



Project Title

Improvement of Leazha road access – Vela for the generation of a wide range of tourism activities directly affecting at the same time the potential development of 7 villages of Lezha highland area.

Project Type

Economic development

Project Location

Kolsh (7 villages), Lezha

Total Pre-Estimated Budget

N/A

Project Background and Analysis

One of the problems of ZF Lezha is its lack of efficient utilization of the touristic potentials of the highland area which possess a rich heritage of values. Lezha is dominated by the magnificent Vela mountain with its height of 1172 m above sea level which provides an attractive limestone landscape and is rich with carstic caves, covered by snow during the cold season, equipped with forest belt consisting of black pines (natural forest) at its basis and with a rich medical flora. Lezha has an attractive and differentiated landscape, alpine climate, incomparable water resources, important and historical objects such as schools and churches and rich toponymy. The cultivation of native corn by the community of Vela village as well as of local vine and goat breeding remain un-managed resources under tourism point of view which are especially due to the lack of road access. According to local legends there are traces (rust imprints) at the top of Vela Mountain due to the fact that in ancient ages ships used to be tied up there. This legend encourages curious visitors. The project of improvement of Lezha road access – Vela mountain will contribute in: Including the touristic products offered by the area in the touristic itineraries and packages, connecting touristic operators, increasing visibility of ZF within the national and international tourism options, generation of agro tourism and agricultural and livestock activities in the whole area of Lezha highland will constitute an opportunity of potential development for the area, making possible the return of the residents and cultivation of the land abandoned for years and bringing about the improvement of community services.

Specific Objectives of the Project

Some of the objectives of the project are:

- Efficient utilization of touristic potentials offered by the Vela area and revival of the activities related to these assets. Increase of visibility of touristic products at national and international level.
- Generation of agriculture and livestock activities of Lezha highland villages as a potential way of development and orientation toward agro tourism. The return of migrants in order for them to take care of abandoned lands.
- Facilitation and improvement of services provided to the community related to transport, access to school, cemetery services, waste management etc.
- Protection of natural environment and proclaim of Vela landscape as protected landscape.

PROJECT 11



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Expected Results and Project Indicators

- Improvement of Lezha road infrastructure - Vela, revival of a variety of touristic activities related to the assets in the Vela area. Local capacities (public and private) which address and develop investment interest in the area.
- Making productive quite a few abandoned lands, increase of production and economic benefits of the community.
- Increase of the interest of the community to stop different aspects of environmental degradation.
- Improvement of life quality through implementation of high quality services.

Project Activities

Some activities to be performed under this project the duration of which is planned to be _____ years, are the following:

- Designing the project for the improvement of the road access Lezha-Vela of 10 km length. Performing its pavement and equipment with all elements required for a roadway.
- Organization of touristic activities such as hiking, walking, skiing etc. starting with high school youth.
- Encouraging caving expeditions and access to tourists through publicity and social networks.
- Identifying hiking itineraries to the top of Vela and placing safety signs for the hiking groups.
- Promoting/marketing/informative and awareness activities. (Organization of workshops and trainings with representatives of the community in order to create touristic products such as hostels, horse tours, agro tourism, as well as awareness activities for the environmental protection).
- Implementing all procedures necessary for submitting the proposal and obtaining the proclamation of Vela area as natural protected landscape.

Project Maturity

The project is the product of many efforts and contributions made by far for the development of this area. The Wordvizion organization has realized some infrastructural improvements which addressed the problem raised in this project. The environmental association EIRLA has implemented projects aiming at the identification of natural values and raising the awareness of the community toward their protection and helped in the improvement of access between villages. The Catholic Church placed at Vela mountain top Zoja statue which is also a pilgrimage spot.

The project initiates an important process not only for the area but extending beyond to the touristic aspect. It deals with addressing major issues related to efficient utilization of the assets of the area in order to bring this area to the attention and interest of local actors and to activate its development potentials.

Financial Resources and Implementation Partners

Financial resources may be diversified: local funding public and/or private, various EU programs (for instance IPA), grants such as DLPD etc.

The appropriate actor for implementing this project is the Major Municipality, the local unit in cooperation with local NGOs.

Project Cost

- Designing and implementing the road infrastructure of about 10 km length covering Lezha (Grykë Manati)
- Promoting/marketing/informative and awareness activities (50.000 Euro)