



Migration and Development
in Bosnia and Herzegovina

**SUCCESS STORIES
OF COOPERATION
IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

November 2015

The following publication showcases nine local initiatives implemented in Jajce, Ključ, Laktaši, Ljubuški, Maglaj, Nevesinje, Posušje, Prijedor, Sanski Most and Velika Kladuša in 2014 and 2015. In order to offer inspiring stories for other municipalities and cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it outlines the outputs of these initiatives as well as various forms of cooperation between local authorities and migrants. The projects were financed thanks to the generous support provided by the Government of Switzerland and benefited from the significant involvement of partner cities and municipalities, individuals and businesses from the diaspora as well as the final beneficiaries themselves.

The views presented in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Government of Switzerland or the UNDP.

INTRODUCTION

According to official statistics, over two million people are migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina. This represents more than 50% of the country's population and thus ranks it amongst the European countries with the highest percentage of migrants in relation to the native population. Migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina are often highly educated and successful and have strong ties to their home country, as evidenced by the level of remittances from abroad that total 3.5 billion BAM annually. Yet such migrant ties to Bosnia and Herzegovina are generally restricted to a private or family nature, due to insufficient institutional support. Consequently, this vast potential remains underdeveloped in terms of economic, technical, educational and cultural cooperation beneficial to all of its citizens, both within and beyond its borders, and progress in the country as a whole.

Recognising this potential, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Government of Switzerland and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched a project in July 2013 on Mainstreaming the Concept of Migration and Development into Relevant Policies, Plans and Activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereinafter referred to as the Migration and Development Project). The project objectives were twofold: (i) to support government institutions in improving policies and practices to enhance cooperation with migrants and (ii) strengthen the capacities of local communities for such cooperation. One of the project activities involved mainstreaming the concept of migration and development into the development strategies of ten partner local governments. This resulted in concrete initiatives aimed at establishing or enhancing cooperation with businesses and individuals or associations of migrants, all targeted at achieving concrete development results at the local level.

Local initiatives were implemented in Jajce, Ključ, Laktaši, Ljubuški, Maglaj, Nevesinje, Posušje, Prijedor, Sanski Most and Velika Kladuša in 2014 and 2015. The initiatives were financed through the project with the full support of the Government of Switzerland. There was significant involvement of partner cities and municipalities, individuals and businesses

from the diaspora as well as the final beneficiaries. Their total value was approximately 1,225,000 BAM.

Emphasising the need to connect with migrants, the Cooperation Director within the Embassy of Switzerland in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr Joseph Guntern, stressed, "Migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina living and working abroad are an important development potential for their home country. They can act as investors, provide very useful knowhow and are excellent at networking, since they can secure good business relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and many other countries."

Ms Ruzmira Tihic-Kadric, Assistant Minister of the Migration Sector of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, added, "Migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina are oriented towards their home country with strong ties to their place of origin and a desire to contribute to its development. That is why the main focus of this project is aimed at local communities: there is mutual interest of both migrants and local communities. The success of this project goes to show the need to continue linking the diaspora with the development of local communities."

The following sections present the results of the initiatives mentioned above as well as various forms of cooperation between local authorities and migrants and offer inspirational stories for other municipalities and cities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The first form of cooperation is to strengthen economic ties aimed at increased employment and income generation and strengthening the entrepreneurial spirit. This form of cooperation was reflected in the project through the transfer of expertise and the establishment of business associations and investment in agriculture. The results achieved were very positive and can be measured by the seventy jobs created or maintained within production, including newly created annual revenue from agriculture valued at approximately 1.3 million BAM.

The second form of enhanced cooperation between local communities and the diaspora focused on improving the quality of services for migrants, which included improving the dissemination of information and the efficiency of administrative services. To this end, activities included the organisation of forums and fairs, the development of printed and

online material containing useful information and the introduction of services such as electronic vital records, establishing migrant registers and the appointment of persons in charge of cooperation with migrants. The first municipal Office for Diaspora was established and now actively communicates with migrants and supports them in overcoming administrative barriers and red tape. Keeping abreast of the developments, communication channels were created on social networks, primarily on Facebook and YouTube, as the fastest way for local residents to network with diaspora as well as to, as much as possible, promote best practice.

All of the initiatives presented in this publication emerged as products of the activities of local communities, meaning partner municipalities and cities, resulting from local development strategies. Therefore, all credit for cooperation with the diaspora goes entirely to them. The fact that local authorities also co-funded these initiatives is testament to their readiness to support projects of this kind financially.



A CHANCE FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT

Learn about new jobs being created through three projects aimed at establishing economic cooperation with the Diaspora

Sanski Most is a town on nine rivers. It is located in the north west of Bosnia and Herzegovina and has a continental climate suitable for all types of agricultural production. It is an entrepreneurial community with a long tradition of migration to other countries. Residents of this city are commonly prone to migration for economic reasons and it is estimated that between 24,000 and 28,000 natives of Sanski Most live in different countries around the world. Therefore, it is no surprise that migrants represent a great potential for the economic development of Sanski Most.

“Given the high rate of migratory movements in Sanski Most in recent decades it can be concluded that more than ninety per cent of the existing local economy was set up thanks to the capital of the diaspora, which speaks volumes about the development potential of the Sanski Most diaspora,” said the Mayor of Sanski Most, Mustafa Avdagić.

“IT IS OUTSTANDING THAT THIS INTELLECTUAL AND FINANCIAL POTENTIAL OF MIGRANTS WHO GREW UP IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA NOW HAS THE CHANCE TO SPREAD IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY.”

MUSTAFA AVDAGIĆ,

Mayor of Sanski Most

Transfer of Knowledge aimed at Economic Development and Employment

The quality of vocational education in Sanski Most is a special obstacle to local economic development. The Municipality is trying to tackle this through cooperation with the diaspora and the private sector. In line with these efforts and supported by the Migration and Development Project, three initiatives were launched with the primary objective of knowledge transfer via professional training in agriculture and industrial production.

A certified hands-on training was organised for welders, which resulted in the opening of seventeen new and the retaining of ten existing jobs in the automotive industry. Training programmes were also conducted for small farmers involved primarily in greenhouse production and growing chokeberry. Modern equipment for processing fruit and vegetables was purchased; 1,800 m² of greenhouses were set up with tomatoes and peppers and nearly an acre of new chokeberry planted. All these activities enabled more than sixty fruit and vegetable producers to sign new supplier agreements, while the level of additional income from agriculture is expected to amount to some 280,000 BAM annually.

These results were precipitated by the activities of the municipal administration on intensifying communication with the diaspora and mapping the potential and readiness of migrants for cooperation and therefore not a coincidence. The administration also devised concrete initiatives to enable and encourage their greater involvement in local development. An important step towards even better results was the establishment of the registry of migrants, which in fact is an electronic database that assists in systematising communication with the diaspora. Furthermore, a 48 service was set up in order to deal with inquiries and suggestions related to the work of the administrative services; in Sanski Most, this is open to citizens in the municipality and the diaspora.

Agrisan and Terra Sana

The municipal administration developed and implemented initiatives in the field of agriculture in cooperation with the agricultural cooperative 'Agrisan' and the Association for Economic Development and Employment 'Terra Sana' from Sanski Most.

Agrisan is the only agricultural cooperative in the municipality whose main activity is greenhouse fruit and vegetable production. It was registered in 2002 and currently has a membership of fifty-two. Through the Migration and Development Project, the cooperative provided professional training on greenhouse production in order to improve the knowledge of its members. The training was led by Zoran Kajić from Metković in Croatia who is an agronomist of Bosnian and Herzegovinian origin. Thanks to co-financing provided by family and friends of members of the cooperative from within the ranks of the diaspora a dozen greenhouses were purchased; it is expected that the additional revenue gained through this greenhouse production will reach approximately 6,750 BAM of annual income per family.

Members of the cooperative Agrisan currently have a total of 3,000 m² of closed greenhouses and the cooperative also works with 250 subcontractors from Sanski Most that are involved in the production of fruit, vegetables, milk, meat, flowers and decorative plants.

The Association Terra Sana is also successfully engaged in agriculture production. Its results for 2014 included two hectares of chokeberry planted and five tonnes of this plant and ninety-five tonnes of other fruit and vegetables processed in 2015. As part of the Migration and Development Project, 2,000 chokeberry seedlings were purchased for suppliers in order to allow for an increase in the planted area of an additional hectare; the plan for the future is to expand production to include apple and beet. A production line for natural chokeberry juice was also purchased.

Remus Innovation: A New Name for Success

Results were also achieved in industrial production through cooperation with migrants and the private sector. This was accomplished through training and new employment at the Remus Innovation Company, which is a renowned global producer of car exhaust pipes.

Thanks to migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, this successful Austrian company established a subsidiary company in Sanski Most. The Remus Group has 600 employees of which 120 are employed as part of Remus Innovation Ltd, which has operated in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the last three years.

The company exports ninety per cent of its production to around sixty countries around the globe, while the entire production in Sanski Most is intended solely for export.

At the initiative of the municipal administration and with the direct involvement of employees of the parent company in Austria but originally





from Bosnia and Herzegovina, certified training was held for a period of four weeks for thirty welders. Of that number, seventeen trainees were given the opportunity for employment and economic independence and another ten kept their jobs thanks to this training.

The Remus Company stated that, “Our people in the diaspora initiated this training for future employees in the production facility in Bosnia and Herzegovina and thus enabled new employment.”

According to the Mayor, the Remus Company is a respectable business contributing to a better quality of life in Sanski Most. Opportunities for cooperation between the Municipality and the company have not been exhausted: new similar initiatives are already being considered, as the company intends to hire another eighty people by the end of 2016.

GOLDEN SUN OF HERZEGOVINA

Join us in the fragrant fields of immortelle as we bring you the story on honey production in Posušje.

Immortelle is a perennial plant of the Helichrysum genus. The name comes from the Greek compound helios (sun) and chrysos (gold). This plant is widely used in the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries and, as it is everlasting, often features in poetic metaphor. Yet immortelle represents a golden opportunity to develop this area for the residents of Posušje, especially in light of the new emerging markets that have appeared in recent years for the export of immortelle oil.

The Municipality of Posušje has a mostly Mediterranean climate and is only twenty minutes drive from the Adriatic Sea, located at the intersection of main roads Sarajevo-Mostar-Split and Livno. The hardworking cheerful population of some 22,000 has a strong entrepreneurial spirit and is its best and most valuable resource. This is further illustrated by the fact that the municipality has thirty-five registered active businesses per 1,000 residents, which significantly exceeds the country average.

At the same time, between 4,500 and 5,000 natives of Posušje, including both the first and second generation, are part of the diaspora, living mostly in Croatia (2,500) and Germany (1,500).

“DIASPORA IS BOTH A BRIDGE AND A LINK BETWEEN PRODUCERS IN POSUŠJE WITH THE EU COUNTRIES.”

BRANKO BAGO,

Mayor of the Posušje Municipality

Agricultural Cooperatives for Immortelle and Honey Production

Supported by the Migration and Development Project, the Municipality of Posušje has opened up new possibilities for cooperation between local entrepreneurs, both men and women, and successful entrepreneurs from the diaspora. This includes both migrants originating from Posušje and those who can simply recognise a good business opportunity when



they see it. Recognising the potential of the fields for the cultivation and processing of medicinal plants and the development of beekeeping the agricultural cooperative EKO Hercegovina was established. The cooperative dries herbs or uses them to make oil and also works on the production of bee cakes.

In order to ensure product placement a partnership was set up with the private company VAGROS. The company is owned by Vlado Duspara a native of Posušje who currently resides in Croatia. The company sells products from Posušje on the Croatian market and VAGROS is one of the leading distribution chains for agricultural products in Croatia. Mr Duspara took the decision to merge his own business interests with efforts to help the region from which he originated.

“Apart from the desire to help my hometown, an opportunity was used for business cooperation between my company, VAGROS Ltd, and the Herzegovina based cooperative EKO Hercegovina. I believe in the good results of our future business cooperation to our mutual satisfaction.”

Branko Bago, the Mayor of the Municipality of Posušje, stressed that,

“We see the main focus of future business relations with the company VAGROS and its owner Mr Duspara as a bridge or link between producers in Posušje and the market in Croatia and other EU countries. We hope to see it materialise as soon as possible; it is dependant only on the speed of growth of producers in Posušje.”

Opportunities Created for Youth and Female Entrepreneurship

Through the Migration and Development Project a dryer for medicinal plants was purchased for the cooperative EKO Herzegovina along with a distillery for the production of oil from immortelle and other medicinal herbs, a production line for bee feed, a packaging line for finished products and twenty-five hives for beekeepers. The company VAGROS participated financially in the procurement of this equipment and also secured a market placement for the finished products on the Croatian market. Professional training was organised for around 100 interested producers of immortelle of which sixty-seven are subcontractors of the cooperative. This training was conducted by experts from the Institute for Adriatic Culture in Split and the Faculty of Agriculture in Zagreb, all natives of Posušje.

The project involves more than 100 citizens in the municipality that are cultivating immortelle and other medicinal herbs as well as those working as beekeepers. As part of the project, twenty-five unemployed beneficiaries received 3,000 new immortelle seedlings resulting in three new hectares of arable land under this plant. A donation of hives and professional training in beekeeping for twenty-five beekeepers also gave impetus to future honey production. This certainly provides great encouragement for the development of beekeeping in Posušje and for the development of female entrepreneurship. It is just one of the ways to help prevent the brain drain of young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina. At current market prices, the total annual revenue for producers of immortelle and beekeepers in the coming year is expected to reach around 130,000 BAM.

NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF JAJCE

Learn how diligent hands are producing raspberries.

The British travel writer William Miller wrote, “To travel around Bosnia without visiting Jajce would be inexcusable for it is undoubtedly the jewel of the country, a town of beautiful position... perhaps the finest waterfall in Europe crashes in thunder from the rocks with the town situated on top and a fast flowing river at its foot.”

Jajce is a meeting place of cultures as well as the rivers Vrbas and Pliva, a town and a sort of a gateway between East and West.

Strong Links with the Diaspora

The current population of Jajce, according to the available information, is about 30,000, while around another 10,000 live in the European Union (EU). The Municipality of Jajce has recognised such a vast diaspora and citizens with temporary or permanent residence found outside the borders of their town and home country as a great resource. This is evidenced by the years of effort that has established friendly ties with the cities where they now live, including cities in Turkey, Italy, Sweden and Denmark.

Raspberries for a better Life

Within the Migration and Development Project, cooperation between the Municipality of Jajce and the diaspora was aimed at supporting new raspberry plantations as a source of income for households. To this end, seedlings and the necessary accompanying equipment for irrigation were procured through co-financing provided by the Municipality and groups or individuals from the diaspora. The latter were informed about this initiative through a public call advertised in the media or through direct contact.

As a result, 7.6 new hectares of raspberries were planted with a total of

92,796 seedlings distributed. This included a full irrigation system for two donums of raspberry and thirty-eight new households included in agricultural production. In the distribution of this assistance, priority assistance was given to multi-member and socially vulnerable families that owned land that they could cultivate during distribution. Under contract, the beneficiaries agreed to grow raspberries for the next ten years.

The expected yield for the following year is about ninety tonnes of raspberries, which with current purchase prices at three BAM per kilogramme gives a total income of 270,000 BAM or about 7,500 BAM per beneficiary.

The Mayor of Jajce, Edin Hozan said, “Successful implementation of the project for thirty-eight households, with an average of four members has provided a source of income for more than one hundred and fifty of our fellow citizens. This project is of great importance to us and I am glad that it has recognised the development potential of our region. Also, in order to involve young people we hired young agronomists who visited farmers and passed on their knowledge for a more successful production. In the spring of 2016 we expect the first offerings of raspberries.”

Although never engaged in growing raspberries prior to this project Mr Sabir Čehić, a native of Jajce, vested his energy into production. His motivation came from the hope that through the opportunity to engage family members he would be able to secure them a stable source of income for the forthcoming period.

“I would like to thank the Migration and Development Project for securing improved living conditions for our farmers,” said Mr Čehić.

In the Municipality of Jajce good practice and the turnout of producers of raspberries for this project has motivated them to explore this avenue further.

“Inspired by this example and positive experience of families involved in the Migration and Development Project we will co-finance the planting of raspberry. Another five hectares of land will be planted with raspberries, with an additional fifty families included in their production,” said Mayor Hozan.

Opportunities for Cooperation with the Diaspora in other Fields

In addition to raspberry production, the municipal authorities also revived the traditional event of 'Meetings at the River Pliva'; the aim was to bring together people from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the diaspora. The event is now known under the title of 'Meetings on the Pliva Lakes: A Day with the Diaspora'. The first renewed meeting was held in July 2015; it included a number of interesting events involving cultural and artistic associations, non-governmental organisations and associations of citizens from the diaspora. This provided a great opportunity for a roundtable discussion with representatives of the diaspora. Under discussion were further possibilities for economic cooperation, particularly in the areas of the metal processing industry, which generates the most revenue, but also the wood industry, tourism and catering industry as well as investment opportunities related to health.

"I AM GRATEFUL TO THE PROJECT THAT ENABLED BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS FOR US AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS."

SAMIR ČEHIĆ,
a raspberry producer



REPRODUCTION OF CAPITAL FROM THE DIASPORA

Learn more about improved agricultural and milk production in Prijedor

The city of Prijedor is located on the banks of the rivers Sana and Gomjenica in the northwest of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The city is well connected with its immediate and wider surroundings thanks to its favourable geostrategic position and transport infrastructure. The city area is rich in forest and its continental climate makes it suitable for agricultural development. The people of Prijedor are helpful, friendly and curious. They say that they enjoy meeting new people and cultures and are responsible and ambitious. There are many migrants that originate from this city that are willing to invest their energy and money in their hometown. Prijedor is the city with the highest rate of return of its pre-war inhabitants in Bosnia and Herzegovina yet still it is estimated that several tens of thousands of its former citizens live and work abroad.



Diaspora to Facilitate improved Conditions for the Development of Agriculture

With the support of the Migration and Development Project and through cooperation with the City of Prijedor and the Prijedor diaspora agricultural machinery and greenhouses were procured for sixty farmers. Of the beneficiary farmers thirty-six were already well established, while the remainder were small producers who were given the chance to secure income and better living conditions.

The Head of the Department of Economy and Agriculture within the City of Prijedor, Miss Zinajda Hošić, said, "The project was funded by donors with sixty per cent, ten per cent from the City of Prijedor and thirty per cent of the funds from agricultural producers, secured from abroad. The goal was to use the funds from friends and relatives from the diaspora for the sake of economic viability, instead of being used solely for consumer purposes... I hope that the good economic environment that has been created in Prijedor will have an impact on attracting new investors from our diaspora."

Livestock production, the breeding of dairy cows and milk production were all improved through the purchase of five milking machines and thirty-one fodder mixers. The selection of farmers to receive the equipment was based on a public call announcement issued by the City of Prijedor; a condition being that all applicants had to have an existing registered business activity. Milk is purchased in Prijedor on a daily basis. The leading customers are Mlijeko Produkt from Kozarska Dubica, Naturavita from Teslić and Meggle from Bihać. In addition to receiving regular monthly payments, milk producers also received incentives based on daily purchase quantities.

As for greenhouse production, which includes vegetables and flowers, thanks to the activities within the framework of the Migration and Development Project greenhouses were purchased for twenty-four small producers. The



placement of these products was done mostly at local markets but also directly with agricultural producers. Based on the purchase price from 2015 and depending on the product mix, each beneficiary can expect an annual income to the amount of 6,750 to 7,500 BAM.

Investing in One's Town and Serving as a Good Example to others

Although the described activities represent an excellent example of opportunities for successful investment in livestock and agricultural production in Prijedor this town has numerous other examples of successful investment by diaspora. This is thanks to the fact that the City of Prijedor assists all investors from the diaspora with administrative affairs and thus supports them in making their business vision a reality.

Prijedor is certainly an area conducive to investment given that it is also internationally certified as business-friendly (Business Friendly Certification) and has a modern info-centre, industrial zone and numerous foundations and economic development agencies.

A range of services were established to support citizens both at home and abroad. These include, for example, virtual vital records that allow for the issuance of all personal documents based on an online application and distribution to any address in the world; an interactive section on the website allows potential investors to find all necessary information to implement a potential investment.

The administration of the City of Prijedor stresses the importance of the involvement of the diaspora in local development and has expressed the hope that this community will continue to be a centre for the successful placement of foreign capital by people originating from Prijedor. Companies already operating successfully in Prijedor that have been established by people from the diaspora, such as Arifagić Investment and Austronet, can serve as good examples for future investors.

“THE AIM IS THAT FUNDS FROM FRIENDS AND RELATIVES IN DIASPORA ARE USED TO SERVE THE PURPOSE OF ECONOMIC STABILITY AND NOT ONLY FOR CONSUMPTION PURPOSES.”

ZINAJDA HOŠIĆ,

Head of Department for Economy and Agriculture with the City of Prijedor

A PLACE WHERE SUCCESS STORIES ARE WOVEN

How hearts and funds from the diaspora were vested in opening a new textile company in Nevesinje.

The Herzegovinian Municipality of Nevesinje has a population of around 14,000, with an average population density of 15 inhabitants per square kilometre. Some 7,000 citizens live abroad. This charming place with long and cold winters and moderate short summers has both continental and Mediterranean climate intertwined. The hardworking people of Nevesinje describe themselves as hearty, brave and generous, while the place itself is characterised by a turbulent and rich history.

A New Company on the Business Map of Nevesinje

Thanks to the Migration and Development Project, the business history of this region can now mark the establishment of a new textile company: Net Press Ltd. The company currently employs ten previously unemployed women. These women were given the opportunity to work and all residents of Nevesinje the opportunity to purchase textile goods made locally.

The budget for opening this company was jointly secured by the Government of Switzerland, the Municipality of Nevesinje and Nataša Čalić, an investor native to this region currently living in Montenegro.

Back in the nineties, before moving to Podgorica, the capital of Montenegro, Nataša Čalić worked at the Nevesinje based company Javor. She along with other female co-workers ended up unemployed after the company closed down. Her journey took her to Podgorica yet today she has been given an opportunity to establish a business link with her hometown through this project and thanks to an initiative by the local authorities. Setting up a new textile company in her hometown has made Miss Čalić particularly happy because it has made it possible for her former colleagues to return to work.

“I am in a way proud to be back here at the end of it all. I am proud to be again a part of this town, a part of the people I grew up with,” she said.

In addition to her emotional connection and desire to help her hometown and the people she grew up with, by opening this company in Nevesinje Nataša Čalić will increase her total revenue through increased volume of production and market placement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and abroad.

The newly established textile company, for starters, produces and advertises work wear and sportswear custom made for buyers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and abroad. It has a guaranteed the sale of its entire product mix thanks to such an approach. As part of the project activities, the Municipality of Nevesinje provided workspace in a former military barracks.

At the commissioning ceremony, the Mayor, Momčilo Šiljegović, stressed that, "After two years of joint activities we have come to the point of commissioning the facility, signing of employment contract between ten people previously registered as unemployed and their employer Miss Nataša Čalić, a representative of the diaspora from the Republic of Montenegro. For the Municipality of Nevesinje this is an important point where ten families are securing living conditions."





New Opportunities for a Constructive Dialogue with the Diaspora

According to the Mayor of the municipality, relations between the local community and the diaspora had previously been built mostly in the field of culture; therefore, this project is a good example of a change in this trend as the diaspora is increasingly investing in the economy of local communities.

The Municipality certainly made its contribution in this regard and remains open for further improvement of the preconditions for cooperation and investment by supporting shorter registration procedures for companies and improving the infrastructure and facilities at its disposal. In addition to the textile industry, this local community sees its chance in particular in the development of industrial zones, rural development and energy efficiency.

The Migration and Development Project has certainly opened up new

opportunities and a more constructive dialogue with the Nevesinje diaspora.

“I AM PROUD TO BE AGAIN A PART OF THIS TOWN AND IN A WAY A PART OF THE PEOPLE I GREW UP WITH.”

NATAŠA ČALIĆ,
an investor from Podgorica

RASPBERRIES ON RADIO WAVES

If your travels take you to Ključ then you will have another chance to taste newly planted raspberries.

People from Ključ describe themselves as tough – the Krajina way-, but still open and friendly and say that you do not get to meet such good people every day. This municipality has a rich history and is located in the northwest of Bosnia and Herzegovina in a valley where the River Sana turns to the north. If you are going to Ključ then you will need clothes for all weather conditions, since the local continental climate is characterised by warm summers and cold snowy winters. When it comes to the transportation of people and goods this municipality is located on the major M-5 Bihać-Sarajevo route and linked to Western Europe via Karlovac and Rijeka in Croatia.

Communication with the Diaspora

The diaspora from Ključ is quite sizable at around 9,400. Ključ can count on their support, which is an important economic development potential. This potential helped in implementing three initiatives within the context of the Migration and Development Project. These included the planting of new raspberries, organisation of a business investment forum and the launch of radio broadcasts with information about developments in Ključ intended for the diaspora.

Sweet Raspberries mean a better Life for Ten Families

Similar to other municipalities, good climate conditions for the development of fruit and vegetable crops has also been identified in Ključ. This led



to the planting of raspberries for ten farmers and their families across twenty donums of land. These activities were co-financed by the diaspora, family members or friends, all with the aim to create conditions for these families to enjoy the fruits of their labour; in this way, they allowed families to create better living conditions for themselves through an expected annual income ranging from BAM 8,000 to 12,000 BAM per beneficiary. By helping to set up raspberry plantations the co-financers helped family members and friends to ensure a stable income from agriculture and thus reduce their dependence on remittances from abroad.

Nedim Pehadžić is one of the ten producers and a man who has invested a lot of enthusiasm, work and energy in this project.

“We have invested a lot of effort in raspberry plantations and we hope that it will bear fruit. It is a great thing to be able to provide your family with better living conditions with your own two hands, but also to actively participate in building a better business environment in our town,” he said.

The Mayor of Ključ, Nedžad Zukanović, is equally satisfied with the project.

“We are delighted that with a series of activities we have proven, on the one hand, that our diaspora has great potential and, on the other hand, that we are ready to create conditions to mainstream this potential. Ties with the diaspora have certainly been strengthened through the cooperation on raspberry plantations in Ključ, but they are also an important prerequisite for a better life for ten of our families. Also, as a result of intense communication and mutual interest, construction works have started for a catering facility on the bank of the River Sana, financed by an investor from Switzerland: a member of the association Friends of Ključ.”



Majda Pehadžić, who resides in Norway yet originates from Ključ, is one of those who supported the project with her own funds.

“We are expected to be of assistance to our parents, relatives, neighbours, friends, those in need and those who depend on our relations with them. In my opinion, this is also one of the ways to help. I gave a financial contribution for raspberry plantations and made it possible for my relatives to create more favourable living conditions. I’ve been helping in the past as well, but like this for the first time; it’s like in that story: do not give them fish teach them how to fish or even better let’s fish together.”

The story of the raspberries was transmitted by radio waves to diaspora from Ključ as a part of radio shows intended for the diaspora; it was broadcast twice a month on the airwaves of Radio Ključ. Eight such radio shows have been aired so far and re-broadcasts occur once per month. It should be noted that after completion of the project these radio shows are to remain as part of the regular radio programme of Radio Ključ.

“IT IS A GREAT THING BE ABLE TO ENSURE BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS FOR YOUR FAMILY WITH YOUR TWO HANDS, BUT ALSO TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN BUILDING A BETTER ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT IN OUR CITY.”

NEDIM PEHADŽIĆ,
a raspberry producer

Further Cooperation with the Diaspora

Intensified dialogue with the diaspora will create one of the preconditions for ensuring that financial investment by natives of Ključ now living across the globe are even higher in the future. The 2014-2023 Municipal Development Strategy of Ključ has a special place for the diaspora. Specific activities under this strategy include the further enhancement of communication with the diaspora, media promotion of successful entrepreneurial ventures, organisation of the Day of Citizens of Ključ and the Ključ Diaspora, and organisation of a new business investment forum. The latter will be recognised as a forum for the promotion of private business and networking amongst entrepreneurs both from within the country and abroad.

HERZEGOVINIAN POTATOES ON THE EUROPEAN UNION MARKET

Learn more about empowering producers
of new potatoes from Ljubuški.

Ljubuški is the municipality with the most number of sunny days per year in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has a population of around 29,550 people, who describe themselves as honest, hardworking, open and hospitable. The Mediterranean climate and proximity to the sea are favourable for growing vines and other fruit, early vegetables and flowers. Numerous natives of Ljubuški live around the world but maintain strong cultural and economic ties with their hometown.

Conditions Secured for the Export of New Potatoes to the EU Market

Guided by the fact that the economic future of this region is to a great extent tied to agricultural production, the Municipality of Ljubuški initiated activities within the Migration and Development Project aimed at the production of new potatoes. In addition to being financially involved in the project the Municipality has established cooperation with Croatian experts and professors who originate from Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to transfer professional knowledge.





The Mayor of Ljubuški, Nevenko Barbarić, stated, “In recent years we have worked to achieve geographical protection of new potatoes from Ljubuški, applied to the European Commission and meet all of their requirements for the export of new potatoes from Ljubuški.”

In this way the conditions to export new potatoes produced in Herzegovina to markets across the EU have been met.

More Jobs for Farmers through the activities of the Cooperative Plodovizemlje

Thanks to the Migration and Development Project support was provided to the agricultural cooperative Plodovizemlje. This included the provision of training organised for around 100 current and future agricultural producers through lectures and academic cooperation with university professors from Croatia that originally came from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Equipment (protective foil) and seed potatoes were secured for 100 farmers, both men and women. Since Bosnia and Herzegovina is now permitted to export potatoes the placement of potatoes produced in Ljubuški will now be possible both on the domestic market and in neighbouring Croatia. In the course of project implementation as well as through the work of agricultural cooperatives marginalised and vulnerable groups (persons with disability, returnees and the elderly) were all taken into account. Based on

the calculated expected income and the average price of new potatoes on the market of the European Union, all beneficiaries stand to earn between 1,500 to 2,000 BAM.

Many will enjoy the benefits of the project, both members of the agricultural cooperative Plodovizemlje and the entire population of Ljubuški. The project has created the preconditions for the acquisition of new knowledge, improved living conditions and work in this area as well as the economic sustainability of farmers.

Mr Dubravko Vukojević, who is a farmer and the President of the agricultural cooperative Plodovizemlje, said, “These are only early steps but it is exceptional that something is being addressed, because if you do not start nothing would ever come out of it. We do hope that the involvement of our diaspora in the future will be even greater.”

In May 2015, Days of New Potatoes was organised as part of the project. One of the primary goals of this event is to facilitate direct contact between diaspora and local farmers. The event also promotes new potatoes from Ljubuški as a unique product on the Bosnian market. Producers had the opportunity to become familiar with the legal, technological and other prerequisites for starting production and the placement of their goods on different markets.

The Diaspora stands ready for New Investment

The Municipality of Ljubuški believes that in addition to agricultural development this area still has significant and underutilised development potential and therefore has initiated ongoing daily activities aimed at improving the business environment. A business zone was set up in Bijača for this reason and followed by further investment in infrastructure. Despite the administrative obstacles that they sometimes encounter the diaspora is, as they say, ready for new financial investment in this area.

“THESE ARE ONLY EARLY STEPS, BUT IT IS EXCEPTIONAL THAT SOMETHING IS BEING ADDRESSED, BECAUSE IF YOU NEVER START, NOTHING WOULD EVER COME OUT OF IT.”

DUBRAVKO VUKOJEVIĆ,
President of the Cooperative Plodovizemlje and a farmer

FIRST OFFICE FOR DIASPORA ESTABLISHED IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In Velika Kladuša you can visit the Office for Diaspora and taste newly planted raspberries.

The Municipality of Velika Kladuša is known as the Gate of Bosnia because of its geographical location in the far northwest of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has a population of around 44,770. It is situated in the vicinity of major transit centres in neighbouring countries and the largest percentage of its territory (67.48%) is agricultural land.

Velika Kladuša was synonymous with economic development and prosperity even in former Yugoslavia, mainly in relation to its developed food, textile and construction industries and agriculture.

Establishment of the First Office for Diaspora in Bosnia and Herzegovina

More than 20,000 people originally from Velika Kladuša live and work abroad, mostly in the United States and Western Europe. According to inhabitants of Velika Kladuša many of their fellow citizens in the diaspora are very successful in business and culture and in sport and politics. The Municipality of Velika Kladuša is aware of the need to improve its connections with its numerous diaspora and this is why the Migration and Development Project launched three interesting initiatives.

The first initiative was the opening of the Office for Diaspora, which was the first of its kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This office provides a range of information and services, including an updated record of diaspora from Velika Kladuša, and organises cultural and sports events and other forms of cooperation.

The Mayor, Edin Behrić, said “The most important result we have achieved in our municipality with the support of the Migration and Development Project is certainly the establishment of the Office for Diaspora from the Municipality of Velika Kladuša; the first of its kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The opening of this office enables institutional networking

between diaspora and local communities, which will be very important in establishing better cooperation and trust as well as in attracting new investments from the diaspora.”

The Production of Raspberries means better Living Conditions

Another initiative of the municipal administration concerns direct support for eleven raspberry producers, who have improved their production by planting 17,600 new bushes on an area of twenty-two donums. Each producer, selected via a public call, received and planted 1,600 new raspberry bushes, which has provided them with the opportunity to ensure greater agricultural involvement of their families. It also offers them an expected annual income ranging between 8,000 to 12,000 BAM. One of the conditions of the public call announced by the Municipality was that the beneficiaries themselves had to secure financial participation of diaspora to the amount of twenty per cent of the value of the project.

Mr Šerif Hušidić was among those who successfully met the requirements. When asked about his involvement in the project this raspberry producer



said, “The most important for me is that I can provide for my family with my own ten fingers and secure long term financial income. Happy is the man to reap the fruits of his labour and this project has just made it possible for me.”

The Business Forum and further Cooperation with the Diaspora

In order to further intensify the impetus for economic cooperation between the diaspora and the local population as well as attract and motivate other potential investors the Municipality launched the Business Forum. The forum brings together diaspora, donors representatives and other important figures from political and public life in Bosnia and Herzegovina and entrepreneurs from Velika Kladuša. It represents a means through which the potential for investment can be presented. It is possible that as a result of the forum some new good examples of successful investment by diaspora in Velika Kladuša will emerge in the future. Such investments could follow the example of similar successful companies that have already been established thanks to funds provided by the diaspora, such as Regeneracija, ADSI Montaža, KIB Bank, Andrieu Fire Extinguishers, 2B Scotch Tape Industry and Airvent.

“HAPPY IS THE MAN TO REAP THE FRUITS OF HIS LABOUR, AND THIS PROJECT HAS JUST MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR ME.”

ŠERIF HUŠIDIĆ,
a raspberry producer

GRASSROOTS ECONOMY

Entrepreneurial Success Stories from Laktaši

The Municipality of Laktaši is located at an intersection of important roads and on the ancient Roman salt road from Dalmatia to Pannonia in the north west of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Given its proximity to major hubs this municipality is still an important crossroad of goods, people and capital. People from Laktaši are characterised by their openness and distinct entrepreneurial spirit, which has developed through the decades. This is confirmed by the statistic of 12.8 active businesses per 1,000 inhabitants, while the average number of active enterprises in Republika Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina is about eight per 1,000. The population of Laktaši is 36,850 spread over eleven local communities, while around 7,000 have settled abroad. Laktaši is situated on plains with a continental climate; the most important natural resources are arable land, forests, mineral resources and the thermal mineral potential.



A Varied range of Economic Activity

As part of the Migration and Development Project, the support provided by the Municipality of Laktaši was focused on various economic activities within two special initiatives done in cooperation with the diaspora. Both were implemented thanks to project funds and co-financing provided by Laktaši along with the financial participation of entrepreneurs from the diaspora.

The first initiative ensured financial and technical support for seven different business and agricultural projects and the organisation of a very successful business forum with more than fifty participants and fifteen successful entrepreneurs from within the diaspora. Two panel discussions addressed a number of issues and defined the development perspective of the municipality as well as the possibility of attracting new investors. Publications and promotional material on investment and business potential in the municipality were made. Entrepreneurial projects were financially supported by individuals and companies from abroad to an amount of thirty per cent of the value of the total investment.

The second initiative financially supported eight additional companies from within the processing industry that already had formalised cooperation with diaspora, whether through their ownership structure or purchase contracts with business partners. Machinery, equipment and raw materials were purchased for these companies to conduct their business activities. Implementation of these activities was also co-financed by business partners from the diaspora to an amount of thirty per cent of the investment, which helped greatly in securing employment for thirty people.

Furthermore and in order to encourage women's entrepreneurship, a Laktaši Ethno Fair that brought together more than forty exhibitors and attracted over 1,000 visitors was organised in October 2015. The fair also included three panel discussions with diaspora on topics related to the possibilities for diaspora involvement in the local socioeconomic development of Laktaši, the role and importance of women's entrepreneurship and support for the production of traditional souvenirs and handicrafts. The municipal Government also provided support for the registration of activities within the handicraft industry and the establishment of a value

chain with the diaspora for the production of traditional peasant shoes and other souvenirs and traditional handicrafts.

Diaspora: Past, Present and Future

The Mayor of Laktaši, Miroslav Kodžoman, said, “Diaspora has an important role in the functioning of companies in the area of the Municipality of Laktaši, whether as co-owners, customers or suppliers of raw materials or services. The fact that some of the most successful companies in the Municipality of Laktaši were established in cooperation with the diaspora goes to show that diaspora is indeed a great development potential. As part of the Migration and Development Project we have witnessed that the role of the diaspora can be multiple: firstly as a provider of specific knowledge and skills and a supplier or buyer from local businesses, thus helping the export of local products; secondly, by preserving and valorising customs, culture and traditions, and thirdly, the diaspora contributes significantly to strengthening and developing private entrepreneurship with an emphasis on the handicraft industry, old crafts and women’s entrepreneurship.”

Many successful businesses that operate in Laktaši were established thanks to funds provided by the diaspora. The Municipality is trying to ensure better conditions for the placement of investments in the form of simplified procedures for registration and logistical support. In addition to creating the conditions for economic development, Laktaši are carefully nurturing both the tradition and culture of this area in close cooperation with the cultural and artistic communities of the diaspora.

“THE FACT THAT SOME OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LAKTAŠI WERE ESTABLISHED IN COOPERATION WITH THE DIASPORA GOES TO SHOW THAT THE DIASPORA IS INDEED A GREAT DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL.”

MIROSLAV KODŽOMAN,
Mayor of Laktaši Municipality

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