

National Report for European Rural Parliament Initiative

Bulgaria



**Society for Territorial and Environmental
Prosperity (STEP), www.step-bg.bg**

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Introduction

The Society for territorial and environmental prosperity (STEP) joined the European Rural Parliament (ERP) initiative in the beginning of May 2015. Established in January 2014, STEP is committed to the sustainable territorial and environmental development of rural areas and rural economy. Its experts welcomed the opportunity offered to Bulgarian rural communities and individuals to share their opinion and understanding about the existing challenges and the changes that need to be made to improve the quality of life in their regions. The ERP initiative is presented on STEP website: <http://step-bg.bg/bg/58505>; <http://step-bg.bg/gb/58505> in English and Bulgarian languages and the National Rural Network bulletin No. 7:

http://www.nsm.bg/sites/default/files/7_2015_Bulletin_NSM_0_0.pdf

STEP partners for the national campaign are the National Rural Network (NRN) (<http://www.nsm.bg/>) and the National Union for Small Family Farms and Producers (NUSFFP).

Part 1. Working methods for collecting and summarizing the ideas of rural people

Due to the late start and the limited time for organization of the campaign in Bulgaria, STEP experts decided to focus on the following main methods for collecting ideas of the rural people:

- Already planned meetings of the National Rural Network (NRN meetings) (<http://nsm.bg>);
- Meetings with local stakeholders in the framework of STEP project “Partnership for nature-friendly management of pastures”, funded by the Financial framework for NGO support of the European Economic Area (EEA) <http://step-bg.bg/bg/pasturesproject>; <http://eeagrants.org/>
- Face-to face and on-line questionnaire <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1-XwRiDpVqnr5SzBdgajePY71TmKiQCZYf4UmJChobo/viewform?c=0&w=1> ;
- Summarizing the conclusions and recommendations of the reports prepared by the NRN Thematic Working Groups (TWG) (<http://www.nsm.bg/tematicchni-rabotni-grupi>).

These methods are presented below.

1.1. NRN meetings

The initiative was presented in 4 meeting of the NRN:

- Meeting of the NRN TWG 11 “Young people and rural areas” on 29 April 2015. 21 people participated in the meeting – members of NRN, LAG representatives, NGOs, Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF) and State Fund Agriculture (SFA), regional coordinators of the NRN;
- Meeting of the NRN TWG 10 “Traditional practice of seasonal grazing in Nature Parks” on 29 April 2015.

- Meeting of representatives of LAG for sharing good practices of the Local development strategies on 16 June 2015. There were 16 participants (12 women and 7 men) in the meeting with age between 30 and 65 years. 7 participants shared their ideas by filling in the questionnaire.
- Meeting of the NRN regional coordinators for sharing best practices during Ecofest 2015 “Green Ideas in Action” on 24 July 2015 in Gabrovo. There were 20 participants in the meeting (15 women and 5 men) in the meeting: 19 with age between 30 and 65 years and 1 above 65 years. The participants filled in the questionnaire, but they were also asked to give 1 answer (the most important one according to them) on the following questions:
 - o What changes need to be made to improve the life of the rural communities?
 - o Who has to initiate that change?
 - o What can you, or your organization to increase the well-being of rural communities?
 - o What should the public authorities do for the well-being of rural communities?

The results are presented in the Annex 1 and summarized in Chapter 2.



1.2. Meetings with local stakeholders in the framework of STEP project “Partnership for nature-friendly management of pastures”

- Training of volunteers for nature-friendly management of grasslands on 30 April 2015 with 37 participants – students, post-graduates and representatives of the partnership group of the project on 30 April 2015.
- Meeting of the Partnership group in Godech municipality on 17 July 2015. The partnership group consists of 12 members – farmers, NGO and local authority’s representatives, representative of the LAG and the local cultural centre (chitalishte). The meeting was attended by 19 people (8 men and 19 women) – farmers, representative of the local authorities, LAG, volunteers and students. 5 of them were between 16 and 30 years; 14 – were between 30 and 65 years. 17 of them shared their opinion by filling up the questionnaire
- Meeting at Ecofest “Green ideas in Action” – with 14 participants (5 men and 9 women) 6 below 30 years; 7 between 30 and 65 and 1 above 65 years.



1.3. Face to face and on-line questionnaires

The on-line questionnaire was published on STEP website and facebook page in Bulgarian and English languages:

- <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XwRiDpVqnr5SzBdgajePY71TmKiQCZYf4UmJChobo/viewform>;
- <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1kPs6Y5Up1FjoNDhWrANqbf7dsWFQ0lOJSsSKjiyenE/viewform>

The questionnaire was also published on the NRN website:

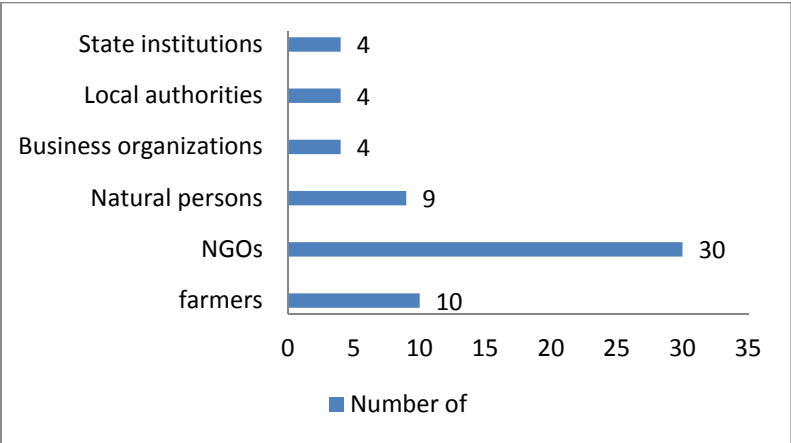
<http://www.nsm.bg/.../vklyuchete-se-v-line-anketata-na-evrope...> and the facebook page of our partner : NUSFFP. It was also mailed to the NRN members and the members of the NUSFFP.

The questionnaire consists of the following 5 questions:

- What changes would you like to see which would improve life for rural communities?
- Who do you think should take initiative in achieving those changes?
- What action can you, or your group or organization, take in order to increase the well-being of rural communities?
- What would you like the public authorities (local government, national government or the European Union) to do to help the well-being of rural communities?
- Can you offer a good example of what has already been done, in your area, to improve the life of rural communities?

We have received so far 61 responses to the questionnaire from LAGs, farmers and farmers association and NGOs from different regions in Bulgaria, most of which were collected during the meetings that were held (Graph 1). 10 of the respondent are between 18 and 30 years, 50 - between 30 and 65 years and 1 is above 65 years. The men are 19, the women - 43;

Graph 1. Different types of respondents of the questionnaire



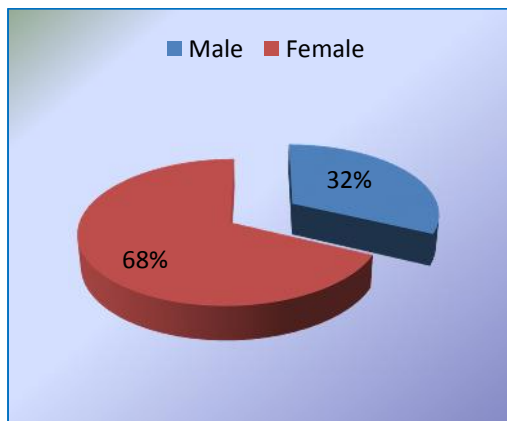
1.4. Summarized data for the participants in the national campaign

In total 199 participants took part in our campaign. Their age and gender are presented in Table 1 and Graphs 2 and 3.

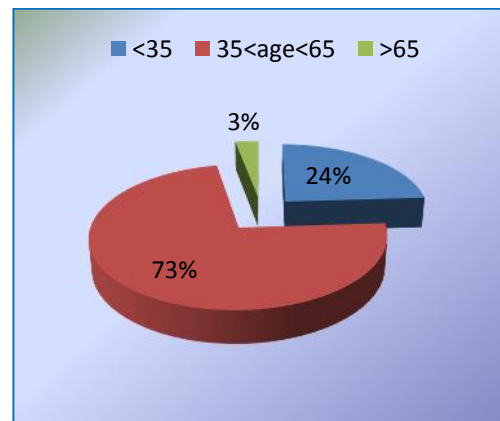
Table 1. Events and participants in the national campaign “Upward cascade of ideas”

Event	Date of the event	Total number of participants	Gender		Age		
			Male	Female	<30	30<age<65	>65
NRN meetings							
TWG 11 “Young people and rural areas”	29/04/2015	21	3	18	3	18	0
TWG 10 “Traditional practice of seasonal grazing in Nature Parks”	29/04/2015	11	5	6	2	7	2
Meeting of LAG representatives for sharing good practices	16/06/2015	16	4	12	0	16	0
Meeting of NRN coordinators for sharing good practices	24/07/2015	20	5	15	0	19	1
TOTAL number	4	68	17	51	5	60	3
STEP meetings “Partnership for nature-friendly management of pastures” project							
Training of volunteers for nature-friendly management of grasslands on 30 April 2015	30/04/2015	37	14	23	22	14	1
Meeting of the Partnership group in Godech municipality	17/07/2015	19	8	11	5	14	0
Ecofest “Green ideas in action”	25/07/2015	14	5	9	6	7	1
TOTAL number	3	70	27	43	33	35	2
On –line and face to face questionnaire							
		61	19	42	10	50	1
Total participants							
		199	63	136	48	145	6

Graph 2. Gender of participants



Graph 3. Age of participants



1.5. Summarizing the conclusions and recommendations of the reports prepared by the NRN Thematic Working Groups (TWG)

There are 8 reports of the TWG on NRN website that contain conclusions and recommendations for the national and EU policy for the rural areas. The recommendations and conclusions of 5 of them can be used also for the needs of the present report. These are:

2013 reports: (1) Short supply food chains in Bulgaria – present situation and needs; (2) Analysis and definition of “small-scale infrastructure” for the rural development policy; (3) Implementation of Leader approach in Bulgaria – challenges in t 2007-2013 period and lessons learnt.

2014 reports: (4) Family farms – present situation, problems and future perspectives; (5) Chitalistata (Community centers) – centers for the development of the communities in the rural areas;

Part 2. Summarized statements and recommendations by rural people

2.1. Concerns expressed by rural people and their aspirations for the future of their communities

The concerns of rural people are related to the changes they would like to see in their communities. The most significant ones are:

- Limited working places and big unemployment;
- Lack of services including social ones – hospitals, schools, kindergartens, educational services;
- Lack of investments;
- Poor infrastructure;
- Lack of information, training and capacity building.

Specific concern was expressed for the strong need for capacity building of the different stakeholders in the rural communities: farmers, NGOs, local authorities and especially young people. Lack of

investments and job opportunities is considered as a big threat by the local communities leading to migration to big cities and depopulation of small settlements. Agriculture and forest management are one of the main sources of income in rural areas. Specific concerns were expressed for the future of small family farms and processors. Direct food chains are considered as a possible market alternative for these farms. But improvements are needed in the existing legislation in that field and its implementation by the local authorities.

More flexibility, mobility and respectively facilitating the access to the main infrastructure, public services, health care and education and adapting legal regulations to enable the access to this services is also a demand pointed out by the participants in the campaign.

The main stakeholders that have to initiate the changes are considered to be local and state authorities like municipalities, state administration, managing authorities that need to simplify the rules and procedures, adapt them to the specific conditions and needs of local communities and apply them in a flexible way. The authorities have to be supported by local people, community centers, NGOs, LAGs, local business and farmers. A few answers also outlined the important role of the EU institutions, European Parliament and its members because the decisions for the objectives and the priorities of the rural development policy framework are taken there.

Preparation and implementation of the Local development strategies are regarded as a positive instrument, which role should be increased in the future rural development policy. Local developments strategies (LDS) can help the decentralization process, which has an important role for addressing the problems and the needs of local people. "The problems of the settlements in Southern Bulgaria are different than the ones in the Eastern part of the country. The mentality of people is also different. Therefore the solutions proposed and policy decision taken cannot be the same", said one of the participants in our events.

When asked about their own role for the community development, the local organizations and people are focusing mainly on projects' preparation, training and capacity building, establishment of LAGs and preparation of the local development strategies. That can be explain by the fact that almost 50% of the respondents were NGOs and these are their main activities. They are also willing to support new ideas and create partnership and networks.

Box 1. Networking between LAGs as a tool for sharing best practices, ideas and experience

As a result of implemented project an effectively functioning network will be established, uniting the efforts of over 100 local action groups functioning in rural areas. Work within the network will ensure certain and convenient way to communicate and share knowledge, experience and good practices; the ways to disseminate training techniques and methods will diversify, adequate distribution of physical resources materials, consumables, etc. will be ensured; all members will have access to current information. Thus the interaction and co-ordination between LAGs for a more successful and timely solution of similar problems will improve. The created online platform will support the existing network. Joint communication and knowledge exchange will increase LAG's capacity as leading NGOs within rural areas. The improved information exchange between LAGs will improve the awareness of service end-users – potential beneficiaries, decision makers, local business, young people and others.

Source: On-line response of the Director of LAG "Liaskovets – Strajitza"

Very few of the respondents think that they can play a role for opening new working places and attract investments in the rural area. Our main conclusion is that people in rural areas are demotivated, they are trying to solve their daily problems and secure their existence and they do not believe that they can initiate a change in their community.

2.2. Achievements of rural communities and of the public and non-government organisations which serve those communities, with brief case-study examples

The replies that we received during our campaign mainly focus on projects implemented with the support of the Rural Development Programme 2007- 2013, especially Axis 3. These include renovation of cultural centers, kinder gardens, building sports halls and yards, touristic routes, guesthouses and information centers. Few other good examples that focus on conservation of the environment and biodiversity:

- Voluntary payment schemes for ecosystem services, creation of a local brand (began, but remained unfinished by Natural park Bulgarka)
- Developing a joint project with Stara Zagora municipality, financed by Innovative Norway through which ecological assessment of the air, water, soil and food in the Stara Zagora region was made. The results were made public, thus the local community received an answer to a number of issues related to the ecological situation.

Community centers (chitalishta) play a vital role for the small rural livelihoods. "Chitalishta" are traditional and typical Bulgarian cultural institution, which originated during the Renaissance and went through all the changes in the society. This institution is still preserved and is developing adapting to different timeframes and communities. Community centers are public institution, which are open to all community members and are characterized by a general access to its activities.

Box 2. Good practices of the traditional community centers (Chitalishta) in Bulgaria

During the 2011 - 2012 period the Community center "Saznanie – 1927". In the village Dolni Vadin, Oryahovo municipality, introduced a new social service so called "shared kitchen". There is only one road leading to the village and the road ends there. Nearly 200 people live in the village, mostly in retirement, who jointly solve their problems. The remoteness of the village from the municipal center made it impossible for pensioners to take advantage of the service "respite care" and in particular "soup kitchen". Thus, local people found an alternative. They call it "shared kitchen". It enables communication and social inclusion of the elderly (over 65) people living alone or with a spouse and in small isolated villages. The service is provided in home environment and covers elderly neighborhood generally in small groups (10-20 people). The service allows for self-organization of the "members" of "shared kitchen" for cooking several times a week depending on the specific needs and desires of the participants. Food is consumed in the homes of its members, according to the schedule prepared by themselves. Already there are 11 chefs and 36 feeding persons. Funding is provided jointly and freely, taking into account the financial possibilities of its members. On the one hand, this relieves the budget for food, and on the other, stimulates communication between people and creates a sense of significance and usefulness. The community center supervises the compliance with diets and hygiene requirements, compliance diets, supports members in the preparation of food, stimulates group communication, provides the necessary information, encourage the inclusion of new members and the formation of groups, organizes thematic meetings. The initiative is still going on.

During the 2011 -2012 period, the community center "Razvitie -1897" in Telish village, Cherven briag municipality developed and implemented the project "Unique heritage of the oldest history in Telish - bridge

to the future". Partners of the community center were Telish town hall, Regional Historical Museum - Pleven Panorama "Pleven Epic - 1877", local businesses and ladies club. The project involved four sponsors, 31 volunteers and the population of Telish. They developed a different touristic trail called tourist spot "in history." The trail contains everything that local people appreciate and preserve: history lesson with lecturer, photos with Russian and Turkish uniforms; relaxing with a cup of herbal tea on the lawn of the local healer "Baba Sayka" and stories about its herbal remedies; look at the unique exhibition "Neolithic" with copies and replicas of many artefacts and pottery and richest collection of goddesses sitting on a throne from copper-stone age; visit the open air museum with copies of clay- like Neolithic dwellings depicting everyday life of prehistoric man in our land. The tourism product is already participating in tourism fairs and exhibitions and invites visitors to try a sip of Telish history, spiced with the scent of herbs and aromatic local wine. More information can be found on <http://www.telish-development.com>.

The community center "Luben Karavelov – 1897" in the village of Kurtovo Konare traditionally organizes the Festival of peppers, tomatoes, traditional foods and crafts. The first festival in 2009 began with a modest aim to unite the local people to revive and promote traditional agricultural livelihoods. Since then, its five editions made the festival the most powerful tool for advertising and marketing Kurtovo Konare and turned it into "innovative cultural event" of Stamboliyski Municipality. The collective wisdom of the community found an effective way to stimulate local livelihoods, building on the local traditions in gardening. More information about the festival can be found on <http://kurtovokonarefest.eu/>.

During 2011-2012 period, the community center "Svetlina-1896", village of Gara Bov created a tourist information center and a new attraction route. In the beginning, during the discussions, the residents of Bov formulated two important community priorities - to create a new touristic livelihood in the village and to retain young people. Dozens of volunteers took part in the ambitious plan of the community. Besides shaping the tourist trail and construction of tourist infrastructure, they voluntarily build the touristic information center in Gara Bov and furnished it with donations from the local businesses. With the help of the community center the volunteers collected database of cultural, historical, natural and tourist sites that can attract the tourists. A new tourist web portal to the official website of Bov - www.bov.bg was created. Five local residents were trained as guides for the new tourist route with the assistance of the partners in the tourism industry. Information infrastructure - boards, signs and marks on the new trail and a map of hiking trails and historical sites in the village of Bov was also created. The map is available on paper and online.

Source: Report of the NRN TWG "Chitalistata (Community centers) – centers for the development of the communities in the rural areas"

Box 3. Good practice for renting municipal settlement's pastures and pastures in Kardzhali municipality

In Kardzhali municipality there is a developed Ordinance on the terms and conditions for acquisition, management and disposal of land from the municipal land fund of 2011, which includes also the procedure for using municipal settlement's pastures and meadows. The terms of using municipal settlement's pastures and meadows for animal breeding are defined during a joint annual meeting of the population at the end of the calendar year. These joint meetings are organized at the level of settlements by the mayors (the ordinance is based on Chapter IV of the Direct Citizen Participation in State and Local Government Act). The decision of the joint meeting contains agreement for the common and individual use of settlement's pastures and meadows by the farmers and/or their organizations. There is a list enclosed to the decision, containing data of the farmers and of their organizations registered as legal entities, of their farm animals, data about the physical blocks and parcels of municipal settlement's pastures and pastures and other data, required for obtaining support under the Single Area Payment Scheme, which is agreed upon with the Regional Directorate for Food Safety and with the mayor of the relevant town-hall. The stock breeders submit an application form to the mayor of the municipality and indicate the size and location of requested land and rental, term depending on the number of animals.

Based on that experience and the work done in that field from different NGO (including STEP) the national legislation for governance and management of municipal pastures (that used to be common pastures in the past) was changed. The latest changes (2015) stipulate that the municipal grasslands can be given only to livestock breeders.

Source: Report of the NRN TWG "Permanent grassland definition and high nature value farmland"

Many of our respondents shared the opinion that nothing good happened or was achieved in their community. Some of them even presented initially good examples that didn't continue after the projected ended:

Box 4. Lack of continuation of good practices in the municipality of Nova Zagora

We created a business center with an incubator through which we supported the establishment of 20 small businesses. The business in the community was supported with microcredits, consultancy, information and other services. Unfortunately after expiration of the contract under which the business center with incubator was set up, the Municipality took our building and at present we are renting as a business center, but without an incubator and ceased the service. We created a House of Crafts where goods from craftsmen from Bulgaria are traded. Again unfortunately after the highway was constructed nearby, our site became desolated and faces difficulties to continue. We created an architecture park in Dyadovo village where a museum near to the village hillock was established, displaying a reconstruction of a prehistoric home as well as a furnace for sweltering ceramics and a pottery wheel. We transferred them to the municipality, but the goal of the project – development of rural and cultural tourism, is not a priority of the authorities. We created a communal center for entrepreneurs with minority descent, where for more than 10 years we've provided services to the population. It is no longer functioning because the building, which is owned by the municipality, is in poor shape and the municipality is not interested to renovate it. We developed a project under the Leader approach for creating a LAG, but it was stopped by the mayor, the governor and the MAF minister. The Governor's order supporting the project suspension was revoked by the court. We have as well succeeded in convincing MAF minister, but whilst the lawsuit was ongoing we missed the deadlines to sign the contracts.

Best practices are requested everywhere but examples for unsuccessful ones and the reasons for that have to be shown as well. Also sustainability of already made investments and the usefulness to people is to be followed! The municipality is depopulating very fast due to lack of investments by the business, total nonexistence of work places, and poor healthcare despite the constructed thoughtless infrastructure which is becoming deserted nowadays.

Source: On-line response of the Chairwoman of the Business incubator in Nova Zagora, acting also as NRR regional coordinator

2.3. Demands which rural people wish to make to their local, regional, national or multi-national authorities, including where relevant the European Union services

Most of the demands of rural people to the local, municipal and national authorities are linked to their main functions. The negative opinion for the public authorities related to corruption and misuse of public money is widely spread in Bulgaria. Some of the respondent even expressed the idea that public authorities should be kept away, even isolated, from the local initiative. But the major demand is for creating a flexible legislative framework, adapted to the local conditions and to the needs of rural communities. The simplification of rules and procedures as well as the decrease in the administrative burden are also regarded as an important issue that needs to be targeted by both local and national authorities. Creating dialogues and partnerships with the civil sector and the local population is also an important issue that needs to be further developed. Attracting investments, training and dissemination of information, implementation of projects for improving the life of rural population are also considered as functions for the public authorities.

2.4. Recommendations of the TWG for the needs of the communities living in rural areas

TWG "Short supply food chains in Bulgaria – present situation and needs";

Targeted support and promotion of short supply food chains will enable local producers to reach sustainable levels of value-added food production, improve and diversify employment opportunities, and to preserve and enrich the cultural and natural heritage.

The existing legal framework rather discourages the development of the farms of small farmers and the diversification of their marketing channels. That is the main reason for many of them to continue to stay in the so-called "gray economy". Simplification and adaptation of the legislation to the reality and possibilities of small farmers, introduction of mandatory training and practices for compliance with key regulations are part of the solutions that will support the compliance of the small farms with the existing regulations and their participation in the short supply chains.

TWG "Analysis and definition of the "small infrastructure" for the rural development policy;

Rural municipalities have obligations to maintain the social infrastructure consisting of buildings and facilities - public property, for the provision of services to the population by the state and local administration, as well as education, health care, cultural and social activities, and sports. Mobile facilities serving community needs in the depopulated areas of small rural settlements should be included as well. Rural municipalities should encourage the accessibility of local population to information infrastructure.

The new rural development policy (2014-2020) has to focus on the investments in the social infrastructure and a number of investments in the production and specialized infrastructure. The definition of 'small infrastructure' should include actions for creation and maintenance of the public infrastructure: health care, education, social, cultural, green, touristic, technological, internet accessibility, irrigation infrastructure, etc. Public efforts and investments are needed to respond to these needs of the enterprises and farms, especially the small and livestock breeding ones.

TWG "Implementation of Leader approach in Bulgaria – challenges in the 2007-2013 period and lessons learnt"

Leader approach is applied for the first time in Bulgaria in 2007 – 2013 programming period. There have been a number of gaps in the process of creating an adequate legal framework in Bulgaria that considered the specificity of the approach and its difference from the national RDP. The implementation process is burdensome and bureaucratic and as a consequence there were long delays that discredited the approach.

Despite of all the existing difficulties, the efforts made produce results that should be the basis of the implementation of Leader in the next programming period (2014 – 2020) and beyond. The lessons learnt should be carefully analyzed by both the Managing Authority and the Paying Agency and also by the Local Action Groups (LAGs) for introducing timely changes (legislative, institutional,

organizational, etc.) to ensure the implementation quality of the approach and significantly more efficient public resource investments in the future.

TWG “Family farms – present situation, problems and future perspectives”

Small family farms in Bulgaria are characterized by a lower efficiency, higher employment and product diversification. On the other hand, their owners are mostly elderly people, the workers are with lower education and often there is lack of active successors. The future of the small family farm is often decided when the generations change. It is necessary to support these farms in order to secure their continuous existence.

One of the strategic goals for the future thematic sub-programme for small farms of the RDP is the support for restructuring of the family farms, increasing their viability and sustainability. Family farms are the backbone of local communities and their development and improvement of their competitiveness will increase the viability of the rural communities.

Facilitating the restructuring and modernization of the small family farms, encouraging their cooperation and integration in the agricultural and food chain should be the focus of the rural development policy for in the new programming period. Bulgarian past experience has proven that results can be achieved only if the support is specifically tailored to the needs of the small family farms and is consistent with their investment needs and funding possibilities.

TWG “Chitalistata (Community centers) – centers for the development of the communities in the rural areas”

As explained in Part 2.2. “Chitalishtata” are traditional and typical Bulgarian cultural institution. Currently these community centers are facing different problems and in general lack of funds. The following actions are needed to secure the future activities of these community centers:

- The new rural development programme has to offer opportunities to support the associations of community centers and public-private partnerships with businesses. To encourage participation in the management of community centers in the LAG and implementation of the development strategy through LEADER approach;
- Adopt festivity (organizing traditional festivals) as a factor in community development and survival of the territory;
- Work towards building a social environment for communication and integration of the elderly population.
- Develop and implement curriculum in universities for training and capacity building of the employees of the community centers

The TWG also drew up priorities for community development that define the long-term central role of the community centers for the development of the rural areas:

- Building social capital and strengthening the relationships of the local community;
- Preservation, development and promotion of cultural integrity of the community;
- Provision of services, products and community initiatives that contribute to sustainable local development;
- Innovation, knowledge, training and capacity building of human resources.

Part 3. Final words

Many and different needs still have to be addressed by the rural development policy in Bulgaria. Our rural communities are facing big challenges in their daily life and future existence. The biggest threats are: unemployment and depopulation, lack of social services and infrastructure, limited access to information and development opportunities. People living in rural areas are demotivated and in general afraid to take the initiative of changing their own life. Targeted support at local level is considered as the best approach for solving the problems of our rural communities. “State and local administration has to work for the well-being of the population and not for themselves” – said one of our respondents. Decisions and rules have to be simple, flexible and differentiated, supported and easily understood by the communities if we want a change to happen.

The most common needs and concerns of the rural population in Bulgaria, gathered during our short campaign are:

- Access to services including social ones – hospitals, schools, kindergartens, educational services;
- Investments that create new working places, entrepreneurship;
- Training, information and capacity building of all stakeholder (including local authorities);
- Simplification of the existing rules, effective and observed legislative framework;
- Networking, cooperation and capacity building of the civil organizations.

All of them need to be put in the focus of the rural development policy if we want to keep alive our rural communities.

Annexes

Annex 1. Responses of the Regional Coordinators of the National Rural Network

1. What changes would you like to see which would improve life for rural communities?

- Activities related to better access to information for the local population;
- Second level of local self-governance and making the decisions closer to the rural areas;
- More and more accessible services;
- Integrating the local Roma community by creating permanent employment;
- Health care – 24 hours access to health care and dental service for young children and older population;
- Development of the local social capital;
- More working places;
- To change the mentality of the local people;
- Infrastructure, internet, playgrounds for children and sport;
- Create conditions to increase the employment;
- Enable the conditions for development of small family business by simplified and easier requirements during the starting period;
- Increase the employment rate;
- More funds for new services in rural areas, that will create new jobs;
- Creation of modern infrastructure;
- Changes in the mentality and way of thinking;
- Better infrastructure;
- To support small but efficient initiatives of local people.

2. Who do you think should take initiative in achieving those changes?

- Municipality;
- Local authorities;
- Central authorities, supported by the local authorities;
- All stakeholders;
- Local authorities and business;
- Local authorities;
- Local authorities;
- LAG, RDPs;
- The state and the municipalities have to create mechanism for making the change;
- The people;
- Local authorities;
- The changes, eligible for funding, have to be regulated by the application requirements, result indicators and the indicators for the changes;
- Civil society organization, NGOs, community centers (chitalishta), active citizens;
- The central authorities at one hand, and on the other the local ones;
- The state, the municipality, the local initiative;
- Farmers and entrepreneurs;
- To support the job creation in the rural areas.

3. What action can you, or your group or organization, take in order to increase the well-being of rural communities?

- To attract tourists;
- To initiate establishment of an organization that will support local farmers in different areas;
- To encourage the people that by participating in the programmes they can improve their life;
- To be enough crazy to continue to work in the way that things have to be done, in spite of all types of restriction imposed;
- To chase the bad guys with a stick; to have an active position for the problems;
- Volunteering, more efforts for awakening of the civil initiative;
- Increase the information for the local community;
- To inform and to contribute to the different funding opportunities;
- Implementation of ideas and projects that are good for the community;
- I can support the activities of the development of the local business;
- To increase the civil participation;
- Role for spreading of information;
- Projects;
- Implementation of ideas that are good for the community;
- I will continue to work on the project of the Operational Programmes;
- Organization of the information campaigns;
- I can participate in real work discussion for future development of the rural areas.

4. What would you like the public authorities (local government, national government or the European Union) to do to help the well-being of rural communities?

- To liberate the citizens initiative;
- To simplify the application rules and procedures of the farmers from poor rural areas;
- To work in intelligent, efficient and responsible way and to be on the same side as the normal people (the beneficiaries);
- To stop stealing and to implement all strategic documents;
- To think when they make decisions or to live in rural areas;
- Changes in the legislation; to support the local initiative for the different services;
- To create opportunities increasing the access to services of the local population;
- Implementation of different services of good projects;
- To decrease the corruption;
- To improve the well-being of the villages;
- To work for the people, not for themselves;
- To create working mechanisms and rules;
- To apply for EU projects that will really absorb the financial funds;
- Civil dialogues;
- To be isolated from the initiatives of the local communities!

Annex 2. All replies to the five main questions in the questionnaire (without editing)

1. In your opinion, what changes need to be made in order to improve the life of local communities in rural areas?

- To increase the capacity and knowledge of local authorities: municipal administration and municipal council. To invest wisely the taxpayers money and those of European programs and into useful activities. At present money are spent for unnecessary extras that are of no benefit to the population, but are suitable for corrupting schemes and misuse form of investment;
- Immediate democracy;
- Employment, access to basic services, social capacity;
- Capacity development is a key priority for each civil organization in Bulgaria. Bulgaria lacks sustainable development of the nongovernmental sector not only due financial short-fall, but also to a large extent due to lack of developed/maintained/developing capacity of the NGOs. This is especially valid for NGOs in small towns. It is a vicious practice to have a NGO to exist and work actively only when project financing is available. This makes civic activity paid/hired/professional activity;
- More projects for development of rural areas, for support to farmers, public institutions – municipalities, community centers, schools, kindergartens, museums, churches /we have all those in our village/ chiefly knowledge and mentality, working and law abiding municipal, communal and government structures;
- Firstly social /creating better life condition/ and secondly: economic development – financing projects for small business starting, without guest houses as experience shows there are quite a few of those, but badly managed or intentionally unmanaged.
- Pay serious attention to young people that desire to live in rural areas;
- To develop medium size processing plants for agricultural produce;
- More investments in small farms and easier access of small farmers to investment programs;
- To simplify the application technology for NGOs for financing and designing mechanisms for financing the projects;
- Remove corruption on all authority levels and put experts in local administrations. Set priority on rural tourism and farming. Lots can be written but it's senseless! Opening of new work places;
- More work places; implementing projects that would keep people in smaller towns;
- Reduce unemployment through stimulating the local business and keep young people on the territory;
- European funds and programs to be focused towards small producers and starting farmers;
- Projects ensuring employment;
- Access to cultural and educational services, discontinuing depopulation;
- To improve infrastructure, to attract investors, improving the access to tourist attractions and natural landmarks in the region;
- Applying activities through which new work places are opened, respectively reducing migration of young people;
- Alienation between people is the root of all misfortunes in Bulgaria today. I think communication between people will improve through conducting local activities and celebrations;
- To find mechanisms for retaining young people and opportunities for their development;
- Resources for rural development and their effective use by local communities for achieving tangible results, to have available simple and easy access for implementing good ideas, full accountability as to who implemented which project, where, with what resources and what was concretely achieved;

- Creating strong local communities;
- To improve the infrastructure, to create work places and social institutions – hospitals, schools, nurseries, kindergartens, etc;
- Social policy, policy on youth employment, informing the population;
- Work places;
- Investment in existing farms is to be increased. Creation of working farms;
- A decent life needs for farmers needs to be ensured; to have more security; to live and work within conditions that contribute to their self-confidence and significance to society;
- Equalizing subsidies with European farmers;
- More flexibility, mobility and respectively facilitating the access to the main infrastructure, public services, health care and education; this is linked to adapting legal regulations and organizing of these services;
- Tax concessions to farmers; increasing subsidies rate to those in the EU;
- Easier access to schemes, measures and support programs;
- Living conditions, roads;
- Working places, good roads;
- Building more playgrounds;
- Permitting and allowing the use of pastures by stock-breeders – local and having animals;
- Presence of 24 hour doctor and dentist offices; more differentiated playgrounds, rest grounds; infrastructure;
- Municipal authorities;
- More information; greater motivation;
- Create work conditions – employment;
- Creating favorable investment conditions for local foreign entrepreneurs that lead to creating work places;
- Creating conditions for enterprise development and employment, based on reasonable use of local resources; education based on local needs;
- Improve infrastructure and access to quality services by local communities;
- Lower unemployment level through attracting foreign investors, creating new work places; infrastructure improvement; setting up tourist destinations and increasing the number of available tourist facilities in the region in order to increase added value and attracting more tourists;
- Creating new work places; encourage stock-breeding, agricultural products processing, developing geographically protected products, infrastructure improvement, broadband internet;
- Infrastructure improvement; quality and various services; creating local social capital.
- Increase number of RDP beneficiaries;
- Creating work places; tourism encouragement; imposing local production to the market ;
- Creating present-day infrastructure;
- Improve quality of life, services, infrastructure, internet, playgrounds and sports facilities, working people;
- Decentralization and a second level of local self-governing. Thus decisions for rural areas will come closer;
- Most of all improve access to all kinds of services;
- Improving rural social life; developing technical and technological infrastructure; more initiatives including young people; utilizing EU project financing;
- Better education; access to medical and dental services in small towns and prophylactics;
- Production development and opening new work places. Improving transport links to small towns.

2. Who should initiate the achievement of these changes?

- Society through selecting politicians with knowledge and morality – this should happen through partnership and discussions with concerned local individuals;
- Citizens, NGOs, And last but not least, when people and the non-governmental sector initiate activities concerning such changes, they are not to be pushed by the police, prosecution state administration and in general the state repressive system;
- It is doubtful any party would do this, so it should be initiated by separate communities;
- Government, operation programs, civic sector, local authorities;
- The civic sector in partnership with local authorities, legislative authorities. Bulgaria lacks enough mechanisms to support NGOs and more precisely for creation and consolidation of networks and coalitions of NGOs. The program is the only suitable instrument at the moment for NGO capacity building as it offers to local authority's financial resource for implementation of projects. There are EU programs to meet the needs of NGOs, which remain inaccessible to the larger part of NGOs, especially in smaller towns and rural areas;
- Government, Parliament, municipalities;
- The state and local population;
- All concerned parties: 1. Municipalities, NGOs, young people living on the territory, schools, community centers, local business if any;
- Both people and the Parliament, to reduce bureaucracy to a minimum;
- Municipalities;
- MAF, MRDPW;
- Non-governmental organizations and respective ministries;
- Young creative people that want to live in Bulgaria but with European laws;
- Local authorities, business;
- Government, local community, local authorities;
- They are initiated enough by farmer's organizations, but unfortunately on higher levels, for example a ministry, parliament, they do not receive approval and further development;
- Local municipality, motivated local firms;
- Local authorities, state policy;
- Mayor, municipal council, local society;
- Local authorities in partnership with locals, NGOs and others;
- Municipality, communal centers, schools;
- The Government;
- EC and European Rural Parliament;
- The citizens;
- Municipal managers and local authorities, together with the business and MAF structures;
- Municipal council, mayor, NGOs;
- Municipality, mayor;
- The government through a policy for rural areas;
- Dual sided – both from the side of farmers and the rural community as an initiative for better life and from the side of the government and/or the NGOs through observing rights and laws;
- European deputies;
- There should be a combined approach where the initiatives and actions to be offered freely on local level /specifications are known/ and at the same time on regional/national level to meet understanding and finding a way for achieving and realizing these activities;
- Livestock breeding associations;
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food;
- Local authorities and state institutions;
- State;

- Governors in certain regions;
- Municipality;
- Local authorities;
- Central authorities, supported by the local authorities;
- All stakeholders;
- Local authorities and business;
- Local authorities;
- Local authorities;
- LAG, RDPs;
- The state and the municipalities have to create mechanism for making the change;
- The people;
- Local authorities;
- The changes, eligible for funding, have to be regulated by the application requirements, result indicators and the indicators for the changes;
- Civil society organization, NGOs, cultural centers (chitalishta), active citizens;
- The central authorities at one hand, and on the other the local ones;
- The state, the municipality, the local initiative;
- Farmers and entrepreneurs.

3. What actions can you or your organization undertake to increase wellbeing of local communities in rural areas?

- As a result of implemented project an effectively functioning network will be established, uniting the efforts of over 100 local initiative groups functioning in rural areas. Work within the network will ensure certain and convenient way to communicate and share knowledge, experience and good practices; the ways to disseminate training techniques and methods will diversify, adequate distribution of physical resources materials, consumables, etc. will be ensured; all members will have access to current information. Thus the interaction and co-ordination between LIGs for a more successful and timely solving of similar problems will improve. The created online platform will support the existing Network. Joint communication and knowledge exchange will increase LIG capacity as leading NGO within rural areas. The improved information exchange between LIGs will improve the awareness of service end-users – potential beneficiaries, decision makers, local business, young people and others;
- Project application;
- Assessment of local assets (natural, cultural, historical) and selection of suitable for valorization; analysis of interested parties in the process and identification of local leaders; trainings on sustainable development and elaboration and management of projects for rural areas development; territory analysis, etc;
- To help young people;
- To find investors;
- To help newly starting colleagues;
- We stimulate creative thinking of all concerned parties and support the project proposal financing process;
- Creation of work places and development perspective;
- To stress on these issues when preparing the strategy for local development during the new program period;
- To stimulate through LDS through criteria;
- Preparing and implementing EU funded projects – for example building irrigation works on district territory;
- Experience sharing, quality consulting according to the needs and resources of the beneficiary, informative meetings to present the new program period. Developing cultural and ecological

initiatives;

- Applying with a new strategy for 2014-2020 local development;
- Organizing trainings and other information activities for expounding the possibilities for project development;
- The cultivated by me crops are of key significance for people's subsistence. I aim to reduce prime cost of the production, sell it on the local market with marginal profit; I commit part of the product to owners of the land I rented through which I in practice help them to improve, even by a bit, their family budget. I would like to be able to purchase contemporary machinery, to produce more, so I may offer land owners higher rent, to hire more workers;
- To ensure access to various cultural, educational and social programs;
- Establishing partnerships, generating and developing ideas and their implementation;
- Working with the people in place;
- To increase production and open new work places in case the national policy in the "fruits and vegetables" sector changes and the market is regulated and export is supported;
- Useful to society labor! Donations;
- Consulting farmers on effective management and development;
- I am open to transfer information and knowledge that I've acquired through my education. To consult and share information;
- To motivate young people to work in agriculture;
- Developing and active work with the local population on education and committing information / consultancy on business activities management (planning, financing etc.);
- Explanatory campaigns, technical support for filling in application documents;
- Promoting the idea for repopulating rural areas and projects supporting the idea;
- Charity support for interior or exterior restoration of kindergartens and schools;
- At the moment we exercise pilot payments for voluntary ecosystem services;
- Granting control opportunities over performed activities and ensuring full transparency; awakening civil initiative;
- Information, direct practical and theoretical help projects or project ideas and initiatives;
- Encourage people that through enterprise they can alone improve their lives;
- Creating LIGs or similar organizations to support local entrepreneurs to implement ideas;
- Developing and applying some pilot models for sustainable use/development; removing unfavorable / dangerous factors (pesticide fields) from rural areas;
- Increasing the awareness of the local community;
- Ideas to be achieved with European funds;
- Training students in rural areas; explanatory activity in relation to the possibilities for training and developing changes in the rural development field; joint projects with ecological organizations, LIG and other organizations;
- Completing good ideas; various projects; development and upgrading the local festival
- Actions related to better awareness of the people in the region;
- Informing the population as well as supporting the local business and farmers when accomplishing their contacts;
- To help in acquiring European funds;
- To initiate local groups, to inform, consult, train. To assist in preparing and managing projects;
- Granting services to micro, small and medium enterprises in rural areas;
- Informing the citizens about possibilities for European or other financing;
- As young people we may be more proactive in different campaigns, to supply ideas and participate in their implementation;
- Information campaigns, legal services;
- Restore and maintain mass transportation means;
- Making the population aware of pressing issues; organizing volunteer groups.

4. What would you like public authorities (local, Government or EU) to do for increasing the wellbeing of local communities in rural areas?

- To work for preservation of the communities and not create rules for centralization and unifying them all. To work more for the wellbeing of all sides and not generalize and develop unified programs and action plans. To take care of training the administration on all levels to act in a professional way;
- Not to hinder initiatives of non-governmental organizations but to support and encourage them when they wish to realize their own initiatives or such with their partnership. Unfortunately in Bulgarian municipalities the local authorities level is becoming lower and lower. It is becoming more difficult to work with them;
- To stop stealing;
- Clear and working regulation foundation and concentrating resources to rural areas.
- To really support the NGO sector and the active individuals in rural areas;
- To support more projects for rural area development under measures 321,322 and others;
- To perform the duties for which they are employed, to strictly observe the laws and to be more active and open to the people;
- These are done by implementation of RDP and the “Leader” approach, but should be more flexible. MAF should give more opportunities for applying the “bottom-up” approach and not to create administrative difficulties and obstacles. Local communities and their unions to be more transparent, to work in the name of local development and not to serve personal and business interests and the private interests of influential businessmen in the municipality. The picture shows that until now “Leader” is not applied in its “real nature” in Bulgaria for 2007-2013 and the prognosis is for worsening and intensifying the triteness and “dividing the cake” between certain players for the new program period. Recommendation: to have LAGs we should make quality LDS, municipal plans and other documents on a higher level and respectively to observe them. LAGs require realization of small and innovative projects which lead to rapid and obvious results for the local communities. Infrastructure is important but the situation, capacity, etc., should be carefully assessed and projects prioritized;
- All subsidies to be committed to those that really deserve it;
- To create work places;
- To seek greater decentralization and leave communities to develop from the bottom up;
- To eliminate corruption and observe the laws in the country;
- Legislation change towards simplifying and simpler application;
- Informing and consulting concerned parties support for project administration, i.e. faster procedures without administrative obstacles;
- Improving infrastructure and quality of services;
- Drawing investors, improving road infrastructure, exposing local cultural inheritance, creating resting places and insuring access to natural landmarks;
- To co-operate for reducing administrative burden;
- Applying for projects and through their implementation and reporting;
- Local authorities to exert more efforts for preserving agricultural production. Low erudition and lack of competence of the empowered locally is the root of the “ethnic” conflict. Local authorities are not interested of the minorities and their problems. No work places are created. Government – without water there’s no agriculture. The government should re-examine the functioning of the irrigation systems – the phrase “organized crime group” covers the content of this organization for the farmers locally. EU – programs for social employment support unwillingness to work. In small towns everyone is unemployed but do not desire to be employed under a labor contract, social employment under programs of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy create artificial employment but in no way labor habits to the permanently unemployed. On the contrary, they hinder employing lasting workers;
- Investment, work places, preferences for the business;

- Simple and clear rules, application forms and simple and clear procedures, access to financing for the “small” ones with good ideas and teams;
- Respecting the supremacy of the law;
- To support working projects that create work places, to stop corruption and draining funds for thoughtless and financially inflated projects, like two playgrounds in a village with 10 children when there is no working water supply system or roads;
- Transparency of plans, referendums, loyalty towards the population, foresight;
- Income increase;
- To maintain security and legality in rural areas. To maintain the infrastructure and social activities in these regions. To have access to training /organizations to come to the farmers. /;
- Synchronizing legislation (accounting, taxing, safety) in the various fields so implementation of specific policies does not hinder/prevent the implementation of specific policies for encouragement of business activities, respectively wellbeing;
- Equalizing subsidies to those of the other European member states;
- Chiefly to support anyone wishing to settle in the region;
- Legislation change;
- Real absorption of EU funds; at least 1 month “living in the village” for encountering the reality;
- To seek the opinion of the people when effecting activities and projects;
- To reduce corruption;
- To create preferential terms for candidates whose projects lead to creating work places or improving living conditions;
- To create conditions that assist people to manage by themselves; less politics – more reciprocity;
- Adequate actions for implementing strategic documents;
- Attracting foreign investors;
- Reducing bureaucracy when preparing and managing projects; assisting local communities with training and qualification enhancement; improving infrastructure;
- Hearing the ideas; projects;
- To support launching of new work places;
- Improving the infrastructure of a given municipality, encourage tourism;
- To begin working for people and not the local communities;
- To create working mechanisms and rules;
- More local instruments;
- More effective control over spending of public funds;
- Help with the needed documentation; transparency when allocating funds and control over spending reporting;
- To participate more actively and to assist with project financing;
- To allocate more funds for preserving local customs;
- Establishing inter-village mass transportation lines; tax preferences for those living in small towns.

5. Share a good example for something done in your region that improved the life of the local community?

- The opportunity of local people to travel to another countries and exchange experience – to study and compare and to transfer experience and knowledge;
- We created a business center with an incubator through which we supported the establishment of 20 small businesses. As an overall the business in the community was supported with microcredits, consultancy, information and other services. Unfortunately after expiration of the contract under which the business center with incubator was set up, the

Municipality took our building and at present we are renting as a business center, but without an incubator and ceased the service. We created a House of Crafts where goods from craftsmen from Bulgaria are traded. Again unfortunately after the highway passed by, our site became desolated and is very difficult to work. We created an architecture park in Dyadovo village where we created a museum near to the village hillock displaying a reconstruction of a prehistoric home as well as a furnace for sweltering ceramics and a pottery wheel. We turned them over for use by the municipality, but the activity that we had as goal within the project – development of rural and cultural tourism is not supported by the authorities. We created a communal center for entrepreneurs with minority descent, where over 10 years we've provided service to the population. It is no longer functioning because the building, which is also municipally owned, is in poor shape and the municipality is not interested to repair it. We developed a project under the Leader approach for creating a LIG, but it was stopped by the mayor, the governor and the MAF minister. The Governor's order supporting the project suspension was revoked by the court. We have as well succeeded in convicting the MAF minister, but whilst the lawsuit was ongoing we missed the deadlines to sign the contracts. I can present all documents on the case so it becomes clear how authorities hinder the civil society and the NGO sector when decisions are made by community and not only by them. I apologize for giving such examples but this is the truth in our community. Successful practices are requested everywhere but examples for unsuccessful ones and the reasons for that to be shown. Also sustainability of already made investments and the usefulness to people is to be followed! The municipality is depopulating very fast due to lack of investments by the business, total nonexistence of work places, poor healthcare despite the constructed thoughtless infrastructure which is becoming deserted;

- Where I live there's simply no such example;
- Implementing 57 projects worth 3 000 000 BGN in public, private and civil sectors, over 20 farmers supported for upgrading their farms, etc.;
- Structuring of public-private partnerships in rural areas;
- Beautiful community center after repairs by an European project, beautiful school following a project where 1700 students study, partial repairs of a kindergarten;
- Almost nothing is done in Rumyanchevo village except partial sewerage which at the moment is not correctly filled and there are huge pits on the streets;
- For more than four years Borovo municipality is trying to raise 10000 BGN for making a replica of the Thracian silver treasure from the IVth century BC discovered on the land of Borovo town. In 2011 a project "Exposing the local ethnographic, historical and natural heritage," was developed under measure 313 of the PDRA 2007-2013. One of the project activities included the making of the long-dreamed replica of the treasure. Also projects for renovating the appearance of the towns and constructing attraction centers;
- None;
- Creation of a vineyards and introduction of a massive land renter;
- Thanks to the efforts of our team an organization of the dairy producers in Rakovski municipality was established which is sustainable structure at the current jolts within the dairy sector;
- Preparing projects and their implementation – for purchasing light and sound equipment for the community center, medical equipment, multifunctional garden area, etc.;
- We have two projects under 321 with beneficiary – the community center and NGO with budget up to 20000 for purchasing a trailer for a service caravan ..., storage and a coffee shop to the tennis courts. Over 2000 people are using the outputs of the two projects – kids practicing sports and visitors for the holidays in Vidima neighborhood at the town of Apriltzi.;
- Processing plants for agricultural production;
- Constructing playgrounds; purchased gear/machines and other equipment, which improve the work and diversifies the company's activity – a machine for window frames; equipment for a

- jewelry shop; creating a durable plants – cherries, morello, lavender;
- Social services rendered;
 - Constructing a sports hall and a stadium under measure 321 of the RDP;
 - Improving the condition of existing tourist infrastructure and building new one;
 - It is difficult for me to point an example in Rakitovo municipality! Unfortunately, but I intend to stay and live here and maybe something good would happen...;
 - We have trained 5 NGOs to render services to kids and families;
 - Effective and practical trainings for true capacity building;
 - Creating a food bank;
 - There is no positive example for the region, there are in other regions though;
 - Cannot recall! So, none!
 - Constructing playgrounds and parks;
 - Works on the infrastructure and sewerage of the city;
 - European subsidies;
 - Development and implementation of municipal project for construction and renovation of the water supply system, which now leads to discontinuing water supply each summer for a few days thus voiding introduction of water supply schedule;
 - The schemes for unified area payment – documents acceptance is done on the Godech municipality territory, which greatly facilitates farmers;
 - Building sports playgrounds;
 - Applying voluntary payment schemes for ecosystem services, creation of a local brand (began, but left unfinished by Natural park Bulgarka);
 - Renovation of the community center building in a small village where about 20 children aged 5 to 15 gather to rehears for upcoming folklore festivals in the country – like Koprivshtitsa;
 - Planting and maintaining municipal grounds;
 - Improving and creating conditions for tourism development;
 - Convincing people, encouragement and training how to participate in the EU funds absorption;
 - Barely any;
 - Do not recall;
 - All implemented projects with European significance;
 - The new development plan, which will become a fact by the end of the year, will improve life quality when entered in force;
 - Developing a joint project with Stara Zagora municipality, financed by Innovative Norway through which ecological assessment of the air, water, soil and food in the Stara Zagora region was given. The results were made public, thus the local community received an answer to a number of issues related to the ecological situation;
 - A guest house in the “Belite brezi” locality that is fully occupied by tourists throughout the year;
 - Restoration of the Lazarovo village church;
 - Training of unemployed young people in rural areas;
 - Improved infrastructure stimulates tourism and the innovation process in rural areas
 - Improving infrastructure of populated places;
 - Ennoblement of spaces between buildings and constructing bicycle alleys; construction and enlargement of kindergartens and nurseries; opening of cultural monuments;
 - In Byaga village, municipality of Bratsigovo, the sports hall was restored and at present competitions are taking place there and also a place is available where young people can actively practice sports.

Annex 3. Names and contact details of the people who will form the national delegation to the ERP 2015 Gathering

1. Mariya Marinova Yunakova – STEP, member of the management board – myunakova@yahoo.com;
2. Mariya Marinova Peneva – STEP – peneva_mm@yahoo.co.uk;
3. Magardich Ovanes Hulyan – Chairman of the National union of small family farms and processors – magardich@gmail.com;
4. Ivana Georgieva Murdhzeva - Association Traditions and Entrepreneurship in Agriculture – ivana.murdjeva@gmail.com