

Practice Abstract “Viscri Farmers Association”

Short and easily understandable title (one key sentence, max 150 char.)

ADEPT has developed village associations as centre of innovation and expertise. With support from Innovation Norway, ADEPT have developed a milk collection points (MCPs) for Viscri Association. By improving milk quality and quantity, and assisting with negotiations with milk processing companies, they have increased the price of milk obtained by the farmers, and halted the decline in cow numbers in the area.

Objective: what problem/opportunities does the project address that are relevant for the practitioner/enduser, and how will they be solved? (300-600 characters word count-no spaces)

The initiative to create the association came from the people themselves, identifying the need to be represented by one common, stronger voice in relationship with authorities. This was the first association in the region, since the communist period, in a corrupt political environment. At that time there was a huge lack of transparency from the local authorities, the Mayor being mainly focused on his personal interests. Nevertheless, this made the association grow stronger.

ADEPT encouraged this initiative and supported the association in its activities. The Association won a competition to win a Brielmeier mower and training in its maintenance/use, through an ADEPT project (but the assessment of applications was carried out by external consultants).

Short summary in easily understandable language (1000 -1500 char.): What problem will the knowledge generated solve for the end-user? What will be the main benefits to the practitioner? Main outcome/recommendation (2-3 main results)

At the beginning of 2014 Viscri community organized their annual meeting. The meeting usually takes place in winter and in spring and the community discusses grazing and opportunities/threats for accessing land area payments (direct payments and agri-environment).

With support from Innovation Norway in 2015 - 2016, ADEPT have developed a milk collection point for Viscri Association, who got support for the building from another NGO, Mihai Eminescu Trust, which whom ADEPT has collaborated before. ADEPT offered support to the association by offering the cooling and quality control equipment.

By improving milk quality and quantity, and assisting with negotiations with milk processing companies, they have increased the price of milk obtained by the farmers, and halted the decline in cow numbers in the area. The milk collection point provides shared quality control and cooling /collection facilities for about 20 farmers. By improved quality (training) and quantity (larger bulk tanks, more farmers participating) and direct negotiation with milk processor companies the local community felt the real outcomes of the project. ADEPT has offered training of farmers to improve milk hygiene and training MCP manager to use/maintain the machinery. By negotiating with milk processors and farmer associations being responsible, the milk price up 20-30%. The result Halt in falling cow numbers in the villages concerned. Hundreds of hectares of abandoned hay meadows have been brought back under good management.

One of the main drivers for this initiative was the need to increase milk prices to stop the fall of cow numbers in the area. Each cow lost = 1 ha of high biodiversity grassland abandoned/converted to sheep grazing. Precious High Nature Value meadows are being abandoned because fewer people available to scythe by hand, and fields are too inaccessible/too sloping for tractor use. In some area 30% of hay meadows are abandoned. ADEPT thought on how to bring these meadows back into use, with benefits to local economy and to biodiversity.

Quote of farmer and/or advisor

“People understood from the beginning that the association is the only thing that one can trust and that can thrive ” (Daniel Tabarcea – President, Viscri Farmers Association)

“The collection point is the main starting point of a farmer, of a milk producer. If you don’t have a milk collection point you cannot capitalize the milk” (Daniel Tabarcea – President, Viscri Farmers Association)

Contact data: Project coordinator (+ address, e-mail, telephone), text editor, project partners (+ address, e-mail, telephone), geographical location, project period, funding source & budget, link to project website and to a website where info stays long-term available

Project coordinator:

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Farmers involved:

- 67 farmers from Viscri

project partners (+ address, e-mail, telephone),

- External consultants:
 - ADEPT Foundation
 - Mihai Eminescu Trust
 - No active support agency in the given context

Text editor: Liliana Gherghiceanu

geographical location: Southern Transylvania

project period: starting date 2014

funding source & budget:

- Innovation Norway in 2015 - 2016, ADEPT – accessed the funds to provide the equipment for the milk collection point
- Mihai Eminescu Trust supported the association with the building