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Business Start-Up Centre
Bitola

USAID'S BUSINESS WITHOUT BORDERS PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: The Business Without Borders is three year USAID'S project (2011-2013), implemented by the Foundation Business Startup Centre Bitola. **The goal of this project is to accelerate economic growth in southwestern Macedonia** by facilitating the startup of new enterprises: the growth and competitiveness of existing micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs); job creation and employment opportunities for the young, vulnerable and unemployed; and improving the regional framework of MSME development through the activities of Business Startup Center Bitola (BSC-Bitola), its business incubator, and local and regional partners in public, private, civil society and academic sectors. **Partners of the project are:** Bitola Municipality, Regional Chamber of Commerce and the University St.Kliment Ohridski in Bitola.

Areas of work

The project consists of three components corresponding to the three objectives:

Component 1: Business Startup and support. It provides support to entrepreneurs, existing MSMEs and unemployed citizens through portfolio of assistance aimed at starting and registering innovative new micro enterprises, supporting the growth of existing MSMEs and bridging the gap between job seekers and employers.

Component 2: Business Incubator Development and Sustainability. It aims to improve the financial and operational sustainability of BSC Bitola so as to reduce or eliminate the necessity for future international donor support

Component 3: Regional cooperation in Economic Development. It enhances interaction between actors in four sectors (public, private, civil-society and academic) at municipal, regional and national levels through cooperation and collaboration on economic development initiatives.

Project activities

The project will foster the economic development of Pelagonia region through wide range of activities, which will create support for development of entrepreneurship.

It includes combination of these activities: Business Plan Writing trainings, Business Plan Competition, Training Portfolio, Curriculum Development Workshops, Training Delivery, Credit Facility, Commercial Loans, Consulting Services, Technology-Transfer Toolbox, BSC Business & Sustainability Plan, Economic Development Forum Alternatives, Organization of Economic Development Forum, etc.

Expected results

-Facilitation the startup and legal registration of new MSEs, the support and growth of existing MSMEs, and the job placement of individuals in MSMEs in the nine municipalities in the Pelagonia region plus Ohrid.

-Improvement the financial and operational sustainability of the existing BSC-Bitola business incubator so that no further international support is necessary to continue operations at a sustainable level of product and service delivery.

-Improvement & enhancement the interaction between public, private, civil-society and academic sectors at municipal, regional and national levels through cooperation and collaboration on economic development initiatives.

USAID'S BUSINESS WITHOUT BORDERS PROJECT, str. Krusevo, bb, MZ Veljko Vlahovik, Bitola, Macedonia; tel/fax: 00389 47 220 203; www.bsbitola.org

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