

PROGRESS REPORT¹

Project title: Integrated Local Product Development

CSO name: Center for Economic Research and International Relations

To: GIZ SRD project

1. Project and beneficiary target group description (including no. of participants in each activity and in particular those identified as returned migrants)

The involved target group in this project are local producers' handicrafts and souvenirs with special focus on women, unemployed young people living in rural areas or seeking opportunities to leave the rural areas for better incomes and employment opportunities. A special focus is given to the returning migrants under age 40 in order to increase their chances to be more economically active. Our approach is to improve human capacities and implement procedures for the promotion of local producers in Puka, Has, Fushe-Arrez, Kukes, Selenica, Himara, Mat, and Burrel Municipality.

As prescribed in the project Application as well as Action Plan the experts started implementing the Activities including the "Identification of stakeholders" as well as "Training on standardization, promotion and soft skills".

The first meeting was conducted to the premises of Kukes Municipality. The meeting was chaired by the Executive Director of CEDIR who made a description of the project goals and importance in relation to the local producer's, handicrafts and souvenirs everyday activity. The other three experts from the organization facilitated the meeting, and maintained communication with the municipality staff in order to determine the logistic organisation and target group invitation.

The Deputy Mayors of the Municipality as well as the Director of Agricultural Department and Director of Tourism Department participated to the meeting and give their feedbacks and recommendations to properly implement the project. Through their assistance we have collected a list with local producers and artisans. This fruitful information impacted the successful organisation of the upcoming training. Such training gathered stakeholders including local

¹To be filled out by awarded CSO by once in three months during project implementation and submitted to SRD

producers and artisans. Two experts were engaged in presenting the modules drafted in terms of - sustainable use of natural resources, local market, product standards (food safety, environment, quality, certification, packing, branding), marketing, organic farming etc.

In this training 15 local producers were equipped with necessary skills and information that will serve them to produce and develop their products in order to be able to compete in the market.

The other meetings in the frame of the Activity “Identification of Stakeholders” were conducted in Has, Fushe-Arrez, Selenica, Himara and Burrel Municipality. In each of the municipality were organised field meetings with the respective stakeholders including municipalities staff, NGOs, private businesses etc. More detailed information for each of the meeting is described in point 2 of this report.

2. Status report on achievement of activities for the reporting period

Activity	Status Category ²	Explanation
1. Identification of Stakeholders	On Schedule	1. Several meetings were organized in order to identify the stakeholders. Also, there has been a meeting with the mayor in order to have a better clue of the situation of local producers and increase the collaboration. The meetings also helped to exchange contacts in order to maintain continuous communication during project implementation
1.1 Identification of stakeholders in Kukes Municipality		1.1 The project staff, involved into the project, based also on the project activity list, started the first meeting in the City of Kukes, where they were welcomed by the vice mayor of the Municipality of Kukes. During the meeting it was explained to the participants an overview of the project, what this project is aiming. Except the meeting organized with the vice mayor, the project staff organized also meeting with the focus groups which will provide their assistance in the identification of the local stakeholders. The staff kept continuous

²Status:

A = on schedule

B = delayed by ... (amount of time)

C = risk of failure

D = impossible

Activity	Status Category ²	Explanation
1.2 Identification of stakeholders in Mat Municipality		<p>communication with the focus groups, representatives of the Municipality in order to provide their feedbacks, in achieving the project objectives. During the first meeting within the project in it was discussed in detail about the main problems of local producers and the challenges they face in their daily lives. Moreover, there were also discussions about the most effective ways to intervene and improve the situation. The presence of the directors of several departments helped to obtain more accurate information of some producers and their specific training needs. This will help to tailor the modules to each area as efficiently as possible. This meeting was helpful also to build a partnership with Kukes municipality. This will lead to increase in collaboration between parties so to achieve the greatest benefits for the local producers.</p>
	1.2	<p>The second meeting in the frame of the project was organized in the Municipality of Mat, where the project staff had a meeting with the mayor of the Municipality Mr. Agron Malaj, and the vice Mayor. The mayor of the municipality expressed his fully engagement in the fulfilment of the project activities, being that in the city of Mat there are a group of women and girls who have their own activity in the field of handicraft. Also during the meeting the representatives of the municipality took their commitment to organize a workshop on the 14 of March 2020, with local products, (handmade cheese, ricotta, honey, handmade pastas, and handicrafts product's also. The Director of the Project Office of the Municipality provide his engagement in the organization and participation of this handicraft women in the upcoming training. During the discussions with the representatives of the Municipality, where also emphasized the engagement of the returned emigrants, different questions were</p>

Activity	Status Category ²	Explanation
1.3 Identification of stakeholders in Fushe-Arrez municipality		<p data-bbox="846 258 1542 331">asked by the staff members on how they are involved into the community.</p> <p data-bbox="846 709 1542 1793">1.3 During the meeting organized in Fushe-Arrez municipality the 4 experts from CEDIR organisation along with the mayor of the municipality as well as deputy mayor, the director of tourism and other municipal employees discussed on the situation and problematic faced by the local producers, handicrafts and souvenirs during the performance of their job as well as difficulties relating to the market access. During the meeting was discussed in detail the main activities of local producers and artisans. The director of the tourism office, together with the deputy mayor, identified product packaging and marketing as a major problem that local producers face on their daily activity. After some discussion and options on the best way to intervene and assist in this process, it was concluded that these local producers shall be assisted to finalize their product and advertise it through a fair. They will be assisted through training and workshops as well as with the necessary materials they may need to have a product ready for market such as labels, wrapping paper, etc. At the end of this meeting in cooperation with the municipality, was achieved the identification of about 15-20 local producers. These producers will participate in the trainings in order to build their soft skills and be able to deal with their products. Moreover, they will also participate in the</p>

Activity	Status Category ²	Explanation
		fair to advertise and see market reaction to their products.
1.4 Identification of stakeholders in Selenica municipality		1.4 The next project meeting took place in the municipality of Selenice. The 4 experts coming from CEDIR met the mayor of the municipality of Selenice as well as the Deputy Mayor as well as all affiliated staff. After a detailed explanation of the project and its objectives in increasing the abilities of the local producers, he expressed his willingness to cooperate by providing us with information on the current situation of the area. At this meeting everyone exchanged information on local producers and main products of the area. The staff expressed enthusiasm and promised their commitment to make this project as efficient as possible for the residents of the area.
1.5 Identification of stakeholders in Has municipality		1.5 The meeting in Has municipality was held with the presence of the Mayor of the Municipality. During the meeting was discussed about the opportunities of development of the area. The mayor expressed his support towards the project implementation. During the visit to Has Municipality the experts visited also an artisan atelier/shop and discussed with the owner about the most important needs of artisans in order to involve them in the upcoming planned trainings. Moreover he also gave some information about the typical products of the area.
1.6 Identification of stakeholders in Himaramunicipality		1.6 The last meeting within the project took place in Himara municipality with the participation of Mayor of the Municipality. The Mayor guaranteed his co-operation and commitment in order to achieve the project's objectives in order for the residents of the area to maximize their benefits from the project. He explained in more detail the main features of local producers and the difficulties they face in their daily activities. The meeting continued with the director of

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2. Training conducted in Kukes Municipality with the stakeholders.		<p>services of Himara municipality, who introduced us to the main products of the area such as olive oil, honey, tea etc. Local producers of these products have great development capacity due to geographical position and favourable climatic conditions. After exchanging various information that the project staff had gathered with the municipality staff, appropriate training and workshop modules for local producers of the area were also determined.</p>
		<p>The first training under this project took place in Kukes municipality. The main aim was training all the involved stakeholders in terms of - sustainable use of natural resources, local market, product standards (food safety, environment, quality, certification, packing, branding), marketing, organic farming etc. This training was attended by 15 local producers and artisans of the area who were focused on different products. It started with a presentation by the experts of CEDIR in making a description of project aim objectives and goals as well as of the GIZ project (SRD). Afterwards the two experts who drafted the modules for standardization, promotion as well as soft skills, made a presentation in the frame of the modules content. Mr. Rezart Prifti along with his assistant Ms. Ana Shkreta provided detailed training on the soft skills needed to succeed in today's market. He also explained the personal qualities a local producer needs to develop in order to design and produce a successful product.</p>
		<p>Mrs. Klodiana Gorica explained the trends of tourism development in Europe and the current state of tourist activities. Her training was focused on addressing some of the most important marketing elements of local products, handicrafts or souvenirs and their</p>

Activity	Status Category ²	Explanation
		approach to the target market. These included steps from identifying products, promoting ways, getting those products and services to consumers and distributing them. Moreover, she also gave some important information about branding, packaging, communication or pricing of products.

3. In case of major deviations from scheduled activities, provide reasons for their cause
There are no deviations. All activities are going according to plan.

4. Self-assessment of project implementation quality

All planned activities, including meetings and training are carried out in accordance to the plan. Cooperation has been maximal from all the involved parties: the respective municipalities and local producers. This was one of the main reasons why the implementation has been successful and all the predicted expectations have been achieved. Also, the feedback received from the local producers and handicrafts has been very positive about the benefits received from the training.

5. Important observations from project monitoring and their impact on project implementation (new risks)

No risk faced

Addendum to Annex 9. (photo documentation, lists of participants, stories, etc.)

List of participants:

that of participants for monthly working

09. 01. 2020

09.01.2020

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Pages of evidence provided for 1 effort to obtain an OIT

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IT magazine



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Photos taken during the meetings in selected municipalities

1. FusheArrez



2. Burrel



3. Selenice



4. Kukes



5. Has



6. Artisan Atelie



7. Training in Kukes

