



Project GROW - Development of woman self-help group in the area of multifunctional farming



Erasmus+

The project is co-funded by the European Union

Program for integration of prepared programs for multifunctional social farming in actions of local and regional development

(Intellectual output 6)

1) INTRODUCTION

Aim of preparation of Program for integration of prepared programs for multifunctional social farming in actions of local and regional development (activity O6) is to:

- Promote measures for cooperation among regional authorities and other stakeholders.
- Identify new measures for integration of programmes into programmes / actions of local and regional development.

2) METHODOLOGY

The programme is prepared on the basis of:

- analysis of existing practices of multifunctional farming in each participating country (where has been reviewed also measures for development of multifunctional farming on regional / national level) – activity O1-A1).
- interviews with experts, who are connected with the development of social economy / farming.

At the beginning (3rd chapter) the document summarized some good practices from analysis of existing practices of multifunctional farming and interviews, which were identified on the basis of interviews.

In 4th chapter there are presented some measures for development of multifunctional farming on local, regional and national level. The measures are based on the analysis of existing practices of multifunctional farming in each participating country (already mentioned in the first paragraph).

In 5th chapter some measures for the development of social agriculture (entrepreneurship) in participating countries are described.

At the end (6th chapter) our achievements are described in the area of integration of prepared programs in actions of local and regional development.

3) GOOD PRACTISES FOR PROMOTION OF SOCIAL AGRICULTURE IN PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

In this chapter are presented proposals and practises, which are important for the development of social farming in each region. These proposals and practises were identified on the basis of interviews with experts in the area of (social) farming and social economy and on the basis of analysis of measures for development of multifunctional farming on regional / national level.

By taking up proper organizational action steps or by changing local and/or regional regulations, these practices can be implemented in all the participating countries:

- Raising awareness of public institutions and administration on social farming: it is important that public institutions are sensitized on social farming and are starting to reflect the new national guidelines on social farming.
- Promotion of innovative projects: through local and regional policies and plans public authorities/institutions can stimulate preparation and implementation innovative projects, specifically dedicated to social agriculture.
- Establishment of “mixed” working groups: for more efficient preparation of measures for social farming it makes sense to form a “mixed” working group, which involve experts in the area of multifunctional farming, research institutions, representatives of public administration, local producers and other interested entities.
- Increase of farmers’ interest to employ, train or involve socially disadvantaged people. This can be done with local/national campaigns for working integration of disadvantaged people and local/regional incentives for employment of them (financial and other benefits, exemptions...).
- Training courses aimed for employment of disadvantaged people in the area of agriculture. Unemployed people, which are interested in working in agriculture, can be further trained to perform specific works in agriculture. This is benefit also for employers because they get qualified workers.

4. LEGISLATION IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL AGRICULTURE (ENTREPRENEURSHIP)

In analysis of existing practices of multifunctional farming in each participating country we have reviewed also measures for development of multifunctional farming on local, regional and national level.

Proposals for promotion of social agriculture, which were described in previous chapter, are an important basis, on which important measures/incentives for development of social agriculture or social entrepreneurship can be established. Actually they represent an environment that may promote or inhibit the implementation of certain measures.

In Italy specific measures for development of social agriculture are foreseen. Among them the most important ones are:

- a) **National “Provisions on Social Agriculture”**. The law is now in the evaluation phase, supposed to be done by the Senate. The law will serve primarily to recognize, legitimize and support the many important experiences of agro-social and social cooperatives, which were established in Italy. The Act regulates the following areas:
 - Incentives and social security contributions for companies and organizations / associations that carry out activities and services targeted to disadvantaged and disabled according European Commission Regulation.
 - Public tenders for school canteens and hospitals according to social farming criteria.
 - Assignment of public spaces for direct sales of social farms products.
 - Incentives for the employment of disadvantaged people.

The most important aspects introduced by the proposal are related to the definition of the activities that could be classified under the name of social agriculture, confirming multifunctionality as a characteristic of the realities that deal with social farming, the recognition of social farming operators and the definition of spaces dedicated to social farming. Supporting measures and establishment of a social farming observatory are also defined.

- b) "**Educational Farms Rules and Regulations**" (Region FVG - L.R. 18/2004): this is regional regulation that supports visits of schools to recognized educational farms in the region. Regulation co-finances expenses for collective transport of students and pupils to mentioned farms.

Although in Slovenia and Hungary there are no special regulations in the area of social agriculture, we have identified some other measures that can be used for promotion of it. Examples of measures, which can be used in all countries, are the following:

Purchase of equipment and quality assurance:

- Financial support for procurement of equipment for production and processing of local agricultural products;
- Subsidies for promotion of quality of agricultural products;
- Grants for development of small farm-yards;
- Loans/grants for facilitating primary production and processing marketing of agricultural products.

Incentives for networking on local level in order to promote:

- Small retail chains (also as employment opportunities for people with disabilities);
- Networking of farms with universities and research centres;
- Networking of farms with local schools, arising awareness and popularity of social agriculture;
- Creation of networks among stakeholders from different sectors (private, public, civil) with the aim to identify and better exploit local resources (knowledge, staff, finance...);
- Collaboration of farmers with cultural and sport associations (NGOs) in order to create strong connection with local community.

Marketing and sales:

- Financial support for development of local trademarks in order to promote locally produced agricultural products and their benefits.
- Funds for promotion of diversification of sales channels in order to promote consumption of local products.
- Promotion of conservation of local traditions and local products.

New services on farms and other agricultural companies:

- Subsidies for development of services for disabled on farms and other agricultural companies;

- LEADER Programme for rural development. Some of measures, that can be promoted in the Leader Programme: development supplementary activities on farms, development of nature friendly farming and preservation of traditional agricultural practices, development of accessible tourism in countryside, preservation of genetic potential, preservation of natural and cultural heritage.

Counselling, education and training:

- Grants for provision of counselling, education and training and for organization of events for exchanging knowledge among farmers;
- Subsidies for preparation of projects in the field of agriculture and rural areas to apply for public calls, events in the field of agriculture;

Financial incentives for employment of persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups. Although incentives for employment of people with disabilities are usually regulated on national level, some of them can be implemented also on local / regional level. Financial help could include advancements in tax system for agricultural (multifunctional) enterprises involved newly in social area.

Potential beneficiaries of described measures should be not only farms but also other forms of agricultural organizations (cooperatives, social enterprises, NGOs, non – profit limited liability companies...).

5. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL AGRICULTURE (ENTREPRENEURSHIP) IN PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

In the analysis of measures in individual countries we tried to find out also the disadvantages that need to be eliminated for further development of social farming and social entrepreneurship. In the following paragraphs some proposals for each country are presented especially in relation to specific content areas. These are not comprehensive “system” proposals, but a set of measures which have been:

- highlighted by the experts who were interviewed in the project GROW;
- exposed in individual regional studies, which are presented in the »Analysis of the existing practices of multifunctional farming and measures for promotion of these practices into actions of local and regional development in participating countries« (intellectual output 1).

These proposals should be implemented at the local, regional or national level; the actual level at which some proposal should be implemented depends on, how much each action is associated with changes in other areas.

Key actions, which are needed in participating countries, are the following:

a) Slovenia

- Improvement of regulation of social economy in Slovenia: existing regulations in the area of social economy do not foresee financial and other measures / incentives for the development of social entrepreneurship. Social enterprises are trying to apply for measures, which can be used also by others (farmers, for – profit enterprises...). A lot of times these measures are more appropriate for other enterprises / organizations than for social enterprises; i.e. they lack of bridging finance and of qualified staff, they don't have appropriate equipment...
- Adaptation of legislation on public procurement: Public Procurement Act (PPA-3) – *Zakon o javnem naročanju (ZJN-3)*, does not contain provisions that promote the purchase of local products. In addition, public procurement procedures are too complex for smaller organizations (eg. kindergartens, homes for the elderly, smaller primary schools ...), which do not have personnel with special knowledge in the field of public procurement.
- Promotion of networking between organizations supportive environment in Goriška Region with a view to integrate measures for development of social entrepreneurship / farming in the region: in each region are several organizations / institutions, which are implementing different measures for development of social economy / farming (i.e. development agencies, chambers of commerce / craft, institutes for agriculture and forestry, VET organizations ...). There is very little (or no) collaboration among these organizations, which means that for end – users are available only separate and incomplete measures (i.e. financial incentives without counselling/mentorship, follow – up...). There is still lack of consultancy for social enterprises.
- Creation of short supply chains. In the Goriška Region there are no specific networks, which would be able to supply local products to bigger public institutes (i.e. schools, retirement homes...); there are lots of producers with small volume of production, which are not able to provide sufficient quantity of crops / products for public institutes. With promoting local networks will be provided additional sales opportunities for local products and opportunities for increasing local production.
- Lack of knowledge about the social entrepreneurship and social farming. Social enterprises are rather new forms of organization. Therefore managers and leaders often lack knowledge in this field, especially competences for financial management of the company, human resources management and marketing. Part of this knowledge could be acquired with the help of managers from the business sector; part of this should be promoted by financial incentives of local community /region.

b) Italy

- Strengthening the network of agricultural producers in order to share information and implement common activities. Examples of common activities: common purchase of machinery, creation of short supply chains that could expand the market

for agricultural producers. Expansion of the market will consequently promote employment of disadvantaged persons.

- Promotion of networking among producers and consumers: the link between producers and consumers is still weak. Consumers need to be stimulated to buy and consume in a more critical way. Active involvement of the community of potential consumers in the promotion of social farming it is still not widespread.

Farmers should cooperate more with the community of potential consumers, for example, by providing some areas in their farms where people could consume the products purchased. It is necessary to involve schools (as this is already taking place with the activity of educational farms) with creation of cultural experiences that are related to preservation of traditions and resources of local agriculture.

In order to raise awareness among citizens and consumers on the issues of short chain supply and social farming, it is necessary to build a closer cooperation with social sector, particularly for the promotion of events open to the community.

- Further development of the Network for social farming in Trieste Province. In Trieste Province was established network for the development of social farming. The network should focus more on common projects and preparation of incentives for implementation of projects for their all lifetime (and not only in the start-up phase); the fact is that agricultural production on small farms needs more time to become autonomous.
- As envisaged by the Memorandum of Understanding between the public administration and social cooperatives, public institutions should make available not only economic and financial incentives, but also public spaces and facilities that are not used for other purposes.
- Promotion of new methods for training disadvantaged groups. It is difficult to activate new training methods for disadvantaged people, because a lot of times there are not enough funds. There are not enough “active” institutional policy instruments in the field of social inclusion for empowerment of disadvantaged people and their active involvement. Staffs of public social services (in charge of social inclusion procedures) often don’t have specific training competences to work with disadvantaged people in agriculture; they should be trained to acquire new competences for working with this target group.



c) Hungary

- Training of employees in the area of social economy and social farming. During interviews we have found out that employee in public sector often lack of knowledge on the social economy and social farming. Aim of the training is to give to employees' basic knowledge on social entrepreneurship and its importance for employment of disadvantaged groups.
- Further development of local partnerships for better local employment. In year 2007 was established "Foglalkoztatási Paktum" at regional level. "Paktum" has 31 members from public and private sector. Aim of the partnership is to strengthen the collaboration for better local employment. Due to lack of money, the partnership ceased to function. In order to solve actual problems/challenges of employment in local communities it is necessary to create local networks, composed from different stakeholders, which can contribute to their solution.
- New types of training of disadvantaged people. Classroom training is most often not enough for development of competences of disadvantaged people. On the other side it is very difficult to introduce new types of training (mentoring, e-learning...) due to insufficient funds and rather strict regulations on education system. In order to attain better results in the training disadvantaged people new types of training and sufficient financial resources are necessary.
- Creation of short supply chains. In Tolna Region is a small number of networks, which are able to supply local products to bigger public institutes (i.e. schools, retirement homes, hospitals, etc...). With further development of local networks additional sales' opportunities would be provided for local products and a potential created for increasing local production. Problem of small volume of production would thus be solved.



6. OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE AREA OF INTEGRATION OF PREPARED PROGRAMS IN ACTIONS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the municipality of Nova Gorica (Slovenia) in the documents for new programming period Institution Foundation BiT Planota with collaboration of NGOs and other stakeholders succeeded to include also contents for development of social farming:

- Regional development Programme of Goriška region 2015 - 2020: project for establishment of a global grant to co-finance projects with a view to the employment of vulnerable target group (measure within priority "Improvement of quality of life).
- Strategies of local development for the local action group "In the embrace of the sun" (Leader Programme): in thematic area of "Better involvement of youth, women and other vulnerable groups" was also included was included also the measure for the development of innovative social services and increasing the integration of vulnerable groups.

In Goriška Region the regional network for promotion of social economy is in the phase of development. In preparation of the network is included Regional Employment Centre, VET institutions, development agencies and chamber of commerce and craft. Each of these stakeholders is implementing specific activities for promotion of social economy in the region. With collaboration with the stakeholders of future network we will implement also GROW programmes and training methods for working inclusion of disadvantaged target groups.

In the Province of Trieste is in the phase of acceptance the Regional Law on Social Agriculture. The law is intended to reinforce implementation of programmes and methods for working integration of disadvantaged people. Programmes and training methodology, which were developed in the GROW project, in the future will be implemented with the use of the measures that will be foreseen in the mentioned law.

At the end of 2015 the "Rural Development Programme for Friuli Venezia – Giulia Region for period 2014 – 2020 was adopted. Consortium for Social Agriculture in FVG succeeded (with active collaboration of Interland Consorzio) to include in the Programme are also the following measures, which can be used also for promoting social agriculture:

- Diversification in educational and social activities and development of agritourism;
- Business start-up for extra – agricultural activities in rural areas;
- Cooperation strategies for rural development.

These measures will be used for further implementation of programmes and training methodology that were developed in the GROW project and for financing new start – ups, which will be created on the basis of self – help groups.