

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

**Minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Stakeholders Group for the cross - border region of “Sharra”**



**June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Municipality of Jegunovce, Macedonia**



## I. INTRODUCTION

### Time and place:

June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Restaurant Antonio, Municipality of Jegunovce, Republic of Macedonia

### Participants:

The structure of participants in the 10th SHG meeting included 24 members and PMU staff. The meeting was organized and facilitated by the staff of the Project Management Unit with the assistance of the President and the two Vice President of the SHG for the “Sharra” Cross – Border Region. The list of participants for the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Stakeholder Group for the cross-border region of "Sharra" is attached as Annex 1.

## II. MEETING PROGRAMME:

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

11:00 – 11:10 Welcome speech

Mr. Toni Kocevski, Mayor of Municipality of Jegunovce

Ms. Irena Shahu – President of the Stakeholders group for “Sharra”

Mr. Sreten Kocevski – Vice-president of the Stakeholders group for “Sharra”

Mr. Flamur Sylejmani – Vice-president of the Stakeholders group for “Sharra”

11:10 – 11:20 Introduction to the programme

Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Regional Manager of “Sharra” Cross-border Region

11:20 – 11:40 General achievements related to the preparations for implementation of ABDA in the WB countries

Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Regional Manager of “Sharra” Cross-border Region

11:40 – 12:00 Presentation of the project on ABDA implementation – 3rd phase

Main outputs, project activities, milestones and general timeframe

Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Regional Manager of “Sharra” Cross-border Region

12:00 – 12:30 Coffee Break

12:30 – 12:50 Future activities related to implementation of ABDA in Sharra cross-border region



Discussion on possible support on "People to People" actions in the "Sharra" region

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

12:50 – 13:10 Discussion about project proposals for Integrated Economic Development and role of "Sharra" Project Management Unit

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

13:10 – 13:30 Discussion about nomination on SHG members (affirmation of current members and involvement of new members)

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

13:30 – 14:00 Conclusions and future activities

14:00 – 15:00 Lunch break

15:00 Departure

### **III. MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

The regular 10<sup>th</sup> Stakeholders' Group Meeting aimed at presenting the achievements within the previous 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the project and presentation and discussion of the upcoming activities that will be performed in "Sharra" region in the new phase.

#### **Minutes of the meeting**

The meeting was opened with welcome speech by Mr. Toni Kocevski, Mayor of Municipality of Jegunovce, who welcomes and thanked all the participants for their presence, wishing fruitful collaboration among the stakeholders and successful continuation of the project.

Ms. Irena Shahu, President of the stakeholders group for "Sharra" Region, Mr. Sreten Kocevski and Mr. Flamur Sylejmani, Vice Presidents of stakeholders group for "Sharra" Region, welcomed all the participants and stressed the importance of the establishment and consolidation of a stable stakeholders group, pleasure of being involved in such important activities for the region and also successful cooperation during the following phase.

Mr. Damjan Surlevski presented in details the program of the meeting focusing on each session and the issues to be discussed.

#### **Session 1**

### **General achievements related to the preparations for implementation of ABDA in the WB countries**



The session began with the presentation of Mr. Damjan Surlevski, who thanked the stakeholder group members for the active participation, and gave an overview of the implementation of the second phase of ABDA project focusing on the performed activities. The participants were informed on the progress and actions undertaken, their importance for the region, and the involvement of stakeholders group. He also presented the conducted activities on capacity building and the implementation of grand schemes mainly focused on Drina-Tara and Drina – Sava Regions.

Part of the presentation was also focused on promotion activities for the Region such as “People to People” activities.

During this session short presentation was also conducted on the functioning of the Project Management Unit, its structure and its supportive role for the “Sharra” stakeholders group.

## Session 2

### **Presentation of the project on ABDA implementation – 3<sup>rd</sup> phase. Main outputs, project activities, milestones and general timeframe**

During this session were elaborated the main objectives and activities of the project "Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of the Western Balkan countries in the EU integration process".

The project aims at fostering regional cooperation among institutions and stakeholders in the agriculture and food sector, as well as facilitation of the process of balanced territorial development of the Western Balkan countries in the progression towards EU integration.

Emphasising that the main objective of the project is to strengthen the networking and cooperation among the public institutions and stakeholders, as well as with other relevant regional bodies in order to accelerate the EU accession process of the WB candidate countries and potential candidate countries in the field of agriculture and rural development. During the presentation it was also described the general approach of the project that is capacity building of stakeholders and support for the preparation of applications for calls for proposals. Other mentioned milestones were the establishment of short value chains, lack of grants during the third phase, analysis of the situation in 3 additional Cross – border Regions as well as the SWG support on political dialog among the relevant institutions.

At the end of the presentation, once again it was emphasized the role of the Project Management Unit on facilitation of the project ideas and initiatives from the SHG based on the ABD approach, targeting potential donors, management of activities in the Cross–Border Region and the development of info database and knowledge sharing on the existing supporting instruments available for the SHG members.

During this session also was presented new project initiative involving “Sharra” region - „Sustainable Waste Management in South Eastern Europe “that should start in the upcoming period. The SHG members will be additionally informed about the kick-off meeting which is tentatively planned for end of August.



The goal of this project is to assess and develop effective schemes for integrated management of solid waste that is environmentally effective and economically affordable in order to eliminate adverse impacts on the environment and support the ecological and socio-economic development of the cross-border rural and coastal areas in the SEE countries.

The project will support the local authorities and stakeholders in establishing a dialogue platform for assessing and developing effective management schemes for integrated solid waste management in the regional cross-border rural and coastal areas. In order to attain policy and operational means which are best and meet the social, economic and environmental conditions of the involved municipalities and countries.

### Session 3

#### **Future activities related to implementation of ABDA in “Sharra” cross-border region - Discussion on possible support on "People to People" actions in the "Sharra" region**

This session was moderated by Mr. Emrullah Spahiu who made a short overview of the organized events under P2P program in the previous phase. Afterwards he invited the participants in an open discussion about possible support of the "People to People" program.

SHG members expressed their interest to apply on the P2P program with events on the following topics:

- Agricultural cooperatives;
- Honey and bee products;
- Beans day;
- Traditional pelivans festival;
- Traditional gastronomic fairs;
- Raspberry days;
- Sharra chestnut;
- Mountaineering events in Sharra;

After the elaboration of the events, the PMU staff explained that the funds in this phase are more restricted and the applications must take into consideration financial contribution and involvement as much as possible partners/stakeholders from all countries in the region. Also once more it was emphasized that the application under P2P program should be submitted at least 40 days before the planned date for the event/manifestation.

At the end of the discussion it was suggested that many of the ideas should not be considered for support only through the "People to People" program, but they could be even developed into



larger projects that can be applied on other programs such as IPA CBC programme or other active donors in the region.

#### **Session 4**

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

During the discussion it was recommended that members of the stakeholder group can communicate with the PMU by suggesting other potential actors that can become part of the group. Also after the new administrative territorial division in Albania other municipality representatives can be significant potential members.

#### **Session 5**

##### **Discussion about project proposals for Integrated Economic Development and role of “Sharra” Project Management Unit**

In various discussions conducted during this session it was stressed the importance of cooperation among the members of the group in order to exchange information and also to participate on all events that are organized by the SHG members.

Participants in the meeting highlighted the importance of cooperation in applying for various project proposals on CBC programs, promoting partnership, capacity building, organization of round tables as well as the organization of meetings with potential partners for the development of ideas for preparing applications under different calls.

New territorial and administrative changes in Albania and the expansion of new structures will engage the Project Management Unit to contact the mayors in order to elaborate the work of the SHG and to establish baseline for new partnerships.

SWG will also provide the necessary linkages on political level which is realized annually at ministerial level and continue with lobbying activities for obtaining additional funds for implementation of the ABDA approach in “Sharra” region.

At the end of the session it was concluded that the Project Management Unit should support the ideas developed in the previous phase and facilitate new initiatives in the region for implementation of new joint projects.

#### **Session 6**

##### **Conclusions and future activities**

In the last session there were drawn the following conclusions:

- PMU office and SWG will serve as an information point where members of the group (SHG) will obtain the necessary information on new calls for proposals and programs. PMU will support the preparation of project applications build up on the developed projects from the previous phase and will provide the information on possible partners eligible for CBC program;



- “Sharra” PMU will cooperate with the stakeholders group for the creation of a database regarding all events and manifestations that are organized in the region. The main goal is each member to be familiarized with the events and possibility of extending them from local to regional level and higher involvement of the SHG members on this events;
- “Sharra” PMU will also facilitate contacts and meetings with business entities and tour operators in order to find common goals and to create integrated tour packages for the region.
- If possible, additional capacity building activities for drafting projects and project cycle management, should be planned and organized for the SHG members;
- PMU office will contact the new structures in the Albanian municipalities that will be established after the new territorial administrative division and their representatives will be invited to attend SHG meetings in order to be introduced with the work done in “Sharra” region;
- PMU will send portfolio form to each member individually and should be filled with information related to implemented projects, planned activities and active field of interest of each SHG member. This will speed up the process of idea matching and establishing partnerships for the future project calls under CBC;
- In collaboration with members of the stakeholders group, new potential stakeholders will be identified (preferably NGO’s working in the tourism or sustainable business development sectors), while the members that have been inactive for a longer period, or have changed their positions will not be contacted in the future or will be asked for appropriate replacement from the relevant organization/institution.
- Application under P2P program should be submitted at least 40 days before the planned date for the event/manifestation and due to the limited funds in this phase, and the applicants should provide financial contribution and involvement as much as possible partners/stakeholders from all countries in the region.

### Prepared by:

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