

Community Development Program

Goals

Slow rural-urban migration.
Increased economic opportunities and improved living standards in rural areas.
Local community members lead local development by identifying and prioritizing needs in their communities and mobilizing resources to address them.

Duration

June 2021–June 2026

Total Funding

\$2,041,914

Implementing Partners

Rural Development Network of North Macedonia in collaboration with SEG Holding

Key Counterparts

Aber Local Action Group
Belasica-Ograzden Local Action Group
Bojmija Local Action Group
Malesh-Pijanec Local Action Group
Plachkovica Local Action Group

Contact

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CHALLENGES

The imbalance between the development of urban and rural communities in North Macedonia, particularly the large gaps in infrastructure and technology, encourages further migration from rural to urban areas. Limited capacities of institutions, small budgets, frequent changes of local policies, stalled fiscal decentralization, and low levels of transparency all contribute to mistrust and weaken rural development. Citizens and civil organizations are not typically involved in actions to improve their communities. Lack of private sector engagement and investment result in underutilized land, deserted villages, and little commitment to community development.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

This activity is part of the Local Works initiative through which USAID is helping communities to drive their own development by creating their own programs and activities. Rather than follow the typical top-down approach of initiatives created outside communities, activities stimulate locally led development by supporting local action groups and other local leadership. Efforts engage community members in the design and delivery of solutions to their challenges and seek local resources to develop rural areas. Special focus is given to engage the private sector, acquiring funding at the local and regional levels, and linking different sources of funding.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increased number of partnerships among community members.
- Increased engagement of community members in identifying and prioritizing community issues and opportunities such as pollution, public health, lack of job opportunities, out-migration, social service provision, and local economic development.
- Improved ability of local actors to use local resources in designing and implementing local solutions to address community issues.
- Effective replication of sustainable locally led development models in other communities and regions.

KEY RESULTS

Stakeholder Coordination

Increased number of partnerships among community members. Increased ability of individuals to lead development in their rural communities, to reach out to and engage other citizens and relevant stakeholders.

More than 159 stakeholders engaged in the identification and prioritization of community issues.



Capacity Building

Improved ability of local actors to use local resources in designing and implementing local solutions to address community issues.



Localized Development



Stakeholders contributed more than 70 percent of resources and completed

20 rural community initiatives.

Stakeholders included local government, businesses, civil society organizations, and volunteers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The activity mobilized more than **\$\$\$300,000** for local development priorities from **non-donor** counterparts.

Five cross-sector **advisory groups** comprised of diverse local actors were established to **identify** and **prioritize** local issues and opportunities, as well as joint **local solutions** to address them.

Local action group members are more able to **mobilize** the community, reporting increased access to **local funding**.

