



South Eastern Europe
SWG RRD
Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group



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Cross-border region “Drina - Tara”

“Support to economic diversification of rural areas
in South Eastern Europe” (SEDRA)

Minutes from the 20th Stakeholders group Meeting for cross-border region "Drina-Tara"



DRINA-TARA
CROSS-BORDER REGION



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Minutes from the 20th Stakeholders Group Meeting for the
cross-border region "Drina-Tara"
20 March 2019
Culture Centre Prijepolje, Prijepolje, Serbia

I. List of participants

The Twentieth Stakeholder Group Meeting for the cross-border region "Drina-Tara" was attended by 47 participants (22 women, 25 male participants; 14 participants age under 40 out of the total number of participants), interested stakeholders from cross-border region "Drina-Tara" Director of Tourism Organization of Prijepolje, media representatives and SWG project team.

II. Programme

March 20th, 2019 (Wednesday)

City Culture Centre, Municipality of Prijepolje

10:30 – 11:00 Arrival of the participants and welcome gathering

11:00 – 11:15 Welcome speech

*Representative of the Municipality of Prijepolje, TBC
Mr. Aleksandar Damnjanovic, SWG Regional Manager
Ms. Danica Nesevic, SWG Regional Coordinator*

11:15 – 11:45 Presentation of SWG GIZ project: "Support to economic diversification of rural areas in Southeast Europe (SEDRA)"

*Output 1: Regional cooperation and policy advice
Output 2: Sustainable business models
Output 3: Community-led and area-based development
Aleksandar Damnjanovic, SWG Regional Manager
Danica Nesevic, SWG Regional Coordinator*

11:45 – 12:00 Presentation of future Grant scheme

12:00 – 12:15 Open Call for support to People to People events

12:15 – 12:30 Capacity building activities within the SEDRA project

*Aleksandar Damnjanovic, SWG Regional Manager
Danica Nesevic, SWG Regional Coordinator*

12:30 – 13:00 Discussion and conclusions of the meeting

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 - 15:30 Performance of detailed baseline assessment of the selected value chains (Evaluation of submitted survey forms) - Meeting with VC operators



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15:30 - 16:00 Capacity building event

Coaching stakeholders for planning, organization and implementation of P2P activities

Minutes from the meeting:

XX Stakeholders group Meeting for the cross-border region of "Drina-Tara" aimed at presentation of the SEDRA project which is jointly implemented by the Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development (SWG) in South East Europe and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ). The meeting was an opportunity to announce Open Call for support to people to people events (P2P) and to organize a training session for value chain actors from public, private and civil sector how to plan, organize and implement P2P activities. During the meeting stakeholders suggested list for training need sessions and possible criteria for future investment support.

For the first time Stakeholder Group Meeting was organized in the Municipality of Prijepolje. As a host the Director of Tourist Organization of Prijepolje, Mr. Nebojsa Svicevic presented the potentials and tourist values of the Municipality of Prijepolje. Among other things, he stated that 23% of the territory of the Municipality of Prijepolje includes protected natural areas and stated that the development of agriculture is possible through tourism. He emphasized that the SWG provides affirmation for the development of the whole region.

Aleksandar Damjanovic, SWG Regional Manager welcomed all participants especially new interested participants from Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje and Srebrenica. He presented the mission and vision of the SWG, which represents the platform of the Ministries of Agriculture of the countries / territories of South-Eastern Europe with the main focused on rural development, development of agriculture and tourism.

1. Presentation of SWG GIZ project: "Support to economic diversification of rural areas in Southeast Europe (SEDRA)"

The overall objective of the project "Supporting the economic diversification of rural areas in Southeast Europe" (SEDRA) is to strengthen the institutional capacities of stakeholders in South East Europe to support the diversification of rural economies in line with the EU. The project is implemented in the countries/territories of South-Eastern Europe: Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo *. The project will focus on involving stakeholders and local communities' development in the cross-border areas through:

- Development of selected value chains with relevant actors to identify gaps and to define possible actions and interventions;
- Implementation of measures for capacity building of stakeholders related to planning, investments, business cooperation within value chains, management, etc.;
- Provision of financial support for the development and strengthening of selected value chains in all 7 cross-border regions;



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- Support to regional and local networking events, establishment of business contacts, promotion of value chain / service products and exchange of experiences / activities of P2P.

SEDRA covers three thematic areas:

- I. Regional cooperation and legal recommendations;
- II. Sustainable business models;
- III. Access based on community and territory development.

Its implementational timeframe is in the period of 2019-2021 and the total project value amounts at 1,200,000.00 EUR.

2. Presentation of future support to investments

The project "Diversification of economic activities in rural areas of Southeast Europe through the development of small value chains" (thematic area 2) aims to develop sustainable business models in structurally weak border regions by improving production and marketing of agricultural, food products, forest products, local crafts and culinary tradition, sustainable tourism, and digitization. Investment support is aimed at improving co-operation and networking through value chains development and targeted support to relevant key actors. A holistic approach for the development of value chain (LV) will be applied as a model for improving economic development, generating income and employment in structurally weak border regions.

Value chains support will be related to previous measures developed within the GIZ-SWG LEIWW project and the SWG area based development (ABDA). In four cross-border regions, four value chains have been selected for further support:

- ✓ Traditional products (including agricultural and food products of animal and vegetable origin, for example cereals, vegetables, fruits, meat and meat products, eggs, milk and milk products, medicinal herbs and spices etc.), wild fruits, traditional craft products, cuisine in the regions of Drina-Tara, Drina-Sava, Krsh
- ✓ Rural tourism in the regions of Drina-Tara, Drina-Sava, Krsh
- ✓ Mountain tourism in the regions of Prokletije-Bjeshket e Namun, Prespa and Sharra
- ✓ Beekeeping in the region of Pčinja -Krajshte

Proposals for the criteria for possible investment support are listed in the conclusions of the meeting.

3. Capacity building activities within the SEDRA project

In the previous period, Survey forms for selected value chains were disseminated to beneficiaries in order to collect information for base-line analysis. Thirty-five survey forms were collected from the "Drina-Tara" region. Regarding the question: Do you need training in one of the above areas (Technical skills in primary agriculture production and processing of agriculture products, Standards of the quality, Business planning, Development of project proposals, Finance, accounting, procurement and reporting, Marketing and promotion, Information, communication) or some other areas following topics were listed:

- Marketing and promotion



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- Product branding
- On-line marketing
- How to manage the farm in the best possible way
- Sale from home
- Product placement
- Innovative ways of promotion and marketing
- Information and communication
- Animation and discovering new clients
- Preparation of project proposals
- Project writing for IPARD calls and EU pre-accession funds
- Developing business plans
- Finance, accounting, procurement and reports
- Trends in tourism as a business / broader aspect
- Trends and standards in rural tourism
- Quality standards in tourism
- All topics related to agritourism
- Rural tourism (legal and realistic framework)
- Tradition, culture and gastronomy for the purpose of tourism development
- Training for rural household (the law changes and we don't receive information)
- Preparation of project documentation
- Innovation in the process of cheese production
- Processing technology
- Rules on food safety, choice of packaging, label design
- Organic plant production
- Production of organic brandy respecting environment principals
- Gardening according to the rules of permaculture or bio gardening

Based on these proposals, a training plan will be developed in the forthcoming period as a part of the capacity-building activities in the region.

4. Performance of detailed baseline assessment of the selected value chains (Evaluation of submitted survey forms) - Meeting with VC operators

Value chain mapping is a process that began in April 2018, where an assessment of the potentials for diversification of economic activities in rural cross-border areas was made through the development of small value chains. The framework for creating a program is related to employment indicators and the creation of additional revenue.

SWG created two sets of questionnaires for selected value chains in order to analyse the capacities of actors for further interventions on the field. For the regions of "Drina-Tara", "Drina-Sava" and "Krs", two value chains are defined: traditional products and rural tourism. The general conclusion is that in the forthcoming period, the development of agricultural products should be further developed and as an added value and placed through tourism, because the processing of agricultural products can only be reduced if added value is created.

All beneficiaries who are interested in getting involved in the project were endorsed with the Code of Practice. The Code of Practice have been prepared on behalf of the Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development (SWG RRD) with the aim of providing guidelines to



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beneficiaries for support to value chain development process based on the valorisation of local resources and the sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage in the cross-border regions of South-eastern Europe. Cross-border regions have been defined and improved within the framework of the application of the Area Based Development Approach (ABD). This statement also includes best management practices in the area of economic development, legislation and environmental protection of involved actors in selected value chains.

During the meeting, a discussion was held on legal regulations in Serbia, B&H and Montenegro regarding traditional fruit and vegetable products and meat and milk (Questionnaire: Are there administrative / legal requirements and obstacles for the processing of agricultural products? How can they be solved ?). In Serbia and B & H there is no regulation on the sale of traditional products, which makes it difficult to market them. The regulation on meat and milk was adopted in 2017.

5. Capacity building event - Coaching stakeholders for planning, organization and implementation of P2P activities

Call for the support to people to people events will be open in the period from 22.03 2019-19.04.2019. Manifestation / activity is a tool for networking and strengthening cooperation, promotion of cross-border regions and their culture, tradition and natural heritage, and contributes to economic development through the development of products and services within selected value chains. A training was organized for all interested stakeholders where the application package consists of the application form and the budget was detail analysed. During the training participants could get acquainted with the list of eligible and noneligible costs, the most common mistakes made in the previous period and where to paid special attention on as well as evaluation/scoring list. 38 participants attended the training session.

Main conclusions from the meeting:

Stakeholder group of the cross-border region "Drina-Tara" supports future work on recognized value chains by creating added value for agricultural products and placement through tourism. A group of stakeholders agreed that further support is needed in education, strengthening of the capacities and promotion of the region, as well as other project activities. The following actions related to investment support within the selected value chains have been proposed:

- Participants support the continuation of SWG activities in the region, through capacity building activities, education and promotion of the region;
- Costs of promotion, visibility, innovative models of sales of traditional products should be included in the criteria for future investment support;
- Partnerships in value chain should be granted with additional points when evaluating applications;
- Additional criteria and solutions represent should include possibility of financing specialized professional services through support of investments such as the engagement of a technologist, chef, etc .;
- Possibility to connect more cross-border regions;
- Financial support for investments and support to people to people events was assessed as relatively modest compering to the interest of the stakeholders.



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