

The agricultural inputs project – pig farming

Jagodina, Serbia



"This project helped me start again the activity of pig breeding, which I use to do in Kosovo, and feed my big family".

- Zoran Mirkovic
an IDP from K&M

LOCATION

Jagodina, Serbia

DURATION

12 months (from January 2008 to December 2008)

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

INTERSOS/VIZIJA
www.intersos.org

DONOR

UNHCR

BUDGET

USD 171,000

OVERVIEW

In Serbia during 2008 there were 99, 672 refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 206,504 internally displaced people (IDPs) from Kosovo. The displaced population were forced to take full care of their families. Therefore, they had to immediately start looking for a job to provide them with some income to ensure their survival. The majority of people living in rural areas used to live in the villages in their country of origin. Their agricultural knowledge helped them get jobs with local farmers.

Initially, the income received was used for food and rent. Later, the IDPs started renting cheap agricultural land to make more money. Some of them were even able to buy land, or in some cases, receive it as a present from the villagers. The IDPs also accepted small donations in the form of greenhouses, livestock, and agricultural equipment to further increase their income. These new technologies and methods of growing fruit and vegetables, breeding livestock, and cultivating land (with use of irrigation and humidifier systems, new types of fertilizers, and hygienic conditions) will result in higher yields. In turn, this will lead to higher earnings, increased self sufficiency and improved market conditions.

AIM OF PROJECT

- To provide dignified solutions and to enhance the self-sufficiency of the refugees and IDPs living in private accommodation.

RESULTS

- 60 displaced families received various agricultural inputs such as greenhouses, livestock, bee sets, and agricultural machines to continue existing agricultural activities and to start new ones.
- They received structured training for each activity, including hands on training in the pig house, learning about hygiene, and learning about feeding techniques. Workshops were set up and professional literature was provided.
- Skilled agronomists and veterinarians were available to help the families with their training.
- The majority of the families managed to earn an income equal to the average monthly salary in Serbia, which enabled them to buy food and other necessities.

IMPACTS

- The project enhances the economic independence of refugee families through production of the food for own needs and sales of the excess of products on the market resulting in improvement of livelihood.
- Beneficiary families, which use to produce food only for own needs, enhanced through different types of trainings, are extending and intensifying their production and placing it on the market.
- The trainings offered through the project helps beneficiaries upgrade their knowledge to apply new technologies in agricultural production. The above results in bigger yields, better product quality, higher market price and better profit.
- Both, the in-kind and training inputs enhance further self-confidence and ambitions of the beneficiaries, so that they undertake initiatives on their own and become independent in their production.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Displaced families, very often have no enough land for the proper development of the agricultural production, so that they depend on the neighborhood. Due to the above they have difficulties to register the activities and apply for the government subventions.
- Production cycles in agriculture are quite long, this is particular valid for the livestock breeding, so that the expected results come after a few years and in mean time the beneficiaries need constant monitoring and trainings.
- Livestock breeding, for instance pig breeding, are often subject to big price fluctuations, making it difficult to do the proper planning resulting in sustainability of such production.
- The most vulnerable displaced families have no funds to invest in further development of the production. Such families are usually carrying the agricultural activity to produce food for own needs.

STORY

"We arrived to Jagodina in the village of Bresje in 2002. On arrival to Serbia, the situation was very difficult for myself, my family and my six kids. Since the kids were very small, I was the only one who was able to work to earn enough money to feed the family and pay rent. The only 'help' we had was the opportunity to visit a soup kitchen which provided by the Red Cross. The villagers were very generous and good hearted. They gave me 50 acres of land to grow vegetables and corn. After I had collected the first yield, I started farming chickens. Over three years I managed to produce enough food for my family and I was able to save enough money to build pig house – to continue the pig farming activities that I use to do in Kosovo.

When the INTERSOS/VIZIJA and UNHCR teams arrived with their Agricultural Inputs Project, I received 20 pigs and I have consequently started breeding them. I kept four pigs for reproduction purposes. I sold the remaining 16 pigs for a small greenhouse and a second-hand electric cultivating machine. As the children are becoming older, the entire family is involved in breeding pigs and growing vegetables in the greenhouse. Hopefully we will soon be able to start building our own house and start living as other people do."