



НАЦИОНАЛНА ФЕДЕРАЦИЈА НА ФАРМЕРИ  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FARMERS



**MANUAL**  
**ON BEST PRACTICES**  
**FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, WOMEN AND**  
**OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS IN RURAL AREAS**



PROJECT  
“SUPPORT OF THE MARKET LINKAGES FOR RURAL  
POPULATION WITH STRONG ACCENT ON PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITY, RURAL WOMEN AND OTHER VULNERABLE  
GROUPS”

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ON BEST PRACTICES FOR PEOPLE  
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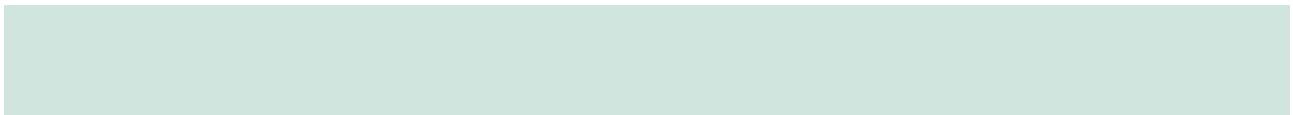
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## INTRODUCTION

This manual has been developed within the project “Support of the market linkages for rural population with strong accent on people with disability, rural women and other vulnerable groups”, supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH within the project “Supporting the economic diversification of rural areas in Southeast Europe” (SEDRA II).

The aim of the project is to increase market connections for the rural population with special emphasis on persons with disabilities, rural women, youth and other vulnerable groups, in order to provide them with opportunities to create new or additional jobs, as well as opportunities to increase their revenues.

At the same time, the goal of this project is to improve the business operations of people with disabilities, women and other vulnerable groups in rural areas by enabling direct sales, shortening the supply chain, increasing revenues and profits, accessing new customers, creating competitive products with added value and establishing stable market connections for the planned future production.

The manual includes advice and recommendations that will help municipalities, people with disabilities, rural women and other vulnerable groups from rural areas to increase production and market the surplus in local markets and buyers interested in buying their products.

The practices shown in the manual derive from the findings of the implemented project activities aimed at agricultural producers, most of which include families with persons with disabilities, women with disabilities, women and youth from rural areas. The activities were carried out in 17 rural municipalities: Zelenikovo, Studenichani, Gazi Baba, Butel, Plasnica, Makedonski Brod, Jegunovce, Chashka, Veles, Lozovo, Sveti Nikole, Strumica, Bosilovo, Vasilevo, Zrnovtsi, Cheshinovo-Obleshevo and Gostivar.

The manual presents recommendations for the creation of budget measures and policies in rural municipalities intended for persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, the creation of market connections, the development of knowledge and skills for the promotion and marketing of production, as well as the development of knowledge and skills for post-harvest technologies.

# 1 CREATION OF BUDGETARY MEASURES AND POLICIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

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## ■ Why is it important to create budget measures?

The preparation of budget measures is a process of allocation of funds in a function of certain priorities, goals or results that should be achieved with the invested funds. Preparation of budget measures and policies for persons with developmental disabilities are developed in the same direction.

The new social policies aimed at persons with disabilities highlight the need for a transition from institutional to social care, by enabling social services that follow a human rights-based approach to persons with disabilities.

The reform of the social services sector involves a paradigm shift in relation to disability – from a medical and charitable model to a social model and a human rights-based approach. In the last thirty years, two important pieces of international legislation have come into force that have helped transform the way society thinks about and treats people with disabilities.

People with disabilities indicate the need for a more serious approach to disability and the attitude towards people with disabilities. The justification of the budget planning of the local governments and institutions in each local community is due to the fact that 15 to 20% of the total population in the world, including in the Republic of North Macedonia, are persons with disabilities. In addition, taking into account persons belonging to other vulnerable categories, the number of people who should be given special attention and work on their economic empowerment is even greater.

## ■ What are the positive changes?

- ➔ Donor support under the 2030 Agenda. A large number of projects funded by civil society organizations, but above all large international projects, have been implemented in recent years.
- ➔ Public awareness and acceptance of people with disabilities in the local community is slowly but clearly changing. People with disabilities are becoming more visible and some of them have strengthened their self-advocacy and advocacy skills.
- ➔ Digitization is a process that covers the whole society, and is especially important for people with disabilities.
- ➔ Social mapping was carried out in some of the municipalities. Some of the municipalities made a mapping of needs and services. The others should do it as soon as possible so that they can use all the existing resources, but also develop new ones.

## ■ What are the challenges facing municipalities and people with disabilities?

### State-of-play

- ➔ Mapping the different types of disabilities in each municipality aimed at identification of the needs of persons with disabilities.
- ➔ Preparation of a budget plan that includes the cost of each service or program, the expected results, and the implementation time frame.
- ➔ Inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families in the budget planning process..

### Challenges:

- ➔ Insufficient financial resources for the realization of significant ideas and projects for persons with disabilities and municipalities.
- ➔ Insufficient human and institutional capacities.
- ➔ Inadequate legislation and non-compliance thereof.
- ➔ Ignorance of available services and inadequate infrastructure.
- ➔ Lack of small grants for families of the persons with disabilities.

## ■ How to create budget measures and policies for people with disabilities?

- 1. Expansion of items in the existing budgets that refer to persons with disabilities** - the expenditures of the municipalities should be described in details, i.e. using the accounts provided by the Ministry of Finance (Transfers to NGOs, Capital transfers to NGOs and Social benefits), the municipalities should open analytical accounts where the items dedicated for this category of citizens will be shown separately.
- 2. A special sub-budget for persons with disabilities** - are funds planned to be allocated for people with developmental disabilities by the Municipality, and should be presented as a sub-budget, that is, within the budget, all items related to the care of disabled persons should be allocated alongside with the detailed overview. If this conflicts with some of the acts related to the standard Budget structure, it can be set aside as a separate document or Budget extract that will be easily available for review by interested parties (for example, uploaded on the Internet pages in the section dedicated to for Municipal Budgets).
- 3. Permanent financial assistance** – this item is part of Budget Item 471 – Social benefits. Legally, these allocations are in the domain of the Social Centers, which earmark the funds budgeted on this sub-account for persons with developmental disabilities who are unable to earn income on any other grounds.



## ■ What should budget measures for persons with disabilities include?

When it comes to an accessibility, one should first of all think in terms of physical accessibility, accessible transportation and available information. The environment and institutions in rural areas do not meet accessibility standards and there is still insufficient awareness of the needs of people with developmental disabilities and inclusive culture is almost non-existent. Field visits were organized within the project, attended by persons with disabilities, their families and municipal representatives. In direct communication with municipalities and institutions from rural areas persons with disabilities highlighted the following needs:

- **1. The information about the mapped social services,** should be accessible to all persons with disabilities, regardless of their type and degree of disability. This can be done by providing information in a variety of accessible formats, such as: Braille alphabet, audio format, large print or easy-to-read formats.
- **2. Identifying potential opportunities for social entrepreneurship.** It requires identifying potential business opportunities that match the skills, interests and needs of people with disabilities in rural areas. Consequently, and above all, opportunities offered by agriculture, tourism, crafts and services should be taken into account.
- **3. Stakeholder networking.** Stakeholders should be networked, including persons with disabilities, their families, community leaders, government officials and non-governmental organizations. Of course, one should not forget the opportunities offered by partnership and cooperation with organizations that can provide support and resources for the development of social entrepreneurship.
- **4. Provision of trainings and supports.** Training and support should be provided to persons with disabilities so they can develop the skills and knowledge necessary to establish and manage a social enterprise. This may include training in business management, financial literacy, marketing and product development.
- **5. Funding opportunities.** Access to funding from government programs, non-governmental organizations and private sector entities to support the development and operation of social enterprises for persons with disabilities. This can include grants, loans and crowdfunding.
- **6. Municipalities should be partners in building market connections.** Market connections for social enterprises by building relationships with potential customers, distributors and retailers. Organizing trade shows, online markets and social media platforms are also good opportunities for promotion and sales.
- **7. Regular monitoring and evaluation over the work of social enterprises,** should ensure that they are sustainable and meet the needs of persons with disabilities in rural areas. Feedback and support will help entrepreneurs improve their enterprises.



→ **8. Key to the social inclusion of people with disabilities are the development of social services, namely:**

- Social clubs
- Foster families
- Interventional foster families
- Transformation of day care centers
- Installation of sensory rooms within each municipality
- Construction of multidisciplinary parks that will be adapted for people with disabilities
- Organization of activities and events for the inclusion of persons with disabilities
- Introduction of a register of persons with disabilities within each municipality (name, surname and type and degree of disability).
- Construction of accessible infrastructure
- Family-oriented early intervention
- Inclusive education
- Inclusive culture and inclusive society
- Development of social entrepreneurship
- Encouraging volunteerism and youth participation

→ **9. When preparing budget measures for persons with disabilities, ways to stimulate work engagement and employment should be taken into account** for persons with disabilities and other vulnerable categories from rural areas in terms of:

- Funding by sets of measure
- Credits/loans
- Grants
- Public-Private Partnership
- Provision of measures and financial support for the employment of persons with disabilities in the sectors of agriculture and rural development.

→ **10. Employment of appropriate staff to support persons with disabilities, such as personal and educational assistants**



## 2 SALES AND MARKET RELATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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### ■ Why are stable market connections important?

Strengthening market connections for food producers is vital to their long-term success. By establishing sustainable relationships, ensuring continuous placement and offering competitive prices, manufacturers can expand their market presence and increase profitability. Involvement of non-governmental organizations and local governments strengthens these efforts and contributes to the progress of social responsibility.

By supporting local businesses and emphasizing the unique characteristics of products, both producers and consumers benefit, supporting a sustainable and productive food production system.

### ■ What do food producers know about the market?

Research and work have shown that food manufacturers have an excellent knowledge of the production area and the necessary working conditions and there is always room for improvement. However, the market situation is not completely in favor of the categories of people covered by this project. Most of their surplus production is self-marketed locally by the families themselves, whilst a smaller part is offered to local businesses. Links have already been established between local businesses and manufacturers with disabilities, but the potential of this collaboration has not been fully exploited. Supply by manufacturers is more spontaneous than planned and there is almost no agreement on regular supply or demand. At the same time, there is no agreement on the purchase prices and these producers are constantly under pressure from the big producers.

### ■ What have our experiences shown about manufacturers' challenges?

The challenges these food producers face are manifold. The producers have pointed out the following challenges: appointed contact person within the municipalities in order to refer and connect the producers and buyers, solving the problem of lack of labor force, difficult access to finances through the commercial banks, the possibility of joint placement of the products with other individual producers, stereotypical representation of women as farmers, the fact that large producers and imported products have more competitive prices. These producers need help with the previously mentioned aspects in the food production process.

### ■ How to establish market connections, what is our experience and recommendation?

As with any business model, this project covers the marketing and sales parts of the products in order to ensure the sustainable growth of agriculture for the specific category of farmers in the future.

Based on the experiences of the project, these are recommendations or good practices in the area of establishing market relations and sales.

Recommendation	What should I do	How	Why
Identifying the needs of manufacturers with disabilities and their specific obstacles.	Conducting surveys and interviews with manufacturers with disabilities to identify their needs and obstacles.	Surveys, interviews, questionnaires.	Make sure you understand the specific needs and challenges faced by these manufacturers.
Education and training of manufacturers with disabilities to manage their products and businesses.	Organizing educational meetings and trainings for manufacturers with disabilities.	Seminars, educational materials.	Training and acquiring knowledge that will help them establish and run their own successful businesses.
Assisting in creating networks and market connections with local buyers.	Organizing meetings and work sessions between manufacturers and local buyers.	Meetings, work sessions, contacts.	These connections will allow manufacturers to sell their product.
Support for branding the products of manufacturers with disabilities.	Consultation and assistance in product design and marketing.	Marketing consulting, design services.	Branding will raise the attention of the products and the sales of their products.
Support for access to financial resources for business development.	Assistance in searching for and applying for funding and grants.	Information on financial programs, advice about applying.	Financial support will facilitate investments in production and marketing.
Promoting awareness among local buyers of products of manufacturers with disabilities.	Organizing campaigns and events to popularize these products.	Marketing campaigns, social media.	The buyers should be aware of the value of the products and the inclusion of manufacturers with disabilities.
Continuous monitoring and support of manufacturers in the process of production and sales.	Ensure regular communication and advice on improving the business.	Communication tools, consultations.	Ongoing support will help manufacturers maintain and grow their business.

# 3 KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR PROMOTION AND MARKETING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

## ■ Why are marketing and promotion important?

Marketing and promotion of agricultural products are essential for achieving competitiveness, profitability and sustainability of agricultural businesses. This is an important segment for persons with disabilities, who face many challenges and limitations in performing agricultural activities. Some of these challenges are: lack of financial resources, lack of education and training, lack of technological equipment and infrastructure, discrimination and social isolation, lack of information and market opportunities. By using various strategies and marketing and promotion tools, they can improve their market performance and market visibility, meet consumer needs, increase their revenues and profits, improve their knowledge and skills, network and collaborate, and build their confidence and empowerment. By doing so, they will contribute to the development of agriculture and the local community as a whole.

## ■ What is the need of education and the use of promotion and marketing tools?

Manufacturers emphasized the need for education about marketing and promotional tools. Marketing tools should respond to their needs and challenges, but for vulnerable groups, the logistical barriers to accessing wider, local and online markets present a particular challenge. There is a great desire for their progress, but they also show the need for increased moral and financial support from the country. There is an urgent need for policies and measures that support the economic activities of these vulnerable groups, such as providing infrastructure for distribution, facilitating access to online markets, promotion and marketing. It is crucial to continue organizing workshops and providing support for building capacities that educate these groups on marketing and promotional strategies, as well as on establishing market connections. The workshops within the project have proven to be an effective means of building skills and knowledge that are crucial for economic empowerment and increasing their income level. The project identified several cases where vulnerable groups could benefit from collaboration. For example, collaborating with other manufacturers to meet demand requirements can be a practical way to overcome production limitations. Future initiatives should explore and promote such partnerships.

## ■ How to strengthen market connections through promotion and marketing?

WHAT SHOULD I DO	HOW TO DO IT
<b>Branding is necessary for product recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Providing clear information about the products, including a brief description of their main characteristics, price and images (branding)</li> <li>b) Using quality marks, such as marks of origin, geographical marks, organic production, traditional specialty, etc. which will add value to their agricultural products and will protect them from dishonest competition</li> <li>c) The photographs of the products should be from different angles</li> <li>d) Providing clear information about the business owner, contact number, production location and a link to the website or social media account</li> <li>e) Providing timely and up-to-date information about the products or services offered</li> <li>f) Once a new product is announced, quickly advertise it on social media</li> </ul>
<b>Good planning using a marketing plan enables good sales</b>	<p>Preparing a marketing plan, which will determine the objectives, the target market, the promotional tools to be used, the marketing mix (product, price, distribution and promotion) and measuring results.</p>
<b>In order to sell, you need to promote the products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Advertisements, brochures, posters, websites, social media</li> <li>b) Participation at fairs, exhibitions, festivals, tastings, etc., which will increase the awareness and interest of consumers in their agricultural products</li> <li>c) Promotions are necessary – special discounts, „buy one, get one free“, timely payment, etc.</li> <li>d) Organizing giveaways and free gifts</li> <li>e) Cooperation with the media for promotion</li> <li>f) Regularly post attractive “wall” notes with attractive images of the products</li> <li>g) Monitoring comments and feedback from followers and responding quickly</li> </ul>



WHAT SHOULD I DO	HOW TO DO IT
<p><b>Online promotion is the cheapest and fastest promotion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Creating a website or using an account on the efarm.mk portal and social media</li> <li>b) Advertising on social media through social media portals and banners</li> <li>c) It is necessary to follow other companies or individuals on social media, in order to gain awareness of the business/product among consumers</li> <li>d) Proper usage of and tagging on social media</li> <li>e) Updating social media</li> <li>f) It is necessary to create controversy around the product, in order to get the customers to talk about it</li> <li>g) Using search engines to locate potential customers</li> <li>h) Using recommendations from existing customers or fans</li> <li>i) Creating crosslinks in all social media and websites, in order to generate visitors</li> <li>j) Advertising on websites of suppliers and collaborators (affiliate marketing)</li> <li>i) Advertising on specialized portals in the field of agriculture</li> </ul>
<p><b>In order to reach the buyers, you need to develop good distribution channels</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Direct sale on the farm</li> <li>b) Direct sale on the markets</li> <li>c) Online sales</li> <li>d) Indirect sales through intermediaries, such as distributors, buyers, retailers, supermarkets, restaurants, hotels</li> <li>e) Clear ordering process</li> <li>f) Clear information about payment options (e.g. directly in the bank, etc.)</li> <li>g) Delivery options (pickup/delivery)</li> </ul>

**The marketing and promotion of agricultural products for persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups aims to:**

- ➔ Identify and satisfy the needs and expectations of consumers, creating value for them and for themselves;
- ➔ Emphasize the advantages and the quality of their agricultural products, setting them apart from the competition;
- ➔ Connect them with markets and consumers, using different channels for distribution and communication;
- ➔ Increase incomes and profits from their agricultural activity, ensuring financial stability and growth;
- ➔ Improve their knowledge and skills for marketing and promotion, using different sources of information and training;
- ➔ Strengthen their cooperation with other farmers, organizations, institutions and interested parties, creating social capital and trust;
- ➔ Raise their self-confidence and empowerment, promoting their inclusion and contribution to society.

# 4 POST-HARVEST TECHNOLOGIES FOR FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

## ■ Why are post-harvest activities important?

It is not only important to produce the fruits and vegetables, but to also preserve them in a fresh condition. To maintain the desired quality of the product (look, taste, structure) and to extend their shelf life on the market.

Fruits and vegetables contain a high quantity of water, due to which they dehydrate after the harvest and their quality decreases. Proper storage reduces changes and losses, and maintains the quality. The main purpose of the production of fruits and vegetables is their longer consumption in a fresh state, which also means the need for high-quality and long-term storage.

## ■ Ripening and harvest

The ripeness at the time of harvest is one of the most important factors in determining the quality and shelf life during storage of fruits and vegetables. The degree of ripeness at the time of harvest affects the chemical quality of fruits and vegetables. Due to late harvest, 30-50% of the total amount of vegetables can be lost. Vegetables are stored better if the harvest is carried out at optimal ripeness. The time of harvest depends on:

- the type and variety
- the possibility of ripening further
- the distance to the market – the length of transport

Fruits and vegetables can be harvested at transport ripeness – a time when the plants that are used in food reach their full size, but the ripening process is not completely finished, i.e. the vegetables have the possibility of ripening further. Health and hygienic measures during harvesting and immediately after harvesting are aimed at reducing microbiological contamination.

## ■ Proper storage of fresh produce immediately after harvest can:

- slow down ripening and respiration,
- reduce water loss,
- reduce ethylene,
- reduce or inhibit the development of diseases caused by fungi and bacteria,
- provide marketing flexibility and eliminate the need to sell immediately after harvest.

## ■ When does storage of fruits and vegetables begin?

The storage of fruits and vegetables begins with the separation of the useful part from the mother plant and lasts until the moment of its use in food or processing.

Firstly, the internal temperature of the product (acquired in the field) should be reduced as the quality of vegetables drops sharply, because the respiration rate and ripening are 2-3 times faster for every 10°C increase in temperature above the recommended level.

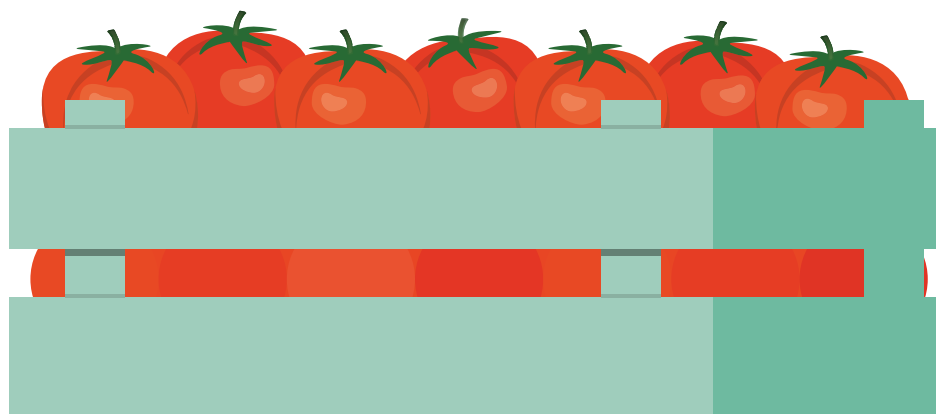
Refrigeration is not necessary if the fruits and vegetables are sold immediately after harvest. Basic ways to reduce the temperature of the products are: protection from direct sunlight, using natural refrigeration, i.e. harvesting early in the morning while it is cold or late in the afternoon, using open warehouses with ventilation during the night and cooling by evaporation with the flow of dry air

over moist surfaces. During the harvest, it is necessary to keep the product in the shade while in the field, and covering it with crates or baskets with reflective nets greatly reduces heat, water loss and premature decay. For some varieties, such as leafy vegetables and herbs, one hour in the sun is too long. The collected fruits must be transported as soon as possible to the facilities for refrigeration, sorting and packaging. During transportation, the fruits must be protected from the sun, rain and dust. Often after harvesting, the fruits are quite dirty, covered in dust and muddy, so they are cooled by washing them with water. The use of post-harvest water removes impurities, but it can also be a source of contamination (it often contains lead and pathogens), most commonly if recycled or river water is used. Water quality plays a significant role in all hygiene and sanitation procedures.

## ■ Sorting and packaging

After harvest, the products must be brought into the sorting and packaging facility and be stored in a cool, shaded and ventilated place. The facility must be kept clean at all times. Diseases or damaged plants should be thrown out since their presence accelerates the development of fungi and bacteria.

The packaging of the products should ensure complete protection and safety. The packaging material must be new, clean, quality, recyclable and allowed for production. Overcrowding the containers and packaging increases the risk of damage by crushing or pressure. The depth of the layer of fruits and vegetables in the packaging should be such as to prevent possible pressure injuries (in the deeper layers). Mechanical damage inside the packaging occurs when the filling is not optimal. It can cause fruits and vegetables to move from the upper layers and increase vibration injuries during transport. Vibration damages are greater in the surface layers of packaging, due to greater free space.





## Conclusions

This project aims to increase and strengthen market connections among the population from rural areas. It is divided into 4 separate parts, all of which are aimed at strengthening existing connections, and also establishing new business connections among the rural population, improving their business abilities, and access to new and potential consumers. Furthermore, the project activities are aimed at recognizing the possibilities for shortening the supply chain, recognizing the possibility of creating networks of manufacturers, and of course, connecting them with the local market, creating new products that will be competitive on the market and interesting for the consumers, equipping the rural manufacturers for future production planning, whereby the end result would be an increase in income and profit.

It is especially important to note that the project places special emphasis on persons with disabilities, women from rural areas, and other vulnerable groups in society. This project emphasizes these often neglected groups of the population so that they could get the opportunity to get acquainted with the manners, methods, and techniques that will enable them to produce better quality agricultural products, and of course, in greater quantities. They could also learn how to connect with one another, how to more easily offer and sell their products to interested local businesses and individual consumers, through direct sales. All of this leads to the creation of new or additional jobs, as well as opportunities for them to increase their incomes.

In each of the four separate parts of the project, through the realized one-day workshops in several municipalities, awareness was achieved among the participants about the possibility of improving their work. That is where the recommendations from several participants come from, that this type of workshop should be organized constantly and more frequently. Through the workshops and materials presented by the lecturers, people from rural areas, women and persons with disabilities become aware of their role in society, but also, they get introduced to new ways and techniques of production.

Probably the most significant aspect of these workshops are the suggested activities by the experts engaged in this project, which should continue in the future. The suggested activities should be translated into the form of best practices that should be applied in the future. The suggestions from these workshops will undoubtedly contribute to the improvement of the situation, as well as everything that was already mentioned in the context of production and sale of their products. These suggestions refer to the creation of budgetary measures for persons with disabilities, rural women and other vulnerable groups within the municipalities, the creation of market connections, the development of knowledge and skills for the promotion and marketing of production, as well as the development of knowledge and skills regarding post-harvest technologies.

At the very end, as an example of good practice, social enterprises certainly deserve to be mentioned.

Social enterprises are organizations that pursue a social mission using market mechanisms. From a societal perspective, they are an important organizational form to ensure the longevity, financial sustainability, and sustainability of mission-driven organizations. Social enterprises are neither typical humanitarian organizations, nor typical businesses, but combine aspects of both, using commercial activities as a means to achieve societal goals. Social entrepreneurship is making an increasing contribution to the social, economic and environmental wealth of the country, identified as an innovative way to address the unmet

socio-economic needs. Social entrepreneurship is not a new phenomenon; it describes those individuals who establish enterprises primarily to fulfill societal goals, rather than generate personal financial profit.

More recently, the need for people involved in marketing and entrepreneurship to explore entrepreneurship has been emphasized, from the perspective of establishing new social enterprises and continuous innovation in existing ones in order to improve their sustainability over time. Humanity faces constant societal challenges that the existing models of organizations or individuals cannot solve. Social entrepreneurship provides an innovative management perspective to solve these problems by viewing them as an entrepreneurial opportunity.

The development of social enterprises is a rapidly emerging trend in Europe, and one sector where they have found a particularly important place is work integration, addressing some of the more pressing problems of social exclusion in labor markets. This form of social enterprise is proving to be effective and an important innovation to address the problems of more marginalized groups and individuals, but questions remain about how to sustain and promote good models and good practices. Persons with disabilities are recognized as hard workers who, within their capabilities, but with continuous monitoring and support in areas they cannot perform on their own, can provide good results. They can be involved in horticultural production, production of agricultural and gardening products, greenhouses, and livestock farming. Two essential challenges are the funding and training to start production capacity, as well as the implementation of marketing and sales capacities in order to generate market presence, sales, income and sustainability over time.

The key question is how consumers respond to a particular social entrepreneurship initiative. The answer lies in the balance between consumer choices with their needs. Increased social inequality results in two groups of consumers; on one hand, rich and educated consumers who expect their purchases to not only generate profit, but also create social impact, and on the other hand, poor and marginalized consumers who are excluded from many markets for goods and services due to their limited resources.

Unlike most for-profit consumer businesses, many social enterprises do not start their businesses by creating a product that fulfills an unmet consumer need. For most social enterprises, the starting point is the mission. As long as the product or service works with their training and support program and can generate enough profit, it is almost irrelevant what the product is. Hence, for many employment-focused social enterprises, the goal is some variation of the axiom: "We do not hire people to make a product, we make a product to hire people".





Implemented by:



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