



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Goals

Economic opportunities are increased and living standards are improved in rural areas

Local community members lead local development, identifying and prioritizing needs in their communities and mobilizing resources to address them

Duration

June 2021 - June 2026

USAID Funding

\$1.98 million

Implementing Partner

Rural Development Network of North Macedonia

in collaboration with

- Local Action Groups: Plachkovica, Malesh-Pijanec, Belasica-Ograzden, Bojmija, and Aber-2015

- SEG Holding

USAID Contact

Kristina Deriban
kderiban@usaid.gov

BACKGROUND

The imbalance between 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.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program 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, the Community Development Program will stimulate locally led development by supporting Local Action Groups and other local leadership efforts to engage community members in the design and delivery of solutions to their challenges and seek local resources to develop rural areas.

Special focus will be given to engaging the private sector, acquiring funding at the local and regional levels and linking different sources of funding. The program will lead the process of continual change, building upon local initiatives, promoting careful use of land and local resources, mobilizing the knowledge and ambitions of local communities with a spirit of innovation, and linking local and national stakeholders.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACT

- Increased ability of individuals to lead development in their communities, to reach out to and engage other citizens and relevant stakeholders, as well as to access increased local funding.
- Increased number of partnerships among community members.
- Increased engagement of community members in identifying and prioritizing community issues and opportunities (e.g., 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.

