

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

Minutes of the 15th meeting of the Stakeholders Group for the cross - border region of “Sharra”



December 8th, 2016

Shterpce/Sterpce Kosovo*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Time and place:

December 8th, 2016, Restaurant "Kod Lipe" Sterpce, Kosovo*

Participants

The structure of the participants on the 15th Stakeholder Group meeting included 11 members of the stakeholder group of "Sharra" Cross-border region, 6 from the local and central government institutions, 2 from the NGO sector and 2 from the business sector, the Deputy Minister of Ministry of Agriculture of Kosovo*, the SWG Head Office staff and Sharra PMU staff. The meeting was organized and moderated by the SWG Head Office staff and Sharra PMU. The meeting was appointed to be held on this date, since there was an opportunity for the regional stakeholders to also participate in the People-to-People event "Regional Gastronomic Fair" in Shterpce, which was held on the same day.

The full list of participants from the meeting can be found at:

ANNEX 1: List of participants_15th Sharra SHG Meeting 08.12.2016

II. MEETING PROGRAMME:

PROGRAMME

09:30 – 10:00 **Arrival of the participants and welcome gathering**

10:00 – 10:10 **Welcome speech**

Mr. Flamur Sylejmani, Vice-president of "Sharra" Stakeholder Group

Ms. Arjola Domi, Vice-president of "Sharra" Stakeholder Group

Mr. Emrullah Spahiu, Regional Coordinator of "Sharra" Cross-border Region

10:10 – 10:20 **Introduction to the programme**

Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of "Sharra" Cross-border Region

10:20 – 11:30 **People to People actions in the "Sharra" cross-border region**

Elaboration of finished and upcoming People to People events in the "Sharra" cross-border region in the period October - December, 2016:

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



- Kukes Handcraft Fair
- Regional Gastronomic Fair
- Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Fair

Mr. Emrullah Spahiu, Regional Coordinator of "Sharra" Cross-border Region
Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of "Sharra" Cross-border Region

11:30 – 11:50 **Coffee Break**

11:50 – 12:10 **Overview of the general and future activities related to the implementation of ABDA in the "Sharra" cross-border region**

Discussion on finished and upcoming calls for project proposals in the "Sharra" cross-border region, with an overview of IPA CBC

Mr. Emrullah Spahiu, Regional Coordinator of "Sharra" Cross-border Region
Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of "Sharra" Cross-border Region

12:10 – 12:20 **Discussion and adoption of the "Sharra" SHG Operational Protocol and Rules of Procedure**

Mr. Emrullah Spahiu, Regional Coordinator of "Sharra" Cross-border Region

12:20 – 12:40 **Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project**

Mr. Darko Buzarovski, Field Officer of "Sharra" Cross-border Region

12:40 – 13:00 **Conclusions**

13:00 **Lunch and visit of the "Regional Gastronomic Fair" in Strpce**

Departure of the participants

III. MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The regular 15th Stakeholders Group meeting aimed at presenting the ongoing and future activities related to the implementation of the ABD approach in the Sharra cross-border region, update on the new developments in the region and information regarding the foreseen activities under the project "Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration", with the main focus on the results from the second call of the ABD Grant scheme in Sharra CBR and the People-to-People reports from the realised events, as well as upcoming events in the region.

The topics of the meeting were:

- Elaboration of finished and upcoming People to People events in the "Sharra" cross-border region in the period October - December, 2016;



- Overview of the general and future activities related to the implementation of ABDA in the “Sharra” cross-border region;
- Discussion and adoption of the “Sharra” SHG Operational Protocol and Rules of Procedure;
- Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project;
- Visit of the People to People event “Regional Gastronomic Fair” in Strpce.

Minutes of the meeting

The meeting was opened with a welcome speech by Mr. Flamur Sulejmani Vice-President of the Stakeholder Group of the “Sharra”, who welcomed and thanked the participants for their presence, by emphasising the importance of the regional cooperation for overall development of the region. Also, Mr. Sylejmani expressed the support of the overall activities of SWG and the “Sharra” SHG in the region.

On behalf of PMU office in “Sharra”, the Regional Coordinator Mr. Emrullah Spahiu welcomed all participants and thanked for the participation. He once again stressed the importance of the regular stakeholders group meetings and the importance of the stakeholder’s active role in the regional initiatives and activities. He informed the Group for the successfully closed second call of the ABD Grant scheme by receiving in total 14 applications and reporting about the realised and ongoing People to People events in Sharra.

Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of the “Sharra” cross-border region, presented in details the program of the meeting, focusing on each session and the issues to be discussed.

Session I

Elaboration of finished and upcoming People to People events in the "Sharra" cross-border region in the period October - December, 2016

The first part of the presentation from Mr. Emrullah Spahiu was focused on informing the stakeholders regarding the People to People events already supported, but also on the upcoming events in the Sharra cross-border region. During this period, from October to December 2016, the "Kukes Handicraft Fair" has been organized on the 23rd of November in Kukes, Albania. The SHG was also informed on the upcoming events, such as the "Regional Gastronomic Fair" in Shterpce, Kosovo*, on the same date as the SHG meeting, and the "Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Fair" which will be held on the 21st December in Kukes, Albania.



This session continued by presenting the other preapproved events/manifestations. The presentation was focused on the application process for local subsidies within the People to People programme, by introduction on how the whole process needs to be followed and which are the deadlines that should be respected by the applicants.

The discussion was developed upon different questions from the Regional Coordinator to the representatives of the organisations which have already preapproved People to People events, present at the meeting. Regarding the event “Integrated tourism offer in Zupa”, the representative of the NGO Agro Red Gold, Mr. Ismet Osmani, explained the reasons for the delays on the postponed submission of the application because of the busy period and harvest season in which the organisation is involved. Mr. Bekim Bytyqi, the representative of Sharri Eco Tours explained that they will submit the application in the deadline given by the SWG. Also, for the preapproved event “Cheese Day” in Dragash the application should be submitted in the respective deadline.

It has been decided that the latest date for the submission of the applications for the preapproved events should be 23rd December, 2016, in order to be able to start with the planning procedures or to consider other events within the program.

Session II

Overview of the general and future activities related to the implementation of ABDA in the “Sharra” cross-border region

During this session the Regional Manager and Coordinator stressed the importance of the integrated economic development as a platform for cooperation between the local population, business sector, farmer’s community and rural community actors in the cross-border region of Sharra, by organizing joint actions, sharing information on resources and marketing of the joint offers.

The accent of the discussion in this session was on the finished and upcoming calls for project proposals in the “Sharra” cross-border region, with an overview of IPA CBC. In this context, there were mentioned the possibilities for opening of the IPA CBC calls in the region, as well as the call within the IPA CBC Program Macedonia-Albania 2014-2020, which was closed in November, 2016.



Session III

Discussion and adoption of the “Sharra” SHG Operational Protocol and Rules of Procedure

The third session continued with a short overview by Ms. Bojana Jovanovska regarding the Operational Protocol and Rules of Procedure of the “Sharra” Stakeholder Group. It was pointed out that the Operational Protocol has been discussed during the previous SHG meetings and it needs to be adopted. The members were asked to give their final feedback regarding additional comment for the latest version of the Operational Protocol, and since no comments followed, the document was adopted. Also, for the future function or any changes needed in the Operational Protocol it will be discussed and approved by stakeholders during the regular SHG meetings.

Session IV

Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project

In the fourth session, Mr. Darko Buzarovski presented some unofficial statistical data regarding the application process for the second call of the ABD Grant scheme in the cross-border region of Sharra. He presented some figures regarding the project applications, mentioning that the expectations for the second call in the cross-border region of Sharra have been achieved. In total there were fourteen (14) project applications submitted, from which eleven (11) project applications from Kosovo*, two (2) from Albania and one (1) from Macedonia. He presented the current state, mentioning that in the cross-border region of Sharra there have been fourteen projects submitted in total, mentioning the municipalities from which the applicants were, in the second call for application.

During this session the discussion initiated by the stakeholders was mostly related to questions related to the upcoming process of evaluation and when to expect to be informed for the projects which are selected and approved for financing under the ABD Grant scheme.

Mr. Darko Buzarovski explained the whole process of evaluation of the submitted applications, starting from Analysis 1, Analysis 2, on - spot control and the final decision, which is expected to be finished latest by the beginning of March, 2017.



Session V

Conclusions and future activities

In the last session the following conclusions were drawn:

- Sharra PMU and SWG are serving and will continue to serve as an information point where members of the group (SHG) will obtain the necessary information on new calls for proposals and programs. They will continue to support the preparation of applications for different call for proposals and will provide information on possible partners for the active IPA CBC programs in the region and other open calls;
- The deadlines for submitting the full applications and reporting documents for the People-to-People events should be respected, according to the contracts and deadlines underlined with the contracts;
- The deadline for submitting the applications for the preapproved People to People events is 23rd of December, 2016;
- The Operational Protocol and Rules of Procedure of the “Sharra” Stakeholder Group has been adopted;
- It was suggested that the next stakeholder group meeting for the cross-border region of “Sharra” could be organized in the Municipality of Kukes, Albania.

Prepared by:

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