

Get Together for the Community

Goal

Strengthen the capacities of communities to plan, finance, and implement solutions for development challenges and priorities.

Duration

September 2021–September 2027

Total Funding

\$2,000,000

Implementing Partners

Association Konekt in collaboration with EVN, Indigo, and Apolonia Foundation Gevgelija

Key Counterparts

The local municipalities of Gostivar, Ohrid, Strumica, Gevgelija, Chair, and Shuto Orizari

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CHALLENGES

Philanthropic giving has the potential to generate substantial resources for social impact and economic development in North Macedonia. While more than half of companies engage in philanthropic giving, contributions often are not invested strategically, nor measure impact. Further, much philanthropic support is directed to meeting emergency needs of individuals. Furthermore, civil society organizations in North Macedonia are almost entirely dependant on foreign donors, and eighty-nine percent have never received resources from local stakeholders. Municipalities have started to engage citizens in identifying community priorities and addressing them. Still, local government is challenged by a lack of human resources, financial resources, and effective mechanisms.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The activity aims to stimulate discourse about community priorities, seeks participatory approval for those initiatives, and strengthens community capacity to raise local funds in an inclusive, effective, and sustainable manner to carry out initiatives. In this way, philanthropy will be harnessed at the local level to help stakeholders better address development challenges and make social impact in communities.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Improved mobilization of philanthropic funding from local individual and corporate donors for community development initiatives.
- Increased engagement between citizens and local elected officials that incorporates feedback mechanisms and citizen participation in choosing municipal priorities.
- Empowered local civil society organizations collaborate with public, private, and civic stakeholders to identify community priorities, plan, fund, and implement solutions for sustainable local development.
- A stronger culture of volunteering and charitable giving with increased participation and engagement in philanthropic activities among target sectors.

KEY RESULTS

Local Civil Society

The activity established six local action hubs. Hubs have mobilized stakeholders and resources to lead the identification, prioritization, and resolution of pressing local community issues. Six leadership groups were established to advise the hubs and ensure that local stakeholders, including the private sector, public institutions, municipal representatives, and civic organizations, have ownership over local development.



Local solutions by local stakeholders



Each local action hub in the municipalities of Gevgelija, Strumica, Gostivar, Ohrid, Chair and Shuto Orizari has developed a local resource mobilization plan to increase community action, mobilize local resources, and cultivate domestic donors. They are working to strengthen the capacity of and linkages among other local groups to engage with the citizens on issues related to local development.

Mapping Local Self-Reliance Potential in Selected Municipalities

Mapping public, private, and civic stakeholders' capacities, networks, and experiences in target municipalities shows promising results that communities are capable of self-reliance.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A **digital and mobile communication application** was launched to facilitate engagement between citizen residents and local municipality governments and help citizens and citizen groups mobilize around common initiatives, and take action at the local level. The application **increases citizen voices** in municipal decision making, programs, and services.

Locally led **leadership structures** were established in **6 municipalities** to promote philanthropic potential and cross sector **cooperation** for sustainable local development.

The self-reliance assessment report recommended **convention and connection** of key actors at the local level and the creation of sustainable **local philanthropy systems** that encourage and include all stakeholders as drivers of community development and well-being.

