

“Area Based Development Approach (ABDA) in the Western Balkans”

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9th “Drina-Sava” SHG Meeting
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The project is financed by:



Overview of the process

2006-2010

- Identification and pre-assessment of situation in WB cross-border areas – done by SWG

2010-2011

- Identification of potentials – JRC study financed by DG AGRI

2010-2011

- Assessment of SWG capacities – financed by DG ELARG

2011-2012

- Preparation of a Proposal for an Area Based Development in the Western Balkans - financed by DG ELARG , implemented by SWG

2012-2013

- “Preparation for implementation of the Area Based Development (ABD) Approach in the Western Balkans – 1st phase” - financed by DG ELARG , implemented by SWG

2014-2015

- “Preparation for implementation of the Area Based Development (ABD) Approach in the Western Balkans – 2nd phase” - financed by DG ELARG , implemented by SWG

Approach

First

- Instruction to make baseline study, strategy and action plan (Strategic support framework) for each of the cross-border areas;
- Capacity building to set up the implementing arrangements;
- Build project pipeline based on set priorities;



Approach

Second

- Instruction to prepare outline of the future concept of the territorial and regional cooperation implementing ABD approach (as a basis for preparation of IPA multi-country strategy and IPA implementing regulations;
- Instruction to make ‘comprehensive ABDA programming documents;
- Criticism for overlapping with CBC, hence the focus on more rural development type actions and economic development;
- Instruction to” redefine the project proposals” with economic development aspects focusing on job creation, income generation, creation of innovative products and services etc.



Outcomes

1. Continuation of preparatory activities for implementation of ABDA in the Western Balkan countries

- The local partnership in the form of local structure – **Stakeholder Group (SHG)** is operational in the “ Drina - Tara” , “Drina - Sava”, “Prespa” and “Sharra” cross-border regions;
- Programmes for economic development** through intensive cross-border cooperation in “ Drina - Tara” , “Drina - Sava”, “Prespa” and “Sharra” cross-border regions have been prepared in close cooperation with SHG and the documents are delivered to EC DG ELARG;
- Project Management Unit – Secretariats of SHG** for coordination of the activities on a regional level are established in all four regions. All offices have two staff members: Regional Coordinator and Technical Assistant;
- Operational Protocols** and rules and procedures for functioning of the SHG are developed and accepted by the Stakeholder Groups in both regions;



Outcomes

1. Continuation of preparatory activities for implementation of ABDA in the Western Balkan countries

- **General Communication and Publicity Strategy and Action Plan for ABDA** grant scheme is developed;
- **SWG Manual of Rules and Procedures** is up-graded in preparatory phase for 4-pillar assessment and accreditation.
- **Set of promotional material** (general promotional brochure, routes and attractions, gastronomy, accommodation and dining ..) have been prepared;
- **Eighteen international people to people actions** for promotion of natural, cultural heritage and tradition are supported (e.g. Raspberry Day, Drina-Sava- Lim Regatta, Pet – recycling event, etc.);



Outcomes

2. Test in practice the ABD with implementation of integrated economic development approach in the “Drina - Tara” and “Drina - Sava” cross-border regions

- **Call for proposals**

- Guidance for beneficiaries
- Manual of procedures for evaluation and selection of grant beneficiaries
- Publicity action plan



Outcomes

2. Implementation of integrated economic development approach in the “Drina - Tara” and “Drina - Sava” cross-border regions

Goal of the grant scheme is to strengthen integrated economic development of the regions of “Drina - Tara” and “Drina - Sava” by **supporting entrepreneurial initiatives focusing on strengthening touristic offer of the region and improving production chains of agricultural, food and craft products, improvement of tourism services** through integrated projects **fostering cooperation among operators in the value chain.**

Additional activities:

- Support to promotion of the integrated economic development actions
- Capacity building of grant beneficiaries (in cooperation with FAO)



ABDA pilot grant scheme

- **First Call** for proposals was opened April 7th and closed May 8th, 2014. After the third stage of the evaluation, as well as ex-ante field control it has been decided **two projects to be financed**.
- **Second Call for applications** opened in the period July 7th, 2014 - August 15th, 2014.
- **Seven project proposals are approved**, three from “Drina-Sava” and four from “Drina-Tara” cross-border regions.
- In total **9 projects approved** which involve **28 partners** with budget allocation of **147.128,00 EUR**





AREA BASED DEVELOPMENT FUTURE PERSPECTIVE



INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE

MULTI-COUNTRY INDICATIVE STRATEGY PAPER (2014-2020)

ANALYSIS OF THE NEEDS AND CAPACITIES

- *“.. Regional cooperation and exchanging best practices are an efficient way of promoting rural development in particular in border areas which need to be better interconnected with the neighbouring regions. **These challenges would be best tackled following a comprehensive approach based for instance on the concept of Area Based Development.**”*



THE OVERALL DESIGN OF HORIZONTAL AND REGIONAL PRE- ACCESSION ASSISTANCE

- **Regional structures and networks** are expected to make a major contribution to the development of the beneficiaries in particular in the following sectors:

...

- ***Competitiveness and Innovation*** including trade (*Central European Free Trade Agreement, CEFTA, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group, SWG*);



EU ASSISTANCE DURING THE PERIOD 2014-2020

Regional structures and networks

- **Needs and capacities:**

“..An all-inclusive approach to the socio-economic development of the beneficiaries would include the less favoured local communities in border areas. “



Regional structures and networks

- **Objectives, results, actions and indicators:**
 - ” .. **Assistance** will also be **provided to facilitate** the promotion of Area Based Development (**ABD**) projects in a limited number of marginalised rural border regions.

- **Types of financing:**

Service contracts and/or grant agreements to support specific networks such as SWG



Territorial cooperation

- **Needs:**

“.. There is a particular need to foster sustainable local development and increasing the prosperity of people and communities in remote and rural border areas which are often lagging behind economically. Over the years, border regions have turned into marginalised peripheries, where access to markets is limited, knowledge and technology transfer from the core difficult, and demographic indicators deteriorating. However, in many of those areas a considerable potential exists, which, if unleashed, would reverse the trend and lead to an increase in rural prosperity. Sustainable development of targeted border areas would foster employment and contribute to furthering regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations.”



Territorial Cooperation

- **Objectives, results, actions and indicators**

“..Projects prepared under the **Area Based Development (ABD)** approach to facilitate sustainable growth in defined geographical areas in cross-border regions in the Western Balkans, in particular rural areas characterized by specific complex development problems, **will be considered for funding under cross-border cooperation programmes.**”



ABDA Future perspective

- Letter from Commissioners Ciolosh and Fule to NIPACs and Operating Structures and Contracting Authorities of IPA Cross-Border Cooperation programmes

“...projects prepared under the Area Based Development (ABD) methodology will be particularly relevant to facilitate the economic development of border areas. Priorities and actions to be taken for this local, community-led integrated approach, have already been identified in four areas in the region.”



Current status

- Fundamental changes in the IPA management approach towards large-scale projects or funding operations through large Financing Institutes and Facilities.
- Programming documents deemed redundant because of no funding of the actions defined in the Programmes for economic development and grants schemes.
- Limited funding for continued facilitation and capacity building among stakeholders.
- Build project pipeline.



The Agricultural Policy Forum 2014

Economic development of SEE rural cross-border areas implementing the Area Based Development (ABD) approach

State of the art:

- ABD meets the need of local stakeholders and provides platform for cross border cooperation
- ABD structures in place and tested by implementation of pilot grant scheme
- Change in EC approach to management of IPA funding has reduced funding to small scale grant schemes, incl. the ABD approach
- Consequence: ABD will not receive funding for grant schemes.
- IPA funding for continued networking and capacity building in the cross border areas.

The Agricultural Policy Forum 2014

Economic development of SEE rural cross-border areas implementing the Area Based Development (ABD) approach

The APF recommends:

- To continue capacity development activities enhancing the ABD approach
- To search for alternative funding, incl. IPARD and the CBC programmes
- To establish cooperation with other regional initiatives for joint activities
- Urge the Ministries of Agriculture to include the ABD principles in national rural development policies.

Annual Working Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture 2014

We appreciate that the Area Based Development (ABD) approach has closely met the needs of local stakeholders, who in the past four years were empowered to define development needs of their regions in a way that other approaches have not been able to achieve. We recognize the need of exploring the options for inclusion of the ABD principles in national rural development policies. In that respect, we encourage the EU Commission to provide further support to the implementation of ABD approach in the SEE countries based on the formulations of the IPA Multi-Country Strategy 2014-2020.

Conclusions

- Structures are established and are operational
- Programming documents are prepared and submitted to EC
- Regional stakeholders are expecting the start up- of the implementation phase
- ABDA is included in the IPA II Multi- country indicative strategy paper 2014-2020
- Financial resources are not allocated for financing of ABDA projects within the IPA II



ABDA Future perspective

- How do you see the current status?
- What should be the future approach towards implementation of ABDA?
- What could be the future activities?
- What could be the future role of the SHG?
- What could be the future role of the PMU?
- What could be approach towards alternative funding/ implementing possibilities?

