



Rural Development support in SEE countries participating in FAO TCP 3101

By

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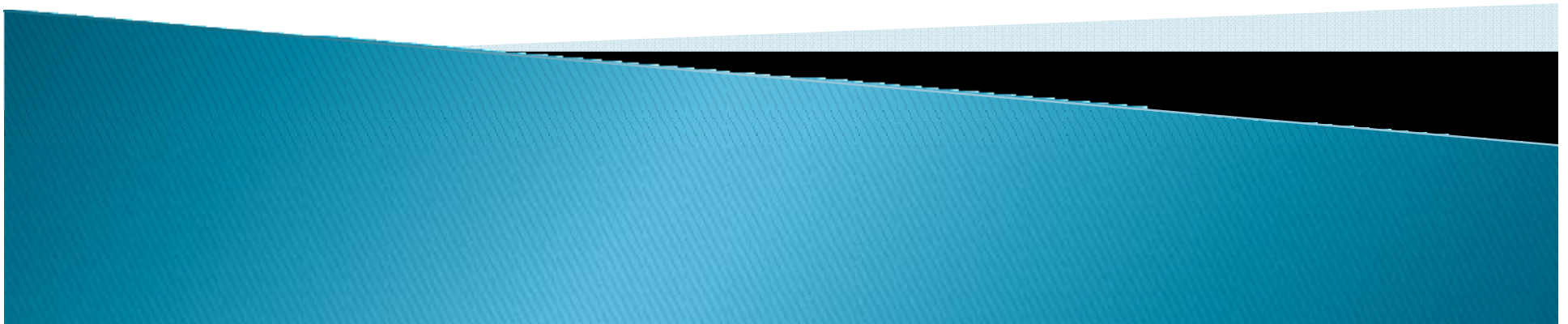
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***“Support to capacity building for agriculture and rural development
policy analysis and formulation to support EU-integration of South-
Eastern European countries”***

Overall Objective

...enable rural communities to benefit from rural development support programs to be provided in the future by the EU, thus supporting the countries' efforts towards further integration with the EU and, ultimately, fostering agriculture and rural development



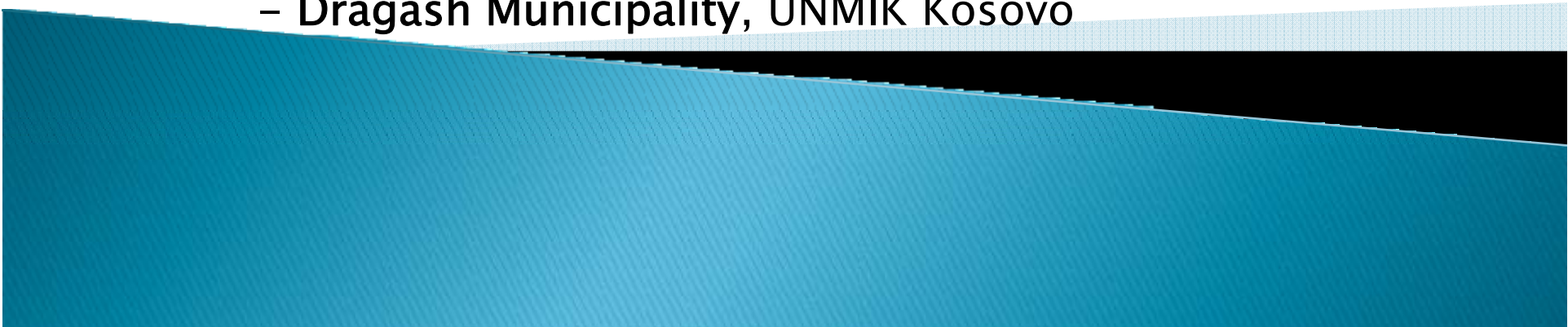
Beneficiary groups

- ▶ Regional branches of the Albanian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection, Regional Centers for Science, Research and Extension, local municipal development officers and local NGOs
- ▶ Bulgarian Regional Extension Services, municipal agricultural officers and LAGs
- ▶ Regional branch offices of the Macedonian MAFWE, Agency for Extension Services in Agriculture, LED officers at municipal level NGOs
- ▶ Montenegrin Agriculture Extension Service accompanied by municipal local economic development officers
- ▶ Serbian Rural Development Support Network, which consist of NGOs working on the municipal level
- ▶ UNMIK Kosovo Regional Branch Offices of the Ministry, including extension service

Training approach

- ▶ Situation analysis of rural areas on the national level (assistance of national experts)
- ▶ Analysis of RD policy and support on the national level (assistance of national experts)
- ▶ Situation analysis and assessment of available rural development support in pilot areas (assistance of national experts)
- ▶ Training on PCM and participatory work and Strategic planning training (assistance of international/regional experts)
- ▶ Introduction to local partnership philosophy (assistance of international/regional experts)
- ▶ Introduction of the future EU framework and EU best practices including LEADER (assistance of international/regional experts)
- ▶ Presentation of the diverse national and EU support measures (all experts)

Pilot areas selected to exercise... strategic & project works

- Preza Commune, Albania
 - Strumyani Municipality, Bulgaria
 - Doyran Municipality, Macedonia
 - Pljevlja & Bijelo Polje Municipalities, Montenegro
 - Ljig Municipality, Serbia
 - Dragash Municipality, UNMIK Kosovo
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First results

- ▶ **Detail baseline analysis of the national RD progress including:**
 - Situation in rural areas
 - Legal framework for RD support
 - RD support extension system
 - Financial support available
 - Institutional support available
- ▶ **Detailed baseline analysis of pilot areas including:**
 - Situation in rural areas
 - Available RD support
 - Local rural people and stakeholders point of view on RD policies and RD in general

More to come

- ▶ Pilot projects designed by trainees for pilot areas
- ▶ Local rural development strategic plans (drafts)
- ▶ SWG database with all collected relevant data
- ▶ SWG pool of experts database completed with engaged experts CVs
- ▶ Training materials available to all trainees for 3 country group languages: Alb, Mac/Bg, Srb/Mne
 - PCM Manual
 - RD & Strategic Planning Manual
- ▶ New regional TCP designed for SWG Rural Club and national RD networks

The background of the slide features a close-up photograph of two large sunflowers. The sunflowers have bright yellow petals and dark brown, textured centers. They are set against a clear, light blue sky. The image is slightly out of focus, giving it a soft, artistic feel.

RD support in the region

**findings from national RD baselines conducted in April/May 2009
by TCP RER 3101 experts team**

Progress, but slow

Agriculture remains the predominant activity in most assessed rural areas; Agricultural employment shares are among the highest when compared to the EU countries.

- Increasing production
- Increasing quality
- Improving food safety
- Reestablishing regional trade
- Rehabilitating food chains
- Troubles with world economic crisis

Although differ a lot due to diverse natural conditions and culture, most of the region share similar problems with rural development





Remaining in theory, more or less...

- Improving living conditions in rural areas
- Diversifying rural economies
- Capacity building including improving education and participation on all levels
- Full and adequate RD programming
- Completed appropriate legislative framework



Therefore rural still going down_n ↓

- ▶ Depopulation in rural areas is ongoing and even intensified *
- ▶ Aging of rural communities continuing
- ▶ High unemployment rates and even underemployment
- ▶ Further decrease of quality of life in rural areas and even...

* Threat: most probably to further escalate with the relaxation of the visa regime (if following pattern from new member states)

Rural economy is based on exhaustion of natural resources

... although environmental pressure from agriculture is considered low, due to low chemical input use, inadequate agro-technological measures cause decrease of soil fertility).



...overexploitation of land and forest, illegal logging etc. cause vegetation degradation, erosion & loss of biodiversity



Further - weak technological discipline and inadequate waste management cause pollution.

...degradation of natural resources – land, waters, forests, grasslands is still ongoing ...

Measures

► EU (Bulgaria)

Axis 2 –Improving the environment and the countryside

Natural handicap payments to farmers in mountain areas

Payments to farmers in areas with handicaps, other than mountain areas

Agri-environmental payments

First afforestation of agricultural land

Restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions

More measures to follow

► Candidates (Macedonia)

Investments in rural areas located above 700 meters above sea level (65% for renewable energies)

Investments for construction of tanks for accumulation of slurry and transportation tools for application of these fertilizers

...the IPARD Operative Programme 2007-2013 – Measure 201 Pilot promotion of Agri-environment measures

planned from 2010-2011. IPARD financing Not started yet. Expected to start at the end of 2009. To be followed by: – Preparation for impl. of actions related to environment & the

► Potential candidates

– Albania –

For certifying bio agricultural products from cultivated plants

– Montenegro –

Genetic resources conservation, Organic agriculture production support, Sustainable use of mountain pastures

– Serbia –

Organic agriculture production support*, Genetic resources conservation*

*(not anymore classified as RD measure, but under agro-policy department measures)

– UNMIK Kosovo – no

Opportunities still underused ...or misused...

Agriculture characterised by small farm units, low productivity and low farm incomes. A large number of farms are subsistence farms; except Danube valley - dual farm structure,



- Suitable soils
- Available lands
- Agriculture/food production tradition
- Forests
- High biodiversity
- Available waters



Measures

► EU (Bulgaria)

Axis 1 – Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector

- Training, information and diffusion of knowledge
- Setting up of young farmers

► Modernization of agricultural holdings

- Improving the economic value of the forests
- Adding value to agricultural and forestry products
- Supporting Semi-Subsistence Farms Undergoing Restructuring
- Setting up producer groups
- Provision of farm advisory and extension services

► Candidates (Macedonia)

- Investments in agricultural holdings
- Investments in agricultural food sector

With launching IPARD the following **Priority Axis 1** measures are selected:

- Investments in agricultural holdings to restructure and to upgrade to Community standards;
- Investments in the processing and marketing of agriculture and fishery products
- restructure those activities and to upgrade them to Community standards.

► Potential candidates

Albania – Investments in drop watering, new vineyards, orchards, olive groves and greenhouses with solar heating

Montenegro – Investments in agr. machinery and equipment, livestock farms, new orchards, glasshouses & equipment; related to land policy, animal products processing, storing, packaging and processing of plant products; in processing in households and support to farmers organizations

Serbia¹ – Investments related to land, livestock farmers, farmers organization, orchard nurseries

UNMIK Kosovo – Investments in viticulture, orchards, greenhouses, agricultural mechanisation and livestock.

¹ specified as agriculture policy measure, separated from RD m.

Rural still almost fully on the agriculture “back”...

- *Low diversification of economic activities in rural areas*, resulting in the lack of alternative employment and income opportunities
- *Rural poverty* – represents one of the crucial characteristics of the poverty in Western Balkan countries
- *Economic and social infrastructure* in rural areas are poor and underdeveloped; it affects negatively rural areas' competitiveness and the social fabric,
- Relatively poor *physical infrastructure*: local roads, water supply, in some areas even electricity;

Measures

► EU (Bulgaria)

Axis 3 – Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy

- Implementation of the local development strategies:
 - *of which: Axis 1 "Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector"*
 - *of which: Axis 2 "Improving the environment and the countryside"*
 - *of which: Axis 3 "Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy"*
- Inter-territorial and trans-national cooperation
- *of which: preparatory technical support*
 - *of which: implementation of joint actions*
 - Running costs, acquisition of skills and animation
 - *of which: running the local action group*
 - *of which: acquiring skills and animating the territory*

► Candidates (Macedonia)

-Rural infrastructure and rural infrastructure in rural areas located above 700 meters (electricity supply for livestock stables/cots, investments in modernization of meadows, reconstruction/construction of non-categorized rural roads and streets)

- Education of agricultural producers (farmers)

- Promotion of rural tourism

With launching IPARD the following **Priority 3:**

Development of rural economy: Diversification and development of rural economic activities; more to come 2010-2013: Development and the improvement of rural infrastructure and improvement of training

► Potential candidates

Albania –Investments in agriculture extension

Montenegro – *Diversification of economic activities in rural areas: Investments in non-agriculture employment; Revitalization of villages and infrastructure (local roads, water supply, communal infrastructure in general)*

Serbia¹ – *Diversification of economic activities in rural areas, investments in rural development support network and agriculture extension*

UNMIK Kosovo –Investments in LAGs projects.