

RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK OF REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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IN DECEMBER 2011 THE RDN OF RM
BECAME A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN LEADER
ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (ELARD)



1. RDN MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

CeProSARD ACTIVITIES

The Center for promotion of sustainable agricultural practices and rural development CeProSARD as a part of the project Agroenergy financed by Sida (Swedish international development cooperation agency) started with establishing pilot units (farms). These Pilot-units will serve as small training centers where farmers will have the opportunity to learn the technology and processes of how to make the best of sustainable energy resource on farms in rural areas, as well as the benefits of enhancing of the energy efficiency.

- For this purpose, two solar collectors have been set on a sheep farm and cattle farm
- Two pellet ovens have been set in two modern plastic tunnels for production of cut flowers and horticulture and equipment for pellet production of wooden chips



- Two sun collectors for warm water have been set on the roofs of two elementary schools in municipality of Konche
- Also a drying facility for organic products that will work on solar energy and energy from the almond peels biomass waste and biomass waste from vineyards and orchards plant.
- Also there is a plan for purchasing straw briquettes machine.



During 2012, pilot units will organize educative sessions for different target groups.

The CeProSard team has had workshops in several towns in Macedonia with a topic: Woman, sustainable energy resources and energy efficiency.

On these sessions there were discussions about gender equality in relation with sustainable energy resources, energy efficiency and power saving in the house, a topic that raised a great amount of interest with the public.

The workshops were held in:

- Skopje- Centar on the 26.09.2011
- Stip, 29.09.2011
- Bitola, 17.10.2011
- Strumica, 31.10.2011
- Tetovo, 17.11.2011

Representatives of the CeProSARD as organizers of the event concretely spoke in front of the present about the project Agro energy and the workshop topic as one of the activities which is part of the project.

Representatives from other concerned organizations and institutions in the country also took part in the workshops: Ms.Elizabeta Spiridonova and Ms.Sanja Popovska Vasilevska from consumer's association of Macedonia, spoke about : "The role of the woman in energy saving at home" and Ms. Valentina Stardelova and Ms. Milica Andonov from the Ministry of economy spoke about: "Sustainable energy resources and energy efficiency at home".





CeProSARD initiative

In accordance with the goals regarding help with introduction and implementing the measures of the EU, CeProSARD, identified need of more active involvement in the legislative processes that concern sustainable rural development, especially in the part of sustainable energy resources and energy efficiency.

CeProSARD performed analysis of the legislative that regulates the production of energy from sustainable energy resources in the part of production of energy from biomass waste.

The focus of analysis was on the production of plants that can be used in production of energy from biomass waste, and the dimension of the land needed for this purpose, as well as introducing legal acts on a local level, that shall improve the enhancement of the local sustainable development.

The idea is in accordance with the changes, challenges and consequences that take place in the EU and where besides the established legislative concerning sustainable energy resources and energetic efficiency, there are still flaws regarding maintaining biodiversity and good land management.



CeProSARD, on a workshop that was held in Skopje on the 22.11.2011 in hotel "Arka", presented the findings of the analysis, and representatives of all relevant factors: ministries, agencies, non government organizations, local governments that face these problems on everyday basis and can help in the process, gave their opinions on this. On this workshop there were 12 representatives from different committees and parliamentary groups. This initiative has a goal to provide sustainable development of the rural areas in Macedonia through providing conditions for increased usage of energy acquired entirely from sustainable resources. The initiative is supported by the National Democratic Institute in Macedonia.



PREDA PLUS ACTIVITIES

The importance of the regional development policy in the countries of the Western Balkan



On the 23 of November in Hotel Koninental in Skopje, the Foundation for Sustainable economic development PREDA Plus, organized the first International Conference for Regional development of the Western Balkan, 2011.

About 100 participants were present among which municipality representatives, agencies for rural and regional development, decision makers, ministries, ambassadors and practitioners from different countries: Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia. They presented the situation in their countries from different perspectives, and also their view-

points on the regional development and cooperation among the Western Balkan countries.

At the conference that had great number of action proposals for improving of implementation of regional development policy, was also concluded that the policy of the national governments of each state is an important segment and concept for further sustainable development. That is why national governments from each country should give greater support to the regional development policy of their countries, but also to the region itself as well.

Such policy of the Western Balkan countries is fully supported by the EU because regional development is one of the basic concepts for development of the EU itself. As an important conclusion from this conference was the stressed out importance and the need for networking of all relevant factors for regional development of the Western Balkan. This process is expected to be formalized very soon.

The next international conference for regional development is scheduled for next year in Kosovo.



ART POINT ACTIVITIES – GUMNO

On the 18-th of November 2011 the students from the Academy of visual arts of the North Carolina, USA, opened the exhibition of works inspired by their stay in Sloeshtica. The 10 student group and their professor Pamela Wallace Toll stayed in Macedonia in June this year and had a chance to spend almost a month living in the families in the village of Sloeshtica, where as guests of the International center for art and sustainable development Art Point – Gumno took part in the realization of the project “Macedonia live”.

At the same time Professor Pamela Wallace Toll who at the same time is a renowned painter, attended a seminar “Collaborative residences” at Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) in North Carolina, USA. Toll had its own presentation at Art Point – Gumno, and promoted the program for international art residences and shared her second experience as a resident artist in the Center that is located in the village of Sloeshtica.



ETNO BEBA ACTIVITIES

“EKO – GARD” “ETNO BEBA” Association in Rezanovce village

Economical-touristic and cultural event

“PRAZIJADA 2011” organized in village of Rezanovce on the 12.11.2011 from the Association “EKO – GARD” “ETNO BEBA” from Rezanovce under the sponsorship of the Mayor and the Municipality council of Kumanovo and supported by SIDA and RDN of RM.

PRAZIJADA is economical-touristic and cultural event that is held for the first time in the Kumanovo region and wider. The main goal of the event is promotion of this region as an area convenient for production of leek (praz) as an ecological and healthy food and promotion of the potentials for increasing its production. The planned activities with the event’s program will contribute to the promotion of the culture and customs of the people of this region, as well as returning of old traditions. The competition for the best meal prepared with leek and the significant participation of the rural women will give the event an impulse to take greater part in the social circles and events.

Sport and recreation activities will provide greater cooperation and connection among the young people in the villages of the region.

The presence of a number of guests and participants will help promoting the region into a significant resource for rural tourism development.





AGRO VINKA ACTIVITIES

Association for Rural Development “Javor” – Zrnovci Municipality

On the 22 and 23 of December 2011, the association for rural development “Javor” from Zrnovci Municipality, organized two-day practice workshop for the pupils of “Sinisha Stoilov” elementary from Zrnovci, which was called “The journey of the wool”, where they learned about the technology of wool production and practiced making of woolen souvenirs with the so called felt technology for processing natural wool.



The training was done by members of the Women farmers association “Agro Vinka” from Vinica.

These activities are part of the project named “Ecologically educated youth – propeller of the sustainable development in the community.”

The project will work on promotion of the sustainable development in education, through using and practicing of the multimedia package for sustainable education Green package junior in “Sinisha Stoilov” elementary from Zrnovci, and the extension school in village of Morodvis.

Project’s activities will include 126 students from first to fifth grade, their parents, population of Zrnovci Municipality and wider surroundings.

The goal of this project is to create ecological practices with the students and their teachers in the curriculum, that will be economically and socially sustained and will provide continuity of the ecological education and eco problems solving - in which the community shall have active participation. Also the community shall have active role in developing sustainable initiatives that shall contribute to the rural area development.

In the long run, this project will open path towards creating conditions for rural development of the municipality through ecologically educated young population, especially in development of rural and agro tourism, maintaining the epithet “eco village” as one of the mainstreams for development in the municipality, planned in the Sustainable development strategy and Local Economical Development (LED) of Zrnovci Municipality.

The project bearer is the Association for rural development “Javor” from Zrnovci and it’s partners are:

- “Sinisha Stoilov” elementary from Zrnovci
- Local self-government of the Zrnovci Municipality,
- KJP “Vodna Kula from Zrnovci and
- Women farmers association “Agro –Vinka” from Vinica.

The project is financed by REC (Regional ecological centre – office in Skopje) with assets from Austrian cooperation for development, Ministry for environment and physical planning of RM and Ministry of education and science of RM.





GRINER ACTIVITIES

Association for green society GRINER

“Go clean” - Campaign for collecting empty used batteries



In the past period the association for green society GRINER in partnership with citizen's organizations Go Green and 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges started the realization of the project “Go clean”. The project is promoted by the Swedish embassy in Republic of Macedonia and the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of RM and supported from the embassies of Norway and Republic of Slovakia in RM. As co-operators in this project are involved SEPA (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency) and OHO. Very special place in the project have the super markets KAM Market, RAMSTOR, TINEX and VERO (where the special boxes for battery disposal will be placed) as well as the company for recycling and production of batteries VESNA SAP from Probishtip, which organized export of the used batteries.

The “Go clean” project has a goal to support the implementing of the batteries, accumulators and wasted batteries management law (“Official gazette” of RM nr. 140/10, 47/11) which is in function since January the 1-th 2011 and establish a constant system of wasted batteries management.

The beginning of the project was marked on the 08.11.2011 in the EU Info centre in Skopje, when the seminar about “Wasted batteries management in the EU countries, and relevant legislative in Republic of Macedonia” was held. This event had a purpose of raising the awareness about wasted batteries management, recycling and creating a relevant structure for implementation of the Law for batteries and accumulators management and wasted battery manage-

ment. On this seminar, the minister for Environment and Physical Planning Mr. Abdulakim Ademi, Mr. Lars Vahlund, ambassador of Sweden in RM, Dr. Snezana Stojkovska (explaining the dangerous impact of the content of batteries on people's health and human environment), Mr. Lars Eklund, expert from the Swedish agency for environment preservation (sharing the experiences from implemented practices in his country) and the Manager of the Waste management Mrs. Ana Karanfilova Mazneva, addressed the present.

Also, during this seminar the special wasted batteries disposal box, that will be used in the campaign, was presented to the present. These disposal boxes as a part of the project will be placed in all above mentioned super markets that are part of it, and are on the territory of Skopje, Kumanovo, and Tetovo, starting from 01.12.2011.

The project continued its realization with a seminar for young people on the 12.11.2011 held at the Economic Faculty in Skopje. The seminar was a part of the planned youth educational program and national campaign for wasted batteries disposal. Local self-governing units have key roles in involving of the schools and raising the awareness level of the citizens and establishing collecting spots where wasted batteries will be disposed of.

The Campaign for wasted batteries disposal is also supported by the media VEST daily news, Antena 5 radio, as well as AKCENT Media that are also co-operators in the project.

All information related to this project can be found at Go Clean page on facebook.





LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER GEVGELIJA ACTIVITIES

Information bureau for providing advisory services in the area of renewable energy resources and energy efficiency, is opened in Gevgelija



In the frame of the project: "Cross border cooperation in the field of sustainable energy resources and energetic efficiency" which was implemented by the Foundation for local development and computer science development from Gevgelija and an union of ecological energy producers –BG from Blagoevgrad Bulgaria, a bureau for consulting and information about renewable energy resources was opened (RER). The bureau's address is "Marshal Tito" nr.60 in Gevgelija where the headquarters of the Project is, and the interested parties may visit the bureau.

Consulting is done with a person who is an expert for energy and are free of charge. The answers to all questions are sent in written form by email. Interested parties may get information regarding the regulations concerning energy in RM, administrative procedures during investments in the RER (**renewable energy resources**) sectors, technologies that RER use, data about companies from Bulgaria and Macedonia that are included in the RER, as well as the financial subsidies for RER.

The telephone numbers for contact are: +389 34 215941, +389 78 32709.

This project is financed from European Union and Republic of Macedonia in the frame of cross border program Bulgaria-Macedonia

IPA Cross Border Programme CCI number 2007CBI-161PO007

2. ELARD

In December 2011 the RDN of RM became a member of the European LEADER Association for Rural Development (ELARD)

ELARD is an international non-profit making association set up to improve the quality of life in rural areas and to maintain their population through sustainable, integrated local development. In doing so ELARD campaigns to spread the philosophy of the LEADER method both at a local grassroots and at an institutional level.

ELARD was founded in Belgium in 1999 by the National LEADER Networks of Local Action Groups (LAGs) of France, Greece, Ireland, Italy and Spain. At present, more than 600 Local Action Groups are involved either through their national or regional networks or as individual members.

Today ELARDs members come from the following 21 states: Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.



ELARD is currently working on expanding its membership base even further, especially among the new Member States and the pre-accession countries in an effort to create a culturally and nationally diverse front united by the common goal of a sustainable and viable rural Europe. The association is committed to involving all stakeholders in local rural development. ELARD supports its members directly in their efforts to carry out innovative work in the field of rural development and to network with each other in order to cooperate and disseminate good LEADER practices and know-how from one territory to another.

In addition, ELARD represent the interests and needs of its members in front of other international, European, and national institutions. It is recognized by the DG Agriculture and Rural Development as the European Association representing the Local Action Groups at European level and has been admitted to the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD), as provided for under the new Rural Development regulation 1698/05, through participation in both the ENRD Co-ordination Committee and the LEADER Subcommittee.

The association works actively to make the LEADER approach better known among the European decision-makers in order to maintain its position as an essential part of the European Rural Development Policy.



3. ACTIVITIES OF RDN IN REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA IN 2011

AGROFUD

Diversification networking and LEADER method in the rural areas

During the Agro food fair the Rural Development Network of Republic of Macedonia and the Foundation for education and development Humanopolis (member of the ERA Skopje Fair group) for the second time organized a forum about rural development with a topic "Diversification, networking and the LEADER method in the rural areas".

The goal of the forum was to share and transfer experiences of the EU member countries about these topics that are inter related and are one of the very important prerequisites for successful implementation of the policies and programs for rural development.

At the beginning the President of the RDN Mr. Petar Gjorgievski addressed the present, pointing out the importance of these three topics, starting from the diversification in the rural areas, that contributes to increasing of the economic activities, providing opportunities and creates more balanced and stabile economy. Mr.Gjorgievski also spoke about the importance of networking as a potential for establishing and building cooperation between various individuals and groups in the rural areas, and in the end he spoke about the LEADER method as an approach that is directed towards improvement of the local economical development, through promotion of partnerships and implementing local developing strategies based on the bottom – up principle, having in mind the needs of the rural areas population.

On this forum experts and representatives of organizations for rural development from EU countries also had their presentations. Representative of the European Network for Rural Development was Mr.Fabio Kosu, who discussed about the benefit from networking and cooperation for the rural development. Also Mr.Patras Panajotis representative of the European LEADER association ELARD and President of the Development agency from Trikala – Greece, had his presentation as well. His discussion was directed mostly towards the value of the LEADER method and it's achievements in revitalizing of the rural areas in Europe and networking of the LEADER groups on EU level.

Mr. Dimche Mitrevski a representative of the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation, an organization that work in the field of the rural economic development also shared the experiences of finding solutions for improving of the quality of living in the rural areas in Republic of Macedonia.

Members of the RDN also took part on the forum as well as representatives of organizations that work in the field of rural development. (All presentations may be found on the website of RDN www.ruralnet.mk)





PEHCEVO

The Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia, in September 2011, organized a one day workshop for women, members of the Roma population in Municipality of Pehcevo, within the frames of the thematic group on economic empowerment of women in rural areas. The goal of the workshop was for women to be trained in creation of woolen items in felting technique of wool processing. The workshop was carried out by the Serafim association of women weavers from Berovo, thereby achieving transfer of knowledge and skills.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE RURAL WOMAN

Atidze Iseini, Katerina Rizova, Zheljka Dikljich Ilievska, Nikolinka Bozhinova, Radojka Kjoropanovska, are the five most successful women-farmers that received awards from the Farmers Federation of RM, during the fourth celebration of the International day of the rural women, this time held in Tetovo. This event is also supported from the Rural Development Network and Ceprosard.

- Although it is only one day in the year, rural women deserve far greater affirmation having in mind that she is the pillar of the family and the one who is taking care for the children, her family's health, the farm, and what especially gives me a great pleasure lately, to show her skills and capabilities. What worries me is the low rate of presence of women in agricultural activities, where decisions about agricultural development are made. Knowing the fact that women are bold and determined executives and good transactors, I wish to encourage them to be much more present in the business and creating policies in agriculture, because our whole society will only benefit from this. Be together and show that you have a voice and strength to be real leaders and promoters of the agricultural process – pointed out Nedim Kasami, vice president of FFRM.

- Demand your rights, use your own capabilities and work together, bespoke Titi Jungren of the Swedish women-farmers federation.

According to her, men and women have to take equal responsibilities in the agricultural organizations in order to gain sustainability of any aspect, economical, ecological and social as well.

The participants of the event had a chance to taste homemade traditional local dishes prepared from rural women of RM.

There are about 1,6 billion rural women in the world, which is over a quarter of the whole population. Averagely, they produce more than half from total amount of food, and up to 80% in Africa, 60% in Asia, 30 to 40% in South America and the western countries. They owe only two percent of the land, gain only one percent from all agricultural loans, and only 5 percent of the assets for direct support of agriculture reach women.





INFORMATION ABOUT THE LEADER APPROACH



“Information about the LEADER approach” is a project that was realized at a national level through organization of one-day forums in the 8 planned regions of Republic of Macedonia. It was realized in cooperation and financial support of the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation-MCIC.

The project was implemented through organizing and realization of one-day forums that had a goal to inform interested parties-participants about the LEADER principles and methodology, it's concept-establishing of Local Action Group LAG and the group's management of the activities related with the rural development. The information presented on the forums had a goal to present to all interested parties, information about LEADER . These information would be a basis for better involvement of the public in the preparations prior to LEADER and IPARD implementation as a measure of the Ministry for forestry, agriculture, and water economy in 2012.

Each of the forums was divided in 3 parts:

1.Introduction

Explaining the goals of the forum and information about the LEADER approach, it's principles and the intentions of the central government to implement it as a measure for rural development inside the IPARD program.

2.Presentation by topics

Explaining of the importance of LEADER for the rural development and establishing of the LEADER methodology and it's seven principles in implementing of integrated activities for rural areas development. In addition, the history of LEADER was presented and also it's implementation as an axis of the EU policy for rural development and obligatory measure inside the frames of this policy. Next, the positive practices from the LEADER method simulation in 16 municipalities in Republic of Macedonia, and the relation of RDN of RM with LEADER were presented. The participants were informed about the draft version of the Strategy for LEADER implementation inside the frames of IPARD program 2007-2013 (measure 202) of the MAFWE(Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water economy), and further anticipated steps that relevant bodies should take.

Conclusion

Discussion with the participants of the forums about the topic of the forums, in the form of questions and answers.

The project was realized in the period October-December 2011. The forums were realized in the eight mountain regions (Skopje, Vardarian, Northeast, East, Southeast, Pelagonian, Southwest and Polog mountain region).

Target group of the project were interested parties –legal and physical entities, representatives from the business, public and citizen sector.





PUBLIC GOODS

Public goods play an important role as a core ingredient in the long-term development of rural areas. This concerns the enhancing of cultural, historical, human and environmental assets, and promoting their role in fostering sustainable socio-economic growth. (Source: European Network for Rural Development)

The provision of public goods in European rural areas can have a major impact on stimulating economic development in those areas. This is particularly valid in the case of public goods associated with agriculture, such as rural vitality, food security and farm animal welfare. Traditional local products or rural tourism may also build on public environmental features such as an outstanding natural landscape, air and soil quality or region-specific bio-diversity. These features can play a key role in attracting investment and promoting economic activities, subsequently benefiting the local rural economy and the quality of life in the community. Some rural areas depend economically, partly or wholly, on their natural environments and the provision of these public goods may be linked, to a large degree, on preservation of their natural environments through appropriate agricultural practices. EU Member States' Rural Development Programmes (RDPS) offer support towards promoting sustainable farming, improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity. Many of those activities support rural communities and economies by enhancing the rural infrastructure and developing new services and products which build on unique, natural assets. By helping to sustain a critical mass of people in the countryside, these activities contribute towards providing the socio-economic public good of rural vitality

Clare Farm Heritage Tours in the Burren, Ireland

The Burren region in County Clare, Ireland, is one of the most unique landscapes in Ireland and in Europe, with huge pavements of limestone present containing clints and grikes. The place is rich in outstanding landscapes, ancient history, spectacular wildlife and culture. Much of the Burren has been designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), under the EU Habitats Directive, and part of the exceptional environmental, historical and cultural heritage of the Burren is situated on private farms, where public access is restricted and farming remains strictly regulated. Back in 2009, a number of local farmers came together and took a decision to establish a co-operative to open those sites to the public. All of the farmers have continued a tradition of farming dating back over 6 000 years, on land where more than 100 archeological sites and monuments have been identified, and where much of the landscape remained unchanged over millennia. In order to capitalize on this heritage, the Clare Farm Heritage Tours Co-operative was therefore founded by nine North Clare farmers. The objective of the Cooperative is two-fold : on-farm diversification, and development of a new tourism offering which can attract high interest and long-term benefits to the Clare County community. With support from axis 4 of the Irish RDP, the Co-op commenced its activity in 2009. Clare Farm Heritage Tours is a member of the Burren Ecotourism Network and it employs local people to promote heritage, archaeology and ancient farming practices while educating tourists about the vulnerability of the Burren's landscape and the importance of its preservation. The tours are both educational and fun, and visitors are guided by people who have lived and worked in the Burren for generations. The Co-operative project, based only one hour away from Ireland's busy Shannon International Airport, is having a positive economic effect on the local area by bringing more visitors into the Clare County, and providing employment for local farmers. It is an example of how the provision of environmental public goods through agriculture can be the basis for wider rural development opportunities. This project also helps build an even stronger sense of place for the local community. The project is a finalist of the J FC Innovation Awards for Rural Business in 2010. For more information visit www.farmheritagetours.com

