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GRANT FOR IMPLEMENTING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL IDEA – ANOTHER 5 WINNERS OF THE YOUTH PROJECT WERE ANNOUNCED



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On December 14, 2019, within the closing ceremony of the II phase of the Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Program held in Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency (GITA), the Grant Selection Committee evaluated presented entrepreneurial business ideas and announced 5 winner projects. Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Program is being implemented by the Association Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG) under the scope of the USAID Zrda Activity in Georgia aiming at strengthening rural youth through entrepreneurship.

The winners of the II phase of the program:

- Tamaz Mtsuravishvili from Kaspi – Iron Man (iron engraved crafts) – GEL 10 000
- Dimitri Chichua from Kaspi – Ready to Light (electrical service) – GEL 5 000
- Mari Tatumashvili from Bolnisi – Nail Salon – GEL 3 700
- Irakli Mogelashvili from Gori – Production of Apple Vinegar – GEL 6 400
- Mikheil Chkholaria from Zugdidi – Ra Vachuko (online platform) – GEL 9 835





Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Program is being implemented in 9 Zrda target municipalities: Zugdidi, Borjomi, Aspindza, Adigeni, Ninotsminda, Marneuli, Bolnisi, Kaspi, and Gori. The program participants are required to present their business ideas related to agriculture, tourism, innovations/technologies or creative industries. The third phase of the project will start in the spring of 2020.

The project is supported by Enterprise Georgia, Creative Georgia, Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency, National Tourism Administration, Agricultural and Rural Development Agency, Crystal, National Bank of Georgia and TBC Bank.

GALAG IS RECOGNIZED AS A MEMBER OF ELARD – THE HISTORICAL MOMENT TAKES PLACE IN PORTUGAL

This year's ELARD annual meeting held in Portugal was especially important for Georgia as after lots of efforts the Georgian Association of Local Action Groups (GALAG) was recognized as a member of the European LEADER Association for Rural Development (ELARD). The mentioned event that took place in the city of Amarante, at the LEADER /CLLD 2019 Conference, can be declared as a historical moment without any exaggeration. From the Georgian side, the ELARD meeting was attended by the Tetrtskaro, Akhalkalaki, Kazbegi, Tskaltubo and Keda Local Action Groups (LAGs) and the representatives of the Association Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG) and People in Need (PIN).



On a behalf of implementing partners and involved LAGs, RDFG officially presented the Georgian Association of Local Action Groups (GALAG) to the general assembly and symbolically proposed to consider the GALAG's application to become a member of the ELARD. Vano Grigolashvili, RDFG chairman delivered a speech about the activities GALAG is implementing and emphasized the importance of the LEADER approach for Georgia's rural development:



“Despite many obstacles, Georgian LAGs and its network demonstrated impressive achievements within quite limited time and proved the effectiveness of the model for rural development efforts in Georgia. The existence of GALAG in ELARD is very symbolic in terms of Georgians’ passion to return to their natural position in the family of European nations”.

The ELARD meeting began on November 25, 2019, with an introductory members workshop on the state of the art of LEADER/CLLD implementation and the preparation of the next programming period in the Member States and continued the next day with the LEADER/ CLLD 2019 Conference. Within the event, RDFG representatives had an opportunity to take part in the workshop on Challenges and Opportunities Regarding LEADER/CLLD in post-2020. Silvia Michelini – European Commission DG AGRI, Merja Happakka – European Commission DG REGIO, and Andrea Leruste, European Commission, DG EMPL participated in the panel discussion reacting on the keynote presentation and previous panels and debates. Moreover, at the end of the national assembly, ELARDS’s new president Maria João Botelho (Portugal) and two vice-presidents – Kristiina Tammets (Estonia) and Marion Eckardt (Sweden) were elected.

ELARDS’s new member from Georgia – GALAG is supported by the EU within the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD). It comprises eight Georgian LAGs from Borjomi, Lagodekhi, Kazbegi, Dedoplistskaro, Tetrtskaro, Akhalkalaki, Keda and Khulo municipalities. It is a conduit for information exchange and learning across the country and acts as an advocate for community-led local development with key state and non-state actors and facilitates the development of integrated, participatory and sustainable rural development in Georgia.



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RDFG launches Professional Orientation and Career Guidance Project

Association Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG) launches Professional Orientation and Career Guidance Project aiming at raising awareness about vocational education and career growth among school students (14-18 years old, at least 350 young people). The specific object of the project is to help young people to make decisions about their educational and professional choice, assist them in managing their careers. The project is being implemented in the framework of the USAID Zrda Activity in Georgia and EU-funded ENPARD Programme and supported by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia. The target of the project are the following municipalities: Tetritskaro, Bolnisi, Marneuli, Ninotsminda, Borjomi, Adigeni, Aspindza, Kaspi, Gori, and Zugdidi.

The key outputs of the project

- As a result of the professional orientation and career guidance trainings, project beneficiaries will obtain knowledge to how to match own skills/knowledge with available professions on the job market.
- Project activities will promote to form solid connections between the education and job market.
- Project activities will support development of the state reform in the field of professional orientation and career consultation.
- Within Project activities, successful career growth and professional orientation experiences will be shared, and relevant recommendations will be provided.



USAID Zrda Activity is a five-year program designed to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth in target regions (Shida Kartli, Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Kakheti) by improving MSME growth, increasing productivity of rural households, facilitating market linkages between producers and buyers and promote local economic development by establishing and strengthening networks. As a result, Zrda will create jobs and increase sales for MSMEs and incomes for households, bolstering the resilience and livelihoods of the target communities. Zrda targets communities in proximity to the administrative boundary lines and communities with ethnic minority populations.

RDFG DRR Center Held a Meeting with the Representatives of the Borjomi Municipality City Hall



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On December 10, 2019, Association Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG) DRR Center organized a working meeting with Levan Lipartia, mayor of the city of Borjomi and city halls' other representatives. The event was held within the USAID Zrda Activity in Georgia and its main purpose was to introduce RDFG DRR Center's planned activities related to disaster risk reduction in the 9 target regions of Georgia. The meeting was led by Shota Kublashvili, RDFG emergency management and disaster risk reduction expert.



At the meeting, the discussions were held about the risks of natural and technogenic disasters and the development of their management plan at the municipal level after which the representatives of the local Municipality City Hall declared their readiness for the future cooperation. Furthermore, based on their resources, they have also expressed their willingness for full support and mobilization.

USAID Zrda Activity is a five-year program designed to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth in target regions. As it is impossible to support the sustainable economic development without creating safe environment, the project consists of disaster risk reduction activities on the local level, elaborating municipal emergency management plans according to modern standards and implementing relevant methods at the level of instructions. Within the project, DRR activities are being implemented by the Association Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG) and DRR Center of RDFG.

Czech Republic's Environmental and Social Development Practices for Sustainable Growth of the Tetrtskaro Municipality



The European Union
for Georgia
ENPARD



On January 20-26, 2020, Association Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG) in the framework of the project V4 Rural Development Experience for Sustainable Growth, hosted the project partner Fórum Ochrany Přírody that provided technical assistance for grant recipients in two phases. In the first phase, they have provided virtual consultations to recently selected grant recipients, supporting the strengthening of projects and, in particular, how they can apply best practices/knowledge from V4 countries, and how to connect the projects with initiatives in other EaP and/or V4 countries.

The results:

- Seven Applications revised, and recommendations provided.
- Based on the produced recommendations, 7 individual consultations (virtual) have been conducted for the pre-selected applicants.

The II phase of technical assistance ensured the long-term sustainability and success of the sub-grant projects being implemented in the Tetrtskaro municipality. The consultations also served as a monitoring visit.



The results:

- Seven field visits have been organized to the pre-selected projects sites.
- Meeting with the pre-selected applicants (in-person) have been organized and intensive consultations have been conducted to advance their project proposals.
- Monitoring have been conducted and recommendations have been provided for the RDFG team.

The Nature Conservation Fórum Ochrany Přírody, is one of the stand-out organizations for environmental and social development in the Czech Republic. They provide a space for dialogue, transfer of knowledge and search for solutions in activities in nature conservation. Organization and its team have extensive experience in environmental protection and small project design/implementation.

The goal of the project V4 Rural Development Experience for Sustainable Growth is to lift the conditions of the people of Tetrtskaro using examples of V4 countries' experiences of utilizing nature conservation to increase economic benefits from sustainable agriculture and tourism. This project is tied to and complements the existing project – Rural Development for Sustainable Growth in the Tetrtskaro Municipality, funded by the European Union within the ENPARD Programme.

RDFG DRR Center Continues Working on Emergency Management Plans in the Target Municipalities



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Association Rural Development for Future Georgia's (RDFG) Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Center, in the framework of the USAID Zrda Activity in Georgia, continues working on emergency management plans in the project target municipalities. On this purpose, in January 2020, RDFG Emergency Management and Disaster Risk Reduction Expert, Shota Kublashvili met with the Adigeni and Dusheti City Halls' representatives.



On January 23, 2020, a working meeting was held with Zakaria Endeladze, Adigeni city mayor. Within the event, RDFG DRR Center's plans and the organization's general field of activity were discussed. Moreover, Shota Kublashvili has also delivered a speech about the implemented activities related to disaster risk reduction in the other project target municipalities.

The representatives of the Adigeni municipality, based on their current resources, expressed their readiness for the future cooperation. Furthermore, the disaster risk assessment meeting was planned. The event was attended by Paata Kbilashvili – Deputy Head of the Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Main Division of Emergency Management Service, Levan Khachapuridze – Head of Adigeni Fire-Rescue Department and Nona Chichinadze – representative of the local city hall administrative department.

USAID Zrda Activity is a five-year program designed to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth in target regions. As it is impossible to support the sustainable economic development without creating safe environment, the project consists of disaster risk reduction activities on the local level, elaborating municipal emergency management plans according to modern standards and implementing relevant methods at the level of instructions. Within the project, DRR activities are being implemented by the Association Rural Development for Future Georgia (RDFG) and DRR Center of RDFG.



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