

# Skills for Rural Employment (S4RE)



## Half Year Report 2013



Pristina, August 2013

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## Project Summary - 2013

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Skills for Rural Employment (S4RE)</b>
<b>Project Area</b>	<p>Sharr Mountains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipality of Dragash</li> <li>• Municipality of Shtpce</li> </ul> <p>Northeast Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipality of Novo Brdo</li> <li>• Municipality of Kamenica</li> </ul>
<b>Project Goal</b>	Poverty Reduction in rural Kosovo through targeted training and skills development, leading to increased employability
<b>Project Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learning Groups targeting young unemployed people</li> <li>2. Private sector training programs to new and existing employees</li> <li>3. Supply chain linkages strengthened</li> <li>4. Capacity building of local service providers</li> </ol>
<b>Target Beneficiaries (2013)</b>	<p>Outcome 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 Participants in at least 10 Learning Groups</li> <li>• 50% women / 25% minorities</li> <li>• 60% into employment / self-employment</li> </ul> <p>Outcome 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 300 participants in large and small businesses</li> <li>• 5 agreements with large businesses</li> </ul> <p>Outcome 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 suppliers involved in training and market linkages</li> <li>• 5 value chains involved</li> </ul> <p>Outcome 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service providers available in all municipalities</li> </ul>
<b>Budget (2013)</b>	CHF 427,629

## 1 Overview

Skills for Rural Employment (S4RE) began the implementation phase in January 2013 with funding from Medicor Foundation, Julius Baer Foundation and HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation. This report summarises the main activities, achievements and lessons learnt from the first half year.

Results have been very positive, with most targets on track to being achieved by the end of the year. The project team have developed strong relationships with local communities and stakeholders, and achieved high visibility in the target regions; including with businesses, municipalities, and importantly, the youth and unemployed. Under Outcome 1, training has been using facilities provided by the municipalities free of charge. In the case of Kamenica, the municipality has also supported grants to farmers for the purchase of bee hives under Outcome 3. The private sector is also supporting project activities, by providing expertise for learning groups, linkages for marketing and access to facilities for training programs.

With any new project, particularly one such as S4RE that is using a new implementation methodology, there will always be adjustments required to the implementation. Comments on these small changes are discussed under each Outcome.

Support from international advisors and HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation management has been important for the project team, with 4 missions completed in this half year. Ralph Rothe provided training on the Learning Group methodology to staff and facilitators in February, supported by Peter Porten. Stuart Pettigrew assisted in the preparation of the annual work plan for 2013 during a visit in February/March. Bachu Mubarak, who has implemented Learning Group projects in Africa, provided more in depth training in April.

Monitoring systems are in place to track both project results and financial management. A database was developed to manage the large number of contracts and agreements, as well as beneficiary details, of the project.

## 2 Narrative Report

The following section highlights the results and activities of each of the 4 Project Outcomes, as well as providing comments on implementation and lessons learnt during the start-up phase of S4RE.

More detailed facts and figures on each Outcome are included in the Annexes to this report.

### Outcome 1

<i>S4RE will stimulate &amp; support groups of young unemployed to develop locally demanded technical, entrepreneurial and life skills; leading to improved employment and income opportunities</i>
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#### Results

A total of 19 Learning Groups have been established in the first 6 months of S4RE, with 213 participants receiving training and skills development (target 200). 7 groups have completed the training cycle and 12 are on-going. Annex 2 provides detailed information on the status of these groups and the sectors they are involved with.

Of the participants, 56% are female (target 50%) and 36% from minorities (target 25%). S4RE aims for a target of 60% of participants completing training to be either employed or self-employed. As most groups are on-going, or only recently completed training, it is not

possible to assess employment. However, 4 young women from a patisserie/baking groups were employed immediately after the training was completed (refer to Annex 4).

A tracer study has been designed for Outcome 1, with all participants completing a pre-tracer questionnaire. A follow-up questionnaire will be used approximately 6 months after the completion of the groups to track impacts of the project.

### **Comments and Planning**

Learning Groups are a new implementation methodology for Kosovo, and some project 'learning' has also occurred in the first 6 months of implementation.

The project selected and trained 11 facilitators across the 4 municipalities to assist with developing and managing the learning groups. Experience now shows that a lower number of facilitators, employed directly by the project, will be a better option. From the latter part of 2013, 1 facilitator will be employed in each municipality, with a junior facilitator also employed in Dragash and Kamenica. This change will improve coordination between the project and facilitators, but will not impact on the overall project budget.

Of the 4 municipalities targeted, 2 have developed rapidly (Kamenica and Dragash) but 2 are less active (Nov Brdo and Shtpce). In the case of Novo Brdo, this is largely due to a small population and limited opportunities. The issue in Shtpce may have more to do with the ethnicity of the region. In Shtpce, the Serbian population are the majority, and this requires a slightly different approach to project implementation. Moving to a directly employed facilitator is especially important for improving implementation in this region.

A more formal approach to the development of the curriculum for each learning groups has also been implemented. Colleagues from HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation trained S4RE staff on the process of developing curriculum, and this has been implemented for a first group (chicken farming) in June, and will be used for all future training programs.

### **Outcome 2**

*S4RE will collaborate with existing businesses (including self-employed) to develop targeted training programmes that aim to improve productivity, employment, and employment conditions.*

### **Activities & Planning**

An assessment of businesses was undertaken in the 4 municipalities, identifying possible partners for S4RE. This has resulted in 23 businesses being approached, and discussions held on collaboration with the project. By the end of June, 6 Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) had been signed (target 20) outlining the agreed joint activities such as staff training in HACCP accreditation, with further agreements to be signed during July.

Outcome 2 included working with small business groups. This has proven more difficult; and activities will be adjusted to increase the number of participants in larger businesses to ensure the overall target for year 1 is achieved. A revised strategy for engaging with small businesses will be developed for 2014. For example, the change to directly employing facilitators mentioned under Outcome 1 is also seen as beneficial to Outcome 2 by strengthening the local network of contacts with smaller businesses.

### **Outcome 3**

*Supply chain integration through skills development of small enterprises in the two focus areas with national and regional companies will improve self-employment opportunities.*

## Results

458 producers across 29 groups are involved in training programs (target 500) covering 4 value chains - collection of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP), raspberries, honey and dairy. Awareness sessions and meetings with buyers and farmers have been arranged for the cultivation of NTFP, but to date no groups have begun with this activity.

An important factor in the success of these training programs has been the direct involvement of the market actors (buyers). In the case of the dairy program, the buyer, milk collection centre, local resource person and farmers were all involved in identifying the training needs, and developing the training program.

One group of bee keepers successfully approached the Municipality of Kamenica to receive co-financing for new bee hives. The support of S4RE was important in preparing a clear cost benefit analysis for the co-financing, and the technical training being provided also improved the chances of success from the perspective of the municipality. Helping beneficiaries find new funding sources for their activities will be further promoted in the second half of 2013.

## Comments & Planning

A more systemic approach to developing the Curriculum for each training activity was identified as a need under Outcome 3. New curriculum will be developed using the same methodology as under Outcome 1, as some programs have common elements.

For each group, a Training Package is developed that includes not only the training program but also some investment into materials for the training. The size and cost-sharing of these investments is different for each group, and it is not possible for the project to make large investments. It is therefore very important that the project creates linkages with other funding sources to enable scaling up of activities beyond our direct interventions.

## Outcome 4

*S4RE will support locally available service providers to offer skills and training services that are more strongly based on practical training and private-sector linked activities, and are complementary to the formal VET system*

## Activities and Planning

The project promotes activities through a website and a *Facebook* page, with events and milestones of the project promoted to all stakeholders on a regular basis.

The website and *Facebook* links are:

<http://www.helvetas-ks.org/s4re/>



A project database has been created where all project activities are managed and contracts related to project resource persons and service providers are monitored. Details of the resource persons and service providers (16) are available on the project webpage.

The first networking event for Resource Persons and Service Providers will be organized by end of September instead of June, as Learning Group trainings will be largely completed by that time. This event will combine a workshop and information sharing, as well as a chance to bring in some examples of successful service providers in Kosovo who can explain how they developed their business.

## **Annexes**

Annex 1: Monitoring Sheet for S4RE

Annex 2: Facts & Figures for Outcome 1

Annex 3: Financial Statements

Annex 4: Case Studies

Annex 5: Photos

**Annex 1: Monitoring Sheet for S4RE**

Skills For Rural Employment (S4RE) - Monitoring Sheet											
Log Frame Indicator	Indicator	2013			2014			2015			Total 2013-2015 Total
		Target 2013	Half Year	Annual	Target 2014	Half Year	Annual	Target 2015	Half Year	Annual	
1.1	# of learning groups created	10	19		30			40			
1.1	# of facilitators created	8	10		0			0			
1.2	# of young unemployed completing training	200	59		600			800			
1.2	% of female young unemployed trained	50	56%		50			50			
1.2	% of minority young unemployed	25	36%		25			25			
1.3	% of young unemployed moving into self-employment or employment	60	7%		60			60			
1.3	# of MoUs signed with MFI partner	1	0		1			1			



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2.1	# of MoUs signed with private sector businesses	5	6	8	7
2.2	# of large business' employees (new and existing) trained	100	0	150	150
2.2	# of SME employees (new and existing) trained	200	0	200	200
2.2	% of new employees trained	25%	-	25%	25%
2.3	# of contracts signed with training providers for employees	5	-	0	0
2.3	# of contracts signed with training providers for business planning	5	1	0	0
3.1	# of VC identified and MoUs signed	6	4	0	0
3.1	# of beneficiaries trained - NTFP Wild harvest	200	122	400	500
3.1	# of beneficiaries trained - NTFP Cultivated	50	0	100	100

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3.1	# of beneficiaries trained - Berries & Fruits	100	105		100		100	
3.1	# of beneficiaries trained - Dairy & Livestock	100	142		200		200	
3.1	# of beneficiaries trained - Honey	50	95		100		100	
3.1	# of beneficiaries trained - Textile & handicraft	0	0		50		50	
3.1	# of beneficiaries trained - Services (IT/Financial)	0	0		50		50	
3.2	# of supplier groups with improved skills	30	29		60		60	
4.1	# of training providers strengthened	4	2		3		3	
4.1	% of training providers engaged in projects other than S4RE	50%	20%		50%		50%	

**Annex 2: Facts & Figures for Outcome 1**

Skills For Rural Employment (S4RE)															
Monitoring Information for Outcome 1															
Updated, July 2013															
Municipality	Profession	Learning Groups		Group Training Cycle		Group Business Plans		Ethnicity (Groups)			Gender (Groups)		Employment (Individuals)		
		Number	Participants	Ongoing	Complete	Ongoing	Complete	Alb.	Serb.	Other	M	F	Full Time	Part Time	Self
Kamenica	Patisserie	2	26	1	1	1		1	1		0.5	1.5	4		
	Flower Production	2	21		2	1		1	1		1	1			
	Jewellery	1	13		1	1		1				1			
	Bee Keeping	1	10	1				1			1				
	Chicken Farming	1	10		1	1		1			1				
	Waiters	1	12	1				1			1				
Novo Brdo	IT	1	15		1	1		1			1				
Shterpce	Flower Production	1	6		1	1			1		0.5	0.5			
	Cake Decoration	1	7	1		1			1			1			
Dragash	Raspberry	1	16	1		1		1			1				
	Hairdressing	5	50	5		3		4		1		5			
	Central Heating	1	14	1		1		1			1				
	Electric Installation	1	13	1		1		1			1				
<b>Totals</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## **Annex 3: Financial Statements**

### **Budget - expenditures**

***S4RE Expenditure Monitoring Report 1st Semester 2013***

## Annex 4: Case Studies

### Learning Group in Kamenica - Young women learning new skills

#### Background

Kamenica is a multi-ethnic municipality in the north east of Kosovo. With a population of 36,000 people and an estimated 5,000 young unemployed men and women, it is an important region for S4RE. In March and April, a series of meetings were held in the area, resulting in an awareness workshop with local youth. Two of the Learning Groups that resulted from this workshop was a jewellery group, comprising 13 Albanian women, and a group of 12 young Serbian women who wanted to develop skills in cake making (patisserie). In both groups, the majority of members are either students or have completed tertiary education, indicating that access to education is not the main issue in Kamenica, but rather suitable opportunities or relevant skills are missing.

#### Intervention by S4RE

The motivation for the jewellery group came from one of the young women at the awareness raising meeting recognising that no locally made jewellery was available in Kamenica. Together with the Learning Facilitator, they gathered together a group of friends, and developed a training program. S4RE supported the group with training sessions with an experienced jewellery maker from Pristina, as well as financing some tools and materials. In the case of the Patisserie group, the proposal for a group came from an existing market actor.



Jadranka Vasic recently established a new shop in Kamenica, preparing cakes and meals, as well as servicing local schools with lunches. Her investment included a new kitchen, but she lacked the staff and skills required to maximise her return on investment. S4RE engaged an external trainer, and in return for using her premises and co-financing materials for the training, Jadranka would receive updated skills as well as training a group of local women.

#### Results of the collaboration



The total investment for each group was €1,430 and €1,590. The jewellery group completed a successful promotion event in Kamenica, and through local sales outlets have sold approximately €300 worth of jewellery. The results from this group are expected to be modest, but several of the members are promoting their products and aim to make this their main income source. The patisserie

group has seen 4 of the members employed full time by Jadranka on a monthly salary of €150. Other members of the Learning Group may be involved later on as the business expands further into providing school lunches in the local area. In addition, Jadranka will be engaged as the resource person for a second patisserie group in Kamenica, this time focussed on the Albanian community.

## NVO Ikebana - Sustainable collection and processing of Non-Timber Forest Products

### *Background*

The women association 'NVO Ikebana' from Shtpce has 20 members, representing both the Serbian and Albanian communities. Ikebana deals with different agriculture activities, and has recently begun collecting and processing of non-timber forest product. They have received support from different donors for training as well as purchasing some equipment. One of the pieces of equipment was drying, storing and grinder of non-timber forest products. Due to a lack of training and market linkages, they were not able to utilise this investment properly.



### *Intervention by S4RE*



S4RE supported Ikebana in building the necessary capacities through the engagement of a service provider for a 3 day training program. Training focussed on market requirements, such as processing, packing and storing, but also on the technical aspects of identification of crops, collection time and drying methods (temperature, air conditions). With over-harvesting a threat to Kosovo's natural resources, and increasing demands from export markets on product tracing, an important element of the training was focussed

on sustainable harvesting of wild products. Furthermore the S4RE gave support to Ikebana on organization of a field visit for demonstration of real collection and identification of crops, also creating improved linkages with final buyers of these products. In total the Project's contribution within this activity was €260.

### *Results of the collaboration*

Little support moneywise, but it made a big change in the market position of the association. The skills of Ikebana's members have been significantly improved on different levels in identification of NTFP, sustainable collection, transporting, storing, drying, processing and making products ready for market. Ikebana members are now able to use the donated equipment correctly. Through this training and collaboration they have been facilitated by the Project to build linkages with different buyers and



already have sales agreements in place with Natyra BMA from Novo Brdo for different products and for all quantity which they can collect and prepare for the coming season. Social relationship was further improved through sharing experiences between the two communities and involving them working in same place with the same business.

## Annex 5: Photos



*Awareness meeting with community/youth, Dragash*



*Awareness meeting with youth, Kamenice*



*Learning Group - Flower cultivation*



*Learning Group -practicing jewellery with beads*



*Learning Group practicing patisserie*



*Producers in Shterpce trained in raspberry*



*Practicing raspberry production*



*A group trained for beekeeping*