



Cross-border region "Drina - Sava"

"Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration"

Minutes from the 11th Stakeholders' Group Meeting for "Drina-Sava" cross-border region



The project is financed by:



Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia

19.06.2015

Minutes from the 11th Stakeholders' Group Meeting for the cross-border region of

"Drina-Sava"

19. June 2015.

Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia

I. List of participants

The Eleventh Stakeholders' Group Meeting for "Drina-Sava" cross-border region was attended by 34 participants, representatives of Stakeholders' Group from "Drina-Sava" region, Secretary General, FAO representatives and SWG project team.

Annex1: List of participants

II. Agenda

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 11:00 – 11:10 | Welcome speech

<i>Mr. Boban Ilic, SWG Secretary General</i>

<i>Mr. Tomislav Jankovic, Vice Mayor of Town Sremska Mitrovica</i> |
| 11:10 – 11:15 | Introduction to the programme

Mr. Aleksandar Damjanovic, Regional Manager |
| 11:15 – 11:45 | General achievements related to the preparations for implementation of ABDA in the WB countries

Presentation of the project on ABDA implementation – 3rd phase

Main outputs, project activities, milestones and general timeframe

<i>Ms. Irena Dzimrevska, SWG Head of Operations</i> |
| 11:45 – 12:00 | Achievements in implementation of FAO project on Capacity Building

<i>Ms. Anetta Szilágyi, FAO</i> |
| 12:00 – 12:45 | Future activities related to implementation of ABDA in Drina-Sava cross-border region

Discussion on possible support on "People to People" actions in the "Drina-Sava" region |

Discussion about project proposals for Integrated Economic Development and role of “Drina-Sava” Project Management Unit

Discussion about nomination on SHG members (affirmation of current members and involvement of new members)

Mr. Aleksandar Damjanovic, Regional Manager

Ms. Mirela Causevic, Coordinator of “Drina-Sava” CBR

12:45 – 13:15

Coffee Break

13:15 – 14:00

Identification of donors, communication and fundraising activities – Role of PMU's

Mr. Kaj Mortensen

III. Minutes of the meeting

The 11th SHG meeting aimed at discussion about the general achievements related to the preparations for implementation of ABDA in the WB countries, as well as discussion about the future ABDA perspective.

The specific objectives of the Eleventh Stakeholders' Group Meeting held on 19th June in the premises of Town Sremska Mitrovica was to present the overall results of ABDA Grant scheme, progress made regarding people to people actions and to discuss about next phase of ABDA programme.

Topics during the meeting:

1. General achievements related to the preparations for implementation of ABDA in the WB countries
2. Presentation of the project on ABDA implementation – 3rd phase (Main outputs, project activities, milestones and general timeframe)
3. Election of the SHG bodies
4. Identification of donors, communication and fundraising activities – Role of Project Management Unites (PMU's)

Official opening

The meeting was opened and the participants were welcomed by Mr. Tomislav Jankovic, Vice Mayor of Town Sremska Mitrovica and by Secretary General Mr. Boban Ilic who gave a short review on the activities that were implemented by the Drina-Sava stakeholder group. Mr. Boban Ilic announced a new project on waste management that should start in the upcoming period. The Agriculture Policy Forum was announced.

1. General achievements related to the preparations for implementation of ABDA in the WB countries

Ms. Irena Dzimrevska, Head of Operation presented general achievements related to the preparations for implementation of ABDA in the 4 cross border regions. Programme documents for Economic Development with defined objectives and measures were developed. Concrete financial sources are not allocated within this programme but could be financed within other programmes. These strategic documents are ownership of Stakeholders and could be used as a base for developing of different project proposals.

In the previous phase 16 **Stakeholders Group Meetings** in four cross border regions were organized, where 526 participants were present.

In cooperation with FAO, within **Capacity building activities** were organized 2 study tours with 40 participants and 4 workshops with 143 participants.

People to people activities were supported with the aim to promote the cross border regions.

- 49 people to people activities were organized
- 1070 exhibitors and 125 471 visitors
- Estimated income to local communities was 148.520 € and 68.000 € estimated direct income from selling products during the events
- 10 Contracts for business cooperation were signed and 4 Memorandum of Understanding for future cooperation
- 30 events promoted traditional food and handicraft products
- 18 conferences and workshops were organized with 1127 participants
- 20 sports and other cultural events with 18.724 visitors

ABDA Grant scheme was implemented in the cross border regions “Drina-Sava” and “Drina-Tara” out which:

- 9 cross border partnership projects were granted with 28 partners
- Total investment of all 9 projects = 259.386,3 € (55% contributed by the European Union and 45% contributed by beneficiaries)
- 7 new products are launched
- 7 beneficiaries have improved and modernized their production processes introducing new technology
- 6 projects have improved the tourist products and services in the regions
- 4 innovative services and products are developed
- 4 tourism facilities are reconstructed
- 3 new products are expected as a result from the investment
- 17 people were additionally engaged as seasonal workforce due to the investment

- 6 additional employments as result of the investments
- Additional employments are expected in the upcoming years due to the investments.

The grant beneficiaries shared their positive experiences. In the next phase will be organized the process of monitoring the effects from implemented Grants scheme. Some effects are already visible. The aim of the implemented activities were to connect people and to strengthen cooperation and partnerships. In the next two years there will be no Grant scheme, but SWG will continue searching for alternative funding.

Ms. Anette Szilagyi FAO, presented the **Capacity building activities** which were financed by FAO and the European Union. Ms. Anette Szilagyi pointed out that agriculture, food processing and tourism have a huge potential in the West Balkan. FAO supported the organization of two workshops on the topics “Strengthening partnerships and networking” and “Strengthening of the value chain” with a study tour to Istria. As a result of those activities training material has been prepared, which will be delivered to the SHG after translation.

Annex 2: SWG ABDA 4 Project presentation

2. Presentation of the project on ABDA implementation – 3rd phase (Main outputs, project activities, milestones and general timeframe)

Ms. Irena Dzimrevska, Head of Operations stated that the implementation of 3rd phase of EU funded project started as of 1st June 2015. In the new phase of the project SWG will continue with implementation of Area Based Development. The main focus on implementation of ABDA will be on capacity building activities and support to preparation of applications for calls for proposals, development of short value chains, and analysis of situation in three more WB cross border areas.

The foreseen activities aimed at facilitation of process of economic development of the cross-border areas:

- Organization of meetings with stakeholders
- Capacity building measures for preparation of project proposals
- Support to stakeholders for preparation of project proposals for different calls (emphasis on IPA II)
- Performance of publicity activities related to available funding
- Organization of people-to-people actions
- Participation on meetings of other regional structures
- Initiation of assessment of situation and strategic planning in three of the cross-border areas

In this phase, criteria for supporting the regional events will be much more rigorous, because of the lack of funds. After receiving a short application form the members of the stakeholder group

will deliver their proposals for the People to People actions, and a list of priority people to people actions will be prepare.

The Project Management Units (PMUs) will have responsibility to:

- Assist the SHG in preparation of projects based on the ABD programme and other donors as appropriate,
- Carrying out information and publicity activities for different available EC instruments and programmes and potential donor activities in the area,
- Managing activities in the respective cross-border area during the implementation phase,
- Manage funding of the functions of the SHG and the PMU activities,
- Serve as a Secretariat for the SHG,
- Serve as the interface with the SWG Headquarter,
- Develop knowledge about existing support instruments potentially available to support projects in the region.

In this phase will be Initiated the assessment of situation and strategic planning in three of the cross-border areas: "Pcinja region" (Serbia-Macedonia-Bulgaria); "Neretva region" (Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro); and "Prokletije region" (Albania-Montenegro-Kosovo*).

3. Election of the SHG bodies

After a short discussion of the stakeholder group of the cross border region "Drina-Sava" following representatives were elected as members of the Executive Board of the SHG.

Nominated representatives in front of Republic of Serbia are:

- 1. Tatjana Savic – Tourism Organization of Municipality Bogatic**
- 2. Miroslav Janjic – Tourism Organization of Municipality Sid**
- 3. Nikola Niksic – Cluster „Sveti Dimitrije“ Sremska Mitrovica**
- 4. Milan Marinkovic – Nursery „Marinkovic“ Sabac**
- 5. Predrag Misic – „Konak Misic“ Loznica**

Nominated representatives in front of Bosnia and Herzegovina are:

- 1. Pero Stevanovic – Municipality Donji Zabar**
- 2. Nedzib Atic – Municipality Ugljevik**
- 3. Adis Rahman - Cooperative Union Brka Brcko distrikta B&H**
- 4. Bosko Nikolic – NGO „Eco Leonardo“ Lopare**
- 5. Zeljko Novakovic – Cycling club „Sv.Nikolaj“ Brcko**

Nominated represenatatives in front of Croatia are:

1. **Dubravka Tomsik – Museum of town Ilok**
2. **Gracijela Stiba – Municipality Vrbanja**
3. **Josip Kovac – LAG Srijem**
4. **Ivan Plavsic – Association of Youth of municipality Nijemci**
5. **Zlatko Fruk – PG Vrbanja**

The SHG proposed following member of the SHG for the President, the two Vice-Presidents:

1. **Nikola Niksic - Touristic cluster "Sveti Dimitriji"**
2. **Nedzib Ataic – Municipality Ugljevik**
3. **Dubravka Tomsik, Museum of Town Ilok**

Majority of the members of the SHG voted and elected **Nikola Niksic** for the President of the SHG.

4. Identification of donors, communication and fundraising activities – Role of Project Management Unites (PMU's)

Mr. Kaj Mortensen, Consultant and Mr. Aleksandar Damjanovic presented the potential donors and fundraising activities.

EC developed Multi-Country Indicative Strategy Paper for the period 2014-2020. Standing Working Group (SWG) and Area Based Development Approach (ABDA) are included in this Strategic Framework. CBC programme covers largely same thematical topics as ABD programme. No support to investments in private businesses will be provided, but can support public private partnerships.

IPA II assistance for programming period 2014-2020 is adressed in 5 policy measures among which agriculture and rural development. The measures under the IPARD instrument were presented as well. IPARD II is based on principles for EU rural development policy.

Project Management Unites will have a role to facilitate ongoing adjustment of development goals, identification and development of short value chains and partnerships, facilitate development of investment projects, keep record of funding opportunities and periods of call for applications under the respective instruments, monitor and publicise calls for applications under other instruments on the ABD website, provide first level of information and advice on where to get detailed information about the conditions for call for applications.

Annex 3: Presentation ABDA Funding opportunities

Conclusions from the meeting:

- PMU as a Secretariat of SHG will facilitate the process of development of project proposals (emphasis on IPA II)
- People to people activities will continue to be supported, with limited budget
- Short application form for People to People action should be prepared and delivered to the SHG. Members of the SHG “Drina-Sava” will nominate people to people action by 17th July 2015 by delivering the application form to the PMU
- Possible implementation of Project “Improvement of Solid Waste Management” in “Drina-Tara”, “Sharra” region and partly “Drina-Sava” region
- No Grant scheme in the next two years (continue to search for alternative funding)
- During the stakeholder group meetings, once per year “decision makers” of the municipalities that have signed the Memorandum of Understanding should be invited to participate at the meeting and
- It is necessary to continue with informing and delivering calls for proposals to the stakeholder group. Members of the SG will inform each other on open calls via the Project Office “Drina-Sava”.

Prepared by:

Mirela Causevic, Coordinator for the "Drina-Sava" cross border region