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# EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Report prepared by: MEL Activity, Local Works Program North Macedonia

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## **Abbreviations**

CDP – Community Development Program

CSO – Civil Society Organization

CAG – Cross-sector Advisory Groups

FY – Fiscal Year

FGDs – Focus Group Discussions

IP – Implementing Partner

INGOs - International Non-Governmental Organizations

LAGs – Local Action Groups

LC – Local Coordinator

LEC- Local Economic Council

LF – Local Facilitators

LOI – Local Ownership Index

LYC- Local Youth Council

LW – Local Works

LW IPs – Local Works Implementing Partners

MAD – Make a Difference

MEL – Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning

MoU – Memorandum of Understanding

P4G – Partnership for Giving

SIIC – Social Impact Investment in Communities

TPC – Together for Prosperous Community

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The evaluation faced a variety of elements, processes and contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of the locally led development models implemented by the Local Works Implementing Partners in North Macedonia. This complex combination resulted in comprehensive findings showing that the locally led development models are in general relevant, adaptive and produce visible results that transform into long term effects. Hence, the effectiveness and efficiency of some of the elements of the models need to be further strengthened and combined with the introduction of additional mechanisms to sustain investment in human capital and preserve the effects in the long term.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Activity (MEL Activity) in cooperation with USAID and the Local Works Implementing Partners (LW IPs) in North Macedonia conducted the Thematic Evaluation I: Effectiveness of the Locally Led Development Models”, The data collection process was completed beginning of September 2023 whereas the validation of findings and completing the report end of October 2023. The evaluation included the locally led development models and local initiatives current and those already completed within the Social Impact Investment in Communities (SIIC) implemented by ALBIZ Foundation, Together for Prosperous Community (TPC) implemented by Romalitico, the Community Development Program (CDP) implemented by Rural Development Network and the youth banks model from the Make A Difference (MAD) implemented by the Local Community Development Foundation (LCDF).

The evaluation addressed the following key evaluation questions to assess the effectiveness:

1. What are the specifics and elements of the locally led development models implemented by LW IPs?
2. What contextual factors contribute to greater effectiveness of the locally led development models?
3. How the established support structures (such as local facilitators, Local Action Groups and other local bodies) influence the effectiveness of the locally led development models?
4. What are the good practices implemented in different communities and the success factors that influence these practices?

In addition to the questions on effectiveness, the evaluation also assessed the relevance and efficiency of the locally led development models.

The evaluation finds the locally led development models implemented by SIIC, TPC, CDP and MAD as **generally effective**. Specific findings on this aspect show that the analysis of the locally led development models should **distinguish between the elements of the models** (such as Advisory bodies, Youth Councils etc.) **and the process** that includes a variety of steps (such as mapping, selection of priorities, implementation etc.). Having said this, the evaluation concluded that **there are some commonalities between the locally led development models**, and additionally, the **LW IPs sometimes use specific steps to adapt the models** to the local context and to the specific actions.

The locally led development models as implemented by IPs **rely on the trust, the recognition, and the power of the individuals** who comprise the elements of these models. Moreover, some of the models are solely based on individuals as facilitators within their local communities which makes them **highly dependent on the contribution and commitment of these individuals**. IPs experience a high turnover/fluctuation with some of these individuals. Further findings suggest that **the elements of the same model do not fit identically different communities and contexts**. Very often this is caused by some factors specific to a particular community such as demographic structure, the migration of young people, political influence etc. Consequently, **this may decrease the effectiveness of the locally led development models**. At the end, the **flexibility and adaptability of the models** to the local context is important, as it is also expected that these adaptations **do not harm the end effectiveness** of the entire model.

The evaluation identified a group of contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of the locally led development models. The **political landscape** as a factor may have a significant influence. The direction and the intensity of this influence depend on the situation within the political parties on the central level, on the defined local priorities of a particular municipality and the personal commitment of the Mayor to the implementation of local actions. Another influential factor is the **demographic trends**. The **mobility of young people and the migration trends** contribute to a greater fluctuation of the membership of youth groups or clubs as those established by the LW IPs that further may lead to a decreased effectiveness of the locally led development models. **Diaspora** is a relevant factor that may increase the effectiveness of the locally led development models. It is likely that the involvement of the diaspora is substantial in the communities that have produced larger diasporas such as those targeted by SIIC. Finally, **the history of giving to the community** positively affects effectiveness. Local actions will have greater chances to be implemented in those communities that have created internal and functional mechanisms of giving to the community.

The **support structures established on the local level** play a key role in the successful implementation of the local actions. **Eight different support structures** were identified including: 1) Local Action Groups (LAGs), the LAG coordinator and the Cross-Sector Advisory Groups (CAG) as part of the CDP model; 2) Local Coordinators as a core of the locally led development model implemented by SIIC, sided by the Local Youth Councils (LYC) and Local Economic Councils (LEC); 3) Local Facilitators are one key element in the TPC model. The Alumni, Business and Diaspora Networks are elements of the TPC model that are still not activated; and 4) Local Youth Banks are seen as one of the key element in the MAD. Although most of these structures do support the implementation of local actions, IPs need to consider that these structures **may not exercise their full potential** in different communities and with a variety of contextual factors.

The locally led development models that **extend on the already established local practices of giving and mobilizing resources** will be more effective. Some of the models are more successful **in infiltrating within the local communities** in different municipalities. Their success is based on the **continuous engagement of locally recognized individuals** who are accessible, transparent and continuously available to listen to the needs of the local inhabitants.

The applied locally led development models **are relevant**. This is because LW IPs develop solutions that adapt to the changing local context and integrate local good practices. The locally led development models **are partially efficient**. IPs experienced difficulties with timely completing some of the actions especially if public procurement is conducted as part of the action. In some cases, the IPs opted to proceed with the most feasible rather than the most efficient solution. The models also lack mechanisms to make use of the developed capacities and return the investment back to the community.

The constant revisiting of the concept of the locally led development models is recommended to assess if some elements and/or steps perform more efficiently than others. In this order, it is equally important to predict and manage the contextual influence. Sustainable mechanisms for the long-term engagement of the individuals on the LW activities need to be developed to reduce the drain of the investments in human capital. IPs should take advantage of the established local support structures and focus on how to increase their effectiveness, especially with those that do not exercise their full functionality. IPs should make complete use of the already developed good practices within LW and multiply them in various communities. In the end, IPs should continuously strive towards more efficient solutions for the local problems in the existing local context and with the involvement of the key local stakeholders.

## I. BACKGROUND

In May 2023, USAID Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Activity (MEL Activity) in cooperation with USAID and the Local Works Implementing Partners (LW IPs) in North Macedonia developed the Statement of Work (SoW) for the Thematic Evaluation I: Effectiveness of the Locally Led Development Models”. This evaluation represents a regular activity within the MEL Activity workplan and belongs to the group of four (4) individual and one (1) overall evaluation of the LW. In the period June-September 2023 the MEL Activity team completed the field research and summarized the evaluation findings in this report.

The evaluation included the locally led development models implemented by the Social Impact Investment in Communities (SIIC), the Community Development Program (CDP, Together for Prosperous Community (TPC) as well as youth banks model of the Make a Difference Activity (MAD). MEL Activity team visited the local communities where these locally led development models were implemented and conducted semi-structured interviews and FGDs with the local stakeholders and end beneficiaries. In total in this evaluation, the MEL Activity team conducted 20 interviews and two (2) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), (please see annex 2 – List of interviews).

This evaluation was of a formative type and provided an **insight into the current state** with the application of the specific **locally led development models**, as well as **recommendations and lessons learned**, to enable the LW IPs to make necessary adjustments to achieve the desired outcomes. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the USAID ADS Chapter 201.3.6 and the final evaluation report was prepared in compliance with the ADS 201mah, USAID Evaluation Report Requirements.

### About Local Works

LW is USAID’s flagship locally led development program. Locally led development means local people take the lead in the development process, including priority-setting, decision-making, management, and more. Through LW, USAID Missions have more time and greater freedom to pursue locally led programming and innovative ways of working. LW provides USAID Missions with the funding, flexibility, and technical support needed to work directly with local actors. In North Macedonia LW includes seven activities as follows:

- Community Development Program (CDP) implemented by Rural Development Network
- Social Impact Investments in Communities (SIIC) implemented by AIBIZ
- Together for Prosperous Community (TPC) implemented by Romalitiko
- Partnership for Giving Activity(P4G) implemented by Konekt
- Make a Difference (MD) implemented by Local Community Development Foundation Get Together for the Community implemented by Konekt USAID MEL Activity implemented by Indago

### About the evaluation exercise

The need and specific evaluation topic steered in a participatory way between the MEL Activity, USAID and the LW Implementing Partners. During Year I the MEL Activity team continuously analyzed information on LW activities and conducted a review of the IPs project reports. In addition to this, the MEL Activity team discussed with the IPs their direct impressions of the community work. During the Collaboration, Learning and Adapting meetings (CLA meetings), IPs shared their experiences with the effectiveness of the community dialogue and citizen participation models and pointed out the



challenges they face both from an administrative and a program related nature. Moreover, the MEL Activity conducted the Local Ownership Index (LOI) analytical exercise and gathered information about the levels of ownership within the local communities and learned more about the perspective of the local stakeholders on the LW activities. Having said this, the main conclusion from this participatory process was to focus an upcoming evaluation in Year II on the effectiveness of the locally led development models applied by IPs in their work with the respective local communities.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation encompassed the current and completed LW actions in the first two years of implementation of the LW in the Republic of North Macedonia. It mainly included LW activities that commenced earliest within the LW as of June 2021 and have completed a number of community initiatives. (at least three). Having this said, the evaluation included data collection about the locally led development models and local initiatives within the SIIC implemented by ALBIZ Foundation, TPC implemented by Romalitico, the CDP implemented by Rural Development Network and the youth banks model from the MAD implemented by the Local Community Development Foundation (LCDF).

The evaluation applied the mixed-method approach based on the participation of the local stakeholders in the development of the data collection instruments and, in the data gathering process. The data collection methods included:

- Document analysis including IPs reports, research products, one-pagers about the locally led development models, narrative descriptions of the local initiatives, LW reports etc.
- Individual interviews with the LW IPs;
- Individual interviews with the local stakeholders (such as representatives of the local government, businesses and local enterprises) directly involved in the planning and implementation of the local initiatives;
- Individual interviews with the representatives of local communities involved in various support structures (such as local facilitators, Local Action Groups and other local bodies) established to facilitate the local dialogue;
- Focus groups with local stakeholders directly involved in the implementation of the local initiatives such as representatives of the CSOs and citizens.

The evaluation addressed the following key evaluation questions to assess the effectiveness:

5. What are the specifics and elements of the locally led development models implemented by LW IPs?
6. What contextual factors contribute to greater effectiveness of the locally led development models?
7. How the established support structures (such as local facilitators, Local Action Groups and other local bodies) influence the effectiveness of the locally led development models?
8. What are the good practices implemented in different communities and the success factors that influence these practices?

The following scale was applied in evaluating the overall effectiveness of the locally led development models: 1) not effective, 2) partially effective, 3) effective and 4) very effective.

In addition to the above questions the evaluation analyzed the relevance and efficiency of the locally led development models based on the general definitions as described:

- Relevance

The data on relevance aimed to provide findings and analysis on how relevant are the selected locally led development models and community work approaches to the needs and specifics of the local context in the respective communities where LW IPs have started their work.

- Efficiency

The efficiency data aimed to provide an answer on how efficiently LW IPs have engaged the resources in addressing the local community priorities with the use of the locally led development models and specific community work approaches. The resources in this regard included invested time, human and material resources.

The same four –grade scale was applied to generalize the findings about the relevance and efficiency.

### 3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

#### 3.1 ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS

**Question 1: What are the specifics and elements of the locally led development models implemented by LW IPs?**

##### Findings

**Finding 1.1:** The analysis of the effectiveness of the locally led development models should **distinguish between the elements of the models and the process that supports the local development.** While on one hand the elements of the models include local support structures and individuals such as Local Coordinators, Local Action Groups, Local Youth Councils, Local Resource Offices, Youth Banks etc. on the other hand the process includes steps such as mapping of the local needs, prioritizing, local resource mobilization and implementation of local actions. Both aspects, elements as well as process, may influence the end effectiveness in a specific way and thus must be considered as equally important to the local development practices. Table 1 below presents the core elements and processes identified across the models.

Common elements	Common steps in the process
Formal or non-formal local support and decision-making structures such as councils, groups, advisory bodies	Field mapping of community needs/problem
Local support by individuals such as Local Coordinators and Local Facilitators	Prioritizing based on established methodology
Local Neighboring Communities as a key local partner	Mobilization of local support
Local Business as a partner	Developing priorities into a quick wins and large-scale actions
Local Government as partner	Implementation of the local actions

Table 1: Common elements and steps across the locally led development models.

**Finding 1.2:** Although these are some of the commonalities of the locally led development models, still the application of the models in practice in a variety of communities and on different types of actions results in **differences in the end effectiveness of the models. The application of the above elements and steps is not a prescription for the effectiveness of the locally led development models.** On the contrary, the IPs very often must apply other approaches and steps

or adapt the existing ones to make sure that the actions will be implemented. Hence, the evaluation also identified some specifics of the locally led development models applied by IPs as follows:

- The CDP locally led development model includes an **additional step in the process which is structured mapping of the local stakeholders** who could provide resources for the actions and **developing an engagement plan** based on the interest of the stakeholders. With this, CDP has an updated picture about the local potential and can in advance assess the feasibility and plan for implementation of certain action. Consequently, CDP may save time and resources in securing available local resources for implementation of the actions which positively influences both the effectiveness and efficiency of CDP locally led development model.
- The TPC model as one of the key steps includes the **signing of MoU exclusively with the local government** which is considered as a main stakeholder that may influence the end effectiveness of the activity. In TPC case most of the actions are of infrastructural nature which requests permissions to be issued by the local authorities for conducting the actions. Thus, involving the local government from the very beginning and moreover agreeing on cooperation is not just a precondition, but it is also a way to ensure that the effects of the actions are more sustainable.
- The CDP model includes the **public signing of the MOU between the involved stakeholders** in financing of specific local actions as a recognition of the contribution and commitment of the stakeholders to the implementation of a particular action. This step as designed ensures that the commitments will be fulfilled, and the process will end up with desired effects of the implementation of the actions. Moreover, this step creates a **local culture of mutual respect and accountability towards the community** and increases the sustainability prospects of the CDP model.
- The SIIC model provides **exclusive benefits** for businesses to decide on local priorities. The local business representatives are invited to a meeting to discuss the local needs jointly with the municipality and SIIC and decide about their part of the investment. With this, the business community predetermines the priorities they want to invest in and may receive support from SIIC. The investment is then completed by local contributions as needed.

**Finding 1.3:** The locally led development models as implemented by IPs **rely on the trust, the recognition and the power of the individuals** who comprise the elements of these models. Although most of the models include elements that represent some form of association such as a registered group or association, nonformal body of local businesses, non-formal youth body, the key individuals in these structures play a crucial role and directly influence the success of some local action. Moreover, some of the models are solely based on individuals as facilitators within their local communities which makes them **highly dependent on the contribution and commitment of these people**. IPs experience a high turnover/fluctuation with some of these individuals (such as with the local facilitators of TPC or the members of the youth councils) and they undertake some reactive measures to minimize potential negative effects. However, it takes time and resources to reestablish the position and build the trust of the community in the newly identified individuals.

**Finding 1.4: The elements of the same model do not fit identically different communities and contexts.** While the local youth council in one community may enjoy trust from the local youth and support of the institutions, in another community this same element may struggle for the presence and interest of the young people and the attention of the adults. Very often this is caused by some factors specific to a particular community such as demographic structure, the migration of young people, political influence etc. Consequently, **this decreases the effectiveness of the locally led development model and poses a question of whether to continue with this element of the model, put it on side, or try to replace it** with some other more effective solution.

**Finding 1.5:** The **flexibility and adaptation of the models to the local context is important**, as it is also **expected that these adaptations will not harm the end effectiveness** of the entire model. For example, although all models foresee mapping and identification of the local needs and priorities as step one in the process of selection of local priorities, there are situations of accepting and addressing ad hoc initiatives that have not been identified through the regular process of mapping. While there is no doubt that these ad hoc initiatives produce benefits for the local communities, it is also not clear how these initiatives are identified which may further hinder some other processes such as prioritization and selection of local actions for implementation and funding.

**Question 2: What contextual factors contribute to greater effectiveness of the locally led development models?**

### **Findings:**

The evaluation identified the following main contextual factor that influence the effectiveness of the locally led development models:

**Finding 2.1: Political landscape** is a complicated contextual factor that contributes to a lesser or greater extent to the effectiveness of the locally led development models. IPs as well as individuals involved within the various support structures on the local level experience both positive and negative influence. In some cases, the **influence depends on the situation within the political parties on the central level that spillovers on the local situation** too. Internal turbulence and dynamics of activities within the political parties engage local authorities who belong to that political party. Hence, the local authorities cannot pay sufficient attention to the activities in the local community which results in decreased effectiveness of the locally led development models, delays and cancelling of the planned activities. Some of the partners overcame this situation by signing an MOU with the local government that should open the door for the LW activities to be implemented at a regular pace. However, even in this case, there might be certain delays and rearrangements. **There are also examples of positive influence** mainly in those situations where the **selected local priority is also a priority for the local government**, it is included in the annual program of the municipality and has specific budget allocations. In addition, the **personal commitment of the Mayor to the implementation of the selected local priority** is also a factor that leads to increased effectiveness of the entire locally led development model.

**Finding 2.2: Demographic trends** on local level have direct influence on the effectiveness of the locally led development models. This is often found in the models that integrate in their structure youth groups of youth councils. **The mobility of young people and the migration trends** that affect the entire country **contribute to a greater fluctuation of the membership in these youth groups or clubs** which further may lead to a **decreased effectiveness of the locally led development models**. The capacity development investments in these young people drain because very often the trained individuals move to another city and leave the country to work abroad. Finding employment and a good salary is the predominant interest of the young people which prevents the engagement of the young people in volunteering and contribution to the community needs. Some of the IPs overcome this problem by **engaging more with the younger members** such as high school students from the first and the second school year. Also, IPs invest in **budding a core group of youth** those that have greater chance to stay engaged and to become institutional memory of the group.

**Finding 2.3: Diaspora** is one of the significant factors that **directly contributes to the greater effectiveness of the locally led development models**. Some of the models implemented by IPs (such as SIIC model) benefit largely from the contributions of the diaspora. Many of the local communities where SIIC implements the LW activities have a significant number of members in the diaspora who are willing to donate to their home place. Moreover, the diaspora is organized in

associations that fundraise for the needs of the local communities back in their home country. This is an **excellent driver in the implementation of the local actions for resolving the community problems**. In addition, diaspora giving is often supported **by the resources mobilized by the local inhabitants** which makes this model even more effective and sustainable. However, on a long way this approach of diaspora giving may pose a **dilemma as to whether it creates a sustainable practice and builds the giving culture on the community level or creates a new form of dependence of the funds coming outside the community**.

**Finding 2.4:** **The history of giving to the community** is one of the drivers that certainly lead to **greater effectiveness of the locally led development models**. Local actions will have greater chances to be implemented in those communities that have created internal and functional mechanisms and models of giving to the community. These are those communities that **testify positive experiences with giving**, the **community members are satisfied with the effects** of the donation and thus are **willing to invest resources in similar actions**. The evaluation found out that some of the local communities that are included with SIIC model have completed local actions independently with their own resources and without any support from the SIIC. This was the case with those local communities that had influential leaders and business community with a strong interest in resolving local problems. In these communities, the prospects for **sustainability of the results are also preserved on long way, by integrating the responsibility to care and protect the results as part of the local contribution**.

### **Question 3:**

***How the established support structures (such as local facilitators, Local Action Groups and other local bodies) influence the effectiveness of the locally led development models?***

### **Findings**

The evaluation identified the following support structures that influence the effectiveness of the locally led development models:

**Finding 3.1: Local Action Groups (LAGs)** is characteristic element/local support structure of the model implemented by the CDP. There are five LAGs located in the eastern part of the country who implement the process of the locally led development (LAG Aber 2015, LAG Plachkovica, LAG Belasica Ograzden, LAG Males Pijanec and LAG Bojmija). LAGs are registered local level associations founded by the stakeholders representing the local government, business and the civil society sector. LAGs are established on the territory of three municipalities and have operational guidance provided by the LAG Coordinator who has executive function both within the CDP model as well as within LAG. LAGs have a Governing Board and a Supervisory Board in their structure. LAGs are by nature founded to support rural development and exist as a model on regional and EU level. LAGs and LAG Coordinator receive regular capacity development support by CDP. The evaluation found LAGs and moreover the LAG coordinator as a **very effective and core of the entire locally led development model implemented by CDP**. LAG coordinator leads almost all steps in the process including mapping of the stakeholders, mapping of the local needs, engaging the interested stakeholders around a specific action, mobilizing local resources, developing project documentation, facilitation of the work of the Cross-sector Advisory Group and leading the implementation. Having said this, the **LAG Coordinator is the strongest element of the model** that links both the process and the remaining elements and thus directly contributes to greater effectiveness.

**Finding 3.2: Cross-Sector Advisory Groups (CAG)** is characteristic element/local support structure of the model implemented by CDP. CAGs are located on the territory of each of the LAGs and represent informal bodies based on voluntary contribution by individuals/mostly local level experts in various fields. Usually, the members of CAG represent some local institution, CSO or business, but

may also involve individuals who are interested in supporting the work of the CAG. The role of the CAG is to prioritize and evaluate the local initiatives based on established methodology and criteria for evaluation. CAG is coordinated by the LAG Coordinator and as a structure it represents the LEADER<sup>1</sup> approach. CAGs are included in the capacity building activities of CDP. At this very moment, the evaluation finds all five **CAGs established and functional, however their effectiveness differs** depending on the interest of the members and their contribution. The existence of CAGs as an element in the locally led development model is important on a long way in **securing the institutional sustainability of the model**. However, this will also depend on external factors and policies in the rural development field and dynamic of the establishment of the LEADER approach.

**Finding 3.3: Local Coordinators** comprise the core of the locally led development model implemented by SIIC. These people are recognized individuals who enjoy trust in their communities and with this position may facilitate the local interest to resolve local problems and needs. Local Coordinators are supported by the SIIC team in their approach to the local communities, businesses and the local government and receive regular training to develop their capacities. They together with the SIIC team play a leading role in the identification, prioritization and implementation of local actions. The evaluation finds Local Coordinators as effective although their effectiveness is influenced by contextual factors such as political context and cultural background.

**Finding 3.4: Local Youth Councils (LYC)** are established as local support structures within the model implemented by SIIC. They are non formal bodies based in the four municipalities where SIIC project is implemented (Saraj, Tearce, Brvenica and Zelino) and comprised of young people volunteers. The role of the LYC is to identify youth needs and priorities in the respective municipalities and with SIIC support advocate to the local government and the business community for implementation of these priorities. The LYC model is foreseen with the Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies (Official Gazette of the RNM, no.10/2020) and it is expected that SIIC will support these bodies on their way towards becoming sustainable structures integrated in the local governments. Members of the LYC were involved in a capacity building support provided by SIIC, but there was an evident lack of interest and commitment of the young people to participate fully in these activities. The evaluation finds the LYC as established, but not fully functional and effective. While some of the LYC are active and have implemented some local actions on their own, others struggle to secure the interest of young people. In addition, these structures are affected by the contextual factors such as migration of youth, the legitimate interest of young people for employment and securing salary instead being volunteers as well as the political turbulences in some of the municipalities.

**Finding 3.5: Local Economic Councils (LEC)** are established as local support structures within the model implemented by SIIC. They are non formal voluntary bodies based in the four municipalities where SIIC project is implemented (Saraj, Tearce, Brvenica and Zelino) and comprised of

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<sup>1</sup> LEADER<sup>[i]</sup> is a local development method which has been used for 30 years to engage local actors in the design and delivery of strategies, decision-making and resource allocation for the development of their rural areas. It is implemented by around **2 800 Local Action Groups (LAGs)**, covering 61 % of the rural population in the EU and bringing together public, private and civil-society stakeholders in a particular area (*situation as of end 2018 - EU-28*). In the rural development context, LEADER is implemented under the national and regional **Rural Development Programmes (RDPs)** of each EU Member State, co-financed from the **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)**.<sup>[ii]</sup> More about LEADER approach: [https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/leader-clld\\_en.html#:~:text=LEADER%5Bi%5D%20is%20a%20local,development%20of%20their%20rural%20areas](https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/leader-clld_en.html#:~:text=LEADER%5Bi%5D%20is%20a%20local,development%20of%20their%20rural%20areas).

representatives of the local business community as well as representatives of the local neighboring communities. The role of LEC is to discuss local needs and decide on local priorities that should be addressed both by the SIIC and the local community. The extended version of LEC model is foreseen as part of the national and local level social dialogue<sup>2</sup>. The LEC are part of the capacity building activities although not all of them show equal interest in this process. At this very moment, the LECs are established in the four municipalities and have conducted their first meetings for selection of priorities. The evaluation finds LECs as an established and relatively functional element of the locally led development model. The businesses and the local neighboring communities still prefer to act individually in resolving local needs and thus the effectiveness of these bodies is rather limited at this point. LEC also lacks written guidance or rulebooks that would define the roles and responsibilities and make clear what is expected of their work.

**Finding 3.6: Local Facilitators** are the core of the locally led development model implemented by TPC. The Local Facilitators' role is to communicate with the Roma communities in the country and abroad and therefore the initial model included communication with the communities of Alumni, Diaspora and Business as separate roles of the Local Facilitators. However, this role was revised since it was not applicable in practice. The TPC Local Facilitators are people living in Roma communities in the 17 target municipalities who are trustworthy and respected by the inhabitants. They receive planned capacity development support, lead the process of mapping local needs, identify potential local actions and then participate in mobilizing local community resources in support of the implementation of the actions. It is important to notice that the Local Facilitators are part of the wider network of local support established jointly with other projects and partnerships implemented by Romalitiko such as the Roma Inclusion Activity (RIA) and REDI. The support provided by the TPC team to Local Facilitators is evaluated as significant in securing the effectiveness of the model. In addition, the support provided by other activities and partnerships implemented by Romalitiko contributes to the effectiveness of this role. At this very moment, the evaluation finds the Local Facilitators as functional and effective. However, it is also a relatively insecure element of the model considering the turnover of people on the position and the time and the resources invested in developing the capacities that drain with the fluctuation of the people on this position.

**Finding 3.7: Alumni, Business and Diaspora Networks** are foreseen as a part of the locally led development model implemented by TPC. Although the networking commenced on virtual level, these communities/elements of the model are still not activated and with that not effective towards support to the local development.

**Finding 3.8: Local Youth Banks** are element of the locally led development model<sup>3</sup> implemented by MAD. The model originally derives from Great Britain, but the one that is implemented within MAD is based on the Romanian Youth Banks model. Youth Banks involve young people who have an interest in contributing to resolving youth problems in their community. The MAD staff guides the group of young people through the process of identification of the needs, prioritizing and developing solutions on how to mobilize local resources for the prioritized issues. The process is sided by the capacity development training for the members of the Youth Banks and regular mentoring. The decisions about

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<sup>2</sup> The Local Economic and Social Councils are established with the tripartite agreement between the Local Government, the Association of Employers and the Trade Unions. More on the model can be found at: <https://www.ssm.org.mk/mk/lokalni-ekonomsko-socijalni-soveti-less>

<sup>3</sup> Although the **M&D/MAD** locally led development model includes other elements such as Community Colleges, the evaluation analyzed Youth Banks as model itself and thus the findings refer to the effectiveness of the Youth Banks

priorities and local resource mobilization are brought solely by the members of the Youth bank. MAD established three Youth Banks in the municipalities of Shtip, Vinica and Kochani which are functional and produce effects. The model involves a risk of membership fluctuation, still there is a core of young people who are constant and play a role of institutional memory of the Youth Bank. The mobilization of the local resources for the priorities through this model is going slow which delays the effects of the existence and functioning of this model although some results are visible and local actions implemented. At this very moment, the evaluation finds the Youth Bank model as effective. However, it should be noticed that the effectiveness of the Youth Bank is in direct correlation with the support and facilitation provided by the MAD team. In addition, the facilitation of the work of the Youth Banks requires additional resources to be invested (such as time and personnel) in planning and organizing the local fundraising events which are considered as a main fundraising approach. Still, the evaluation finds this specific fundraising approach as sustainable and effective because it is oriented towards step by step developing a genuine culture of giving in the community- the culture that is focused on giving as a habit and not on size of the collected amounts and goods. In addition, the core group of youth who are part of the Youth Banks, follow the process of development of the Youth Banks model and mobilize new members, provide initial sustainability of the given fundraising approach

#### **Question 4: What are the good practices implemented in different communities and the success factors that influence these practices?**

##### **Findings:**

The evaluation registered a number of good practices and positive examples of the implementation of the locally led development models so far. Some of these good practices are presented below:

**Finding 4.1:** It is more likely that the **locally led development models that extend on the already established local practices of giving and mobilizing resources will be more effective.** There are local communities included in LW activities that have their own internal mechanism and practices of giving and mobilizing resources. As an example, the non formal **local neighboring communities called “mesni zaednici” in some places are very active.** Although these mechanisms were abolished as formal structures, they continue to function in non formal ways with an aim to advocate local priorities in front of the local government and moreover to act towards addressing some of the local problems. Having said this, SIIC has established functional links with these local structures and with their leaders that mobilize the community around the identified problems. In fact, the approach on the local level within SIIC is secured through these structures as the main drivers. The neighboring communities in this regard **play a vital role in the selection of the priorities and predetermine this process by showing their interest in resolving certain problems.** Those who are **the most persistent and proactive go a step forward and match local resources with the USAID funds, the municipal and business contributions** and act to resolve some of the local problems. Other IPs also take advantage of cooperating with these local mechanisms and in this process, they may consider the SIIC model and experience that in our view is the most structured.

**Finding 4.2:** Some of the LW IPs are based in Skopje and most of their activities are conducted on a central level. At the start of the LW implementation, these partners had less insight into the local communities, their needs and priorities and were at the very beginning of the process of building the image of a trustful partner on a local level. However, nowadays the situation is changing. As an example, the TPC is very effective in getting into the local communities in different municipalities. Their success is based on the **continuous engagement of locally recognized individuals** who live within the Roma community and enjoy the trust and confidence of local people. **They are accessible, transparent and continuously available to listen to the needs and the problems of the local inhabitants.** In addition, these same individuals have also a supervisory role to make sure that



the local inhabitants take care of the applied local solution. While we confidently say that human capital/individuals are one of the key elements within the locally led development models, on the other hand, it is very important that the IPs create sustainable arrangements for local individuals and give them a secure working environment that will decrease potential fluctuation and drain of the investments in these people.

### 3.2 ANALYSIS OF THE RELEVANCE

The evaluation finds the applied **locally led development models as relevant**. This finding is based on the analysis of the adaptability of the models to the local context, the good use of the existing practices within the local communities and the results produced so far with the implementation of the local actions.

- The locally led development models implemented by IPs **develop solutions to adapt to the changing local context**. As discussed above in the report, the political context, the demographic trends, the presence of the diaspora and the local culture of giving influence the elements of the models as well as the implementation of the steps in the process. The models do consider these influences and adapt or find ways to mitigate them if negative. Some of the mechanisms applied to adapt to the context involve participatory planning of the actions, participatory decision making about the local actions, introducing MoUs with the municipalities and local partners etc. It is important that the IPs are not just aware of the contextual factors and their influence on the effectiveness of the locally led development models, but also proactive in developing solutions.
- **The end effectiveness of the locally led development models increases if the models consider the already established good practices** on a local level. The local communities are familiar with these local practices and feel confident to participate. The IPs pay attention to this factor and **make space to integrate local good practices in the implementation of local actions**. To that effect, the IPs engage with recognized local leaders, create mechanisms for participatory priority selection and support transparency of the local processes. They in addition try to integrate local ownership and accountability during the planning phase of the action and to secure care by the community of the results of the implemented actions.
- **The results of the actions implemented by the LW IPs so far are visible**. The actions implemented so far also **start to produce multiple effects as long term results**. Some of these long-term results include 1) implementing similar local actions in other municipalities with the implementation of the locally led development models and 2) the proactiveness of the local communities to undertake actions on their own and mobilize around local issues and problems. **These and similar outcomes do show the relevance of the undertaken activities of the IPs**.

### 3.3 ANALYSIS OF THE EFFICIENCY

The evaluation finds the **locally led development models as partially efficient**. The focus of the IPs is on mobilizing resources for resolving local priorities. The evaluation found that in some cases the IPs opted to proceed with the most feasible rather than the most efficient solution. Sometimes the most efficient solution is not applicable in the given local context due to factors such as the accuracy of the local stakeholders, the legislative burden that prolongs the solutions or the lack of mechanisms to secure a return on investment. In addition, some of the elements of the models and the application of some of the steps in the process of locally led development may not always be completed in the most efficient way.

- The IPs experienced **problems with timely completing some of the actions**. One case was when municipalities as partners in local actions had the obligation to conduct the procurement process that is strictly regulated by the Law on Public Procurements. The problems involved delays in the procedures, cancelling procurements, problems with the timely provision of the supplied goods and services. As a result of these and similar negative experiences, the IPs started to **plan the process more realistically** in cases where the municipality is conducting the procurement. Also, another mechanism was to **find a way to avoid long lasting public procurements** and use the capacities and procedures of the IPs and businesses to provide local actions on time with the needed services or goods.
- The efficient solutions should consider the most efficient combination of the resources towards addressing some local priority. However, **in practice, although some of the identified priorities involve relatively small investments** (such as asphaltting a small street or replacing the sewage installation), **there are other conditions that should be fulfilled in order to invest**. For example, the Roma settlements are not urbanized and with that, all the streets cannot be asphalted. While urbanization is a long process, the need to make better conditions for living in the Roma settlements is alarming. Thus, TPC instead of cancelling all potential investment in the streets in Roma settlements decided to concrete the streets. This solution is **less efficient** because **may not offer the highest quality**, it is a **short term** to some extent, and also **may require new investment**. However, at this moment it is also the most feasible one.
- **Investments in the capacity development of the local support structures** (groups and individuals) need to be considered from the efficiency perspective. One of the findings is that the capacity development activities are with lower efficiency. This is especially valid for the investment MADE in young people who receive capacity development support and are employed or engaged with the locally led development models. While on one hand, it is of **utmost importance to build the capacities** of the local facilitators, members of the youth clubs etc. **on the other hand there should be some mechanisms in place to make use of the developed capacities and return the investment back to the community**.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of the findings for the effectiveness, relevance and efficiency of the locally led development models, the evaluation derived following conclusions:

**Conclusion 1:** At the general level, the evaluation finds the locally led development models implemented by the LW IPs as effective. Some of the elements and steps within the models are in the initial stage and are expected to produce more effective outcomes in the following period.

**Conclusion 2:** LW IPs apply a set of common elements and steps in the locally led development models. In this regard, local support structures comprise the key element that increases the effectiveness of the locally led development models. Some local support structures need to be further developed and strengthened to be more effective.

**Conclusion 3:** Some of the IPs develop and apply specific elements and processes to increase effectiveness. These specific steps such as the structured stakeholders mapping are also good practices and tools that may be applied countrywide. However, there is no prescription on how to combine these local development elements and processes to secure greater effectiveness.

**Conclusion 4:** The effectiveness is influenced by the set of contextual factors including political landscape, demographic trends, the presence of the diaspora and the history of giving to the community. Some IPs perform better in integrating and managing the contextual influence and with the locally led development models than others.

**Conclusion 5:** The locally led development models that extend on the already established local practices of giving and mobilizing resources and relying on the local leaders are more effective.

**Conclusion 6:** Adaptability of the models to the local context, the good use of the existing practices within the local communities and the visibility of the results produced so far make the locally led development models relevant to the needs and priorities of the local communities.

**Conclusion 7:** The IPs do not always apply the most efficient combination of the time, human and material resources which makes the locally led development models partially efficient.

Subsequently, the evaluation provides following recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** Constant revisiting of the concept of the locally led development models within LW to assess if some elements and/or steps perform more efficiently than others and analysis of the cause-effect relationship behind them. In this order, it is equally important to predict and manage the contextual influence.

**Recommendation 2:** IPs should take advantage of the established local support structures and focus on how to increase their effectiveness, especially with those that do not exercise their full functionality.

**Recommendation 3:** IPs should make complete use of the already developed good practices within LW and multiply them in various communities.

**Recommendation 4:** IPs should continuously strive towards more efficient solutions for the local problems in the existing local context and with the involvement of the key local stakeholders.

**Recommendation 5:** Sustainable mechanisms for the long-term engagement of the individuals on the LW activities need to be developed to reduce the drain of the investments in human capital.

## 5. ANNEXES

### Annex I – SoW

#### Thematic Evaluation I: Effectiveness of the Locally Led Development Models

##### Statement of Work

### INTRODUCTION

This evaluation is planned as a part of the Local Works Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Activity (LW MEL Activity) to be initiated and completed during Year II of the LW implementation. The need and specific evaluation topic have been steered in a participatory way between the MEL Activity, USAID and the LW Implementing Partners (LW IPs). In this regard, during Year I the MEL Activity team continuously analyzed information on LW activities and conducted a review of the IPs project reports. In addition to this, the MEL Activity team discussed with the IPs their direct impressions of the community work. During the Collaboration, Learning and Adapting meetings (CLA meetings), IPs shared their experiences with the effectiveness of the community dialogue and citizen participation models and pointed out the challenges they face both from an administrative and a program related nature. Moreover, the MEL Activity conducted the Local Ownership Index (LOI) analytical exercise and gathered information about the levels of ownership within the local communities and learned more about the perspective of the local stakeholders on the LW activities. Having said this, the main conclusion from this participatory process was to focus an upcoming evaluation in Year II on the effectiveness of the locally led development models applied by IPs in their work with the respective local communities. It is expected that the evaluation findings will help LW to explore the differences and similarities between the IPs models/methods for community work and their effectiveness to date. The evaluation will be of a formative type and will provide an insight into the current state with the application of the specific locally led development models, as well as recommendations and lessons learned, enabling the LW IPs to make necessary adjustments to achieve the desired outcomes. The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the USAID ADS Chapter 201.3.6 and the final evaluation report will be prepared in compliance with the ADS 201mah, USAID Evaluation Report Requirements.

### METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will encompass the current and completed LW actions in the first two years of implementation of the LW in the Republic of North Macedonia. It will mainly include LW activities that commenced earliest within the LW as of June 2021 and have completed a number of community initiatives. (at least three). Having this said, the evaluation will include the local initiatives within the Social Impact Investment in Communities (SIIC) implemented by ALBIZ Foundation, Together for Prosperous Community (TPC) implemented by Romalitico, the Community Development Program (CDP) implemented by Rural Development Network and the youth banks model from the Make a Difference (MAD) implemented by the Local Community Development Foundation (LCDF).

The evaluation will use the mixed-method approach based on the participation of the local stakeholders in the development of the data collection instruments and, in the data gathering process. The data collection methods will include:

- Document analysis including IPs reports, research products, one-pagers about the locally led development models, narrative descriptions of the local initiatives, LW reports etc.
- Individual interviews with the LW IPs;

- Individual interviews with the local stakeholders (such as representatives of the local government, businesses and local enterprises) directly involved in the planning and implementation of the local initiatives;
- Individual interviews with the representatives of local communities involved in various support structures (such as local facilitators, Local Action Groups and other local bodies) established to facilitate the local dialogue;
- Focus groups with local stakeholders directly involved in the implementation of the local initiatives such as representatives of the CSOs and citizens.

The analysis of the gathered data will reflect the potentially significant differences that may appear based on gender, age and ethnic criteria. The analysis of the data will also be conducted to reflect the specifics of different locations and regions, if any.

The selection of the local initiatives that will be included in the evaluation will be conducted in a participatory way with the LW IPs considering the following criteria:

- Local initiatives representing different geographical locations and statistical regions in the country;
- Equal representation of initiatives conducted in rural and urban areas;
- Local initiatives that address the needs of diverse communities in terms of ethnicity, gender and age;
- Local initiatives that address a variety of sectors such as infrastructure, ecology, education etc.

## **EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

The evaluation will aim to answer the following key evaluation questions:

1. What are the specifics and elements of the locally led development models implemented by LW IPs?
2. What contextual factors contribute to greater effectiveness of the locally led development models?
3. How the established support structures (such as local facilitators, Local Action Groups and other local bodies) influence the effectiveness of the locally led development models?
4. What are the good practices implemented in different communities and the success factors that influence these practices?

Considering the above key evaluation questions, the evaluation will aim to gather relevant data and produce evaluation findings within the following general evaluation criteria:

### **Relevance**

The data on relevance should provide findings and analysis on how relevant are the selected locally led development models and community work approaches to the needs and specifics of the local context in the respective communities where LW IPs have started their work. The specific questions in this regard are:

1. To what extent are the needs and specifics of the respective local context analyzed by the LW IPs and integrated in defining the community approach?
2. In what way do the results of the contextual analysis influence the established locally-led development models?
3. What are the most challenging contextual factors? How is the influence of these factors mitigated with the application of the locally led development models?

### **Efficiency**

The efficiency data should provide an answer on how efficiently LW IPs have engaged the resources in addressing the local community priorities with the use of the locally led development models and specific community work approaches. The resources in this regard include invested time, human and materials resources. The specific questions in this regard are:

1. In what way do the LW IPs identify the local resources to be mobilized in addressing specific local priorities?
2. What kind of analysis is conducted to assess the cost-effectiveness of a specific local action?
3. How do the results of this analysis influence the implementation of the locally led development models?

### **Effectiveness**

The effectiveness data should provide an answer on the effects in the communities achieved exclusively with the application of the locally led development models and the specific community work approaches applied by the LW IPs. The specific questions in this regard are:

1. What are the factors that determine the effectiveness of IPs locally led activities?
2. How are achieved effects preserved in a short and long run?

### **EVALUATION TIMELINE**

The evaluation will be implemented in the period June – September 2023. The timeline and the specific deliverables of each evaluation step are provided in the table below.

	<b>Evaluation step</b>	<b>Time period</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>
1.	Completing the evaluation design	1 June 2023	Finalized Evaluation design
2.	Field preparations for the evaluation	1-15 June	Local stakeholders contacted and meetings arranged
3	Data collection process	15 June – 15 July	Implemented interviews and focus groups
4.	Data analysis and producing the draft evaluation findings	15 July – 1 September	Completed data analysis
5	Preparation of the Draft evaluation report	15 September	Draft evaluation report
6	Validation session with USAID and IPs to validate the findings and discuss recommendations	15 – 20 September	Gathered input by USAID and LW IPs on the draft report and recommendations

7	Preparation of the Final evaluation report	30 September	Final evaluation report
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## FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

The final evaluation report will be maximum of 30 pages (without annexes) including following sections:

1. Title page
2. Content
3. Abstract
4. Executive summary
5. Evaluation scope and methodology
6. Background
7. Evaluation findings
8. Conclusions
9. Recommendations
10. Annexes

The report will be finally approved by the USAID Mission in North Macedonia.

## EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation will be conducted by Indago, a local company specialized in research, monitoring and evaluation. Indago is LW contractor for MEL Activity and for this exercise will assign a team of experienced individuals who will lead the participatory design of the valuation, prepare the data collection instruments and finalize the evaluation report in collaboration the LW IPs and USAID.

### Annex 2 - List of interviewed people

Nr.	Name and surname	Stakeholder type	Place	Implementing partner
1	Nevenka Longurova Girova	LW IP	Shtip	MAD, LCDF
2	Boris Sharkovski	LW IP	Shtip	MAD, LCDF
3	Petar Gjorgjevski	LW IP	Skopje	CDP, RDN
4	Ana Damovska	LW IP	Skopje	CDP, RDN
5	Vesela Lambevaska Domazetova	LW IP	Skopje	CDP, RDN
6	Suad Skenderi	LW IP	Skopje	TPC, Romalitico
7	Verica Bojkovska	LW IP	Skopje	TPC, Romalitico
8	Besir Dernjani	LW IP	Saraj	SIIC, Albiz
9	Armend Becha	LW IP	Saraj	SIIC, Abiz
10	Gramoz Sabani	LW IP	Saraj	SIIC, Abiz
11	Dragan Chungurski	Local Coordinator	Kumanovo	CDP

12	Erol Ademov	Municipality of Shtip	Shtip	CDP
13	Sasha Kuzmanovik	Municipality of Staro Nagorichane	Staro Nagorichane	CDP
14.	Metin Muaremi	Local Coordinator	Tearce	SIIC
15.	Jakup Huseini	Local coordinator	Brvenica	SIIC
16	Afrim Tanalari	Local Coordinator	Saraj	SIIC
17	Esengil	Local Coordinator	Zhelino	SIIC
18	Jalcn Nedzipov	Local coordinator	Kochani	TPC
19	Besim Agushi	Director of Primary School	Radusha	SIIC
20	Isra	Representative Youth Council	Saraj	SIIC
21	Shedzabil RaMADanov	Local coordinator	Kochani	TPC
22	Samir Sejдини	Local Economic Council	Zhelino	SIIC
23	Jasn Shakiri	Municipality of Zhelino	Zhelino	SIIC
24	Naser Asani	Representative Youth Council	Zhelino	SIIC
25	Zujneta Bekiri	Representative Youth Council	Zhelino	SIIC
26	Zekirija Aliti	Prshovce Community	Tearche	SIIC
27	Representatives of Youth Council Tearce	Tearce	Tearce	SIIC
28	Jumran Mamudova	Local Coordinator	Shtip	TPC



### **Annex 3 – About the LW Activities in North Macedonia**

LW is USAID’s flagship locally led development program. Locally led development means local people take the lead in the development process, including priority-setting, decision-making, management, and more. Through LW, USAID Missions have more time and greater freedom to pursue locally led programming and innovative ways of working. LW provides USAID Missions with the funding, flexibility, and technical support needed to work directly with local actors. With LW funding, USAID Missions may:

- Develop and test flexible solutions to overcome operational challenges to advancing locally owned development within USAID;
- Explore and use systems approaches to achieve sustainable outcomes with local actors;
- Launch new programming that focuses on and tests approaches to local leadership and ownership;
- Adapt existing programming to enable greater local ownership of the development process and improved results.

In the Republic of North Macedonia LW supports the following activities:

- **MEL Activity**

To support USAID mission to advance locally led development, MEL Activity prioritizes learning, balancing accountability for results with accountability to local people and communities, and respectful engagement with local sources, owners, and users of data. MEL seeks to expand on USAID’s commitment to use and strengthen local monitoring and evaluation capacity by enabling USAID missions to explore many different ways to promote local ownership of MEL processes.

- The MEL Activity will focus on four components;
- Monitoring at a higher level and across awards;
- Evaluating individual activities;
- Collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA);
- Capacity building of implementing partners to jointly develop a measurement of success with the communities.

The expected results are as follows:

- Comprehensive indicator reports produced to drive implementation of locally led development;
  - Evaluation findings and recommendations generated to support locally responsive and adaptive management of programs;
  - Established and functioning collaborative and information sharing practices among implementing partners;
  - Improved capacity of local partners and community stakeholders to be responsive and accountable to the communities;
  - Geographic information system created to serve as a data analysis tool for LW and other USAID activities.
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- **Community Development Program (CDP) implemented by Rural Development Network** catalyzes the development of less developed, rural communities in North-East, East and South-East Regions in North Macedonia through networking and empowerment, mobilization of local resources for achieving sustainable locally led development models and outreach and transfer of knowledge.

- **Social Impact Investments in Communities (SIIC) implemented by AIBIZ** supports local companies to become recognizable drivers of the local economic development and make investments that have a wider positive social impact. This will be performed through close collaboration with the local governments in SIIC's target municipalities and the promotion of public-private partnerships for local economic development.
- **Together for Prosperous Community (TPC) implemented by Romalitiko** establishes sustainable systems and develops capacities of communities so that the communities can plan, finance, and implement solutions to their own development challenges and priorities.
- **Partnership for Giving Activity(P4G) implemented by Konekt** aims to the functioning system for individual, community and corporate giving towards development activities. The multi-facet approach reflected in the four program objectives includes interventions in the legal and tax framework, increasing capacities of companies and individuals for giving and provision of support through a sustainable fund-raising platform.
- **Make a Difference (MD) implemented by Local Community Development Foundation** aims to improve the environment for community led development by providing the citizens with mechanism to state their concerns, organize themselves, provide community support by businesses and solve the issue.
- **Get Together for the Community implemented by Konekt** aims to deploy sustainable systems and develop communities` capacities to plan, finance and implement solutions to their development challenges and priorities. The activity will thus materially contribute towards a shift away from donor dependence and building an enabling infrastructure for community activation in resolving local challenges by mobilizing existing resources