



Workshop REPORT
RURAL DEVELOPMENT in B&H

ORGANIZER OF THE WORKSHOP:

PREPARE
Partnership for Rural Europe

WITH SUPPORT FROM



18. – 19. July 2012

Banja Luka,
Bosnia & Herzegovina

REPORT

Coming from all parts of BiH, more than 60 representatives of civil society covering diverse aspects of rural development issue attended the workshop. In addition to them, representatives of relevant ministries, from both entities and Distrikt Brčko, also actively participated in the event. PREPARE network was represented by its members from Slovenia, Latvia, Croatia, United Kingdom and Serbia.

Topics that were presented and discussed during the first day of the workshop include:

- PREPARE mission, aims, activities, structure and networking;
- Functioning of Latvian Rural Forum, member of PREPARE;
- How to involve youth in rural development, with specific focus on Latvian experience;
- Current rural initiatives in BiH and concrete set of activities of CSOs in BiH;

During the second day, the participants were divided into three groups, where each one of them was actively analysing and suggesting measures for improvement of current situation, in the following fields:

- Networking in BiH;
- LEADER in BiH;
- Rural development policy in BiH;

When it comes to networking, workshop participants agreed that it is necessary to establish rural development network in BiH, interlink all existing structures and capacities in rural development sector, and identify and mobilise network members that will actively work on improvement of current issues in this sector. The participants also expressed expectation from PREPARE, in terms of analysis of network operation in other countries, as well as in gaining access to variety of scholarships through which a certain number of actors in this sector can visit and familiarise with the work of successful networks in other countries.

Regarding LEADER, the participants concluded that BiH is ready for this concept of rural development due to the fact that it is already present and implemented in number of regions, but it still needs better support from domestic institutions, which can be a challenge to achieve due to complicated government structure in BiH. The participants also agreed that LAGs can successfully operate only if their members invest a lot of work and effort, build partnerships and exchange experience, and work according to previously designed plan or strategy.

The participants also expressed the need for LEADER methodology guidelines in BiH, greater attention to rural development through concrete development activities of relevant institutions, financial and institutional support and adequate set of legal regulations in this area. In participants' opinion, many of these issues can be resolved more quickly if civil society is considered as a partner to government.