



Sustainable Agriculture
and Rural Development
MOUNTAIN POLICY PROJECT



CIHEAM
IAM BARI

Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions Project (SARD-M)

**Results of a survey on Policies, Institutions and Processes
for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
in Mediterranean Mountain areas
(October 2005 – May 2006)**

**Virginia Belsanti, Annarita Antonelli and Lamberto Lamberti
CIHEAM – IAM Bari**

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Introduction

The SARD-M Project overall objective is to support the rural livelihoods of mountain peoples by facilitating the design, implementation and evaluation of improved policy packages and institutional processes promoting SARD in mountain regions at global, regional, national and local levels.

Policy assessments have been conducted in different regions of the world in order to bring about a better understanding of how the SARD framework is applicable to mountain regions.

CIHEAM-IAM Bari acts as the SARD-M Project Regional Focal Point in the Mediterranean region. Specifically, CIHEAM-IAMB has mobilized key stakeholders for the analysis of Policies, Institutions and Processes for SARD in mountain areas in Mediterranean countries and for the implementation of two case studies, in Morocco and Lebanon, in order to learn lessons on processes for SARD and mountain related policies.

This document reports on the results of a **multi-stakeholders survey** coordinated by CHIEAM-IAM Bari for a **preliminary assessment** of the types of **policies and policy packages, institutions and processes** that are important to achieve SARD in Mediterranean mountain areas.

Networking Stakeholders on Policy Analysis for SARD in Mountain Regions

Networking mechanisms started with the invitation of several stakeholders from Mediterranean countries to participate, **on a voluntary basis**, to a **Mediterranean Forum** on Policy Analysis for SARD in Mountain Regions involving the following Mediterranean countries: Albania, Macedonia, Serbia & Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina in the Balkan region; Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in the Maghreb; Lebanon and Syria in the Middle East; Italy.

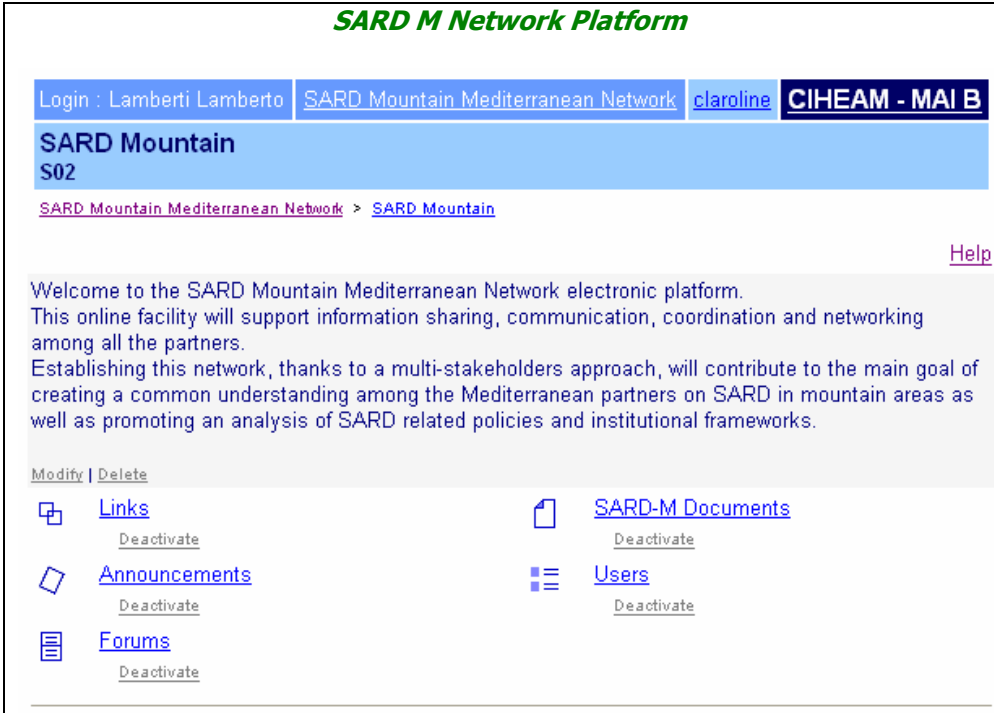
The forum aimed to:

- Draw up country profiles encompassing Policies, Institutions and Processes (PIPs)
- Identify significant stories for SARD in Mediterranean mountain areas.

A diversified range of stakeholders coming from agriculture and rural development institutions, competent in mountain areas and including both governmental and non-governmental bodies, accepted the invitation.

The networking tool

An **online environment** was set up working as a hub gathering all documents, information and as a forum that can be accessed by all participant stakeholders. Some mechanisms encouraging the sharing of information were proposed to keep the actors updated on the state-of-the-art of development in mountain areas in different countries, to increase their awareness on SARD in mountain areas and to inform them on positive experiences for SARD.



The screenshot displays the 'SARD M Network Platform' interface. At the top, it shows the user's login information: 'Login : Lamberti Lamberto', the current page 'SARD Mountain Mediterranean Network', the user's name 'claroline', and the organization 'CIHEAM - MAI B'. Below this is a blue header for 'SARD Mountain S02' with a breadcrumb trail: 'SARD Mountain Mediterranean Network > SARD Mountain'. A 'Help' link is visible in the top right. The main content area contains a welcome message: 'Welcome to the SARD Mountain Mediterranean Network electronic platform. This online facility will support information sharing, communication, coordination and networking among all the partners. Establishing this network, thanks to a multi-stakeholders approach, will contribute to the main goal of creating a common understanding among the Mediterranean partners on SARD in mountain areas as well as promoting an analysis of SARD related policies and institutional frameworks.' Below the message are 'Modify' and 'Delete' options. A sidebar menu lists several features, each with a 'Deactivate' link: 'Links', 'Announcements', 'Forums', 'SARD-M Documents', and 'Users'.

Survey for country profiles preparation and significant stories selection

CIHEAM-IAM Bari prepared and delivered guidelines¹ and questionnaires to the stakeholders to create a common understanding on SARD and mountain-related policy concepts, a clear conceptual framework facilitating the collection of accessible and comparable information.

¹ The basic guideline "Towards a methodological framework for a rapid assessment of policies for SARD in Mountain Regions" developed by the SARD-M Project drove the preparation of these documents.

They also include definitions, concepts and links to key documents and websites that support the actors in carrying out their activity. The online platform hosts a space functioning as an archive for the key documents and questionnaires received.

The survey was divided into two sessions:

- First session: "**Definition of the existing national strategic frameworks on Sustainable Development and SARD in Mountain areas**". Main focuses were on:
 - National achievements concerning Sustainable Development strategies, with specific reference to Agenda 21, the UN guidelines for putting concepts of sustainable development into concrete actions;
 - Identification of policies and institutions directly concerned with agriculture and rural development in mountain areas.
- Second session: "**Identification of significant stories relevant to SARD policies development**"². This session aimed at:
 - Identifying and characterizing frameworks that exist at the local level in Mediterranean mountains;
 - In particular, identifying significant stories characterized by policy processes relevant to the development of policies for SARD that have been implemented or are in the process of being planned.

Survey achievements

The stakeholders involved in the process

All stakeholders participating in the network, according to their functions, knowledge and access to data sources, contributed to the survey, collecting the required information, considering the concepts and following the questionnaires included in the guidelines. All partners provided either firsthand information and/or data obtained by interviewing key informants (e.g. stakeholders from project frameworks). Following this procedure, the network was extended.

The table below shows the full range of stakeholders - international organizations, ministries, universities, NGOs, local organizations – involved in the process.

Country	Stakeholders	1 st session questionnaire	2 nd session questionnaire
Albania	Ministry of Economy Ministry of Finance University of Agriculture of Tirana Ministry of Agriculture and Food – Rural Development Division NGO	1	1
Algeria	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development S.A.R.L. Topvert Institut National Agronomique	2	2
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Ministry of Agriculture	1	1
Lebanon	Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Environment NGOs National Council For Scientific Research	2	2
Macedonia	Center for Agriculture Development GTZ Ivica Nikoloski (independent group promoter)	2	2
Morocco	Ministry of Agriculture, Division of Cooperation Ministry of Water and Forest National Agriculture Research Institute	2	4
Serbia	Ministry of Agriculture	1	2
Syria	Ministry of Agriculture – Research services Arab Forest and Range Institute	1	1

² Feedbacks were received between October 2005 and May 2006.

Tunisia	Ministry of Agriculture Institut supérieur d'agriculture Le Kef Institut de l'olivier	1	2
Italy	NRD IAM Bari	1	1

Country profiles

Questionnaires³ have provided a preliminary country profile outlining existing significant policies, institutions and processes in each country. **Ten country profiles** (see Annex 1) have been prepared in order **to summarize the most significant information** collected on SARD related policies and strategies for mountain areas, sectoral policies, institutions and processes, and to carry out a comparative analysis among different countries and regional areas.

Due to the high degree of complexity of this analysis, the country descriptions **cannot be considered as complete and exhaustive**⁴. The approach had the primary aim to outline a **first general picture** of the national political framework using a common methodology.

Significant stories

The survey gathered over **twenty stories from ten different countries**. The stories were selected and analyzed by the country informants according to their contacts and linkages with institutions.

These stories cannot be considered as completely representative of the existing country reality but they **provide useful information for the creation of a database to be broadened** in the future and to a preliminary analysis process in order to learn lessons on policies, institutions and processes for SARD in Mediterranean mountain areas at regional and country levels.

Stories sheets have been prepared, highlighting the main points related to SARD policies and mountain specificities (see Annex 2).

³ All questionnaires are uploaded on the CIHEAM-IAM Bari SARD-M platform to be shared by all participants, to provide a topic for discussion and to allow comparisons.

⁴ Several elements affected the data collection: respondents had different preparation, coming from different institutional and academic contexts; they participated in the network on a voluntary basis.

SARD PIPs framework: country commonalities and specificities

This section attempts to summarize the results of the analysis and compare the PIPs frameworks. An emphasis is given to the main commonalities and specificities of the different countries at a sub regional level⁵.

The analysis is expected to trigger a debate among the involved Mediterranean stakeholders in order to review the achievements and validate the information acquired⁶.

Balkan region

Balkan countries **do not have specific policies** supporting sustainable agriculture and rural development in mountain areas. The survey shows, however, the existence of a **wide range of policies that are affecting mountain environment and communities** as well. They concern policies for infrastructure development, employment, education, services access and provision, environmental protection, natural resources management, poverty reduction, decentralization and local development, etc. An **exception is Albania** where **mountains have a specific place** in the Albanian National Strategy for Economic and Social Development.

Processes for the establishment of **National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD)**, which presumably will have an impact on SARD and mountain territories, have been initiated in almost all the countries surveyed, although at different level of advancement and political commitment. The **participation** of a wide range of stakeholders, from the governmental and non-governmental sphere, is part of the ongoing processes.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a framework supportive to sustainable development of mountain areas at the **local level** does exist - even if a governmental initiative on sustainable development is missing. It is reported that some municipalities with mountain profiles are adopting local development strategies according to Agenda 21 principles.

Governmental institutions in the Balkans that deal specifically with agriculture and rural development do not show to have specific strategies for mountain areas and the lack of an institutional attitude to implement processes for sustainable development is also emphasized, especially with regards to the participation of civil society in development (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania). Macedonia and Serbia are setting up governmental policy frameworks for rural development sensitive to mountain areas too.

A weak mountain perspective appears in the **National Agriculture Research and Extension Services (NARES)**. The Macedonian Agricultural Advisory Support Program, however, is a program of the Ministry of Agriculture that aims to improve national agricultural advisory services, oriented to match the diversity of people livelihood strategies in the different territories.

Other significant institutions dealing with mountain areas are the **Ministries of Environment** engaged at different levels with environmental and natural resources protection in mountain areas as well. Albania represents a unique case with the establishment of a specific Agency for Mountain Albanian Development and the setting up of interesting networking mechanisms with non-governmental sectors and financial mobilization mechanisms.

Maghreb region

Development strategies for rural and remote areas, including mountain areas, occupy an important place in governmental institutions responsible for agriculture, rural development and environmental protection. They are committed to a complex set of strategies, policies, and programmes for mountain areas development, which are linked to sustainable development principles and mechanisms.

⁵ Due to the trans-boundary character of mountain areas the analysis was carried out at the sub-regional level.

⁶ The debate would benefit from the involvement of stakeholders outside the survey as well.

However, specific policies and strategies for mountain areas are not in place, with the exception of Morocco, that has started a multi-stakeholders process for debating the need for a specific mountain policy.

Tunisia is the only country where a National program for Agenda 21 has been activated and several Local Agenda 21 operate in territories with mountain specificities.

In Algeria the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has activated a sustainable rural development strategy that recognizes mountain territories as a main target and comprises sophisticated tools for ensuring coordination mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation systems, democratic and participatory processes.

Morocco, finally, has also prepared the rural development strategy 2020 and has set up mechanisms for coordination among different governmental bodies and other stakeholders for rural development.

Complementary to this concern on sustainable agriculture and rural development, Maghreb countries have a number of policies and processes finalized to support the **enhancement of livelihoods systems** in mountain areas managed by different ministries and bodies. A wide range of policies and processes are in place and a wide range of institutions, whose aims are to improve the access to services and resources, enhance productivity, protect the environment, etc., is implementing them.

Of specific interest is also the existence of **governmental institutions strongly oriented towards mountain problems**. In Morocco, the High Commissioner plays a key role for agriculture and rural development of mountain areas for water and forestry and to combat desertification, responsible for the implementation of policies and programs for research and development of mountain areas. Tunisia has the North-West Sylvo-Pastoral Development Office, an inter-governmental institution committed to the development of a specific area of Tunisia. It specifically addresses problems of mountain areas, aiming at protecting the environment and facilitating people participation, and establishing new institutions.

Middle East region

Lebanon and Syria do not have any specific strategy or policy for mountain areas and for their sustainable development. However, **institutions are sensitive to mountain issues**, even, apparently, through sectoral approaches, with weak synergies and linkages with other similar or complementary institutions.

In Syria, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform is involved to sustain agriculture in mountain areas for poverty alleviation, creation of employment opportunities, women empowerment and environmental protection.

The case of the Ministry of Agriculture of Lebanon is also meaningful since it tries to sustain processes for discussing policies and strategies for mountain development (e.g. sustainability and its ongoing involvement in the implementation of SARD related programs - Integrated Pest Management programme, the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification). Of particular interest is the New Lebanese Agricultural Strategy, strongly inspired by sustainable development principles and based on Lebanon zoning, with mountain areas that contribute to the definition of territorial specificities.

North Mediterranean region (Italy)

Information has only been collected from Italy. Nonetheless, it appears very important and meaningful to stimulate further debates and comparisons with other North Mediterranean countries and other sub-regional areas.

Italy has a NSSD, but without a specific focus on mountains and SARD. However, sustainable development of mountains seems to be supported **by a diversified institutional and political framework**. Local development strategies, that affect mountain areas, are supported by specific policies and measures, such as the LEADER programmes or the mountain communities, the latter with a long experience. Meaningful is also the **Parliament mobilization for supporting policy making for mountain areas** and the existence of specific agreements for the development of mountain regions (Alps and Apennines), which recognize the specificities (like in Tunisia).

Summary table

	National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) and for SARD	Mountain strategies/policies	Institutions highly oriented towards mountain issues	Local frameworks for learning lessons from implementation
Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia)	With some exception, no NSSD are in place. On the contrary, meaningful examples of strategies for rural development and mechanisms for stakeholders' coordination on themes related to sustainable development are already activated at the national level	Mountain issues are often covered by strategies and/or policies, even if not having a specific focus on mountain areas. In each country, there are complex policy frameworks sensitive to problems of remote and poor areas.	ODESYANO- Office de Développement Sylvo-Pastoral du Nord Ouest - Tunisia High Commissioner for Water and Forestry and to Combat Desertification - Morocco	A number of processes, which envisage policy and institutional processes and include mountain communities, have been identified. These represent a valuable resource for sharing experiences and learning lessons.
Middle-East (Lebanon and Syria)	No NSSD and SARD strategies and mechanisms are in place	Not any specific mountain policies/strategies. Some projects and territorial development schemes consider mountain regions.	Arab Forest and Range Institute – Syria Association for Forest Development and Conservation (AFDC) - Green Plan - Lebanon	
Balkans (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina; Macedonia, Serbia)	Countries have activated processes and mechanisms (e.g. committees) for preparing NSSD and rural development strategies	No specific mountain policies. Mountain issues find a place in specific rural development or social development strategies.	Albania Agency for Mountain Development	
North Mediterranean (Italy)	NSSD without a specific focus on mountains			

Conclusions

The survey succeeded in the **mobilization of a wide and differentiated range of stakeholders**, from governmental and non-governmental organizations, contributing on a voluntary basis.

These stakeholders played a key role in the collection of information related to policies, institutions and processes for SARD implementation in the mountain areas of their countries, showing **great awareness and high motivation towards SARD processes for mountain areas**.

The survey process, at the same time, can be conceived as **an individual learning process**, which has increased each stockholder's awareness on what is needed for SARD in mountain areas. The contribution given by the partners can foster debate at the country level concerning the needs and opportunities, enlarging the range of involved stakeholders. These actors, moreover, could be considered as reliable partners for future SARD-M Project activities or for the promotion of other SARD-related activities.

The survey allowed the preparation of **ten Mediterranean country profiles**⁷ and the identification and **characterization of twenty significant stories**. These very important outputs should be valorized in the SARD-M Project and be considered as entry points to stimulate and consolidate further networking mechanisms at the regional or sub-regional levels, where different situations, experiences and approaches of countries could be discussed and shared. The creation of a **regional database** collecting other significant stories and giving free access to all the information gathered would be a very useful service for stakeholders ranging from the civil society to the policy makers.

It is important to highlight that the results of the survey cannot be considered as a final country picture on policies, institutions and processes for SARD in Mediterranean mountain areas. On the contrary, they have **to be handled as an incomplete basket of information that should be built upon**. Incompleteness comes from the nature of the process that investigated on a very broad and complex set of information, policies, institutions and processes, through the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders characterized by different perspectives, knowledge and experiences. Those elements stress even further the **need to strengthen networking** mechanisms in order to provide more exhaustive information, useful for driving decisional processes, eventually expanding the PIPs assessment to other Mediterranean countries not yet represented.

Even with their incompleteness, the information acquired appeared relevant for learning lessons from commonalities and specificities in sub-regional areas. **Main lessons learned** that could be highlighted are the following:

- Marginal areas, and mountain areas in particular, are situated differently in the political framework of each country; except for Italy (law on mountain communities), there are no mountain oriented policies/strategies; however, **in every country, mountains are affected by a range of policies/strategies oriented towards rural development, poor people, marginal and remote areas**;
- Countries that are evaluating the opportunity to have specific policies for mountains development can **learn from other countries** that already went through similar processes;
- There are **significant examples of country and local institutions** strongly committed towards development of mountain areas from which important lessons could be learned;
- The **institutional awareness**, at the central level (governments), of the necessity to put in place strategies for sustainable development or SARD **is growing and spread**. When the process is more advanced, the involvement of other levels of institutions and of the civil society is more evident. There are meaningful lessons that can come from policy processes that involve multiple sectors, linking actors at the different levels, involving civil society.

⁷ Covering Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina; Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia; Lebanon, Syria; Italy.

What stems from these results is that the SARD-M next steps should have **as a priority, the strengthening and consolidation of the network of stakeholders** already involved, eventually extending it to other countries or actors at the country level. Communication systems could be based on an improved version of the existing online platform developed for the SARD-M policy assessments, e.g. with a retrieval systems on the significant stories and with the facilitation of a specific forum of discussion at the regional, sub-regional and country levels. This would allow existing mechanisms to go deeper in the comparison of situations in different countries, having the chance to link with similar experiences and processes and learning from the experiences of others.

Forums could be stimulated, shifting the focus of the SARD-M analysis on specific entry points (an institution, a policy, or a process) by mobilizing multi-stakeholders teams, identifying specific needs and promoting partners' concerted actions starting from the discussion of the outlined country profiles.

The knowledge acquired from the entire process should also be valorized and used for the design of mechanisms for building stakeholders capacities for SARD policies assessment in mountain areas.

COUNTRY PROFILES

Albania

A specific policy concerning SARD cannot be identified. The government has, however, embraced the adoption of Agenda 21 and, due to a growing awareness concerning sustainable development principles both at institutional and civil society levels, it is engaged in the elaboration of a new development strategy based on the objectives and principles of sustainable development.

The **National Strategy for Economic and Social Development (NSES)**, at the very first stage of its implementation, gives a good example of this growing awareness and concern on sustainable development as it places a strong emphasis to Integrated Rural Development and to mountain areas, dedicating two chapters to both topics.

The National Agency for the Development of Mountain Areas (MADA) is strongly supporting mountain communities, facilitating the access to a range of services. MADA, together with other NGOs, created a national forum for the mountain areas representatives, whose task is to organize producers and local actors for lobbying in order to back up the inclusion of the issue of mountain areas development in the national agenda.

National agricultural research and extension services do not have specific focus on sustainable development and mountain issues. Some institutions are nevertheless significantly committed to mountain development. The Ministry of Agriculture, for example, has adopted a strategy to develop rural infrastructures, allocating direct funds to projects in mountain areas. The Ministry of Finance supports the micro credit system in mountain areas, giving financial support to poor families living in these areas and additional financial support to mountain villages to build schools and medical centers.

Other policies, such as decentralization policy or policy for poverty reduction, have been identified for their importance on mountain areas development, but their impacts are limited for reasons such as the lack of SARD concepts in programmes for developing institutions and the weakness of mountain local structures in initiating participatory processes.

Serbia

Serbia is currently involved in a process for the preparation of a NSSD (the Cabinet of the Vice-Prime Minister is directly involved).

A Council for Sustainable Development has been in place since 2003 to support the Government in decision making, within the policy process, on all the important issues for achieving sustainable development through the integration of economic activities and social perspectives on the protection of environment at the national, sub-national and local levels. Its members are representatives of different ministries and NGOs. The Council is committed to activating working groups and commissions on specific tasks, such as the drafting of a strategy for sustainable development, for the implementation and reporting on the Agenda 21 process, for the promotion of environmental friendly productions. The Council acts to harmonize its activities with other Governmental bodies, whose programmes are complementary, such as those for decreasing poverty in Serbia, implementation of Millennium Development Goals and process of accession to EU.

No SARD strategies are currently in place and there are also no institutions specifically committed to mountain areas development.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM) and Ministry of Science and Environment (MSE) are trying to strengthen their linkages, to better support agriculture development. Mountains are still not an issue taken into consideration, but the process is still in its very early stage.

MAFWM, however, is oriented to promote a new grant scheme in 2006 to support SARD in less favored areas (above 600 meters of altitude) as a part of a general rural development scheme, which has been active for the past two years.

MSE is also preparing a Strategy for Nature Conservation that would be important for the protection of mountain ecosystems as well.

Other sectoral policies and strategies have been listed as important for their impacts on mountain areas:

- Poverty Reduction Strategy
- National Employment Strategy
- Agricultural Strategy of Serbia, 2004
- Water-Management Basis of the Republic of Serbia
- Draft of Health-Care System Reform and Action Plan, 2003
- Draft of Vocational Education Development Policies and Strategies in Serbia, 2005
- Action Plan for Support to Medium and Small Businesses Development.

Macedonia

The Government of Macedonia is implementing a two-year project for the preparation of a **National Strategy for Sustainable Development**, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

A wide range of stakeholders are involved in the process: the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (MAFWE), the Commission for Economic System and Current Economical Policy, the Assembly of Macedonia Republic, the Commission for European integration, experts teams, representatives of NGOs, business sector, professional associations, unions and civil society.

One of the planned activities is the establishment of a National Council on Sustainable Development and the preparation of a manual for implementing the Local Action Plans for Sustainable Community (Local Agenda 21).

Regarding the existence of policies and processes for SARD in mountain areas, at the moment the Macedonia Government, through the MAFWE, is at the initial stage of a process leading to the establishment of a stated plan for rural development, which will recognize among others, hilly-mountainous, border and underdeveloped areas (see details below).

The MAFWE in 2004 prepared a "Strategy for the Approximation of the Macedonian Agro and Food Economy to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the EU", which foresees the preparation of a "National Program for Agriculture and Rural Development for the period 2005-2010"; "National Strategy for Rural Development"; Government Program for Agricultural and Structural Policy and Rural Development.

Rural areas are going to be divided into 2 groups: rural centers and specific areas; they will be further divided into 3 sub-groups: hilly-mountainous, border and undeveloped.

A Department for Support to Agriculture and Rural Development and a Rural Development Unit has been established in MAFWE. They will start processes for understanding and overcoming problems of the rural populations, contributing to the policy and measure design and implementation. Great emphasis is given to encourage rural communities to diversify into new income generating activities, both agricultural and non-agricultural, and to enhance local services to complement this development. This is also seen as an important part of the European integration agenda that will allow accelerated access to EU structural funds in the medium-term.

Other processes have been identified with important impacts on mountain people livelihoods:

- The Macedonian Agricultural Advisory Support Program (MAASP), funded by SIDA, is strengthening the Macedonian advisory systems in providing services to rural households which would match and fit the specific livelihood strategies of rural communities;
- The Macedonian National Forestry Policy and Strategy is promoting processes to conserve and manage forest resources, and to enhance their economic, environmental and social contribution to the wellbeing of Macedonian society.

Moreover, measures, programs and projects have been mentioned for their significant role on mountain development, acting towards the:

- Enhancement of the environment and countryside (i.e. support for sustainable land management, including supporting farming in mountain areas or other areas with particular handicaps, schemes to protect biodiversity, habitats and landscapes, support for environmentally friendly farming and forestry methods, including organic farming);
- Enhancement of the quality of life in rural areas and promoting diversification of economic activities, including the provision of basic services for the rural population (e.g. roads, electricity, water, sewerage), the renovation and development of villages, the support to development of new economic activities to diversify the rural economy.

Others key stakeholders identified as important for their key role in NARES and for the development of mountain areas are the following:

- Agency for Promoting the Development of Agriculture (AIDA) that included in a National institution the former Research Centres for Development of Agriculture;
- National Extension Agency, an independent body financed directly from Macedonian Government, committed to the provision of advisory services to farmers and farmers associations on the latest scientific achievements and the direct implementation of the programme for agriculture and rural development;
- Agency to implement the "Law on stimulation of development of the economically under-developed areas" under the Ministry of Local Self-Government.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The recent policy history of B&H⁸ has been characterized by great attention to the drafting and adoption of economical and social laws. On the contrary, up to now, processes for the implementation of Agenda 21 have not been started and few are the achievements towards SARD and mountain areas development.

An insufficient communication and dialogue between the B&H entities and governmental bodies is also highlighted, in particular in the area of natural resources management; civil society (NGOs and other stakeholders) do not have an active role in policy-making and do not participate in the decisional processes.

Public institutions, such as the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment and the National Systems for Research and Extension Services, are not yet committed to SARD or sustainable development and neither mountain protection nor development. Institutional capacities are generally considered a weak point for designing and implementing sustainable development and SARD related policies, and training for building institutional capacities at all levels is required.

Some documents, mainly developed by national experts with the assistance of the international community, rather than of institutions and/or coordination mechanisms among institutions, are identified for their potential impacts on SARD and mountain development (see box).

- Development of «Global Framework for Economic Development Strategy of Bosnia Herzegovina for 2000 – 2004 – ENTREPRENEURIAL SOCIETY» adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH (2000);
- «UN joint study for BiH», prepared by UNDP in cooperation with domestic experts (2000);
- Report on the Status and Need for Environmental Legislation in BiH, prepared by BiH – REC BiH in the framework of REReP, and its project of Building Capacities in Southeast Europe for Accession to European Union (2002);
- Drafting of a set of five coordinated environmental laws (i.e. Framework Environment Law, Law on Water Protection, Law on Waste, Law on Environment and Law on Protection of Air) prepared by international consultants, with the assistance of EC-EU (2001);
- Establishment of institutional and organizational infrastructure at the state level, for coordination and management of environmental issues and GEF program, adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH (2002);
- The Government of the Federation of BiH established the Fund for Sustainable Development, the activities of which are in early stages.

At lower administrative levels, however, development processes in compliance with the principles of sustainable development, are in place:

- “Sarajevo Canton Strategy of Development until 2015”;
- The local communities from the cities of Tuzla and Bijeljina adopted Local Agenda 21. They observed from practice that there was a need for cooperation and synchronization of activities in the bordering parts of these areas;
- The city of Banjaluka, in cooperation with the cities from the Federal Republic of Germany, is presently drafting and preparing the implementation of the Local Agenda 21.

⁸ Formed by the two entities B&H Federation and Republic of Srpska.

Algeria

In Algeria, a comprehensive national strategy for the sustainable development does not exist. The strategies of development are left to the initiative of the various governmental departments. The mechanism of coordination is assured through the **Haut Conseil de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable**⁹ (HCEDD), an interministerial body whose task is to control the integration of the decision-making process in environment and in sustainable development at the overall institutional level.

Concerning rural development, the Ministry of Agriculture has set up a **National Strategy for Sustainable Rural Development** in July 2004. This has been prepared with the aim of revitalizing the Algerian rural areas, valorizing the cultural, natural, economical diversities of the different populations. The Strategy takes into account the territory specificities, and mountains are recognized as specific ecosystems to be matched, together with Steppe and Sahara.

The multi-sectoral dimension of the strategy and its integrated and participatory approach brings together a wide number of stakeholders with action centered on project promoters (individuals, groups, municipalities). At the local level, coordination mechanisms exist among these entities through the Proximity Rural Development Projects.

The **principal axes of the strategy** are:

- The establishment of a local partnership and a multi sectoral integration among territories
- The support to implementation of economic activities
- The valorization and sustainable management of natural resources
- The social and economic synergy and coordination among actions.

To implement the strategy a **number of tools** have been set out:

- Mechanisms for consultation and decision making
- Funding mechanisms for activities in rural areas
- Tools for programming and managing rural territories
- Monitoring and evaluation systems to support decision making processes
- Supportive legislations and regulations
- The innovative aspects of this new program consist of 5 points:
 - Project promoter is the core part of the mechanism
 - Implication of services other than agricultural ones: crafts, habitat, health, environment and culture
 - Involvement of all the associations settled in the rural territory
 - Decrease of the importance of the public services
 - Extension of the program to all rural populations willing to take part in the process in an innovative way
- From the organizational point of view, starting from the local level up to the highest levels, three groups of responsibilities are identified around the following functions:
 - Facilitation
 - Technical support and financial assistance
 - Coordination of activities and creation of a network among the different stakeholders.

The main institutions concerned with SARD and mountain issues are: Haut Conseil de l'environnement et du développement durable (HCEDD) ; Ministère de l'agriculture et du développement rural, Ministère délégué chargé du développement rural, Ministère des ressources hydrauliques; Direction Générale des forêts ; Ministère de l'aménagement du territoire; Institut national de vulgarisation agricole (INVA).

⁹ Chaired by the Prime Minister, it consists of 12 ministerial Departments (Environment, Defense, Home Affairs, Health, Foreign Affairs, Finances, Transport, Agriculture, Hydraulics, Industry, Energy and Higher Education) and of 6 personalities of the civil society chosen by the President of the Republic. It is supported by two committees, a technical and a financial one, in which participate, besides the representatives of the various ministerial departments, six representatives of the NGO. HCEDD should, as a rule, decide, control, advise and supervise.

About one year after the adoption of the rural development strategy, the need for capacity building and information mechanisms have been identified as a priority for its correct implementation. Programmes for training and extension activities have, hence, been set up and implemented by different institutions (e.g. INVA).

Moreover, the technical services of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have been mobilised for the "New policy on sustainable rural development"; at the same time, facilitators (local administration operators) and animators (rural communities representatives) have been mobilised to ensure the flow of information between the rural population and the political level.

Other policies and measures that have direct or indirect impacts on mountain areas and SARD are: Programme des grands travaux; Plan national de l'eau; Programme national de reboisement; Programme national de développement agricole et rural; Plan national d'action pour l'environnement et le développement durable.

Morocco

Morocco does not currently have a National Strategy for Sustainable Development or any specific strategy or policy for mountain development. However, rural development is considered as a country priority. Mountain areas, as part of the remotest and poorest areas of the country, are a main target of rural policies. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has elaborated the National Strategy for Rural Development called Strategy 2020 (see details below).

National Strategy for Rural Development called Strategy 2020

Two principal **priorities**:

- To enhance agricultural productivity through a more intensive use of labour and a sustainable and responsible management of natural resources;
- To provide equipment to the countryside and support the development of rural villages in order to stimulate the diversification of economic activities, to create new opportunities and to develop the social and cultural services necessary for involving the rural population into the local political life.

These priorities have been translated into a **set of objectives**:

- Increase of agricultural production;
- Increase of income and employment in the agricultural sector;
- Creation and diversification of economic activities;
- Halt the process of environmental degradation;
- Renewal of training and establishment of new professional training schemes;
- Improvement of infrastructure and services;
- Correction of regional disparities and gaps.

To achieve these objectives some **approaches** have been adopted: integration, territorialization, multifunctionality and the multidimensional approach, implementation of decentralization and deconcentration processes, participation, development of partnership and contractual negotiation.

The importance given to development of rural areas emerges also from the presence of a State Secretary in charge of Rural Development and of the Council and Permanent Interministerial Committee for Rural Development (CIPDR) (see details below).

The State Secretary in charge of Rural Development, established in 2004, set up an action program for rural development, recently adopted by the Government of Morocco.

The Council and Permanent Interministerial Committee for Rural Development (CIPDR), headed by the Prime Minister and whose secretary is based at MADRPM, define the orientations and assure the coordination, integration and monitoring of rural development programmes and projects.

At the decentralized level the CIPDR are represented by **restricted provincial committees** headed by "*Walis*" that approve the development plans and elaborate financial plans, mobilizing resources, monitoring, and evaluating projects. The Directions provinciales de l'agriculture and the Offices régionaux de mise en valeur agricole guarantee secretarial services.

The creation of the High Commissioner for Water and Forestry and to Combat Desertification (Haut Commissariat des Eaux et Forêts et Lutte contre la Désertification, HCEFLCD) shows also the importance given by the Moroccan Government to mountains.

HCEFLCD plans and programmes pursue the protection and conservation of the natural resources, the control of desertification processes, the valorisation of local resources, and implement approaches for people participation, and diversification and integration of activities. Plans and programmes include: National Forestry Program; Plan national d'aménagement des bassins versants; Plan national de lutte contre la désertification; Plan directeur de reboisement, Plan directeur des aires protégées.

Other policy measures are in place and important for their complementary role for mountain development. Measures noted for their impacts on infrastructure and social services include: Program of Grouped Supply in Drinking Water of Rural Populations (PAGER); Global Rural Program of Electrification by the Ministry of the Equipment; Program of Education called "School for all" by the Ministry of Education; Program of integrated rural development, such as the PMVB, DRI-Forest.

Other institutions belonging to MADRPM are mentioned for their role in NARES for SARD and mountain development. The Department for Education, Research and Development coordinates research bodies that cover all agro climatic areas: INRA, IAV Hassan II, ENA de Mekhnès, etc. DERD coordinates the extension services activities, which work at the local level through the "Centres de Travails". HCEFLCD is also directly involved in research, coordinating a National Centre for Research and Development for the past 10 years.

Tunisia

Sustainable development processes have already touched mountains areas in Tunisia. Since 1995, a "National action programme for the environment and sustainable development for the 21st century" for the implementation of Agenda 21 has led to the establishment of Agenda 21 specialised services in several mountain areas (regions: Bizerte, Jendouba, Draham Ain, Siliana, The kef, Zaghouan, Kasserine, Nabeul, Kairouan and Béja) that cover both SARD and mountain issues.

National Sustainable Development Commission (CNDD)

Since 1993, the Prime Minister chairs a National Sustainable Development Commission. CNDD includes among its members representatives of Government, members of Parliament, representatives of the business community, women and youth organizations and other NGOs. The National Observatory for Environment and Sustainable Development (OETD) has been established since 2004 to support decision making of CNDD.

Its mission is to adjust and harmonize the national development programmes with a view to reconcile socio-economic development with the conservation of natural resources. It has prepared a "National action programme for the environment and sustainable development for the 21st century".

Mountains are also a focus of rural development policies, with Integrated Rural Development Programmes, integration, territoriality, participation and partnership. From the mid 1990s, these programmes focused on increasing competitiveness of agricultural products, improving the working environment, promoting integration and considering environmental sustainability through a well-planned management of natural resources. There has been a greater decentralization, involvement of local associations and enhanced role for NGOs in the whole development process. Other schemes were implemented in the framework of rural development such as the national solidarity fund and the integrated agricultural development projects.

Specific policies for mountain areas exist.

Since the beginning of the eighties, government development policy in the North-West has been implemented mainly by the ODESYPANO. The establishment of the North-West Sylvo-Pastoral Development Office (ODESYPANO), a commercial public establishment under the authority of the Ministry of Agriculture, was a decisive step in the radical modification of the authorities' role in the development of the mountainous areas in the North-West of the country and of their methods. It is a government instrument used to establish a balance between regions, promote and rationally exploit natural potential and protect natural resources in the five Governorates of the North-West, particularly in the mountainous and forest areas that are lagging behind the rest of the country.

At first, the main objective of the Office was to conserve natural resources and, in particular, to combat erosion and thus ensure that water resources were retained behind dams as long as possible. However, this approach to development very soon gave way to a more realistic one, which focused on educating the population and improving its living conditions, thereby cultivating sustainable local development and indirectly ensuring better protection of resources.

An important contribution was given by the agencies (CRDA, forestry services, etc.) and NGOs, whose approach has been similar to that of the Office.

Changing approaches to development: North-West Project No III - towards a broader partnership

After ten years (1991-2002) of the Integrated Participative Approach (IPA), designed to secure the active and responsible participation of the population throughout the entire development process, the Office has embarked upon a new phase with an improved IPA.

The new approach consists of making better use of the IPA and extending its scope by introducing new forms of partnership that go beyond the mere population/Office level and involve the whole range of local players in the entire development process, from planning/scheduling to monitoring /assessment. In the new

partnerships, responsibilities would be shared between the Office and the other development stakeholders in the region (CRDA, OEP, DGF, Ministry of Public Works, NGOs, private firms, etc.). Local and regional institutions are involved in the political and economic processes, management of natural resources and in social and cultural life (see list below).

Local institutions

- The Omda;
- The RCD cells: mobilising the community politically. It gives even greater influence in the economic and social life of the community. The presidents of the cells are therefore involved in all decision making;
- The District Committee;
- The GDA: the agricultural development group, which was set up to represent the community in all development and natural resource management projects;
- The extended Development Committee;
- The Miaad: a traditional, informal and community-level organization.

Regional institutions

- The ODESYPANO;
- The CRDA: its different directorates and departments have had a significant impact on the economy of the zone;
- The Rangeland Resources Office (OEP).

A number of NGOs, notably ATLAS and APEL, contribute to implementing the policy of promoting rural development partnerships with civil society.

The establishment of GDAs in the region community is part of a strategy adopted by the ODESYPANO to involve the population in the management of development activities and natural resources. Thanks to this new approach, the Group enjoys greater visibility, both as a local institution and as an autonomous stakeholder promoting the development of the community it represents. This new autonomy of the community, or rather the new expression of its autonomy, actually represents an important step forward, opening up new prospects for sustainable development for the community and its territory.

It has been particularly successful in including all stakeholders, particularly women, and in broadening the outlook for development, setting it in a wider context that encompasses all mountainous and forest regions in the North-West of Tunisia.

However, the development process is likely to reach its limit for a number of reasons: the lack of income-generating activities that are not directly based on the exploitation of natural resources, the difficulty of directing all members of the community, some of whom refuse to join the GDA, and the difficulty the GDA is encountering in its attempts to include women in the decision-making process.

Lebanon

The Ministry of Environment (MOE) is implementing the Agenda 21, along with the different concerned stakeholders, but until now, there is no National Strategy for Sustainable Development, or some formal mechanisms. MOE is, however, strongly committed to the safeguard of mountain areas, implementing several projects for biodiversity conservation, creation of protected areas, reforestation, regulating quarry exploitation, etc.

Concerning SARD in mountain areas, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) has prepared the new Lebanese agricultural strategy, which fits with the sustainable development principles. Even if mountain ecosystems are not expressly targeted in the strategy, they are indirectly recognized since the document proposes territorial development approaches based on the recognition of zone specificities. MOA is also currently in the process of preparing for a forest policy and strategy where mountains issues will be addressed, since most of the forests and other wooded lands are in mountain areas. A National Action Program to Combat Desertification was elaborated in a participatory and coordinated manner, with clear strategic objectives and actions related to the sustainable development concept to be implemented at the national and local levels.

The Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) has finalized the "Schéma directeur d'aménagement du territoire", which addresses all the aspects of land planning and land use of the country. As part of this study, a team is currently working on the elaboration of framework laws on mountains, on protected areas and on the coastal area. A project called "Community Project" based at and implemented by the CDR, identifies an "axe of poverty", where sustainable agriculture and rural development projects are co-financed.

The extension service in the Directorate of Studies and Coordination in the Ministry of Agriculture has launched a new project with FAO (a Technical Cooperation Project) for the improvement of the extension system. SARD exists as a concept in extension programmes and activities coordinated or executed by the extension services. All activities related to the agriculture sector in mountain areas, such as integrated pest management programmes or extension on the biological control or organic farming in mountains area, can be classified as activities related to SARD-M. If mountain issues are not directly addressed, there is room to do so.

The Ministry of Agriculture is currently planning to organize a national meeting to discuss mountain issues and policies. The creation of a national committee will be proposed, where the MOA could play a leading role. Regional committees will also be proposed. These committees will have a crucial role in the coordination of the different activities and in measuring the impacts of the different actions and policies on mountain regions.

Syria

In 2002 the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment was given the responsibility of writing the Syrian report to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Since WSSD, Syria has neither prepared a National Strategy for Sustainable Development nor set up a council or committee to coordinate sustainable development process. Sectoral activities prevail and various Ministries and institutions carry out some activities with no or minimum coordination with other agencies or institutions, unless these activities are mandated by law.

Ministries and agencies have plans targeting different geographical areas including mountain areas. The sum of their activities fit very well in the process of sustainable development. The Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform carries out most agricultural activities in mountain areas either within the Ministry's annual plan or in cooperation with regional and international institutions such as FAO, UNDP, IFAD, ACSAD and AOAD. The activities of the Ministry in this regard are directed towards alleviating poverty and providing jobs in agricultural projects carried out in mountain areas and towards the protection of environment.

The Coastal/Midland Agricultural Development Project is an example of a project carried out in this direction. The overall aim of the project is to help reduce poverty and enable rural people to increase their agricultural production. One of its most promising activities is helping women increase their income through raising cows or establishing small handicraft shops. It is anticipated that these types of activities will enhance income of mountain people and preserve environment.

Italy

During the last decades, national policies have considered sustainable development. A National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) has been established, which presents a focus on several important principles related to SARD, but does not appear to have a specific focus on mountains.

Italian policies dealing with sustainable development at the institutional, law-making and economic levels

Institutional level: The I Division of the Direction for Environmental Research and Development (*Direzione Generale per la ricerca Ambientale e lo Sviluppo*) of the Italian Ministry of Environment (*Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio*) is responsible for environmental training and education, Agenda 21 and national reports on the state of the environment.

Law-making level: A Committee called COPIT (*Comitato di Parlamentari per l'Innovazione Tecnologica e lo Sviluppo Sostenibile*), composed by members of the Italian Parliament, is guiding the process that is supposed to lead the Italian law system to change toward sustainability. The Italian Ministry of University and Technological Research acknowledges it and one of its tasks is the dissemination of research and technological innovation about sustainable development.

Economic level: A Commission of the Italian Inter-Ministerial Committee for Economic Planning or CIPE (*Comitato Interministeriale per la Programmazione Economica*) is responsible for the financial aspects of sustainable development activities on the national territory.

In 2002, the CIPE has approved the Italian National Strategy for Sustainable Development which identified for the next decade four priority areas of action: climate; nature and biodiversity; life quality in urban and rural environments; sustainable use of natural resources and management and recycle of wastes.

The national strategy focus in relation to SARD envisages:

- Improving the quality of agricultural and industrial products by quality standards and ecolabels (ISO, EMAS);
- Reducing the amount of energy used for production, polluting technologies and uses and carbon emissions of both agriculture and industry (it involves other institutions such as ENEL, APAT/ARPA, ISTAT);
- Enhancing energy self-dependence;
- Education on sustainable uses of natural resources (other institutions involved: INFEA).

Besides the NSSD, Italy is developing the following processes towards sustainability concerning two wide mountain ecosystems, the Alps and the Apennines:

- *Alps*: in 1994, Italy adhered to the transnational Convention for the sustainable development of the Alpine chain. Acknowledging the uniqueness of this fragile agro-ecosystem and its social, cultural, economic, political and environmental characteristics, it was decided to implement actions for an integrated and sustainable development of this area (with specific reference to agronomic uses);
- *Apennines*: by means of an agreement with the Italian Region Abruzzo and based on the previous agreements among all the regions concerned, the Italian Minister of Environment established a Plan of Action for the sustainable development of the Apennine belt, whose aim was to make the Apennine the "Parco d'Europa".

Another important element is the National Strategic Plan for Rural Development for the years 2007-2013, which targets rural development and whose objectives are divided into five Axes: increasing competitiveness of the agro-food/forestry system; improving environment conditions in rural areas; enhancing quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy; implementation of the European Programme LEADER; development of a National Rural Network.

Some sectoral policies can have an impact on SARD in mountain areas, although not directly targeting those areas. For example, the Law n.328/2000 and following bills concerning devolution and increase of the autonomy of local stakeholders; Programmi di Azione Locale (PAL) meant to implement the European LEADER Programme in Italy; local Agenda 21 processes; National Projects to Combat Desertification and other environmental constraints.

Recently, work was started towards a complete reform of that legislation, with a view to furthering the development and conservation of mountain regions, in light of lessons learned in regional (European Union) and global policy frameworks (FAO and other UN agencies). Within the Italian Parliament, a group known as the "Friends of the Mountain" (*Amici della Montagna*) has recently put forward five priorities for the design of mountain policies:

- Financial support to reduce economic disadvantages in mountain areas;
- Legal, social and economic acknowledgment of the value of the activities taking place in mountain areas;
- Improvement of the living conditions in mountain areas through adequate legislation;
- Enhancement of mountain cultural and environmental assets;
- Devolution to local authorities of the benefits arising from the use of mountain infrastructures.

Until now, the protection and the development of mountain areas have been taken into account in various sectoral policies. As forest resources are mainly located in mountain areas (95%), public forest policies are highly relevant to these areas. A recent study pointed out that current forest management and related policies are based on a multi-functional approach, aimed at promoting the protective role of mountain forests (soil protection and water conservation) as well as their productive role (wood production).

Likewise, land-use planning tools usually address the needs and constraints of farming development, livestock management and wood harvesting in mountain areas (FAO, 2002). In addition, the national/international projects to combat desertification have often been useful to identify constraints and needs for a sustainable development of rural areas and to face the natural odds against the socio-economic development of mountain areas.

Italy has a long tradition of considering mountains as an important part of the country acknowledging their specificities and is aware of the necessity for targeted legislation and interventions. Art. 44 of the Italian Constitution, 1947, states that the law provides for interventions in favour of the mountain areas. In 1971, the law 1102 established Mountain Communities in order to help eliminate the social and economic imbalances between the mountain areas and the rest of the national territory, and to contribute to soil and natural resources protection. The relevant interventions should be carried out through their inclusion in a socio-economic development plan fixing its objectives according to the available resources. The law 142/90 on the local self-governments, recognizes Mountain Communities as local administrations, strengthening their role and function as a programming administration and link between the Municipalities and the Province and Regional authorities, representing the interests of the mountain population. Regional laws can establish them and regulate their functioning and they are responsible for programming development interventions. The Mountain Communities with the law 97/94, "the Law of the Mountain", have received a new input. There is an important association of the Mountain Communities established in 1952, involved in promoting mountain development from the social, economic, civil, territorial and environmental point of view.

Significant stories

Algeria (3 stories)

Country	Algeria
Title	
Duration	One year: the project is ongoing
Source of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State funding • State budget (sectoral) • Municipal budget • The inhabitants' own resources
Location /Territory	<p>Ain Zaatout. Population involved: 3 850 inhabitants Number of households: 550 The village stands on the south-western slope of the AURES mountain range. The highest point of this range is Mt. Chelia, at an altitude of 2,354 metres asl. The site affected by the project is above 1000 m asl. It has a dry semi-arid continental climate, with very cold winters and hot summers. The main economic activities are agriculture and handicrafts. The people living in the Municipality of Ain Zaatout, and who belong to the Beni Frah tribe, raise sheep and goats and grow olives, palms and vegetable crops in the valley situated in a <i>wadi</i> bed. The valley is practically dry all year long, except after the few storms that occur in the region. There are also cactus plantations to protect against erosion, and fodder crops are grown during the drought years.</p>
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints There are problems regarding water supplies for both human consumption and agriculture. The unemployment rate currently stands at 32%.</p> <p>Diversity Possibilities exist for diversifying activities where it is possible to improve the production capacity of the arable land in the valley and to diversify arboriculture production by introducing other hardy species such as almond, apricot trees, etc. The diversification of animal husbandry is also possible by introducing indoor livestock raising such as poultry and rabbit farming, and apiculture. The possibilities for improving the conditions for producing handicrafts, and to diversify production also exist. It should be noted that throughout the region, the Béni Frah people are well- known for their traditional jewellery-making and wool-working skills.</p> <p>Potentialities The region's natural potential, the local people's know-how, the availability of young workers and the very attractive landscapes for tourism in the region, are also valuable assets and offer potential on which the project can draw to assist the local population.</p>
Objectives	<p>The main objectives of the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to raise the living standards of the local people; • to increase the incomes of the local people; • to ensure the rational use of the natural resources in the area; • to protect the natural resources.
Responsible institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Rural Development • <i>Wilaya</i> (Prefecture) • <i>Daira</i> (Sub Prefecture)

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>1/ The primary purpose of the project is to create a participatory process involving the local people. The project was designed and has been put in place jointly with the local people.</p> <p>2/ While the project aims at enhancing and developing all the regional potentials and possibilities, its objectives are to mobilize water resources and develop agricultural activities.</p> <p>3/ The rational use and the protection of natural resources are other project objectives.</p> <p>This project is not designed specifically for this region or as an isolated action for the benefit of the Béni Frah alone. It is being implemented in the Ain Zaatout region as part of the National Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (SNDRD). This new policy is based on the implementation of socio-economic actions.</p>	<p>With regard to the principles of the SARD programme, the Ain Zaatout proximity project has been put in place to achieve several objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the integration of the various aid, financing and (technical) assistance measures already in place at the grassroots level; • raising the incomes of mountain people; • protecting natural resources; • raising the living standards of the local people.

Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry for Rural Development	Implementation of the National Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (SNDRD)
Meso level	1/ <i>Wilaya</i> (Prefecture) 2/ High Commission for the Development of the Steppes 3/ Agricultural Services Directorate 4/ Woodland Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing the project • Implementing actions • Project monitoring/evaluation
Micro level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal People's Assembly • <i>Daira</i> (Sub-Prefecture) • <i>Daira</i> Agriculture Subdivision (Sub prefecture) • <i>Daira</i> Forests Circumscription (Sub prefecture) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with the local people • Setting up the project with the local people

Good synergies among all the institutions involved.

Processes

Political processes	<p>The instrument used for the physical implementation of a rural development policy in these regions is the Rural Development Proximity Project (PPDR). For projects forming part of the rural development framework in the Ain Zaatout zone, the approach is based on a partnership between the local people and government representatives. Decision-making and project validation are performed at the decentralized level of the <i>Wilaya</i> (Prefecture). Funding or government contributions are decided locally. Payments are also made locally.</p>
Participatory processes	<p>The whole PPDR approach is based on the participation of the people concerned, using a bottom-up approach. The idea of the project may come from a rural community, citizens' groups, etc. The project is put in place with the technical and administrative representatives of government institutions.</p>

Technical processes	In addition to the representatives of the political, administrative and technical institutions, the project also has a facilitator supplied by the administration and the leader representing the rural community. Monitoring and evaluation system based on real time information will be implemented very shortly.
Financial mobilization	In addition to individual or joint contributions by the populations involved in the project, the funding is provided by mobilizing all the financial resources that currently exist or are budgeted by government agencies. Financial resources may come from funds, sectoral programmes, communal programmes, etc.

Country	Algeria
Title	Rural Development Proximity Project (P.P.D.R.) This outlines a programme of development actions for which the rural communities concerned take the initiative. It is part of an approach of the decentralized administrations that accompany their efforts. The aim is to sustainably improve the incomes and living standards of the local people.
Duration	Since 2000
Source of funding	The PPDR is financed by various public sources (sectoral budgets, local budgets, sectoral aid and assistance funds), soft bank loans, and the members' own personal contributions.
Location /Territory	The PPDR is designed for all rural households and those wishing to return to the countryside to engage in economic activities there. The PPDR can be implemented for a whole municipality or part of a municipality in the national territory. This history refers to the Tizi-Ouzou <i>wilaya</i> (greater Kabylie).
Mountain specificities	Constraints Fragility (fires, erosion), inaccessibility (dense undergrowth, steep slopes), marginality (unemployment, poverty). Diversity Social diversity (great cohesion), linguistic diversity, and mobility (migration). Potentialities High school attendance rate, biodiversity, plentiful water resources.
Objectives	The purpose of the PPDR is to revitalise the rural zones, particularly the most deprived areas by consolidating the economic activities of the rural communities involved in the project, encouraging new activities and promoting sustainable natural resource management. The areas covered by the PPDR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved household food security; • consolidated and improved basic economic activities (agro-silvo-pastoral in particular) and the promotion of rural and traditional trades, micro-undertakings in the rural environment and the natural assets and heritage of the rural environment; • sustainable natural resource management. <p>The PPDR focuses on implementing publicly-funded public facilities (roads, rural electrification, AEP, school and healthcare infrastructure, etc.) and facilities for individuals (wells, production valorisation workshops, livestock units, micro-enterprises for the production of goods and services, etc.), supported by public funding.</p>
Responsible institutions	<i>Wilaya</i> (Prefecture) Agricultural Services Directorate (DSA) Forests General Directorate (DGF)

Policies

Policies	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectors: agriculture, forestry, environment, water management, habitat and tourism; • Policies: agricultural and rural development; the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) is implementing a National Agricultural and Rural Development Plan (PNDAR, in 2001 to be known in 2005 as SDRD) hinging around two components : 	<p>The PPDR works in the following three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mobilizing, protecting and valorising natural resources (water, soil, forests); • promoting and valorising agricultural, locally produced and livestock products; • promoting the expertise of the local people. <p>1. Actions used to implement communal facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arable land development (breaking up the land and improving it); • water management schemes (water capture and storage,

<p>1. Upgrading farms and production lines: through farm development plans supported by The National Agricultural Development and Reconversion Fund (FNRDA), for which a procedural guide entitled "Implementation of an FNRDA-supported investment application file" has been published;</p> <p>2. Revitalizing rural areas, improving the living conditions of the rural populations and fostering handicrafts and rural trades: by implementing land development projects and through the granting of concessions as the subject of a specific measure, and by Rural Development Proximity Projects (PPDR). The PPDRs, which are special tools for implementing national rural development policy, are integrated and multisectoral projects, implemented in rural areas identified in advance in order to ensure the stability of the rural communities and attract the return of community members who have already left the land. They are supported through various public and private funds and facilities.</p>	<p><i>wadi</i> runoff water, irrigation or drainage ditches, irrigation equipment);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soil conservation operations (against storm-induced erosion, anti-erosion banks, dune fixation, fodder crop plantations, rangeland management and protection); • valorisation of agricultural commodities (building storage, processing and packaging facilities for agricultural products and soft fruits, supporting family livestock farming, creating small livestock units and small animal feed production or milk collection units). <p>2. Actions relating to the construction of facilities for individual use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving agricultural production systems (fruit and vine, fodder crops and palm plantations); • livestock production (supporting family farming, creating small livestock units, and small animal feed production or milk collection units, establishing local markets); • soil conservation; • activities linked to agriculture and rural handicrafts (milling, oil milling, forging, esparto ware production, mat-making, wool preparation, etc.); • actions to consolidate economic activities (rural habitat, access roads, electrification, social services, etc.). <p>Results :</p> <p>During the implementation of the rural development programme since 2002, 20 projects were validated at <i>wilaya</i> level for an aggregate investment of 677,000,000 DA, (\$US 1 = DA 70) targeting 1,028 households in 14 municipalities. The planned actions refer to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the rural habitat - 40% of aggregate investment; • agro-silvo-pastoral activities - 48%; • local development-related actions - 12%; • access roads - 10%. <p>With regard to the implementation of the programme, only six projects have made moderate progress; these are the projects that began following ministerial decision n° 353 of 27/11/2002.</p> <p>The implementation of the other 14 projects is being hampered by burdensome administrative procedures relating to the preparation and finalization of the individual files, the level of FDRMVTIC support, which offers only weak incentives, and is a pre-condition for access to bank loans.</p> <p>Generally speaking, through the experience gained with this new process and rural development, these projects are inadequately coordinated and there is a lack of synergy between all the parties normally involved.</p> <p>Rural habitat:</p> <p>The <i>wilaya</i> submitted 65,000 requests for rural habitat support. The <i>wilaya</i> technical committee examined 3,000 requests; 500 were validated for development and extension. 450 applicants were declared eligible for FONAL support. The quota allocated to the <i>wilaya</i>, which was inadequate, was shared almost equally between all the municipalities in the <i>wilaya</i>, without taking account of real individual needs. The fact remains that following the experience with the 20</p>
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projects validated at *wilaya* level, a host of difficulties emerged regarding the implementation of the measures.

Promotion of artisanal activities:

Regarding the total share of 23 projects from which the *wilaya* benefited during financial 2003/2004:

- there was a lack of information and sensitisation of the households which made it difficult to integrate them into this new economic and social dynamic;
- there has been a worrying tendency to concentrate more on social amenities and the rural habitat to the detriment of basic economic activities and the promotion of rural trades;
- there was a low rate of support for the measures implemented following ministerial decision n° 306, because of the limited financial options of the local people, and because of credit access procedures;
- an approach was adopted envisaging a form of decentralization that was hampered by the quota-based policy and failed to take into account the real needs and specific local features. The delay in launching the seven projects in the Municipality of Sidi Namane as part of a programme to attract the return of the local people can be partly explained by the primacy given to the rural habitat, under which the *wilaya* did not benefit from any quotas in terms of new constructions. The quota-setting system also applies to the arrangements for integrating and promoting artisanal activities, with the risk that the cases may be subsequently rejected by the *wilaya* committee when the quotas are exhausted;
- with regard to preparing and working on the cases, even though the contribution of all the technical decentralized services has been recommended to ensure greater complementarities and effectiveness, they have had little involvement in this mission and, for some administrations, they refer exclusively to agriculture and forestry services;
- the funding arrangements, integrating all the local resources, did not attract unanimous support of all the communities. For the APCs (the municipal people's assembly, namely, the town council), the PPDR necessarily had to be financed from complementary and special envelopes, while the customary funding (PCD) had to be devoted to implementing more relevant programmes establishing a kind of balance between the various localities involved, thereby staving off any discontent;
- too few supervisory personnel of the agricultural subdivisions and forestry circumscriptions, poorly trained in planning methods, conducting surveys and interpreting results. The supervision would be more effective with adequate training and improved logistics;
- At the *wilayat* level, the institutionalization of a rural development service is now necessary to replace the present organization based on various elements at the DSA level on the one hand, and for forest conservation on the other.

Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-economic surveys statistical analysis rural development priority zones
Meso level	<i>Wilaya</i> <i>Daïra</i>	Monitoring and evaluation
Micro level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural subdivision or forestry circumscription Municipality 	Service vehicle

Good synergies between agricultural sector and forest; poor synergies among agriculture and water resources and habitat; conflicts among agriculture and environment and tourism.

Processes

Political processes	<p>Without a coordination body with strong powers and prerogatives, flexibility, autonomy and authority, the PPDRs may fail to meet their objectives. The project exists, the money is available, but the relevant institutions (agriculture, forestry, habitat, tourism, water management, etc.) are delaying the settling of administrative issues (red tape) such as: dates of meetings, signing minutes, reading and re-reading the project, etc.</p> <p>In 2004, the SDRD therefore advocated the establishment of GADER (as an accompanying group) precisely to play that role. So far, no group has been put in place, and - worse still - they do not know how to understand the word establishment (appointed, voluntary, elected, etc.)!</p>
Participatory processes	<p>Several players are involved in different stages of the PPDR process, from start-up to implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service hosting PPDR This is a territorial organization or a decentralized administration (the agricultural subdivision, forestry administrative unit or some other administrative service) appointed by the <i>Wali</i> (the equivalent to a State Governor in the USA) for each municipality in his own <i>Wilaya</i> (equivalent to State or fraction of a State in the United States) to which all project initiatives can be submitted and explained. This organization will monitor the PPDR in every phase of its preparation and implementation; it is the chief contractor of the PPDRs. The rural communities and other project promoters will be supported by the hosting service throughout the whole process of formulating and implementing the PPDR. The PPDR technical agent/facilitator A technical agent has been appointed within each territorial organization. The agent will be the spokesperson of the rural communities in respect of the "rural development proximity project" facility. The PPDR leader An individual will be chosen on to work alongside the rural community as the project leader. His role will be to brief the community on all the various administrative and technical procedures needed to bring the project to fruition. Daïra monitoring and evaluation committee This was instituted in the Inter-departmental circular n°221 of 13 July 2002; in addition to the missions devolved upon it, the CSE-PDAR will also be required to issue an advice regarding the PPDR opportunity. The wilaya technical committee to validate agricultural and rural development projects (CTW) The <i>wilaya</i> technical committee (CTW) is made up of representatives of different decentralized administrations. Its purpose is to study and validate the PPDRs. Specialized financial institution this is appointed under an agreement signed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR); it holds the FDRMVTC funding and the accounts

	<p>opened for the PPDRs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPDR members PPDR members are members of the rural community, and are thus involved in the project development and are beneficiaries of the work of the PPDR. • The consultants These are accredited external parties: consultancies, consultants (independent graduates working with the consultancy firm) responsible for supporting the rural development programmes in their administration, generally, and the hosting service, in particular, and to assist the PPDR member to draw up his/her case file. At the request of either (the hosting service, or the member) they can take action to support the implementation of the PPDR: preparing the PPDR, producing the individual case files, verifying the work of individuals, and conducting an evaluation.
Technical processes	<p>Supplementary interdepartmental instrument underlying the measures relating to rural development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interdepartmental circular n° 221 of 13 July 2002 relating to the organization and valorisation of the plan of action for agricultural and rural development – MADR-MICL; • interdepartmental circular n° 294/spm/86 of 27 July 2002 relating to the “hill reservoirs”. MADR-MRE; • interdepartmental instruction n° 06 of 31 July 2002 relating to the procedures for implementing rural habitat operations within the framework of rural development – MADR-MF-MICL-MHU; • ministerial circular n° 256 of 25 August 2002 relating to the monitoring and evaluation of agricultural and rural development programmes (PDAR); • interdepartmental circular n° 020 of 08 February 2003 relating to the promotion of craft activities within the framework of the rural development scheme MADR/MPMEA; • interdepartmental circular n° 094 of 08 April 2003 relating to the promotion of socio-economic activities within the framework of rural development – MADR-MESN.
Financial mobilization	<p>In general terms, the project is financed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from its own funds; • from loans contracted with the approved specialized financial institution; • special funds (from rural development funds and from the exploitation of lands under franchise, the national fund for the promotion of traditional handicraft production, employment and national solidarity funds and budget, etc.). <p>Support for actions for the implementation of communal facilities will be financed from resources that can be mobilized under Local Development Plans, sectoral funds and budgets and Communal Development Plans (PCDs).</p> <p>The PPDRs launched in 2002 have not yet been implemented for the following two main reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial: the households involved in the project do not have their share of the funding; • Land tenure: there is no official document or title required by the administration processing the case files (DSA/DGF).

Country	Algeria
Title	Rural Employment Project (PER)
Duration	1996-2002
Source of funding	World Bank (US\$ 89,000,000) ; Algerian government (US\$ 15,357,990)
Location /Territory	The mountainous areas in north-western Algeria
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints Inaccessible, fragile and marginalized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • due to vulnerability to climatic conditions and their fluctuations, combined with the under-utilization and inadequate mobilization of irrigation water resources; • the limited acreages of arable land and declining soil fertility; • the lack of human resources specializing in a participatory approach to rural development; • insecurity (terrorism). <p>Diversity A wealth of biological resources and socio-cultural diversity (near the Moroccan border)</p> <p>Potentialities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high rainfall • agri-tourism • a young population
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • combating unemployment by creating jobs through the development of high labour-intensive activities. • Protecting the environment by undertaking erosion prevention and soil protection measures. • Involving the rural communities in implementing the project's objectives. • Involving rural women in production, in order to improve household incomes by undertaking appropriate activities relating to handicrafts and small livestock farming. • Fostering the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in implementing the project activities by involving public and/or private enterprises on a competitive basis.
Responsible institutions	Directorate General for Forests (DGF)

Policies

Policies	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectors : Agriculture, forests • Policies: agricultural and rural development <p>The PER was prepared and initiated by the Algerian government at a time of chronic instability (1996) in the rural environment and a simultaneous rural exodus under difficult conditions: the country's financial resources were falling because of the decline in the price of oil, Algeria's main export; unemployment rose from 21% in 1987 to over 30% in 1998, and the country implemented a structural adjustment programme proposed by the IMF which had perverse social effects. This was compounded by the problem of insecurity.</p>	<p>1996-2002:</p> <p>1. Antierosion measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rebuilding the levees, 4,070 ha (58 %) • redirecting streams, 530,570 m3 (55 %) • forest plantations, 13,195 ha (93 %) <p>2. Agricultural development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land improvement, 9,992 ha (85 %) • viticulture, 2,547 ha (44 %) • fruit tree plantations, 32,165 ha (76%) • track building/repairs, 641 km (48 %) <p>3. Mobilization of water resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water points, 53 (25 %) <p>4. Advancement of rural women: 2,870 beneficiaries for four activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apiculture: 988 • weaving: 160 • embroidery: 243 • poultry: 1,480

5. Institutional strengthening

- training: a training programme was run for 177 managers, engineers and technicians, in the project zone, on project management and planning, the methods of the participatory approach and techniques for restoring mountain lands (RTM).
- equipment: computers and audiovisual tools, vehicles and office suites for the administrations directly involved.

6. Social impact

- 6,000,000 working days created, equivalent to 25,300 jobs per year.
- Employment opportunities in the region: 60% of the persons recruited on the project sites had never been in work before.
- A change in the conduct of cropping practices by the beneficiaries, with a widespread keenness to undertake fruit tree and vine farming.
- An improvement in the beneficiaries' social and economic conditions, particularly with the children returning to school and the boost given to trading.
- Resumption of dialogue between the users and the managers of the mountain environment.
- A sharp increase in on-farm investment, which was further consolidated after SARD.

N.B: Since PER does not propose the systematic development/valorisation of farms it appears that PNDA/FNRDA has been an ideal complement to the activities of the PER agricultural component.

Strengths

- the use of high labour-intensive techniques
- the adoption of participatory approaches
- training in participatory approaches
- participation by the beneficiaries in investing in their own farms through household labour (appropriation)
- competitive tendering in small batches, encouraging the development of SMEs, with the exclusion of the state supervision option
- decentralized organization and implementation, which increased the commitment and the initiative of local level managers
- Independent monitoring and evaluation conducted by a national consultancy firm

Inadequacies

- limited investment in rural infrastructure
- limited impact on rural women: apiculture, poultry, embroidery and weaving
- the state of security
- tendering
- the sustainability of the measures adopted
- employment policy

Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Directorate-General of Forests - Head Office	Project Management Unit (CGP)
Meso level	Forest conservation - <i>wilaya</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination unit
Micro level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest administrative unit • District and sorting centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention perimeters • Inter-municipal Development Unit (CID)

The institutions involved all belong to the same administrative body, namely, the DGF. From the institutional point of view, conflicts are therefore less apparent, due to respect for the hierarchical order. The agents involved in the project have acted much more like civil servants rather than as persons implementing a new type of project in which all the parties concerned were in a learning situation.

Processes

Political processes	The main impact of the PER launched in 1996 was to encourage the political decision-makers to opt to move away from centralized and planned management towards a decentralized rural and agricultural development policy, stressing participatory approaches (PNDAR 2001) to supporting investments in rural areas (this was the first PER which made it possible to embark on the PPDR and PER 2).
Participatory processes	A participatory approach involving the development practitioners; target population (village committees, communal services, associations, religious institutions). Use of household surveys and focus groups.
Technical processes	Several interdepartmental circulars were signed after the completion of the first PER, in order to better approach PER2 and the PPDRs, by reducing the legal and institutional vacuums to the minimum, and improving co-operation between the different sectors falling under different ministries, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Home Affairs and Local Authorities (MICL) • Ministry of Water Resources (MRE) • Ministry of Finance (MF) • Ministry of the Habitat and Urban Development (MHU).
Financial Mobilization	The PER determines the implementation of activities for the target populations by actively involving them in financing these activities. This participation, equivalent to 50% of the labour costs, and then 30%, takes the form of a contribution in terms of labour. The grand total of the project was about US\$ 104,357,990 with an 85% participation by the World Bank.

Morocco (3 stories)

Country	Morocco
Title	Project for the development of the Lakhdar Wadi watershed (PABVOL)
Duration	5 years
Source of funding	IBRD
Location /Territory	Province of Azilal (Rural Communes: Aït M'hammed, Aït Abbas, Ouaoula and Aït Bou-ouli)
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • isolated, particularly when under snow • increased rural exodus • unclear land tenure situation • resistance by certain <i>douars</i> to any innovation • ecosystem fragility (erosion, soil degradation, etc) <p>Diversity</p> <p>The project zone covers an area of 166,700 ha upstream of the Hassan I Dam. This watershed is classified as the third priority watershed in the National Plan for Watershed Development, and concerns 40 <i>douars</i> spread between four rural communes (Aït M'hamed, Aït Abbas, Ouaoula and Aït Bouali) comprising 1,800 households and some 13,000 inhabitants.</p> <p>Potential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of a traditional social organization • substantial water resources are available • a natural landscape (favourable for eco-tourism)
Objectives	<p>A pilot project project should test the participatory approach to improving land use and natural resource management in the mountain zones. Through a set of actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rehabilitation of the silvo-pastoral domain • defending and restoring fruit tree lands (DRS) • rehabilitating small irrigated perimeters • concentrated anti-erosion measures • improved socio-economic infrastructure • institutional strengthening
Responsible institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Commission for Water and Forests, and Combating Desertification • Azilal Provincial Directorate for Agriculture • Azilal Province

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>The project forms part of a global strategy for sustainable development of the rural environment, and in particular the MADPRM 2020 strategy. It forms part of their national policy for the development of the mountain zones, and the design was coordinated closely with the guidelines set out in the National Watershed Management Plan.</p> <p>Economic and social policy: the project forms part of Morocco's general economic and social development project, and in particular the World Bank Programme. It is now been recognized that all national development necessarily depends on the sustainable development of the rural world and the reduction in social inequalities, in the knowledge that the mountain zones have been marginalized by earlier policies.</p>	<p>Two principal performance indicators have been set down to gauge the degree to which the project objectives are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- improved land use, including increased incomes from crop and livestock production; 2- improved natural resource management, including increased plant cover, erosion control, and community participation, indicated from the number of active <i>douar</i> committees and the degree of participation in investment. <p>From an examination of these indicators, one can conclude that PABVOL has achieved its objective. The examination of available data studied with the PABVOL completion mission (21 March to 2 April 2005) confirmed this.</p>

<p>The budgetary instruments used for the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work and employment policy: one of the objectives of the project is to create jobs in the rural zones; • investment and foreign aid, considering that this is a project being financed by an international institution (WB); • population policy: for the project is designed to curb the rural exodus; • incomes and equality policy: the project seeks to reduce inequalities between the regions and to raise the incomes of the people living in mountain zones. 	<p>In economic terms, according to data collected by the completion mission, the activities performed helped to raise farmers' incomes.</p> <p>In social terms, resource persons have emerged after acquiring agriculture and livestock skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formalization of the series of <i>douar</i> committees (CDs) in a local development association (ADL) currently achieving autonomy as a result of the development of 16 CDs in 13 ADLs; • construction of forest type tracks. <p>In environmental terms, the scope of the project in relation to natural resource management gradually expanded to take in forest and rangeland resources. A pilot experiment to jointly draw up agreed forest management plans is currently being funded. Vegetation cover is estimated to have increased by 4% in the silvo-pastoral areas, 16% in the foothills, and 11% in the bours zones.</p>
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	High Commission for Water and Forests and Combating Desertification	General contractor, Chair of the National Monitoring Committee
Meso level	Azilal Provincial Directorate of Agriculture Province of Azilal (Ministry of Home Affairs)	Delegated general contractor, Chair of the Technical Committee
Micro level	<i>Douar</i> Committees	Partners in every phase of the project in addition to making a financial contribution.

In general, good synergies among institutions; some conflicts between HCEFLCD (macro level) and the Comité des *Douars* (micro level).

Processes

<p>Political processes</p>	<p>The project is consistent with the 2020 Strategy Guidelines of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Maritime Fisheries, and the National Water Basin Management Plan. Its design underpins the objectives of the World Bank programme. The project receives government support and a 24.5% financial contribution from the government. The general contractor is the High Commission for Water and Forests and Combating Desertification, as the body instituted in the framework of government policies to guarantee sustainable rural development.</p> <p>In the preparatory phase the Moroccan government played an active part in the project pre-evaluation missions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accompanying the missions and supplying them with all the information they needed; • organizing coordination meetings, involving all the different partners; • establishing a favourable climate for receiving positive feedback regarding the documents and the recommendations of the pre-evaluation missions. <p>The Moroccan government also adopted all the necessary measures to enable the project to take off properly, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it put in place the teams responsible for the implementation of the project before it was launched; • it ran a participatory approach training programme for all the teams in the framework of the PHRD Grant; • it advanced funding for the activities under the Programme Contracts (CP) for
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	<p>the first <i>douar</i> development plans (PDD) before the signing of the loan agreement.</p> <p>The project took off successfully thanks to all these measures, and in particular to the training efforts made within the framework of the PHRD Grant.</p> <p>In the implementation phase, the Moroccan government devoted particular attention to the project and adopted a number of measures to facilitate its sound implementation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing the number of PDDs from 40 to 26 following the recommendations of the mid-term review team; • requesting the project closure date to be deferred in order to be able to honour the agreements in the PDDs and to make it possible to improve the financial implementation and the physical execution of the project; • intervention by certain directorates of the MADR to make up for the difficulties of mobilizing funding for certain activities, particularly apprenticeship training and the supply of literacy teaching aids through the Education, Research and Development Directorate; • improving the project environment by involving other partners (ADS, NGOs, etc.); • monitoring and reporting on the financial aspects through coordination and sensitisation meetings with Ministry of Finance officials.
Participatory processes	<p>The project was implemented with a participatory spirit. All the parties involved took part in the various phases.</p> <p>The declared objective of the project is "to test a participatory approach, in the form of a pilot project, for improved land use and natural resource management". The activities were identified and ranked within the framework of the PDD and the CPs drawn up in close coordination with the local people represented on the <i>Douar</i> Committees (CD) consistently with the principles of the participatory approach.</p> <p>However, in the field, difficulties emerged such as the build-up of previous negative experiences, the inadequate mastery of participatory approaches by the partners involved at different levels, etc.</p>
Technical processes	<p>The coordination of this type of project is entrusted to the administration whose activities are the most important.</p> <p>The project is based on a participatory and partnership basis, with bottom-up programming. Coordinated actions are implemented under programme contracts, both between institutions and the project management, and with the beneficiary populations themselves. All disputes are governed by organizing workshops for all the stakeholders involved in the project.</p> <p>The philosophy underlying this type of project is primarily to valorise and improve local know-how. Mountain people have generally acquired the know-how they need to manage natural resources, which only needs improving using modern techniques. This approach enables local people to take part in the project activities.</p>
Financial Mobilization	<p>The project is worth a total of 55.5 million dirhams, and is financed by the IBRD (WB) with a contribution from the Moroccan government and from the beneficiaries. The contributions of the three parties account, respectively, for 68.5%, 24.5% and 7% of the total value of the project.</p>

Country	Morocco
Title of the story	Integrated Development Project for Poverty Alleviation and sustainable development in the mountainous region of Agouddim Region, Middle Atlas
Duration	1999-2007
Source of funding	IAV Hassan II/Morocco-BAFI/BYU/USA
Location /Territory	Agouddim region, L'hri Rural Community, Province of Khenifra, Morocco.
Mountain specificity	<p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragile ecosystem due to steep slopes, deforestation and over use of resources • Low diversification of cropping systems, and dominance of cereals and fallow • Poor crop management, responsible for low yields and poor quality • Poor livestock management, responsible for high abortion rate, high mortality rate, low fertility and poor growth rates for sheep and cows herds • Widespread internal parasitic diseases such as gastrointestinal, respiratory, hydatidosis, and external parasites • Malnutrition among the population, and especially youngsters • Low rate of school attendance among kids, and especially girls • Poor school environments represented by deteriorated classes, absence of sanitary facilities, and tap water <p>Diversity Co-existence of livestock and crops within farms</p> <p>Potentialities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundance of manpower, mostly youngsters, within the three villages • Existence of land that is used for growing crops • Existence of forest that is used as pasture for animals • Proximity to major roads • Presence of water beneath the soil surface that can be mobilized
Objectives	Carry research and development oriented activities aiming to diversify and improve farmer's income and livelihood.
Responsible institutions	IAV Hassan II, Rabat, Morocco

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>The project is an example of a voluntary and collective action undertaken by a group of IAV professors, supported by IAV administration, BAFI/BYU financial support and very fruitful collaboration from local administration, such as the local authorities of Khenifra Province, the DPA (Direction provinciale d'agriculture), the local health administration, the local education administration, the DERD (Direction de l'enseignement, de la recherche et du développement), and ITA (Technical School for Technicians).</p> <p>The project policy sectors are mainly related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies relating to agricultural and rural development: in this regard, the multidisciplinary team, composed of agronomists, veterinarians, nutritionists, animal scientists, agro-economists and soil scientists are working in close collaboration with local population in all areas. In the area of rural infrastructure, the team is working on the renovation of the school. The team after gathering data on the current constraints is focusing its 	<p>The nutrition and health status of the population, cereal productivity, livestock sanitary status and productivity are improving.</p> <p>Farmer's revenues are more diversified and in progress, the local school is ameliorating.</p>

<p>efforts on the implementation of adequate technological solutions. The team, after characterizing the nutritional situation of the population, addressed the main problems, such as iron and vitamin A deficiencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies aimed at establishing a democratic and participatory process: the project team works with the local population through three village representatives. All decisions are made by consensus. The three village representatives are rotating services to make sure that all households will benefit equally from project activities. • Potentialities: "Building on potential": the project team did not use the top down approach in implementing technological solutions to current problems. It tried, from the beginning, to build on the existing by addressing its weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cereal intensification was pursued while trying to diversify the cropping systems through the introduction of new and alternative crops; - Chicken business, which suffers from diseases and low productivity, is reinforced through the introduction of vaccines and modern management techniques; - Sheep are the main species, followed by cows and goats. The team did not try to change the existing composition of the herds, but it addressed management problems, such as nutrition and disease control. 	
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	IAV Hassan II BAFI/BYU	Scientific and Technical knowledge Funding
Meso level	Local authorities, DERD, ITA, DPA	Logistic support and coordination
Micro level	Health, education administrations	Logistic support and actions

Good synergies among institutions.

Processes

Political processes	The project team felt a strong commitment and support from both top leadership (Minister of Rural Development, the Governor of the province of Khenifra, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, Director of IAV Hassan II, Director of DERD), and local authorities (Director of DPA, Local representative of Health and Education Ministries) to sustainable development.
Participatory processes	The local population was asked to select one representative per village. It is through these village representatives that the project communicated with villages. All project activities were undertaken in full partnership and according to a participatory approach involving all stakeholders, both within the three villages and in coordination with all the involved institutions.
Technical processes	All project activities were undertaken after an analysis of the initial situation. The following actions taken within the framework of the project were first discussed with local administrations and their technical staff. This not only avoided incoherence due to a lack of coordination, but also ensured that solutions were not being dictated from above.

Financial mobilization	Funding made available by donors was not sufficient to realize all the planned activities. Difficulties to use available funds added to this difficulty. Those difficulties were related to the Ministry of Finance rules. In fact, while donors insist on the importance of the participation of population to all activities, the Ministry of Finance sticks with its rules that do not apply unfortunately to the project situation. For example, the project team asked for 30,000 US dollars for school renovation. The sponsor wanted the active contribution of locals in the renovation process, but the Ministry of Finance asked the whole renovation to be made by companies, and it was asking for different bids.
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Country	Morocco
Title	Rural Development Project for the Mountain Zones in the Al Haouz Province
Duration	6 years
Source of funding	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Location /Territory	17 rural municipalities belonging to the "cercles" of Asni and Amzmiz, in the Al Haouz Province. The total area is about 233 ha. Arable land accounts for 13% of this area, while the rest are rangelands and woodlands. The population of the municipalities involved in the project is 111,774.
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The zone is isolated and has thus far received little public investment, and has been bypassed by the trading channels. Hence the difficulty in breaking the vicious circle: poverty → low educational levels → population growth → over harvesting of natural resources → resource degradation → low production levels → poverty • increased rural exodus, particularly because the region is close to Marrakech • the fragility of the ecosystems (erosion, soil degradation, etc.) • the difficulties are compounded by the fact that the so-called "collective" lands are often the object of usage rights governed by oral tradition <p>Diversity The project zone comprises 17 rural municipalities. Farmland constitutes 13% of the area. The rest comprises rangelands and woodlands.</p> <p>Potentialities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the existence of a traditional social organization • the proximity of Marrakech and the natural landscape (the culminating point of Morocco Toubkal) which is favourable to eco-tourism, skiing resorts, etc.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The integration and participation of the local people in every phase of the project 2. To improve the profitability of crops and livestock, and to improve the value of products 3. To improve and diversify the poorest people's sources of income, particularly women and young people 4. To improve basic infrastructure 5. To rationally manage and conserve natural resources
Responsible institutions	Marrakech Provincial Agriculture Directorate

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>The project forms part of a global strategy to achieve the sustainable development of the rural world, especially the MADPRM 2020 strategy. It was implemented within the framework of law 33/94 governing government intervention in the Bour zones (Law on the Perimeters to be Developed as Bours - PMVB).</p> <p>Economic and social policy: the project forms part of the country's general economic and social development strategy. It has now been recognized that any development effort necessarily requires the sustainable development of the rural world and reducing social inequalities, in the knowledge that the mountain zones have been marginalized by earlier policies. The budgetary instruments used for the project are:</p>	<p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the project is to reduce poverty, and raise the living standards of the local people, particularly women and children. • By developing micro credit through a partnership with FONDEP (the Foundation for Local Development and Micro credit Partnership), it is possible for sections of the population excluded from the banking system to acquire the funding they need to finance income-generating activities. <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the emergence and upgrading of local development associations will make it possible to strengthen the capacities of the local people. • The basic unit is the <i>Douar</i>. • Construction of woodland-type tracks

<p>a. labour and employment policy, because the objectives of the project include job-creation in the rural zones;</p> <p>b. foreign investment and assistance, since the project is financed by an international institution (IFAD);</p> <p>c. population policy: the project aims at curbing the rural exodus;</p> <p>d. diversifying sources of income by encouraging the development of off-farm activities: handicrafts, rural tourism, etc;</p> <p>e. incomes and equality policy, as the project sets out to reduce inequalities between regions and raise the incomes of mountain dwellers;</p> <p>f. women's advancement policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project approach is highly participatory. It is based on locally identified needs that are used for the framing of the project. It focuses on the real situation and involves the communities and local associations in order to meet their real needs, and guarantee greater project effectiveness and sustainability. Three principles sum up the approach: coordination, participation, assignment of responsibilities. • Among the project priorities is the aim of fostering economic development for the benefit of women. The project comprises major leadership and economic development elements for the benefit of women's associations. Numerous livestock activities (goats, poultry, bees, rabbits, etc.) have been launched for their benefit. Over 5 000 women will benefit from the literacy programme. Other project elements, particularly water supply, will benefit them in particular. Even the simple fact of taking water to the village without piping it to individual houses is a considerable improvement when one realizes how burdensome it is to have to carry water in these foothill regions. <p>Environmental</p> <p>The province of Al Houaz is one of the poorest in Morocco. The selected municipalities are still among the poorest in the Province. Reducing poverty in these zones will ease the pressure on natural resources.</p> <p>Institutional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a strong involvement of local authorities, firmly established in the field with a thorough knowledge of the local social fabric, with motivated and effective staff is a key element for implementing projects; • several enhanced leadership and sociologists' teams.
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Maritime Fisheries	General contractor, Chair of the National Monitoring Committee
Meso level	Marrakech Provincial Agriculture Directorate Tahnaout Province (Ministry of Home Affairs)	General contractor, Chair of the Technical Committee Chair of the Provincial Monitoring Committee
Micro level	Agricultural labour centres Local associations	On-site supervision and monitoring Partners in every stage of the project, plus a financial contribution

The private sector is very reluctant to participate, and is limited to rural tourism. The municipalities are not heavily involved because of their limited financial resources.

Good synergies among institutions at macro level; poor synergies between macro and micro level.

Processes

Political processes	The project is compliant with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Maritime Fisheries 2020 strategy guidelines. It is being implemented under Law 33/94 on the Valorisation in Bours. The project receives government support.
Participatory processes	The project objectives include strengthening capacities and supporting the participatory planning of local development, through grassroots organizations and the public administration, both provincial and local. The <i>Douar</i> , as the basic unit, represented by local associations, is involved in the whole process: identifying needs, programming, implementing and monitoring activities.
Technical processes	<p>The Marrakech Provincial Agriculture Directorate (DPA) carries out implementation. Central government is represented by AGR (Rural Engineering Administration). At the local level, the work centres, as branches of the DPA, play an important part in implementation, supervision and monitoring. Coordinating this type of project is entrusted to the administration whose actions are the most important.</p> <p>The project is based on a participatory and partnership approach, with bottom-up programming.</p> <p>The coordinated actions are being performed under programme contracts with the institutions and the project management, and with the beneficiary populations.</p> <p>All disputes are addressed by organizing workshops for all the project stakeholders.</p>
Financial mobilization	The project is being financed by IFAD.

Tunisia (1 story)

Country	Tunisia
Title	Apiculture
Duration	1 year
Source of funding	Ministry of Agriculture
Location /Territory	Ain Draham, in north-western Tunisia - a mountainous and forested region. The region is characterized by difficult climatic conditions in winter. The rural people are amongst the poorest in Tunisia.
Mountain specificity	<p>Constraints A very harsh winter climate</p> <p>Diversity This region is both mountainous and forested. Biological diversity is guaranteed</p> <p>Potentialities Rainfall lasts six months</p>
Objectives	The local authorities have proposed that the rural women should set up a self-financed apiculture project: the women are establishing a kind of savings scheme among themselves to be used as the revolving fund for the project, and at the same time to provide loans to the members if any one of them needs cash. The local institutions undertake to provide the apiculture materials, and find a market for the honey.
Responsible institutions	Agricultural extension unit. Regional Commission for Women and Children. Regional Commission for Sustainable Development.

Policies

Policies	Impact
This project is a specific activity of a structured practice designed for the advancement of rural women and to help combat poverty. Rural women living in mountain areas often encounter difficulties in marketing their products (difficulties of access, non-existent markets, etc).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will give women a spirit of enterprise and independence from the men folk • It will help the women to become mutually independent (through the savings system) • it will valorise the diversity of the region and the neighbouring forest lands

Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry for Women and the Family	Financing
Meso level	Regional Commission for Sustainable Development (CRDD)	Coordination
Micro level	Agricultural Extension Unit (Cellule de rayonnement agricole)	Monitoring

Good synergies among levels.

Processes

Political processes	Wide involvement of the Ministry for Women and the Family. The Regional Sustainable Development Commission will also make a logistical contribution and provide consultation and advisory services. The Agricultural Extension Unit will undertake the extension work.
Participatory processes	The rural women play a focal role in this process. The Agricultural Extension Unit personnel run the communications system. The engineers of the Sustainable Development Commission provide

	<p>consultation and expertise on the environmental, social and economic levels.</p> <p>The Regional Agricultural Production Commission handles the technical component.</p>
Technical processes	<p>Post-project work (evaluation of results, monitoring the progress of the main stakeholders, gauging the project impact, etc.) remains one of the weak points of this project. After the completion of the project, it is highly likely that there will be no monitoring and no feedback.</p>
Financial mobilization	<p>The mobilization of funds will stop when the project ends.</p>

Lebanon (3 stories)

Country	Lebanon
Title of the story	Rural Development Efforts In The Shouf Biosphere Reserve
Source of funding	Seed money from Canadian Fund; UNDP, World Bank; revolving funds
Location /Territory	Mount-Lebanon; Al-Shouf region
Mountain specificity	<p>Constraints Lack of knowledge of real potential</p> <p>Diversity Biodiversity; religious diversity</p> <p>Potentialities Rich cultural and traditional background; diversity of products; devotion and commitment of local population</p>
Objectives	Natural and cultural heritage conservation, research and monitoring; rural development, eco-tourism, environmental awareness and capacity building. Protection and sustainable use of wild plants in the Reserve and in the villages surrounding it.
Responsible institutions	Al-Shouf Cedars Society Association for Forest Development and Conservation (AFDC) Local NGOs

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>The project is conceived and implemented by a local NGO with the financial support of international organizations and the administrative support of the Ministry of Environment, and to a certain extent of the Ministry of Agriculture.</p> <p>It covers the 5 main policy instruments, but is not directly emerging from them. The project is not directly related to public policies as it is conceived, managed and implemented by local NGOs and grassroots organizations. It has emerged from a project previously implemented by the Ministry of Environment (The Protected Areas Project) which has established a protected area, the Al-Shouf Nature Reserve.</p>	<p>Al-Shouf Cedar Society has undertaken the Crafts Reviving and Evolving Project since February 1999, with the financial support of the Canadian Financial Fund (25.000 US Dollars for a period of one year). Since then the project has contributed in granting aid to 40 families by purchasing from them raw material and hand-made provisions, after having trained the villagers on the modern ways of preparing and conserving food.</p> <p>Traditional mountain and rural areas products such as marmalades, pickles, preserves, herbs, beverages, distilled waters (orange blossom, rose, sage, etc.) and craftworks are sold at the gates of the Al-Shouf Cedar Nature Reserve. Such products are considered part of the cultural heritage that the Al-Shouf Cedar Society is promoting through its different activities.</p> <p>During the execution of the rural development project of the Reserve, the ACS, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the World Bank (WB), is going to expand to 5 southern villages: Niha, Jbaa, Mrousti, Baadaran and Maasser by executing a new project on the: "Sustainable Use of Edible, Aromatic and Medicinal Plants".</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops on the sustainable collection, usage and packaging of wild plants. ▪ Nursery for the production of some important wild plants (e.g. thyme, mint) and distribution of seedlings to the participants. ▪ Training on the safe and healthy ways of transforming (cooking, distillation and packaging) and preserving the harvested plant parts; provision of necessary material for participating families.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marketing of products on the main entrances of the Reserve and other places (supermarkets, hotels, etc.). ▪ Production of a marketing booklet on the important medicinal, edible and aromatic plants species and the rural development products. ▪ Environmental awareness – presentations.
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry of Environment	Jurisdiction over the protected area; legal support for NGO
	Ministry of Agriculture	Rural development; forest guards (outside the protected area)
Meso level	Regional offices of the MOA – Rural Development and Natural resources Directorate	Rural development; forest guards (outside the protected area)
Micro level	Al-Shouf Cedars Society AFDC	Management; fund raising

Good synergies among institutions.

Processes

Political processes	The MOE is committed to implement sustainable development principles and to manage the Protected Areas. The Ministry of Agriculture is implementing an Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy that should cover all the aspects of sustainable development. The involvement of the MOA in the SARD-M Project will lead to a better integration of the SARD principles in the agriculture and rural development strategy.
Participatory processes	Since its early days, the project was based on a bottom-up approach and on consultations with local communities.
Technical processes	As the project is privately owned (NGOs and local community), it lacks the technical process aspects. The direct involvement of the concerned ministries and mainly the MOA should overcome this gap.
Financial mobilization	The project started from seed money and international funding. It is now more depending on local funds and revolving funds, which insure a better sustainability.

Country	Lebanon
Title	Protection des natural resources in the mountain regions of Hermel, Akkar and Donnieh
Duration	1999-2005
Source of funding	Swiss Cooperation Agency (DDC)
Location /Territory	The mountain regions (<i>jours</i>) of Hermel, Akkar and Donnieh (1500 to 2300 m asl)
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> land tenure: private non-registered lands erosion (sharp slopes, stony soils, etc.) deforestation and the lack of regeneration in certain areas because of goat grazing felling practices sand quarrying the destruction of traditional habitats current constructional of a motorway with the risk of unbridled urbanization the lack of protection by the authorities <p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> centuries-old cedar and juniper forests 30 other tree species a wealth of flora very low-income transhumant and seasonal populations (April to November); a population of between 3,000 and 4,000; traditional and pastoral agricultural activities; poor access to utilities and services (water, electric power). <p>Potentialities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> eco-tourism development: creation of thematic excursion trails (natural heritage, archaeology, traditional habitats), accommodation in local homes, a Woodlands Information Centre, etc. Enhancing the sustainable use and protection of natural resources: drafting of a woodland development plan dealing in particular with the protection of forest biodiversity, re-forestation using native species, agro forestry plantations to take into account of the users' practices (wood collection, felling, grazing, hunting, etc.); implementation of this management plan applied to different forests and natural areas as part of a natural park developing economic alternatives such as organic agriculture.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To declare the region a "natural park" with government protection, as a means of reducing poverty by the preservation and value-adding use of the natural resources to motivate the local people protecting woodlands while respecting their traditional uses of them, adjusting their conduct in order to protect natural woodland biodiversity and promote compatible woodland-use practices.
Responsible institutions	Mada (established in 2001) is the only association working in this region.

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>1) Natural resource management: preliminary study of flora in the woodlands; planting 1,900 forest species; (1,800 cedars and 100 junipers); establishing 25 km² of protected areas (with a commitment from the proprietors not to harvest the wood, to prohibit goat grazing and ban hunting) set out under contracts concluded with the local people; creating economic activities relating to tourism (restaurants, small cafés, organic chicken farms); an ongoing pilot study on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reforestation of certain zones. Protection zones under contracts with landowners. An improvement in knowledge of the region's biodiversity. The establishment of a partnership with the local populations. The local people are aware of the value of their natural, architectural heritage, etc. The development of new economic activities.

<p>the biological and anthropological parameters of the forests and the use of woodlands by the local populations to be used for the subsequent drafting of a forest zone management plan; providing assistance to establish economic alternatives to tree felling (creating wood depots) in the forests zones.</p> <p>2) Encouraging participatory processes: providing assistance to set up committees of 13 persons representing 7 sub regions. These committees were established in July 2004 to establish the needs and priorities of the local people, and to draft the Mada projects. Training has been given on the sound running of associations, project financing and the fund donors' criteria. Mada has retained the services of a consultant to lead working sessions with the committees in order to establish a common vision for the future development of their region and to prepare the elections of new representatives. The committees have encountered internal dissent and disagreement that has considerably hampered their work. In the immediate future, Mada is intending to work more directly with households. The project is not being driven by any public policy even though it pursues similar objectives to those of a public institution responsible for environmental protection.</p>	<p>It is nevertheless still difficult to gauge the impact in terms of reducing felling and harvesting practices. An evaluation of this kind will be meaningful in a few years' time.</p>
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry of the Environment; Ministry of Tourism; Ministry of Agriculture.	Support in terms of advice, communications and sometimes logistics
Meso level	MADA	Project implementation
Micro level	Local committees	Currently being established

Good synergies among institutions.

Country	Lebanon
Title	Rural eco-tourism and agro-tourism in the region of Deir el Ahmar
Duration	6 months
Source of funding	Combat Desertification Project - UNDP
Location /Territory	The region of Deir el Ahmar located in the north-west of the Bekaa valley , between 1000 and 2000 m above sea level, at 100 kms from Beirut, 10 kms from Baalbek and 40 kms from cedars of Becharreh. It is a very hot dry area in the summer and cold in the winter. It is an arid area where temperature reaches 35°C in the summer and 1-10°C in the winter. In spring, the temperature is mild, streams are at their highest levels, mountains are covered with snow and wild flowers are blooming. During winter, the region is inaccessible for short periods due to snow.
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints Mountainous areas are characterized by a diversified nature and are home to a large number of biological resources. Rich in forests (<i>Quercus caliprinous</i> and <i>Quercus insectoria</i>, <i>Juniperus exelca</i>, wills almond, wild pears, astragalus), cereal and legume pasture areas, medicinal plants (wild mint, <i>roubas</i>, <i>akkoub</i>, sage) as well as native herbs.</p> <p>Diversity A wild and unspoiled nature of the mountainous area, forests, pasture areas, many unknown historical and cultural sites.</p> <p>Potentialities The region has a strategic location, on the ancient Roman road between the famous temples of Baalbek and the eternal Cedars forest above Becharreh, across the majestic western mountains of Lebanon, home to Qornet es Sawda (3083m), the highest summit of the Middle East. The rural and agro-tourism in the area adds to its social and cultural diversity and additional potential for visitors.</p>
Objectives	Enhance socio-economic activities of farmers. Integration of agro-tourism and eco-tourism activities in the region. Promote women's role in rural development and welfare of the society.
Responsible institutions	Combat Desertification Project – UNDP Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>Policies relating to agricultural and rural Development The main policy for implementing this project is to provide people in rural areas with additional means of income generation in order to sustain their livelihood and prevent their migration to cities. Develop a rural ecotourism infrastructure and provide the necessary trainings allowing the local population to benefit from tourism while protecting their environment and combating desertification.</p> <p>General economic and social policies Based on the government policies to maintain rural people in their areas and prevent their migration to the cities, such projects were implemented in rural and mountainous areas with a major objective of creating new employments, investments and foreign aid for rural areas.</p>	<p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability of the rural population and prevention of migration. • Creation of new employment opportunities through a visitor information centre, seminars, trainings, agro-tourist and eco-tourist guides, marketing of organic products and organic agro-food processed. <p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuation of the natural resources and cultural and historical sites of the area. • Participation of the local rural people in the different project activities: trainings, seminars, local guides for cultural tours and hiking, information, reservation, transportation, organic and traditional farmers selling their products, etc.

<p>Policies aimed at establishing a democratic and participatory process: Local rural people were involved in the project since the project formulation phase. The project was developed based on their needs and concerns to benefit from the ecological, cultural and historical resources of the area. The local people of the project were trained and empowered to manage, implement and control the activities of the project. Currently the local rural population of the area is implementing the project activities which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building and training for local communities; • Awareness campaigns on the environment; • Rural eco-tourism and agro-tourism; • Agro-food processing; • Exhibitions, fairs and marketing. <p>Policies designed to influence natural resource use and protect the environment: This included the classification of a protected area in the region, and education and awareness campaigns to protect the natural resources and environment.</p>	<p>Social:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • empowerment of the local people in the activities that they have to manage: tours, trainings, seminars, reservations, hosting, raising awareness campaigns. • maintain their cultural and historical heritage. improve their social status.
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	MOA	Project hosting, local development
Meso level	Combat Desertification Project – UNDP Esprit Nomade	Funding and coordination Empowerment, Infrastructure
Micro level	Women's Association of Deir El Ahmar (WADA) Grass Root people	Management, implementation of activities, participatory involvement

Good synergies among all institutions involved

Processes

Political processes	<p>The WADA organization and local people are committed to sustain the project activities, since this will improve their social and economic status, provide additional sources of employment to the rural population, attract tourists and provide a niche to market their organic and traditional products.</p> <p>A phase two of the project will be implemented when additional funds will be provided. This phase will aim at improving the services provided by the local community. This will include accommodation of visitors (bed and breakfast system) in family houses.</p>
Participatory processes	A steering committee within WADA is coordinating all the activities of the project and insuring the top-bottom and bottom top links with the institutions at the meso and macro levels. This committee will ensure the human local capacities.
Technical processes	The Combat Desertification Project through the implementation of the NAP is providing the co-ordination and coherence of policies and guiding WADA to balance technical and local knowledge.

Financial mobilization	The MOA and the Combat Desertification Project are providing the funding sources to implement the project activities. Phase two of the project will be financed from the Spanish Embassy. The ministry is maintaining the sustainability by providing additional funding sources.
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Syria (1 story)

Country	Syria
Title	Coastal/midlands Agricultural Development Project
Duration	6 December 1995 – 31 December 2006
Source of funding	IFAD
Location /Territory	The coastal mountain ranges in Syria reach up to 1500m with shallow soils and rough topography. The mountains are covered with various types of forests and scrublands where amount of annual rainfall varies from 850-1000mm. Total populations in these mountains are up to 500,000 concentrated in small-scattered villages and small size cities. Agriculture is the economic activity, specifically cultivation of fruit trees (apple, apricot, olive) and annual crops (tobacco, wheat and barely) and raising/grazing animals (cows and goats).
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints Rough topography with shallow soil. Drinking and irrigation water are the two main limiting factors for development.</p> <p>Diversity People are diverse in terms of ethnic, economic and social status.</p> <p>Potentialities A great potential exist for promoting sustainable agricultural development with the preservation of the natural landscape.</p>
Objectives	Agricultural development of the coastal and midland areas
Responsible institutions	Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian reform, IFAD and local administrations

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>Main objective of the project is to alleviate poverty by increasing opportunities for boosting agricultural productivity through field activities such as reclamation of rocky spots and difficult sites, rehabilitation of water resources (water points, mountain lakes, springs, etc.), empowering women and financing income-generating projects. It can be seen that the project has a socio-economic and technical dimension and an environmental component.</p> <p>According to its main components, the project has specific measures to undertake. A procedure to loan money to rural communities within the project is set.</p>	<p>The project will have significant effect on agricultural development in mountain areas. This in itself contributes to overall sustainable development in the region. Community development such as institutionalizing cooperatives and promoting synergies between different activities and organizations.</p>

Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform IFAD	Overall policy setting, management and supervision
Meso level	Project administration unit (service) in the coastal area International cooperation at the Ministry of Agriculture	Coordination
Micro level	Project Director in the coastal area (management)	Implementation of project activities

Good synergies among institutions.

Processes

Political processes	There is a great concern over degradation of natural resources in mountain areas that contributes to the poverty of local communities. Political commitments to alleviate poverty in various areas of the economy including agriculture are high. The coastal/midland Agricultural development project came as a commitment of government towards sustainable development of these areas. However, the project is conducted with little or virtually no public participation either at the planning or implementation stages. Participatory approach must be institutionalized regardless of the fact that the project will soon be ending (one year left).
Participatory processes	None
Technical processes	Training of rural women is the main component of the project. Several training activities have taken place including training on sewing machines, typing, overcoming illiteracy, raising animals, etc.
Financial mobilization	The project is mainly dependent on donor funding and all activities of the project will cease by the end of the project.

Italy (1 story)

Country	Italy
Title	Evaluation of land use impact on soil degradation in an agro-pastoral area of Sardinia
Time life	2001 - 2004
Source of funding	European Regional Development Fund in the frame of the European Program INTERREG IIIB-MEDOCC (DesertNet Project)
Location /Territory	<p>The story concerns one of the pilot areas of the European DesertNet Project (involving 8 Italian Regions, 2 Spanish Region, Tunisia and other Italian partners). The pilot area concerned by the story is located in the Irgoli Municipality, in the central-eastern part of Sardinia.</p> <p>It has a hilly morphology and is highly susceptible to erosion. The climate is dry sub-humid, with a mean annual temperature of about 17 °C and mean annual precipitation ranging from 500 to 700 mm; rainfall distribution during the year is very irregular, mainly concentrated in autumn and winter. The length of the dry season is important in relation to erosion processes: often the early autumn events are storms that can have a very erosive impact on pastures that have been deprived of the vegetation cover by agronomical practices and grazing.</p> <p>The most representative vegetation type is Mediterranean maquis, in all its different typologies originated by degradation processes. The high maquis, characterized by the prevalence of <i>Quercus ilex</i>, is located in limited areas not affected by fires since a long time. The low and degraded maquis, with prevalence of <i>Cistus sp.</i> and presence of other shrub species, is the most common vegetation typology in the area and is extensively grazed mainly by goats.</p> <p>The geological substratum is heterogeneous (Palaeozoic granites and metamorphic rocks). Granite outcroppings are very steep, irregular in shape and deeply dissected. Metamorphic outcrops are flatter and have quite an undulating relief. The study area lies on a contact zone between the two formations. Coarse-grained granites mixed with pegmatite and biotite crystals, micro granites, and porphyritic, white granites with two micas and their migmatites constitute the prevailing lithology.</p> <p>Soils typically show A-R or A-C profiles, are shallow (no more than 20/35 cm depth), are sandy loam or loam to loam or sandy clay loam, sub-acid, moderately saturated. They are often eroded and degraded.</p> <p>The over-exploitation of the existing pastureland and the creation of new pastures on unsuitable marginal land causing severe land degradation. The agro-pastoral practices, which include tillage (often along the maximum slope gradient) and mechanical brush removal, are carried out regardless of morphological and pedological conditions. Erosion processes are widespread and locally intense, in relation to vegetation cover and soil erodibility.</p>
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints Very steep and irregular morphology, wood fires, wood/shrub clearance mainly due to agriculture and grazing practices, very thin and often coarse soil, gullies and other erosive shapes.</p> <p>Diversity Vegetation, soil and water biodiversity, now at risk, should be preserved.</p> <p>Potentialities The collaboration with local institutions and agro-pastoral community could be useful for changing land uses towards a more sustainable management of the territory.</p>

Objectives	General objective: Evaluation of land use effects on soil in an agro-pastoral area at high risk of desertification, by means of a detailed study on the historical evolution in land use dynamics and soil degradation indicators.
Responsible institutions	NRD in collaboration with the Sardinian Authority for Technical Assistance to Agriculture (ERSAT - <i>Ente Regionale per l'Assistenza Tecnica in Agricoltura</i>)

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>The project was part of the Interreg IIIB-MEDOC European Program for Mediterranean countries and was locally implemented in cooperation with ERSAT, which is the principal institution responsible for agricultural extension in Sardinia.</p> <p><i>General outlines:</i> Through the dissemination of the scientific results coming from the study in Sardinia (as well as from those in the other pilot areas) the project aims to sensitize the institutions on the effects that incorrect agronomic management of the territory could have on natural resources availability and quality, leading sometimes to the risk of irreversible desertification processes.</p> <p>The effects of desertification are often interrelated in an ongoing process and include among others: losses in soil fertility and generally in natural resources availability or quality; decrease of production and, as a consequence, of incomes especially from farming but from industry; poverty; unemployment; land abandonment.</p> <p>1) General economic and social policies One of the expected goals of the project is to spread the knowledge of this multi-sectoral phenomenon through the dissemination of the results from scientific studies to Italy and other partner countries of the project. This objective will be achieved by means of a long-lasting collaboration and exchange of experiences among experts, and by establishing a good communication with institutions; in this sense the project is meant to influence national and international economic and social policies that are able to have impacts on land management and reduce desertification risks or its effects on the socio-economic system.</p> <p>2) Policies relating to agricultural and rural development The project has worked to produce a positive impact on agricultural research and technology development at national/international levels by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a network of experts to exchange experiences and knowledge (that will be strengthened by DesertNet 2); • publicity of DesertNet results towards policymakers; • definition of a set of indicators that can be applied to different contexts; • a study on the exportability of the Sardinian results. <p>It was also expected to have an indirect effect on sustainable rural livelihood promotion and on risk prevention if it succeeds into leading local policies toward a sustainable use of natural resources.</p>	<p>Mountain specificity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aim of dissemination activities was to sensitize local farmers and institutions about the needed changes in land management practices to stop the degradation process. <p>SARD Pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The economic impact can be positive or neutral depending on the concerned administrations and decision makers' sensitivity to desertification issues highlighted by the project, with specific reference to mountain environments. Changes in the economic policies could help to mitigate the effects of desertification by means of: new labour and employment policies; increase in investments to reduce the isolation of the rural areas (infrastructures, education, culture, tourism) and consequently, land abandonment. • The social impact achieved will depend on: i) the establishment of new economic policies that invest in improving conditions of rural life and ii) the achievement of a wider people participation in local policy; • The environmental impact depends on what will be the local institutions' response to the project recommendations. It is the most anticipated result of the project in Sardinia, as it specifically concerns how the mountain areas constraints should be addressed for a more sustainable management of the agro-pastoral system (see above); • As for institutional impacts, a better exchange and dialogue between institutions and farmers is expected, including a greater participation of people in policies and a deeper communication between institutions and researchers.

<p>5) Policies designed specifically to influence natural resource use and protect the environment</p> <p>Based on a thorough analysis the project proposed some “best practices” for a land management able to cope with natural resource preservation needs in the study area, with specific attention paid to both natural constraints and human under-exploitation/poor use of resources in this hilly environment. The techniques proposed for tillage, seeding and vegetation removal proposed were thought to answer farmers’ needs of land exploitation without a creating a negative impact on soil. These were presented to farmers and institutions.</p>	
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Meso level	ERSAT, University of Sassari (NRD-UNISS), Sardinia Region	Coordination, organization and carrying out of the activities, spreading of knowledge, field studies
Micro level	Irgoli Municipality, “Unità Pastori soc.coop. a.r.l.” farmers’ cooperative, Mountain Community of Baronie	Cooperation and support to the development of the activities; target groups for dissemination

If the other partners of the project would take into account the Sardinian experience and use it to orient their policies toward SARD/mountain areas, they could be considered as part of the process.

Processes

Political processes	None.
Participatory processes	<p>The dissemination of project products was thought to be as participatory as possible. They included conferences, seminars, CDs and reports production. A series of meetings were held with local partners to discuss on technical issues. During the project implementation phase, expert visits have been organized. For a public meeting organized in September 2004, representatives of the Irgoli Municipality and the Mountain Community of Baronie were invited, together with the President of the “Unità Pastori soc.coop. a.r.l.” farmers’ cooperative. During the meeting, the proposed agronomic techniques to reduce farming impacts were presented by the experts from NRD and ERSAT.</p> <p>The project utilized both a top-down and bottom-up approach. The beneficiaries of dissemination were not common people but local stakeholders. The objective of change being the land management system, the goal had to be to improve the local farmers and institutions knowledge on less invasive agro-pastoral practices.</p>
Technical processes	Technical proceedings have covered the project as a whole, rather than just the Irgoli experience examined in this form.
Financial mobilization	During the meeting of 22 September 2004, the soil protection measures of Common Agriculture Policy reform (2003) were presented as a possible instrument to address soil erosion in the area. In fact, the 2003 CAP reform included standards of good agricultural and environmental conditions referring specifically to protection of soil from erosion and maintenance of soil organic matter and soil structure.

Macedonia (3 stories)

Country	Macedonia
Title	Local initiatives for sustainable human and economic development
Duration	2003-2005
Source of funding	Government of Finland, through UNDP Macedonia
Location /Territory	<p>Municipality of Berovo, in the Eastern part of the Republic of Macedonia. It encompasses an area of 595 km². The abundance of beech, pine and oak forests gave the region its name "Males" – mountain. The Municipality of Berovo and the surrounding communities are located at the periphery of the Males lowland. The climate is classified as temperate continental including certain features of mountain climate.</p> <p>13,941 people live in the municipality, 65% of them are Macedonians, and the rest are Roma, Turks, Serbians and others. Main economic activities are agriculture, forestry and wood processing, and textiles. The agriculture is best known for its production of potatoes and cereals, as well as production of the blue plum and sour cherry.</p>
Objectives	<p>Improvement of local economy and quality of life through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of tourism potentials of the Maleseviija region, as well as support and promotion of local products, of specific food products, souvenirs and hand crafts; • Initiation and enhancement of women activities in urban and rural areas.
Responsible institutions	UNDP- Local Development Agency Berovo; Municipality of Berovo

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>Project activities are created based on real needs of the inhabitants, having in mind comparative advantages of the region and at the same time environmental protection. During the project period, a local strategy for development of eco tourism was made as an official municipality strategic document. A local sustainable development strategy is being prepared.</p> <p>Project activities are focused on capacity building at the local level, for implementation of concrete activities in order to improve quality of life for local people, the through promotion of local potentials and their sustainable use.</p>	<p>Organized approach in production and marketing of local specific products and specialties, integrated with tourism development, as a starting point for improvement of economic and social conditions in the region.</p> <p>Promotion of sustainable activities, with elements of environmental protection and sustainable use of the natural resources are very important. That is why the target group of tourists are environmental sensitive and responsible people.</p>

Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry of local-self government	Project partner, participation in general project planning process
Micro level	Municipality of Berovo	Project partner at local level, participation in planning and realization of the activities

Processes

Political processes	Development of a strategy for sustainable local development is fully supported by local government, with broad participation of local stakeholders.
Participatory processes	Steering Committee (SC), as advisory body, is composed of representatives of local government, NGOs and business sector - 2 representatives from each

	sector. SC gives directions and suggestions to the local staff in defining priorities and implementing of the activities.
Technical processes	Local project staff is responsible for technical support of the project activities: cooperation with local and regional NGOs, information collection and data base creation on regional potentials and specific data production; needs assessment of the key target groups (agriculture producers, women from rural areas, youth, unemployed) and design of necessary training and other technical support; active role in creation of local policies and strategies for sustainable development.
Financial mobilization	Project funding is sufficient for realization of part of the planned activities for 2006.

Country	Macedonia
Title	Capacity building of local governance
Time life	Permanent project
Source of funding	Government of Norway, UNDP and Municipalities
Location /Territory	<p>The Kicevo region is situated in the western part of the Republic of Macedonia in the Kicevo valley. This area represents a well-formed natural entity surrounded with high mountains and is the source of the river Treska. On the north side, it reaches the Straza upland and Porecje; the mountain Bistra is on the west side; on the south, alongside the Valley of Treska River; the Ilinska Mountain on the east side.</p> <p>With the territorial division dating from 1996, Kicevo region is divided into 5 municipalities: Kicevo Municipality, Drugovo Municipality, Zajas Municipality, Oslomej Municipality and Vranestica Municipality. The Municipality of Kicevo kept its old borders (based on the results of the referendum regarding the question of territorial organization of LG organized by LG on 1 February 2004), pointing out that in 2008 four smaller municipalities (Oslomej, Zajas, Drugovo and Vranestica) will be merged into Kicevo Municipality. According to the 2002 census, there are 30,138 inhabitants in the municipality. The ethnic structure of the population is as follows: Macedonians 53.55%, Albanians 30.53%, Turks 8.06%, Romas 5.41% and other 4.4%. Kicevo city is an urban centre of the region situated between 620-650 m above sea level. The remaining inhabited settlements are positioned from 600 to >1000 m above sea level.</p> <p>Regardless of the region's mountain surrounding, infrastructure, i.e. connection with roads of the Kicevo region with other regions in the Republic, is good. The region is connected with Skopje with a regional road Kicevo-Gostivar-Tetovo-Skopje. On the south side of Kicevo, a road crossing diverts in three directions. One leads to the Ohrid-Struga tourist region, another leads to Demir Hisar and Bitola, which continues on to Republic of Greece and the final road through Macedonsi Brod and Porecje continuing to Prilep. There is also a railroad to Skopje through the Kicevo-Gostivar-Tetovo-Skopje railway. Because of this infrastructure, the Kicevo region is well connected with all significant cities in the Republic.</p>
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints</p> <p>In particular, local government institutions face serious challenges in the area of local economic development (LED) and the transition to a market economy. In many areas, the old "socially-owned" industries are either downsizing or closing down, generating high levels of long-term unemployment. Unless new economic opportunities arise through the diversification of the local economies, there is the distinct prospect that social unrest may result from the increased levels of local tension, partly caused by the economic change.</p> <p>Yet many, if not most local government officials, simply lack the vision, knowledge and skills required to creatively and constructively address this situation in the medium- to long-term. In addition, there is little co-ordination between the municipalities and with their hinterland. Macedonia has 83 autonomous local authorities in a territory composed of 25,713 km². In order to create a coherent economic development process, the LED capacity building program will focus on the new territorial boundaries, reflecting the needs, potentials and priorities of the wider area, but taking into account any wider regional development strategies that may be created in the future.</p> <p>Diversity</p> <p>Local Governments are being called upon to mobilize local resources and to undertake management responsibilities in new sectors, including an expanded role in relation to LED. The new Law on Local Self Government stipulates that Municipalities are responsible for LED planning; determining of development and structural priorities; running of local economic policy; supporting the development of small and medium size enterprises and entrepreneurship at local level</p>

	<p>(including the establishment and development of local network of institutions and agencies) and promotion of partnerships. This differs markedly from the previous competencies that were simply defined as preparing development programs for the issues of importance for the local self-government and citizens.</p> <p>The municipalities will assume an expanded role and handle issues that are more complex. However, over and above the perennial problem of lack of financial resources, there is lack of institutional knowledge, information and capacity to find solutions to the economic and development problems in the local context. There is need to overcome the burden of bureaucratic mentality and transform local governments into enabling institutions for private sector growth.</p>
Objectives	<p>The Project is shaped to strengthen capacities of local governments for transforming them into facilitators rather than obstacles in the new decentralized environment, in other words enabling institutions for private sector development and growth and thus sustainable economic development.</p> <p>Activities will focus on bringing together representatives from public and private sectors to develop local economic development partnerships; define the priorities and potentials of the two regions (LED strategy), then develop a LED action plan on how to go about them and finally carry out concrete activities that envisage a transformation of municipal capacity and improvement in the local economy.</p> <p>The main activities conducted are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the LED team and Local Economic Centre, which will serve as a secretariat to the LED Partnership and the Municipality authorities. • Training and establishment of LED Partnerships for LED, created as foundations, in order to be sustainable. • Creation of holistic LED strategies and the associated Action Plans for implementing the LED. • Civil society, citizens, business organizations, etc. will have been consulted in the preparation of the strategies and plans through a participative approach. • The local authority LED team will be fully trained in dealing with all key aspects of local economic development, resulting in better relevant services to the local businesses. • Delivery of a variety of co-financed projects in the two regions via the Municipal Development Funds. • Vocational training in basic and advanced IT skills to the unemployed, civil society groups, local businesses and their employees. • Establishment of ICTCs as Foundations, delivering a wider and more commercially oriented range of services. • Creation of positive environment and possibilities for establishment of clusters, business incubators, industrial zones, etc. depending on the priorities established by the LED process
Responsible institutions	UNDP, Government of Macedonia, ZELS, Municipalities of Kicevo region, private sector and NGOs.

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>The focus of this project is to raise the capacity of municipalities to undertake LED in a coherent and comprehensive manner, thus maximizing the economic opportunities for the local population. This in turn necessitates that municipalities devote adequate resources to it. The starting point is the establishment of a Unit or Department focusing on development; it does not have to focus specifically on LED per se. It will act as a secretariat to the LED Partnership and the Municipality authorities. A separate UNDP project on the development of model municipalities will assist local authorities to develop new organizational</p>	<p>A comprehensive LED strategy is a continuous, broad-based planning process for tackling the economic problems of areas (defined as the local authorities of Kicevo area as well as any local authorities that may be merged following the creation of the new territorial boundaries to be determined shortly by the Ministry of Local Self Government).</p> <p>The strategy will focus on promoting economic development and opportunity, foster effective infrastructure, enhance and protect the</p>

<p>arrangements, in line with the new competencies and responsibilities. The model municipality project is expected to include recommendations for the establishment of such development units and the selected municipalities should demonstrate a clear commitment to establish such units.</p> <p>The LED team within each unit is likely to consist of staff members of the local authority that will be selected to ensure that they have an appropriate skill and knowledge base to undertake the LED process. They will be flexible persons with understanding of the local economic development, willing to learn, cooperate, and willing to bring the improvement in their regions. They are likely to consist of urban planners, architects, economists, geographers, etc.</p> <p>The project will invest a great deal into the capacity building of the two LED teams, thus the UNDP project team will ensure that the members of the LED teams are appropriately qualified, to maximize the impact of scarce public resources.</p> <p>Establishment of LED Partnerships is now widely considered an essential pre-requisite for effective local economic development. Whilst it is essential for local authorities to take the lead in the LED process, there needs to be recognition that partnerships enable additional resources, competencies, co-ordination and democratic involvement to public economic and social policies.</p> <p>Such partnerships involving the local authorities, private sector, other public, NGOs and indeed local citizens, are essential in legitimizing the LED strategies, Action Plans and resulting priorities actions. LED Partnerships would also represent essential preparatory work for the accession to the EU, since pre-accession and accession structural funds for development is predicated upon such partnerships.</p> <p>The LED project will emphasize the sustainability of the LED Partnership and the capacity of the staff to maintain the LED activities once project financing finishes via the creation of a LED Partnership in the form of foundations. The exact composition of the LED Partnership will be customized to each region in consultation with the partners but it likely to involve the local authority, local entrepreneurs as well as business representative bodies, representatives of NGOs, citizens, representatives of local public organizations (e.g. bureau of employment, local educational establishments, etc.) and other relevant key actors, which are important for the local economic development.</p> <p>The role of the UNDP project staff will be important in raising awareness of the importance and value of LED Partnerships, leading the signing of a project memorandum, followed by the creation of the LED Partnerships in the form of foundations.</p>	<p>environment and balance resources through sound management of development. The resulting LED strategy document will be short and easily accessible. The public, government, and investors will be able to use it as a guide to understand the regional economy and to take action to improve it.</p> <p>Each strategy is unique, reflecting the challenges and opportunities facing the regions. It will contain four main elements: analysis, vision, action plan, and evaluation.</p> <p>The analysis will assess the state of the regional economy, the opportunities and threats posed by external trends and forces and the availability of partners and resources for economic development.</p> <p>The community's vision and goals, together with an appraisal of the region's competitive advantage, will set the strategic direction for the Action Plan presenting the priority programs and projects for implementation. Finally, the strategy will describe the process for evaluation and periodic update (see below).</p> <p>The analysis will address the following question: "where are we now and where are we heading?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state of the regional economy; what are its strengths and weaknesses? What are the growth sectors and clusters? What is driving the economy and where is it heading? • External trends and forces: What are the opportunities and threats? How is the region positioned in the Macedonian, European and global economy? • Partners for economic development: who are important actors in the region? • Resources for economic development: what do we have to work with? <p>The vision is a statement of change that answers the question: where are we heading? And will set a clear direction for the future based upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desired future: what is our vision for the area in the next ten to twenty years? What are the goals? • Potential for excellence: what are the areas in which the region can build competitive advantage? How can the region's strengths and opportunities be maximized and its weaknesses and threats mitigated?
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<p>The local authority LED team and the members of the LED Partnership will be the principal focus of the capacity building efforts and the UNDP team will interact closely with them. The UNDP project team will need to ensure that appointments of the LED Partnership members and LED staff are made based on transparency and appropriate skills and experience, to facilitate the process of capacity building.</p> <p>Co-coordinating the efforts of the different partners as well as organizing the representation of different groups of local people in decision-making processes are major challenges for local development initiatives. Community involvement in the LED strategy making and practice has been experimented with considerably in the EU and it has become a priority to include communities in LED strategy making and service delivery.</p> <p>The objective of the Project is to contribute to the sustainable socio-economic development by strengthening capacities of local governments for efficient delivery of services and supporting their active role in the development processes, as well as by creating an enabling environment for the growth of the private sector - the source of long-term, sustained employment opportunities. The project will strengthen the capacities of local governments for transforming them into facilitators rather than obstacles in the new decentralized environment. This means recognizing that local governments have at least three key roles in relation to LED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide leadership in policymaking. • To administer policy, programmes and projects. • To be the main initiator of economic development programmes through public spending, regulatory powers and promotion of business development. <p>The Project will support the Local Economic Development (LED) using a partnership approach leading to the development of an integrated framework for LED that will help to channel and maximize the use of scarce resources, particularly by working with existing local institutions, programs or initiatives in the implementation of the project.</p>	
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry of Local Self, Ministry of Labour and Social affairs, Ministry of Economy, ZELS	Advisory Board of the project
Meso level	UNDP, the Municipalities of Kicevo area, private companies and NGOs	Policy and decision makers, direct involvement in project implementation

Processes

<p>Political processes</p>	<p>The new Law on Local Self-Government gives expanded responsibilities to the Local Governments in the area of local economic development. The Law is accompanied by a three-year Action Plan, which outlines the main steps and identifies the key players involved in the reform process, adopted by the Government of Macedonia. Among the main laws to be adopted, there is the new Law on Local Government Finance and the amendments to the Law on Territorial Division and on the City of Skopje. The Government also recognizes that in addition to the necessary legislative changes for alignment of the existing and enactment of new laws that will encourage decentralization process, attention should also be paid to the immediate needs of municipalities for capacity building and institutional strengthening in order to successfully implement the transferred responsibilities.</p> <p>Recognizing the importance of private sector development, with the objective to increase the economic efficiency and the international competitiveness of the Macedonian companies and entrepreneurs, at the end of 2002, the Macedonian Government has prepared a programme of measures and activities for promotion of entrepreneurship and creation of competitiveness of the private sector in the country. It presents a plan of activities for operationalisation of the policy and the strategy for the SMEs sector, through various forms of non-financial and financial support and activities for creating conditions for new job-creation and unemployment reduction, increasing exports and the living standard of the population. It calls for decentralization of entrepreneurship promoting activities, i.e. making the supporting resources closer to each potential entrepreneur and/or SME. In this respect, establishment of a supporting infrastructure on a local and regional level is recognized as prerequisite for the success of the Programme.</p> <p>As one of the basic elements of the supporting infrastructure, the Programme outlines the stimulation and promotion of the development of the network of centres for business support of the entrepreneurs on local level. It is envisaged that these centres should act as focal points of the expert and advisory assistance of the entrepreneurs in the municipalities and the cities depending on the number of the existing or potential entrepreneurs in certain area, who need this kind of service and whose number justifies the establishment of this kind of assistance. Furthermore, the Programme emphasizes the fact that these activities will be reinforced after the adoption of the legislation related to the local self-government, in particular legislation related to the financing of the local self-governments.</p>
<p>Participatory processes</p>	<p>Establishment of a Project Advisory Board (PAB) at the national level as a main coordinating body for the implementation of the project and allow effective dissemination and replication of the best practices arising throughout the country. The PAB will meet twice a year and include the following organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Economy • Ministry of Local Self Government • Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs • ZELS • Kicevo and Stip municipalities • UNDP
<p>Technical processes</p>	<p>UNDP has established a strong network of partners at local level and is considered a major player in efforts to facilitate the decentralization reform and enhancing local governments' capacity to undertake additional competencies, provide public services and promote LED.</p> <p>UNDP has the unique advantage of having collaborated with all 83 municipalities in the country various projects (short-term employment, small infrastructure improvements, water supply and sewage systems, ICT for development, environmental management, institutional support, etc.). Many of these activities</p>

	<p>are co-funded by various bilateral and multilateral donors, including Governments of Norway, Italy, Sweden, Netherlands, Council of Europe Development Bank, USAID, Open Society Institute, etc.</p> <p>The current Project proposal will capitalize on the UNDP experience with local authorities and complement other ongoing UNDP activities. A wide range of support facilities to the SME sector in Macedonia has been developed over the years, including business development services and finance opportunities. A lot of international stakeholders are active in this area providing financial and non-financial services, like EU's PHARE programme (now EAR), EBRD, WB, DFID, GTZ, FOSI, MRFP, etc.</p>
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Country	Macedonia
Title	Municipal Economic Development Fund (MEDF)
Time life	Permanent project
Source of funding	Government of Norway, OSCE, UNDP and Municipalities
Location /Territory	<p>Kicevo region</p> <p>In the Kičevo area, the only sector that was more or less economically stable (in terms of securing and providing even new jobs) over the last ten years has been the mining and forestry industry. The decline of people employed in the metalworking and wood-processing industry is very sharp, due to the closure of some State Owned Companies. Since 1992, more than 51% of the jobs have been lost in these sectors. It was estimated that in September 2001, 42% of the active male population of the Municipality of Kičevo was without a regular job. This figure was almost doubled in the case of the Municipality of Drugovo (75%). The need for employment and income generation is a fundamental necessity for the population in the areas affected by the conflict in Macedonia.</p>
Objectives	<p>The development objective of the project is to establish replicable model for sustainable development and improvement of the economic potential through the strengthening of the local institutions in providing services to the citizens, improvement of conditions for economic regeneration and promotion of growth-oriented and competitive small and medium enterprises in the Kičevo area. Inter-municipal cooperation in the areas of common interest will be mainstreamed through the Project activities.</p> <p>The Project aims to demonstrate that a Development Fund can be a cost-effective mechanism in Macedonia to transfer funds to be used for restoration of basic infrastructure and stimulation of initiatives of local organizations (governmental and non-governmental) to act as partners in job creation and poverty reduction.</p>
Responsible institutions	OSCE, UNDP, Government of Macedonia, Municipalities of Kicevo region and SMEs

Policies

Policies
<p>The 2005-2009 UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) recognizes that the country's ambition to reduce poverty through economic growth, job creation, improved domestic investment climate and integration with the institutions of the EU, requires different and new policy approaches, especially in the economic and social sphere. Therefore, UNDP efforts in pro-poor policy advocacy and support to the formulation of strategic poverty reduction policies (in line with the national MDG targets) are complemented by interventions aimed to increase the currently low level of capital utilization and the large pool of unemployed by providing economic opportunities for their deployment in boosting the economic growth rate. One of the CPD outputs aimed to contribute towards achievement of this outcome is the support to the creation of enabling environment for economic regeneration and development at local levels.</p> <p>The development objective of the project is to establish replicable model for sustainable development and improvement of the economic potential through the strengthening of local institutions in providing services to its citizens, improvement of conditions for economic regeneration and promotion of growth-oriented and competitive small and medium enterprises in the Kičevo area.</p> <p>The primary objectives established with this project are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote inter-ethnic dialogue and increase the level of communication among municipal officials in an ethnically mixed area; • assist in the implementation of the law on local self-government (specifically facilitation in the area of Inter-Municipal Cooperation, Article 14) and demonstrate advantages of cooperation between municipalities and among various ethnic groups.

Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministry of Local Self Government, Ministry of Economy, ZELS	Advisory Board of the project
Meso level	UNDP, OSCE and the Municipalities of Kicevo area, private companies and NGOs	Policy and decision makers, direct involvement in project implementation

Good synergies among institutions

Processes

Political processes	<p>The new Law on Local Self- Government gives expanded responsibilities for the Local Governments in the area of local economic development. The Law is accompanied by a three-year Action Plan, which outlines the main steps and identifies the key players involved in the reform process adopted by the Government of Macedonia. Among the main laws to be adopted are the new Law on Local Government Finance and the amendments to the Law on Territorial Division and on the City of Skopje. The Government also recognizes that in addition to the necessary legislative changes for alignment of the existing and enactment of new laws that will encourage decentralization process, attention should also be paid to the immediate needs of municipalities for capacity building and institutional strengthening in order to successfully implement the transferred responsibilities.</p> <p>Recognizing the importance of private sector development, with the objective to increase the economic efficiency and the international competitiveness of the Macedonian companies and entrepreneurs, at the end of 2002, the Macedonian Government has prepared a Programme of measures and activities for promotion of entrepreneurship and creation of competitiveness of the private sector in the country. It presents a plan of activities for operationalisation of the policy and the strategy for the SMEs sector, through various forms of non-financial and financial support and activities for creating conditions for new job-creation and unemployment reduction, increasing exports and the living standard of the population. It calls for decentralization of entrepreneurship promoting activities, i.e. making the supporting resources closer to each potential entrepreneur and/or SME. In this respect, establishment of a supporting infrastructure on a local and regional level is recognized as prerequisite for the success of the Programme.</p> <p>As one of the basic elements of the supporting infrastructure, the Programme outlines the stimulation and promotion of the development of the network of centres for business support of the entrepreneurs on local level. It is envisaged that these centres should act as focal points of the expert and advisory assistance of the entrepreneurs in the municipalities and the cities depending on the number of the existing or potential entrepreneurs in certain area, who need this kind of service and whose number justifies the establishment of this kind of assistance. Furthermore, the Programme emphasizes that these activities will be reinforced after the adoption of the legislation related to the local self-government, in particular legislation related to the financing of the local self-governments.</p>
Participatory processes	<p>The project is implemented under the Direct Execution modality (DEX). This means that involvement of local stakeholders will be ensured on all substantive issues through a Steering Committee and consultation processes whilst management and administrative responsibility rests with the UNDP Country Office. UNDP will take full responsibility for the production of outputs/implementation of activities envisaged as well as administration of the financial and human resources, which is justified based on the urgent character</p>

	<p>and duration of the envisaged activities.</p> <p>Close coordination and integration of project activities with the Government initiatives regarding decentralization reform will be ensured through the developed arrangements (Programme Advisory Board) applicable for the overall UNDP decentralization portfolio.</p> <p>The UNDP Country Office will also be responsible for coordinating the activities of other UNDP projects implemented in Kičevo area as well as making available the UNDP expertise and regional experience in implementing development fund and micro-financing schemes.</p>
<p>Technical processes</p>	<p>The Management of the Municipal Economic Development Fund (MEDF) will be entrusted to a MEDF Steering Committee (Inter-Municipal Cooperation Board) that will make the final decisions in defining the MEDF rules and procedures as well as on the prioritization and approval of proposals.</p> <p>The Steering Committee will also decide during its first meeting on the transfer of funds related and needed for administering the MEDF to the UNDP bank account. As for the further transfer of funds allocated for each approved proposal, the decisions for transfer of relevant amount of funds per project to UNDP account will be made in parallel with the decisions for approval of particular project proposal by the MEDF Steering Committee. According to UNDP rules and previously agreed MEDF rules and procedures, UNDP will make the final transfer of funds to contractors.</p> <p>To ensure that all areas and stakeholders' interests and concerns are fully considered, the composition of the MEDF Steering Committee will incorporate the members of the Inter-Municipal Cooperation Board established under the OSCE implemented project (mayors of the 6 covered municipalities), 3 representatives of the private sector and local NGOs. In addition, representatives of UNDP and OSCE will be nominated as members of the Committee and will participate in its work. To ensure that MEDF funds are utilized in accordance to the agreed rules and procedures as well as are fully in line with the Project objectives, the decisions on the MEDF rules, prioritization and allocation of funds will be made on a consensus basis with approval of all represented parties. However, the Committee's composition will be tailored during the Inception phase of the Project and will reflect the specific needs and environment in each municipality.</p> <p>The Project Officer will act as Executive Secretary to the Committee, including provision of strategic recommendations for the development of MEDF Guidelines and utilization of funds based on the UNDP expertise and regional experience in implementing development funds and micro-financing schemes.</p> <p>The Country Office will hold the overall responsibility for the production of outputs/implementation of activities envisaged. The locally recruited Project Officer, located in the Municipality of Kičevo, will provide management and oversight for the Project on a daily basis. The Project Officer would be responsible for reviewing and making recommendations concerning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of work plans; • Act as Executive Secretary to the MDF Steering Committee; • Monitoring of project activities and guidance during the implementation phase; • Establishing and maintaining of close collaboration and coordination with other UNDP projects; • The use of funds; • Practical problems and obstacles faced during the implementation; • Project reports and results

	<p>The Project officer will also be responsible for promotion of project activities ensuring that the name and emblem of UNDP and OSCE are used in direct connection with the Project, and subject to prior written consent of UNDP and OSCE. The management of project funds will be carried out according to UNDP financial rules and regulations, based on a work plan with a detailed budget and in accordance with the contract/agreement signed with OSCE. The Project Officer will be responsible for reporting on the resources allocated and project achievements to both UNDP and OSCE project management staff.</p>
<p>Financial mobilization</p>	<p>Since the envisaged activities of the Project have a clear and direct relation to the previously noted UNDP projects implemented in the Municipality of Kičevo, the Project Officer will closely cooperate with the local staff engaged under these projects. By linking with the local staff of the Local Economic Development programme, the Project Officer will help to ensure an inter-municipal perspective and that more than the Kicevo Municipality is covered by LED activities. In addition, by cooperating with the "Capacity Building of Local Governments - Development of Model Macedonian Municipality" programme, the Project will support visible demonstration of the improvements of local governments' performance, organizational and functional capacity on the area level.</p> <p>In order to ensure production of effective and relevant impact of the interventions, as well as cost efficiency of operations, most of the administrative, logistical and operational support and structures established under these UNDP Programmes will be utilized by the Project. As one of the outputs, this approach will allow for minimization of the operational support costs and allocation of the Project funds for the Municipal Development Fund at the highest possible level. The municipal authorities will fully cooperate with the project and will be responsible for provision of relevant inputs for the project, including the premises (preferably at the same place as for the Local Development Centres) and coverage of their maintenance costs. In addition, the Project Officer will closely cooperate and receive support from the OSCE project staff assigned for the Kicevo area.</p>

Serbia (2 stories)

Country	SERBIA
Title	<p>Promotion of networks and exchanges in the countries of South Eastern Europe</p> <p>The whole project comprises three transborder sites: Skadar Lake (Albania/Montenegro), Neretva Delta (Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina) and West Stara Planina (Serbia/Bulgaria).</p>
Duration	Until the end of 2006
Source of funding	SDC
Location /Territory	<p>West Stara Planina Mt. area</p> <p>The state-owned sector has destroyed the organization of production, first imposing a communist model of cooperatives and later large state-owned industrialized farms in order to transform peasants into industrial workers. This offered no chance for the small private farmer to survive and the region gradually became abandoned. After the final collapse of the heavily subsidized state farms, there was no option left for the remaining rural population, leading to an exodus of young people and an aging of the rural population. Although rural people never gave up possession of their land in the villages, most of the productive land was not being utilized until the end of 1999.</p> <p>At the beginning of the 21-century, facing economic hardships, local industry collapsed. Part-time farming and the grey market became the only way for the citizens of the local towns to survive. Absence of any other options in urban centres led to the migration of people back to the villages. Afternoon and weekend farming are nowadays a basic part of the regional economy. The Municipality of Dimitrovgrad is on the bottom of the list of average income in Serbia (ten times less than the Republic of Serbia average salary). Rapid depopulation has led to not only the slow disappearance of traditional agriculture knowledge and effective resources management, but also to the degradation of their ethnic and cultural identity, creating a favourable climate for social and other frictions, despite the well-known peaceful nature of the local people.</p> <p>Natural and cultural resources in the region are thus being threatened. The situation is particularly serious in distant mountain areas. Peasants are not maintaining human-dependent grassland resources, which is leading to their degradation. Woodlands are also being destroyed by urban exploiters. an under-managed environment suffers as much as an overexploited one.</p> <p>Pirot and Dimitrovgrad Municipalities (Serbia) are characterized by a high dependency of agricultural employment and low agricultural incomes. However the reason for the worsening of rural life was not only due to the structure of the local economy, but also the fact that the elderly rural population is unable to produce, and younger generations do not respond to demands for reviving agriculture production through preserving and/or upgrading traditional knowledge.</p> <p>Another factor making the rural economy even more unstable and less profitable the mistaken approach to modernization offered often through the official extension service. The majority of improved technologies suggested were imported from different natural and social environments. Due to severe climate and limited soil quality, the sustainability of small-scale farming requires a wise approach combining agriculture and non-agriculture activities.</p>
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalized rural areas, poor infrastructure, and high level of depopulation processes. • There is a general lack of understanding about the changes occurring to Europe's biodiversity and the impacts this could have on their communities in the future.

- The importance of land-use activities on the natural assets and its role in halting the loss of biodiversity is not sufficiently known to the stakeholders and the public.
- The public is not entirely aware of the key importance of that area for biodiversity conservation (referring to the abovementioned).
- There is insufficient awareness about biodiversity conservation and values and insufficient knowledge about the sustainable land use and biodiversity conservation.

Diversity

Stara Planina is located in the middle of Balkan centre of biodiversity. It is one of the 6 temperate biodiversity centres according to IUCN. In 1997, the mountain area was protected as a nature park and together with Bulgarian part of Stara Planina as a Park of peace. The Park presents a great variety of landscapes, habitats, natural phenomena and cultural heritage over its 142,000 ha range. Besides fifty-two plant communities and variety of wild animal plant and species, Stara Planina is a home to a few native breeds of sheep, cattle, goats, horse, etc.

Semi-natural grasslands are essential part of the traditional landscape. They form a continuous belt along the highest parts of the mountain chain, together with a narrow belt of natural pastures above coniferous woodland level. On the lower altitudes, grasslands are located between remaining woods. The botanical composition of most of them was heavily changed due to the absence of traditional animals and human management (mowing).

According to the spatial plan, this area is extremely important as a water resource.

Grasslands are rich in species, particularly medicinal, aromatic and melliferous plants. Medicinal plant resources are being endangered (*Gentiana lutea* etc.) due to the uncontrolled exploitation and poor picking techniques. Local rangeland vegetation is a real *in situ* genetic bank of wild fruits. Grasslands of Stara Planina contain valuable genetic material of forage grasses and legumes. Few wild vegetables used in traditional dishes naturally appear as plantation *Urtica sp.*, *Rumex sp.*, *Allium ursinum*, *Orchis sp.*, etc. In deep valley areas, warm climates provide favourable conditions for advanced forms of beekeeping.

Gornje Ponišavlje and Stara Planina are the part of Southeast Serbia characterized by interlaced Bulgarian and Serbian rural culture. The strong influence of environment and history when Balkan nomadic tribes were often in this region bringing their knowledge and habits, made these communities more similar to each other than to the communities of their nation outside of the region. Formerly prosperous, this region was famous for good pastures, sheep cheese and meat, wool carpets and pottery.

Potentialities

Development of cross border cooperation in terms of empowering organic farming; agro-ecotourism and integrated rural approach able to improve well-being of the mountain people and nature.

Rural areas of Gornje Ponišavlje and Stara Planina possess great wealth with natural and cultural resources. Agriculture has to remain the most important income source, but with more emphasis on its multifunctional role, rural southeast can really prosper. The region of Gornje Ponišavlje and particularly Stara Planina mountain are extremely suitable for safe, high-quality food production. This region, famous for its livestock production, is situated in the middle of the Balkan Centre of biodiversity. Containing various medicinal plants and fruits, it appears to be not just a source of feed for domestic and wild animals and their habitat, but also a valuable source of income for the local population. Since the extensive grazing is "responsible" for its diversity, the most suitable way for its maintenance is to bring traditional sheep flocks back.

Organic agriculture is seen as a sustainable option for the biodiversity conservation in the region, but also as an opportunity for rural revival.

	<p>Valorisation of typical products could be done in the most profitable way through certification and creation of an organic brand. Traditional hard-cheese together with other manufactured sheep and cattle dairy products and lamb meat production appeared to be a trademark of the region.</p> <p>Most of Stara Planina region lacks the potential to be integrated with modern livestock production or any other economic activity again, due to the lack of infrastructure and extreme depopulation. To provide existing population with an incentive to turn to organic agriculture and attract the attention of the potential farmers from towns, Natura Balkanika plans to launch a complex program of education and a pilot farm program.</p>
Objectives	<p>1. To support and implement activities leading to effective cross-border management of natural resources</p> <p>The activities under this objective are targeted towards establishing sustainable partnerships and training knowledgeable stakeholders on both sides for the joint management of the shared nature. This includes different lines of activities reflecting the dynamic developments in the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ongoing procedure for establishment of a nature park on the Bulgarian side and the future opportunities for transboundary park; • the ongoing procedure for establishment of Biosphere reserve on the Serbian side, restructuring of the Biosphere reserve on the Bulgarian side and the future opportunity for a transboundary biosphere reserve; • the willingness of municipalities to formalize their cooperation through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding. The signing of a MoU will be a process, in which the relevant Ministries of Environment, Agriculture, Regional Development and Foreign Affairs will be approached for involvement in order to ensure its institutionalization. Other funding opportunities will be sought for implementing initiatives agreed on at forum meetings. <p>Reflecting the local needs, potentials and interests, the joint management of natural resources is also approached through the joint development of environmentally friendly tourism and agriculture.</p> <p>2. To empower local stakeholders to improve their well-being through support and promotion of environmentally friendly tourism, agriculture and traditional crafts</p> <p>Under this objective, the Bulgarian part is leading in ecotourism activities, because of its greater experience, national policy developments and available good practices. The Serbian part is getting experience from Bulgaria and starting to develop similar initiatives. The Serbian part is leading in environmentally friendly agriculture, because of the better experiences and greater number of initiatives. The Bulgarian part is following the process and getting the experience from Serbia. The activities carried out under this objective are based on the agreed common priorities in the Regional Ecotourism Action Plan for Bulgaria, the Strategic document for development of environmentally friendly agriculture for Serbia and the conclusions from the transboundary roundtables on ecotourism and agriculture during the forum meeting, Pirot, October 2004.</p>
Responsible institutions	<p>The Project is developed within the framework of Stability Pact/REReP, financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and International Co-operation (SDA) and carried out by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and East Europe (REC).</p>

Policies

Policies	Impact
The project is not a specific measure of public state policy, but it is a part of the national rural	The strategy will focus on promoting economic development and opportunity, foster cooperation,

<p>development program of both countries and a part of a development program of a stability pact. The project had developed as an answer to a declaration adapted in 1995 by Ministry of Protection of Environment of Republic of Serbia and Ministry of Environment of Republic of Bulgaria.</p> <p>Policy relating to agriculture and rural development- in order to empower local stakeholders to improve their well-being through support and promotion of agrotourism, agricultural production and traditional crafts.</p> <p>Policy regarding natural resources use and protection of environment in order to support and implement activities leading to effective cross-border management of natural resources.</p>	<p>capacity building of local communities, enhance and protect the environment, and balance resources through sound management of development.</p>
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Ministries of Environment	Nature Park Program/Plan development and establishment
Meso level	District governments Regional government institutions of Serbia and Bulgaria	Project support and realization; seminars organization
Micro level	Municipalities Eleven municipalities of Serbia and Bulgaria	Services users, activities holders, development and realization of action plans

Good synergies among institutions.

Processes

Political processes	<p>In 2005, the leading element in the transboundary cooperation is the institutionalization of this cooperation through the signing of a Letter of Intent (LoI) between 11 municipalities from Bulgaria and Serbia. This LoI institutionalizes the willingness of the communities on both sides of the border to cooperate in the sustainable development of the region, and more specifically in the development of environmentally friendly tourism and agriculture, infrastructure and transboundary park. The text of the LoI was approved by the two Governments, which are fully supporting the initiative. The municipalities will now initiate the process for registering a transboundary association in order to implement the LoI and to be able to jointly apply for funding.</p> <p>Transboundary forum meetings were held, and the Letter of Intent was signed by the West Stara Planina mayors. Priorities for transboundary cooperation were defined in the area of environmentally friendly tourism and agriculture; next steps were agreed for a Transboundary Association; the two governments approved the cooperation and REC was mandated to be Secretariat of the Forum.</p>
Technical processes	<p>Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe has established a strong network of partners at the local level and is considered a major player in efforts to facilitate project realization, enhancing local governments' capacity to undertake additional competencies and provide public services.</p>
Financial Mobilization	<p>The Project is developed within the framework of Stability Pact/REReP, financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and International Co-operation (SDA) and carried out by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and East Europe (REC).</p> <p>For two of the activities - promotion of Nature park values and Transboundary biosphere reserve meeting – the Bulgarian MoE and UNESCO (MAB program) ensured co financing.</p>

Country	SERBIA
Title	Livestock development Project – Sandzak region Southern Serbia
Time life	July 2003 – March 2006: Two-year extension requested by Serbia Ministry of Agriculture
Source of funding	Netherlands government
Location /Territory	Sandzak region of Southern Serbia – specifically the municipalities of Tutin, Sjenica and Prejipolje. Much of the project area is situated at or above 1000 meters; total population (ethnically mixed – Muslim and Christian) is 100 thousand with 60% being rural dwellers; farm size averages around 3-4 hectares but with access to common grazing - small scale and subsistence farming predominates; government services (veterinary and artificial insemination(AI)) are main-road biased; the area is famous for soft cheese and lamb – de facto organic production; local state farms and agro-processing companies have collapsed resulting in huge reduction in district livestock numbers and employment opportunities.
Mountain specificities	Constraints Alpine climate; remoteness; poor roads and public services. Diversity Livestock production (meat and dairy); on-farm processing, meat and dairy products; fruit production and processing; short-season arable crops; wild-fruit and mushroom harvesting. Potentialities Improved grass and fodder production and conservation; increased animal productivity; better market access; diversification (tourism, hunting and fishing); spinning and weaving.
Objectives	Lifting the living standards of livestock farmers in the mountainous areas of the Sandzak region and assisting socio-rural development– mainly but not exclusively through the formation and activities of farmer-owned and managed cooperatives and associations.
Responsible institutions	FAO/Serbia Ministry of Agriculture/Municipal Authorities

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>The project was formulated in the absence of specific and clearly articulated government policies towards mountainous regions. As implementation proceeded, project activities and results contributed towards policy formulation and, with this continuing, the project now facilitates evolving government policy goals over a wide area, for example: rendering farmers accessible to extension advice; developing/mobilizing demand-driven extension services; furthering farmer empowerment and advocacy through self-help association and cooperation; lifting producers' knowledge and skill levels across the board and giving them confidence and ability to seek out and apply for available loans and assistance; improving social environments (especially for the young) in mountainous villages.</p> <p>Thorough groundwork paved the way for the project's success and included: widespread publicity announcing the project's launch (TV, radio, newspaper, personal staff contact) followed by an extensive programme of consultations at the grassroots level (involved the holding of 27 meetings for 500 farmers at designated 'hub-</p>	<p>Organizing associations, cooperatives and machinery groups lifts economical, social and institutional aspects on higher level. The landscape where the project is conducted is a remote area and is very clean and healthy. Farmers are very careful, they do not want to destroy it, and a part of their conscience of conserving environment, they are aware of the fact that only under circumstances of clean nature can they produce the products that have a higher price than those produced in an intensive and industrialized way.</p> <p>Achievements since commencement of the project include: the establishment and sustainable growth of 10 farmer-owned associations and cooperatives comprising, 6 machinery groups; 1 wool marketing cooperative (successfully exporting wool to Bradford, UK); 2 milk collection circles (supplying milk to EU standard processors); and 1 trading cooperative (purchase of farm</p>

<p>centres' throughout the project area – under the direction of a trained team of professional facilitators using tried and tested participatory tools and techniques); the formulation and delivery of a winter training program (content based on analysis of needs from the participatory process) and identification of 100 key farmers to undertake the training and become joint implementers of project activities (a further 30 as reserves); the selection and processing (five stage) of Association and Cooperative proposals from key farmers (36 put forward, 18 selected for consideration, 10 accepted and received seed funding). Training and empowerment has constituted a substantial project undertaking – formal training sessions; study tours (domestic and overseas); farm walks; fodder and feed demonstration plots; introduction of new technologies and machinery; specialist advice and supervision of on-farm innovative activities; fielding of national and international consultants (Sheep cooperatives, YFC/NFU, Cottage Industries; Wool marketing; Cheese manufacture; Business planning; Book keeping etc). Organization and implementation of project training activities forged link-ups and working relationships with a diverse range of subject specialists from the state and private sectors. These included university faculties of agriculture and senior teaching staff, agricultural institutes and research organizations, state and private veterinary services, primary product processors and traders, lawyers and accountants and various others. The resultant network of expertise is now available to project beneficiaries virtually on demand – with specialist availability made economically and organizationally possible through the formation of farmer-owned associations and cooperatives. Project activities and results have been widely disseminated through frequent TV and newspaper publication. It has also formed close associations with other like-minded projects and development initiatives within and outside Serbia. A duplicate project is about to be implemented in Kosovo and Montenegro and proposals have been made for Bosnia and Croatia.</p>	<p>inputs). Leaders of the 10 associations have formed a Farmers Union and 3 Young Farmers Clubs are in the formative establishment stages (assisted by the NFYFC, UK). The project has helped improve cattle and sheep quality through expansion of AI services (in association with Velika Plana – state - AI Institute) and the distribution of well-bred rams for natural service (Yugoslavia-developed Pirot breed from the national flock). Improved district livestock marketing services for producers and increased access for outside buyers is being addressed through the new, project-designed Sjenica all-species market built in association with the Municipal Authority. Organizing and staging the now annual two-day Sjenica Show is a further joint endeavour between the project and Municipal Authority - the objectives being: the presentation and celebration of alpine agriculture, strengthening linkages between rural and urban communities and nationally highlighting the Sandzak region as a whole.</p> <p>A most enduring result of the project will be the farmer empowerment that has been brought about through joint implementation of project activities. Tangible manifestation of this can be seen in the confidence and cheerfulness now exhibited by group members, the continual bringing forward of new ideas to tackle perceived problems through group action and the proactive search for development credit and loans.</p>
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Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Meso level	Faculty of Agriculture Belgrade, Faculty of Agriculture Cacak, Research and extension services	Providing advices, lecturers, trainings and workshops
Micro level	Local municipality	Assisting the project

Good synergies among institutions

Processes

Political processes	Local authorities are very interested in assisting the project as much as they potentials are.
Participatory processes	Cooperation and communication between stakeholders and all those who are involved in this project is in two-way direction, and solutions are tailored according to stakeholders' needs.
Technical processes	Very good coordination and human relationships enabled this project to pursue very smoothly and all misunderstanding or misleading would be solved very fast. Since field workers, specialists, and local population work together, they are in position to use advantage of knowledge of each other and to share good ideas and solutions.
Financial mobilization	Project is entirely financed by donors, but one of the most important aims of the project is to achieve total sustainability. Informants are strongly convinced that after the end of the project, this region will continue to develop itself.

Albania (1 story)

Country	ALBANIA
Title	Role and the strategic vision of Albanian Agency for Development of Mountains Areas (MADA)
Time life	MADA was created 4 August 2000, under the decision of Council of the Ministers for realizing the "Program of development of mountain areas"
Source of funding	IFAD (loan and grant), Albanian Government, Dutch SNV, Italian Cooperation, contribution of DFID, etc, finance MADA.
Location /Territory	MADA is operating in 16 mountain areas of Albania.
Mountain specificities	<p>Constraints Life conditions in these areas are worse than in other regions of Albania. Public services such as hospitals, centres of health care, schools and kinder gardens in many cases lack quality or sometimes nonexistent. In addition, mail service, telecommunication, roads, water and energy supply are still problematic in these areas.</p> <p>Diversity They are rich in natural resources (minerals, hydro resources, forests, food products of a high quality and a high level of livestock raising), but their actual development is still very low.</p> <p>Potentialities The mountain areas in Albania are a very important part of the whole country because they occupy more than 60% of the whole Albanian land, in which 35% of the Albanian population work and live. Development of handicrafts and the traditional work like the reprocessing of leather, wood, wool clothes, carpets and rugs. These areas are also known for cooking some special types of food. These areas have great possibilities for development of the tourism sector in general and specifically the natural tourism, historical tourism, agro-tourism and especially cultural tourism.</p>
Objectives	<p>The principal objective of MADA is the increasing of revenues of the families in the mountain areas of Albania, especially of rural poor population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the international level: The foreign institutions should help the decentralization process as this is of great importance for the development of these areas. • At the country level: the Albanian Government, the House of the Parliament, NGOs, etc. should be more aware for their needs because for the time being awareness is very low. Specifically the Government should build a special economic platform to increase the employment rate, give more loans for new small businesses for restrain the migration from these areas and using more their potentials. • At the local level: Increasing the public participation of the local stakeholders is one of the priority issues as well as the increase of women participation in the public life and the decision making process. Measures to increase the access to local government information and activities as well as enhancing the capacities of civil society organizations to offer inputs and monitor the activities of local government to generate more output.
Responsible institutions	Albanian Government, MADA, International institutions, NGOs.

Policies

Policies	Impact
<p>The policy instruments which we can recognize are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reduction of the poverty in the conditions of the market economy; • Active participation in the process of the pacification and in the process of the investments; • Identification of the investment strategic opportunities for guaranteeing an effective use of the limited resources; • Preparation of the technical and financial measures for realizing the identified strategic investments; • Reinforcement of the main institutions to realize these measures. <p>The formation and operation of MADA is a specific action of a governmental policy to support the process of development of rural mountains areas in Albania.</p> <p>MADA has arrived to demonstrate that in mountain areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the desire, capacities and possibilities for an economic development based into important strategic products exists; • Policies and specific governmental measures can influence positively at local and national levels for the development of mountain areas. <p>The new partnerships are an important element for offering and distributing modern techniques and technologies of production and development.</p>	<p>MADA is a Governmental Agency that is working in the mountain areas in Albania.</p> <p>The expected impact are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of Mountain areas in Albania; • The improvement of living conditions and economic possibilities; • Protection of the natural heritage; • The improvement of collaboration between the governmental and local institutions.

Institutions

Level	Institutions	Role played
Macro level	Albanian Government, MADA	Creating and developing strategic policies
Meso level	IFAD, SNV, Italian Cooperation, DFID, NGOs	Supporting the activities of MADA
Micro level	Local Government, communes, rural communities	Implementing the measures for mountains areas development

Good synergies among institutions

Processes

Political processes	The political process should be improved in order for MADA to be able to better develop strategies for the mountain areas in cooperation with local authorities.
Participatory processes	MADA should be more involved in the improvement of the communication and collaboration between all the stakeholders, especially at the local level.
Technical processes	MADA is a new organization and for the moment is in a process building, so technical assistance is needed to improve the implementation and organization process.
Financial mobilization	Actually, MADA is depending from the donors' funds, which indicates that in the future it should work more effectively to be independent of donors.

Stakeholders and key informants

Country profiles

Country	Stakeholders			
	First hand information	Institution	Key informant	Institution
Albania	Etleva Dashi	Université Agricole de Tirana	Alba Beqiri	Ministère d'Economie
	Adrian Civici	Ministère des Finances / Université Agricole de Tirana		
Algeria	Rezki Ounnaci	SARL TOPIVERT; Agro_BEC; CREAD	Abdelgerfi Idir	Chambre d'agriculture de Tizi- Ouzou
	Lynda Khiali	INA; Agro_BEC		
	Mohammedi Salah	Ministère de l'Agriculture et Du Développement Rural		
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Renata Rakic	AgroNet	Olivera Tosic	Extension Service/ Ministry of agriculture
			Gordana Rokvic	Agricultural faculty in Banjaluka
Lebanon	Carla Khater	CNRSL	Georges Chemaly	Ministry of Agriculture/ Directorate of Studies and Coordination
	Fady Asmar	Ministry of Agriculture Rural Development and Natural Resources Directorate		
Macedonia	Kiro Dokuzovski	GTZ Agro Promotion	Risto Civciev	MAFWE (State Inspectorate)
			Sonja Srbinska	Ministry of health (Food directorate)
			Aco Gurceski	P.E. Macedonian Forestry
			Kaja Sukova	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning- Department for Sustainable Development
			Petar Gjorgievski	OPTO International AB / Macedonian Agricultural Advisory Support Programme MAASP
Morocco	Mohamed Benziane	Haut Commissariat au Eaux et Forêt et à la lutte contre la désertification	Fouzia Chakiri	Haut Commissariat au Eaux et Forêt et à la Lutt contre la Désertification
	Lahcen Ahouate	Ministère de l'Agriculture, du Développement rural et des Pêches Maritimes	Mohamed Dafraoui	Direction Provincial de l'Agriculture d'Azilal
			Doublali Khadija	Direction de l'Enseignement de la Recherche et du Développement
			Abdelkrim Majoudi	HCEFLD
			Zakaria Mousli	Centre de Travaux de Khenifra
			Rkia Ouaal	Association Tilkahia
Serbia	Suzana Djordjevic- Milosevic	Ministry of agriculture forestry and water management	Jovan Protić	Cabinet of vice-primeminister
			Maja Krunić-Lazić	Serbian Environmental Protection Agency
Syria	Mohammad S. Abido	Arab Forest and Range Institute	Majd Jamal	General Commission of Agricultural Research
Tunisia	Khairi Meddeb	Institut de L'Olivier		
Italy	Claudio Zucca	Desertification Research Centre of the University of Sassari, Faculty of Agronomy -Sassari		
	Ivana Casu	Desertification Research Centre of the University of Sassari, Faculty of Agronomy- Sassari		

Significant stories

Country	Stakeholders			
	First hand information	Institution	Key informant	Institution
Albania	Etleva Dashi	Université Agricole de Tirana	Specialists of MADA	MADA
	Adrian Civici	Ministère des Finances Université Agricole de Tirana		
Algeria	Rezki Ounnaci	SARL TOPIVERT; Agro-BEC; CREAD	Kacimi Belkacem	Haut Commissariat au Développement de la Steppe
	Lynda Khiali	INA; Agro-BEC		
	Mohammedi Salah	Ministère de l'Agriculture et Du Développement Rural		
Bosnia& Herzegovina	Renata Rakic	AgroNet		
Lebanon	Carla Khater	CNRSL	Clément-Nadim Zakhia	Mada
	Fady Asmar	Ministry of Agriculture Rural Development and Natural Resources Directorate	Isabelle Peillen	Mada
	Rania Khalil Zarzour	Ministry of Agriculture		
Macedonia	Jasminka Pasaliska - Andonovska	UNDP-LGD project	Ylber Rufati	UNDP PO Kicevo
	Venera Gudaci	UNDP PO		
	Jovanka Grigorijevic	UNDP PO		
Montenegro	Mr. Milutin Simović	Ministry of Agriculture	Abaz Kujović	Municipality
	Dr. Ljubomir Pejović	Bio-technical institute	Dr. Mijodrag Jovančević	Bio-technical institute B.P.
	Tarzan Milošević	Municipality	Zejak Dejan	NGO "Centar za razvoj agrara"
	Adem Jasavić	Municipality of Plav		
	Relja Jovančević	Municipality		
Morocco	Mohamed Benziane	Haut Commissariat au Eaux et Forêt et à la lutte contre la désertification	Ahmed Felus	Ministère de l'Agriculture
	Lahcen Ahouate	Ministère de l'Agriculture, du Développement rural et des Pêches Maritimes	Oumtani	Direction Provinciale de l'Agriculture de Marrakech
	Si Bennasseur Alaoui	IAV Hassan II, Rabat	Abdellatif Jaïdi	Association Espace Provincial des Associations de Développement D'al Houaz
			El Majoudi Abdelkrim	HCEFLCD
			El Fouzi Abdeslam	DPA d'Azilal
			El Majoudi Abdelkrim	HCEFLCD
			El Fouzi Abdeslam	DPA d'Azilal
Serbia	Sergej Ivanov	Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe		
	Marjan Djordjevic	-		
	James Airey	UN FAO		
	Saso Martinov	UN FAO		
Syria	Mohammad S. Abido	Arab Forest and Range Institute	Majd Jamal	General Commission of Agricultural Research
Tunisia	Taib Sekhiri	ONG l'Association Régionale de Sauvegarde de l'Environnement et de la Nature (ARSEN-Kef)	Mabrouk Ayachi	Association des ouvriers agricoles- Dehmani
	Feika Thameur	Ministère de la femme et de la famille	Hassen Balti	Amicale des médecins vétérinaires-
	Aymen Magouri	Commissariat régional de développement agricole- Le Kef		
Italy	Claudio Zucca	Desertification Research Centre of the University of Sassari, Faculty of Agronomy -Sassari		
	Ivana Casu	Desertification Research Centre of the University and Faculty of Agronomy-Sassari		