



Newsletter N°4

June 2020

Let's Do Things Better Together!!!



Through the fourth Newsletter of the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020, we will present to you how We Can Do Things Better Together and create our future!

Despite the circumstances caused by the Covid-19 virus pandemic, we have consistently provided support to the beneficiaries of projects contracted within the 1st Call of the Programme. During the first half of 2020, monitoring visits to projects that are in the process of implementation were conducted. Monitoring visits were held via Skype, under the motto “stay safe through digital communication”.

Joint Technical Secretariat staff communicated with projects' staff on regular basis in order to secure smooth implementation of supported projects, as well as to provide assistance in procurement, visibility and other project related activities.

www.cbcsrb-mne.org

www.facebook.com/PrekogranicniProgramSRBMNE

www.cbc-srb-mne.euzatebe.rs/en/

This Programme is funded by the European Union



Activities aimed at integrated management of medicinal plants through the PORALIST project

By the end of January 2020, within the scope of PORALIST project funded through the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020, Inter-municipal Working Group for protection of medicinal plants and biodiversity held the second joint meeting. This cross-border body brings together relevant representatives of public, private and civil sector from Prijepolje and Bijelo Polje who focused their efforts on integrated management of medicinal plants, in accordance with the provisions of Memorandum of Cooperation by which two local governments confirmed their intention to coordinate activities in this sector. The membership of this joint Working Group has been elected, thus providing precondition for future initiatives and sustainability of the PORALIST project.

The great interest expressed by local actors in the medicinal plants and biodiversity preservation in general, resulted in their active participation in recognizing challenges, chances and opportunities in the sector. This segment is crucial for the next phases of strategic planning, especially for defining vision, goals and measures of the joint Action plan for conservation and protection of biodiversity in two cross-border municipalities, which will ultimately be the basis for future projects and activities not only in the field of environment, but also rural development as a whole, through integration with other development priorities in border region. With an active contribution and engagement of all participants, the SWOT analysis was definitely shaped at the third meeting held in Prijepolje on 1st of June 2020.



Although implementation of the PORALIST project was almost stopped due to emergency measures caused by Covid-19 virus, since it was not possible to organize joint events and planned activities in the field, the project team worked intensively on preparing practical publications on measures and techniques of medicinal herbs collecting, analysing the value chain in the medicinal plants sector with specific business opportunity profiles for cultivation economically the most profitable herbs. During the state of emergency, base for the

creation of the PORALIST platform Regional Observatory and various contents were set, with a lot of useful information on medicinal plants intended for a variety of users from this area, but also more widely. After field research that was continued in June by experts of the Institute Dr Josif Pančić in both Serbia and Montenegro, a key segment about the geographic distribution of medicinal species in this area will be available, thus providing conditions for the platform to become fully operational and visible to the public.

At the beginning of June, a training for the local population was held in Prijepolje on the topic of commercialization of medicinal plants. The training was attended by representatives of companies engaged in the purchase and processing of medicinal plants, which offered cooperation proposals to local residents and thus contributing to mitigation of existing problems, which are evident in spite of great plant potential. Field research and workshops will be conducted during the summer, in parallel with study visits which will serve for the creation and development of tourist products based on medicinal plants intended for modern forms of tourist demand.



Primary schools equipped for heating with renewable energy

Within the project “Reducing the impact of local communities in the cross-border region of Serbia and Montenegro on climate challenges - WE CAN” excellent cooperation with the primary school “Đura Jakšić” and secondary agricultural and chemical school “Dr Đorđe Radić” from Kraljevo, “Salko Aljković” elementary school from Pljevlja and “Radomir Mitrović” elementary school from Berane was established.

In the previous period, the cooperation was focused on the practical implementation of measures that replace the use of fossil fuels as an energy source with renewable energy sources. This approach thus contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emission, as well as pollution at the local and thus global level.

In the primary school “Salko Aljković” in the satellite school in Guka (Pljevlja), a boiler that used coal as a fuel was replaced with a pellet boiler as part of the project. The same approach was used in the elementary school “Đura Jakšić” in Konarevo (Kraljevo) in the satellite school in Mataruga, where fuel oil has been used so far as a heating energy source, and the project has enabled the replacement of the boiler to use pellets in the future.

In addition to measures aimed at replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources, ie. wood pellets, in four schools (Elementary school “Radomir Mitrović” from Berane, Elementary school “Salko Aljković” from Pljevlja, Elementary school “Raška” from Raška and Agricultural-chemical school “Dr Đorđe Radić” from Kraljevo) in the cross-border area of Serbia-Montenegro four small photovoltaic systems have been installed for the production of solar electricity with a total power of 1.92kW (individual power in each school is 480W). The installed photovoltaic systems produce electricity that is used in the Green Cabinets in the mentioned schools.

The realized activities have contributed to a significant impact on the protection of the environment through the reduction of pollution, to contribute to the educational process through the practical application of knowledge and renewable energy sources. When it comes to the positive effects on the environment, it is necessary to point out the data on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in these schools. Prior to the implementation of project activities, these schools emitted about 110.3 tons of CO₂ annually, and after the installation of pellet boilers and small photovoltaic systems, CO₂ emissions will be reduced to 45.3 tons annually. In the next period, it is planned to install a 50kW solar power plant in the “Toplana” in Kraljevo, which will further reduce the emission of harmful gases by about 39 tons per year.



The Corona pandemic and the introduction of a state of emergency in both countries had a significant impact on the project, especially on a set of activities aimed at educating and informing young people and citizens about renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and possible solutions to reduce climate changes.



New equipment for weather forecast provided within the project “Let’s be Prepared”

Despite many obstacles caused by new Covid-19 virus NGO FORS Montenegro managed to procure new equipment for weather prediction and numerical early warning for the Institute of Hydrometeorology and Seismology of Montenegro within the project “Let’s be Prepared”.

The aim of the project is to strengthen capacities of institutions and services from Montenegro and Serbia dealing with protection and rescue for prevention and mitigation of floods and fires, as well as to raise the awareness of the local population in the cross-border area on disaster risk reduction. The project is implemented in partnership with the Sector for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Interior of Serbia and in cooperation with the Directorate for Emergency Management of Montenegro and municipal protection and rescue units in Montenegro.

New equipment whose value is €19,350 enables faster and more efficient weather forecast and hydrologic prediction, as well as to the improvement of the early warning system related to natural hazards.



The eighteen-month project is implemented in Montenegro in following municipalities: Berane, Bijelo Polje, Žabljak, Nikšić, Petnjica, Pljevlja and Šavnik in Montenegro and in Republic of Serbia in municipalities of Novi Pazar, Raška, Sjenica and Tutin.

Other activities envisaged within the project include procurement of equipment and vehicles for institutions and services engaged in protection and rescue, cross-border trainings, seminars and demonstration exercises on topics related to protection and rescue in case of fires and floods, trainings for Hydro meteorological services staff, international conference on disaster risk reduction, awareness raising campaign on the risks of disasters, preventive measures and protection and rescue activities.



Qualified in-home caregivers provided assistance to the elderly during the pandemic

Within the project “Skilled women’s workforce for better future”, implemented by the Home for Elderly, Bijelo Polje and the Center for Social Work Novi Pazar, during January and February 2020, trainings for unemployed women for the profile of in-home caregiver were held. The goal of the training, which lasted 33 days, was to acquire the knowledge and skills required during the visits of households in the field. The working practice for a 40 qualified in-home caregivers began in March 2020 and lasted for three months.

Considering that an emergency situation caused by the Covid-19 virus occurred during the period of work practice, the participants of the work practice in Novi Pazar continued their engagement, with the use of complete protective equipment. This provided great assistance to the most vulnerable category of the population, the oldest citizens.



“On behalf of my twenty colleagues, I want to say that we have gained a life experience through this project. I hope that we managed to provide adequate help and support to our elderly citizens during the difficult period of the pandemic”, stated in-home caregiver Branka Dorović.

According to the project coordinator Emina Koničanin, “Skilled women’s workforce for better future”, is the first cross-border cooperation project implemented jointly by the Center for Social Work Novi Pazar and the Home for the Elderly Bijelo Polje.

“It turned out that this project was very good and that it was realized at the

right time. Trained in-home caregivers have the best recommendations for doing this job”, said Koničanin.

“The cross-border cooperation project is a real example of useful spending of EU IPA funds” said the director of the Center for Social Work in Novi Pazar, Adnan Dizdarević.

The participants of the working practice in the Public Institution Home for the Elderly Bijelo Polje temporarily stopped working on the basis of the Order for taking temporary measures to prevent the introduction into the country, suppress and prevent the transmission of the new Corona virus of the Ministry of Health, Montenegro.





Nine companies opened in Rožaje and Sjenica through the project “Craftsman”

The Municipality Rožaje and Municipality of Sjenica, in cooperation with two Vocational Schools have come together and jointly almost finished implementation of the “Craftsman” project that supported creation of nine new businesses across two cross-border municipalities, as part of the IPA CBC Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020, financed by the European Union.

The “Craftsman” project, worth €193.466, builds on the growing interest for self-employment among youth and is designed to ensure they newly opened businesses can be integrated into sustainable parts of the local and national economies. The project generated new jobs for vulnerable parts of the population including youth and women by equipping them with the support they need in terms of business knowledge, start-up support, trainings and mentoring services. Additionally the project provided specialised tools for craftsmanship to Secondary Schools in Sjenica and Rožaje to be used by students and interested potential entrepreneurs.

Amela Kovačević Kalender, the Project Manager, said: “The Municipality of Rožaje is proud to further strengthen its support to local economic development, having strong focus on the job creation, entrepreneurship and further support to local population in order to improve their quality of life. We plan to continuously provide advisory and technical support to potential new entrepreneurs through opened Local Office for Support to Entrepreneurship and based on adopted Local Strategy for Entrepreneurship Development that will launch new innovative businesses as well as traditional ones. Even though not originally planned our common CB Project generated nine new businesses in Sjenica and Rožaje Municipality. The businesses opened include hairdressing, rugs and car interior washing, beauty and massage salons, crafts, soap production, sewing, car body maintenance etc. Our aim is to encourage people to pursue their ideas and to show that even small initiatives can have significant impact on local economy.”

Micro, small and medium enterprises play a crucial role in employing a diverse workforce and income generation for local communities both in Montenegro and Serbia. The project supported collaboration among Secondary Vocational Schools from target Municipalities under leadership of local authorities with an aim to renew interest for traditional businesses like crafts production. The project provided support to more than 90 individuals that were directly involved in trainings and mentoring program, with expectations to have more than 100 of beneficiaries by the end of project.





Trainings for Workers in the Tourism Industry

Municipalities of Raška and Plužine organized trainings for employed and potential tourist workers within the project “Increasing employability opportunities for textile and tourism industry in the CBC area”. Twelve training modules were held for workers in the tourism industry in Raška and sixteen training modules for the same target group in Plužine. Also, in the municipality of Plužine, sixteen training modules were conducted for members of target groups who want to start a business within the tourism industry.

After the declaration of a state of emergency due to the Covid-19 virus in both Montenegro and Serbia, both municipalities began to organize online trainings for members of the target groups in cooperation with service providers.

The first set of online trainings was held in Raška during May 2020 for workers in the tourism industry. The training was attended by 17 participants and the topic of the training was “Promotion of tourism via the Internet”. The training aroused great interest among the participants due to the changes in the way of promotion of tourism and tourist products that will occur in the future, mainly due to the adjustment to the conditions of travel and accommodation due to the consequences of Covid-19 virus.



An online training for workers in the tourism industry was also organized in the municipality of Plužine. The topic of the training was determined in accordance with the new circumstances caused by the Covid-19 virus. The lecturers focused on finding new models in the functioning of the tourism industry in the environment as it exists today. New opportunities in the promotion of tourist potentials and a new approach in attracting guests mainly from Montenegro and the countries of the region have been proposed.

The main objectives of the project are to increase the capacity of stakeholders for new opportunities in the textile and tourism industry and to promote new employment opportunities and to inform potential employees and employers.





Results of the project “Rehabilitation of illegal waste on the river Lim and rising awareness of its harmfulness” presented

In a time of increasing concern about the environment and in the process of negotiations for accession to the European Union of the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro, Secretariat for Sustainable Development of the Municipality of Bijelo Polje and the Municipality of Priboj, in cooperation with Utility “Service” Priboj and NGO Euromost, presented the achieved results at press conferences in Bijelo Polje and Priboj, on 26th and 28th February 2020, of the project “Rehabilitation of illegal waste dumps on the river Lim and raising awareness on its harmfulness”.

During introductory speech, Deputy of the Municipality of Bijelo Polje Ernad Suljević said that preserved and healthy environment, is a prerequisite for the well-being and prosperity of any society.

“On that basis, I can state that you have made a significant contribution to environmental protection and regulation of the riverbed of the river Lim in municipalities Priboj and Bijelo Polje in which this cross-border project was implemented. Strategic orientation of Montenegro is to join the European Union and points to a whole set of international standards that must be met when it comes to the environment” said Deputy Suljević and pointed out that the Municipality of Bijelo Polje through the implementation of the construction of wastewater treatment plant contribute to a permanent solution of the problem of pollution of the river Lim.



The project objectives were to establish a sustainable model of environmental protection and provision of conditions for changing habits of the population about the proper disposal of waste. Partners in addition to removal 6 illegal landfills in Bijelo Polje and Priboj, purchased containers for solid waste, set up video surveillance and outdoor furniture on cleaned locations, purchased laboratory equipment for testing water quality and implemented a campaign on the importance of preserving the environment through which a free SOS line was established for reporting illegal waste disposal. The project lasted for 14 months and was completed on 29th February 2020.





Promotion of the “Bins” project through video clip on proper solid waste management

Despite the fact that Covid-19 pandemic was ongoing, and almost two months of prohibition of travel and gathering in Gusinje and Sjenica, target area of the project, the project „Bins“ managed to finish recording, production and broadcasting of promotional video.

The aim of the promotional video is to widen the number of people that are aware of the Project's objectives and consequently to increase the number of them in local environmental actions and waste management activities. Additionally the video clip promoted good neighbourly relations and cross border cooperation among Montenegro and Republic of Serbia.

The promotional short video-clip visualises the activities of the cooperation between Municipality of Gusinje and Public Utility Company “Vrela”, Sjenica within the project “Bringing in sustainable waste management - BinS”. The audience gets an idea about the proper solid waste management, legislation and contribution of the interventions financed by the European Union within the IPA CBC Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020. The video will be presented to a broad audience through web site of the Municipality of Gusinje and through their Youtube channel.



Additionally, the project team in Gusinje and Sjenica worked on the signing the Memorandum of Understanding with local private and public institutions on joint actions related care on environment. Such future cooperation is part of the public awareness campaign aiming at increased level of awareness towards environmental issues.



Newsletter N°4

June 2020

Let's Do Things Better Together!!!



www.evropa.gov.rs

www.mei.gov.rs

www.eu.me

www.kei.gov.me

www.cbcsrb-mne.org

www.facebook.com/PrekogranicniProgramSRBMNE

www.cbc-srb-mne.euzatebe.rs/en/

This Programme is funded by the European Union

The contents of this Newsletter are the sole responsibility of structures in charge of implementation of the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020 and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union.