a third country. Joint actions are carried out on the basis of a partnership agreement, with its implementation being coordinated by a lead partner LAG. All cooperation projects must lead to clearly identifiable deliverables, which produce benefits for all the rural territories involved. Based on mutual learning, cooperation is expected to result in real added value for the participating areas.

Access to new information and ideas enables cooperating partners to jointly address a specific local development issue. Almost 5% (€265 million) of the total EAFRD funding has been budgeted for implementing both inter-territorial and transnational cooperation projects. As a tool for delivering Local Development Strategies (LDS), cooperative activity provides LAGs with the confidence to innovate. Working together, sharing the risk and utilizing each other's experience increases the chances of success. With the majority of cooperation projects being developed and delivered by LAGs themselves (rather than by project promoters applying for funding), they provide the opportunity to follow through effectively

with the LDS in a way that individual project promoters may not achieve.

Despite the growing experience with cooperation, such projects remain time consuming and challenging to develop. The support provided has made it far easier to identify suitable partners; however, agreeing on the details of the project, responsibilities and funding can still prove challenging when working across language, cultural and administrative boundaries. Despite these challenges there are already a number of project examples that provide evidence of how cooperation efforts by rural communities in the current programme period produce tangible results.

## WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

The 'Quality of Life through Proximity' project ('Lebensqualität durch Nähe – LQN') is working to ensure that basic services and local supplies are available in rural areas, addressing the principal challenges of rural demographic change and the current economic climate. More and more grocery stores, banks and post offices are withdrawing from rural areas, too burdened by the economic pressures of high maintenance costs and low purchasing power. The participating LAGs from Germany and Austria hope to find solutions to maintain or even improve the quality of life in their areas. The LQN cooperation project aims to support local communities with the development of innovative and integrated activities which deliver all inclusive services and provide a supply of local food. The project will become sustainable as it directly targets the needs of communities, encourages the participation of committed local people





and draws support from the transnational cooperation dimension. The sharing of new ideas, the fresh impetus that comes with working with new partners and the consideration of examples of innovative practice are expected to help develop new approaches to service delivery. "The partner regions discovered they have very similar problems and therefore they wanted to cooperate to support each other with the development and implementation of solutions", says

Ingrid Engelhart, the LQN project coordinator of the German lead partner LAG Nordschwarzwald. Visits of partner regions focused on flagship projects aimed at safe-guarding quality of life in rural areas. Transnational training courses, held in both the Austrian and German partner regions, comprised six modules and a final symposium. Thereafter, participants developed solutions adapted to their own specific local needs. For example, elderly people will now have a dedicated point of contact if they need help, innovative forms of housing and care which include regular meetings, recreational dates and day care for people with dementia are being established, and centres providing local food and other essential goods, coupled with public and private services, social and medical care, communicative and cultural services are being trialled. The development strategies of the partnering LAGs all share a focus on securing the quality of life by maintaining the supply of basic services and needs. "Through cooperation we have identified an innovative concept and hopefully a long-term solution for how to economically operate a shop in one of our villages, despite the low purchasing power of its population", explains Andreas Schilcher, manager of the LEADER Region Nationalpark Kalkalpen, one of the Austrian partner LAGs. Given such positive experiences the participating LAGs want to cooperate in other projects. Among them is the plan to jointly initiate and implement innovative, 'barrier-free' forms of living for elderly people, including a care option, thus stimulating village revival and renewal.

**An alle Direktvermarkter  
...denn das Gute liegt so nah!**

Sind Sie Landwirt oder anderweitiger Direktvermarkter Ihrer eigenen Produkte von Kartoffeln, Eiern, Honig und vielem mehr? Dann möchten wir, der AK1 (Nahversorger) Ihnen in Kürze eine Plattform in Form einer Produktliste von aktuellen Angeboten unserer Direktvermarkter im Amtsblatt bieten.

Die Erfahrung zeigt, dass es zahlreiche Direktvermarkter in Neubulach und den Teilorten gibt, die qualitativ hochwertige Produkte hier herstellen und vermarkten, aber dies in Neubulach garnicht oder nur wenig bekannt ist.

Doch artgerechte Tierhaltung, ökologische Landwirtschaft, kurze Transportwege, faire Preise und die gute Qualität aus der Region sprechen für sich.

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**Dieser Service ist für Sie kostenfrei!**

Haben Sie Interesse daran, Ihre aktuellen Produkte mit aufnehmen zu lassen oder haben Sie noch Fragen dazu, dann kontaktieren Sie Margit und Martin Schötle, per Tel. (07053) 6570 oder per E-Mail an [info@martinschoettle.de](mailto:info@martinschoettle.de)

## COOPERATING OVER CLIMATE CHANGE

The Cheviot Hills is a range of rolling hills in the north of England, straddling the English Scottish border. The project was developed by a cooperative of representatives from agencies and organizations involved in working with rural communities in and around this area. The 'Cheviot Futures Initiative' began with an initial project focusing on the Tweed river catchment area which helped farmers and land managers to take steps to adapt to a changing climate through a series of demonstration projects that looked at developing farming techniques and sharing best practice. A

series of short projects addressed the various impacts of climate change faced by rural communities, such as increased flooding and run off of carrying soils and pollutants, drought, wildfire, wind erosion and the effects on grouse, sheep and salmon. The success of this first project encouraged Cheviot Futures to work over a larger catchment area and so an inter-territorial LAG project, working with both the Northumberland Uplands LAG





and the Scottish Borders LAG, was developed. Northumberland Uplands LAG manager Tom Burston says "The benefits of working collaboratively on this issue are numerous, not least because land management practices and changing climate conditions do not obviously fit with LEADER boundaries. For example, some of the work undertaken by the project is based on river catchment areas, which cross LAG boundaries. Also, similar land conditions are

found on both sides of the border so lessons and good practice can be shared between Northumberland and the Scottish Borders".

The second phase of Cheviot Futures is about raising awareness of the predicted threats and opportunities of climate change in the area and aims to take simple practical approaches to land management that focus on adapting to the effects of climate change. This is being achieved through the sharing of best practice to support and, where appropriate, diversify rural businesses. The

key is the continuous engagement with farmers and land managers to develop and adopt new sustainable solutions to address the impact of climate change. These solutions deliver wider community and economic resilience and also support local businesses by helping them to become more resilient to climate change phenomena. The project provides an adviser, who works directly with farmers and land managers to enable them to incorporate climate adaptation measures into their business practices, including the roll-out of the recently developed and successfully piloted farm flood plans. The project officer will also create an exhaustive catalogue of projects and best practice guidance so as to have a lasting impact on the way farmers and land managers within the catchment area reduce the risk of flooding and improve their overall resilience to climate change. The approach reflects the needs of land managers and ensures that the emphasis continues to be on practical solutions to real problems, hence encouraging other land managers to also invest in adaptation measures.



## THE BRUSSELS DECLARATION: Safeguarding the future of the **LEADER** approach

*On the 27th and 28th of April 2012, more than 400 local development experts from 300 Local Action Groups and all 27 EU Member State representatives met in Brussels for the ENRD Leader conference “Local Development Strategies and Co-operation: Key Approaches to Local Development” in order to kick start their preparation for the 2014-20 Community Led Local Development era envisaged to contribute towards the EU2020 goals.*

Against the background of the regulations for the next programming period 2014-2020 and the emergence of Community Led Local Development as its central tool, the participants of the conference endorsed the following declaration in support of the Leader approach:

- The Commission's initiative to bring Community Led Local Development and the multi-fund approach to the forefront of the next programming period is a highly commendable development. Moreover it indicates the Commission's recognition of the true potential and the positive impact that bottom up, grass roots methods and approaches can have upon the regeneration of stagnating economies and the rejuvenation of rural areas as a whole.
- Having said this, the process of securing adequate funding for Community Led Local Development in EU rural territories should by no means result in the reduction of Leader funding within the 2nd Pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, as for most of the EU's 2.300 Local Action Groups, rural development will still remain the main area of focus in 2014-20.
- The Leader approach is an ideal tool for supporting the Europe 2020 Strategy aims in terms of “smart”, “sustainable” and “inclusive” growth. Thousands of Local Action Groups have demonstrated that applying the specific features of the Leader approach can help find innovative, environmentally and socially sustainable solutions for rural





development as well as help mobilising the unique human, social, economic and cultural potential of rural Europe.

- Therefore a decrease in the budget allocated to Leader will most definitely result in hindering the start up of new businesses, increasing unemployment, crippling services and endangering the overall generation of welfare in rural areas.
- Having at heart the welfare and sustainability of rural areas and communities, we call on policy makers to up keep their commitment of a minimum 5% allocation to Leader from the Rural Development funds.
- Following the publication of the findings of the European Court of Auditors report on Leader implementation (special report No5/2010), the ENRD established a Focus Group inclusive of a variety of actors from most member states whose work concentrates on improving the quality and impact of the Leader Local Development Strategies (LDS). Special emphasis has been placed on improving the methods of measurement and documentation to demonstrate the added value of the Leader approach. In parallel the Focus Group, in an effort to support the Community Led Local Development programming and implementation both at national and LAG level, has collected a wealth of information, relevant practices and recommendations on LDS design and implementation. Should Leader funding be reduced, the results of the Focus Group will most definitely not be fully utilised while the capacity to put the recommendations into practice would be significantly hampered, thereby impeding the further improvement of the Leader approach.

We, the participants at the ENRD conference “Local Development Strategies and Co-operation: Key Approaches to Local Development” assembled in Brussels, urge policy makers:

- To safeguard the continued and smooth implementation of the Leader approach by securing a minimum 5% allocation from the Rural Development funds.

And hence

- to make rural areas more attractive to people to live and work in, and become centres of a more meaningful life for a growing diversity of people of all ages;

27th of April 2012



bioregions.eu

## PROJECT - BIOREGIONS



### An overview of the project

The Bioregions project supports the creation of “bioenergy regions” in rural areas of Europe. Such regions aim to get at least 1/3 of their heating and electricity needs from local and sustainable bioenergy sources, with a focus on solid biomass.

Building on the best practices developed in the most advanced bioenergy regions in Europe, the project is currently supporting the creation of five new bioenergy regions in Sredna Gora (Bulgaria), Slavcin and Brumov-Bylnice (Czech Republic), Trieves (France), County Westmeath (Ireland) and Limbazi (Latvia).

The project also aims at inspiring other rural areas of Europe to follow the example of our target regions.

The BioRegions project was set in motion in May 2010 and its consortium is made up of 13 partners from 10 European countries.

### Some basic facts on bioenergy

- Bioenergy is one form of renewable energy among many from other sources (wind, solar, hydraulic, etc.)
- Bioenergy, when produced sustainably, saves greenhouse gas emissions.
- Bioenergy accounts for more than two thirds of total renewable energy in the EU.
- Biomass for energy is mainly provided by forestry, agriculture and organic waste.
- Feedstocks for bioenergy are storable; bioenergy can thus be produced constantly and is a very reliable source of energy.
- Biomass is amply available in most parts of Europe.
- Biomass can be either in solid, liquid or gaseous form and can be used to produce electricity, direct heating, or transport fuels.





## Why go for bioenergy...? Bioenergy & Rural Development

Biomass is the most used source of renewable energy in Europe and 80% of it comes from wood. Production of bioenergy is therefore another important function of European forests, and a growing economic sector with much potential for boosting economic development and employment in rural areas. Bioenergy from wood is not only renewable but it is also largely considered as carbon neutral, so production of wood-based energy supports EU strategic goals for 2020 of achieving 20% use of renewable sources in energy production, as well as a 20% reduction in carbon emissions.

Bioenergy brings new investment into the agricultural sector which over the last decades has had to sustain productivity improvements in the face of declining real prices for food and agricultural commodities. New investment can provide market and employment opportunities. Bioenergy growth, if managed appropriately, can also contribute to improving infrastructure and market access in rural areas. Modern bioenergy can also be a clean source of energy in rural areas that can provide new opportunities for modernisation of agriculture and the rural economy and improve access to modern energy services for households. Reducing indoor pollution by switching to cleaner biofuels can improve health and livelihoods.

## There are many more good reasons to use biomass:

- Biomass is solar energy stored in organic matter
- Biomass is a renewable energy source
- Biomass for provision of heat, electricity and fuel is expected to contribute considerably to the future energy supply for Europe
- Biomass is suitable for base load needs
- The use of biomass instead of fossil fuels will limit the dependence on oil
- The use of biomass instead of fossil fuels will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions
- Biomass and bioenergy will provide an additional income for farmers and will contribute to rural areas development

## Are you interested?

We will be happy to provide you with assistance in starting up a bioregion in your area!

For more information visit our website on: **[www.bioregions.eu](http://www.bioregions.eu)**

Contact us to find out more on bioenergy and its benefits for rural areas: **[info@bioregions.eu](mailto:info@bioregions.eu)** or **[elard@elard.eu](mailto:elard@elard.eu)**

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