



9th Regional CBC Consultative Forum
12 May 2023,
Hotel Izgrev, Struga,
North Macedonia

Presenter: Goce Toleski

Ministry of Local Self Government
Republic of North Macedonia

2014-2020 CBC programme(-s)

➤ 2014-2020 IPA – IPA CBC

Programme MK - AL (MoLSG - MK and State Agency for Strategic Programming and AID Coordination (SASPAC) - AL

CBC Programme KS – MK

CBC Programme RS – MK (2016-2020)

➤ Shared management

INTERREG programme BG - MK

INTERREG programme GR –MK

Balkan med (ends near the end of the year)

2014-2020: State of play of calls published so far

Main achievements

- IPA II 2014-2020 allocations funds are fully consumed 20 (9+5+6) projects were or are being implemented.
- The evaluations of all the three CfP lasted an average of 5 months.
- The commitment rate has reached 94.09%. (1st - 99.12%) , (2nd 91.7%) and (3rd 92,5%).
- The six projects under the 3rd CfP are in the process of implementation
- We held trainings for pre-selected applicants before the submission of full applications.
- The indicators in the log-frame matrices of the 20 grant contracts were reviewed at the beginning of their period of implementation with assistance provided by CBIB+.

2014-2020: State of play of the calls published so far

Main achievements

- The grant coordinators are quarterly uploading data on the achievement of indicators at the IPA II CBC regional monitoring system. Reports on the achievement of indicators are presented at the JMC meetings.
- Strategic project “Ohrid lake- Bridging two countries towards one destination” – part of the IPA 3 CBC MK-AL
- The CBC partnerships are fostering inter-sectoral (local / national institutions /NGOs) cooperation with a wide variety of local stakeholders.
- Increased capacity and awareness of local stakeholders.
- From no local government units as a lead applicants under the 1st call, to several of them under the 2nd and 3rd calls.
- Full incorporation of cross-cutting issues (especially women and youth) during project implementation.

2014-2020: State of play of calls published so far

Main challenges

- The Covid-19 pandemic slowed down the implementation of the foreseen activities of all projects (1st and 2nd call) during 2020 and 2021.
- Fluctuation of the staff responsible for the Programme implementation in Both OSS / JTS.
- Still not clear “What element defines a projects to be CBC projects”
- Not enough attention on programme's and projects' visibility activities to increase awareness of the CBC benefits in the eligible area.
- Shift of focus from the administrative side of the programme and projects to the content related topics that can generate real and tangible results.
- Weak cooperation between projects in similar fields of activity.

2014-2020: State of play of calls published so far

Main challenges

- The sustainability of project results, and the consistency of project and programme indicators should remain priorities for the future;
- Local government units and state agencies are struggling regarding the project application, implementation and reporting;
- Financial constraints affecting GBs (ensuring co-financing, VAT reimbursement in AL and cash flow troubles).
- Imbalances in the implementation of the activities on both sides of the border.
- To keep up a realistic project implementation plan with the application of corrective measures to respect the activity timetable.
- Inflation seriously affected budgets of the project under the 3rd CfP in the beginning of the implementation.

2014-2020: State of play of calls published so far

Addressing some challenges:

- During to the Covid-19 pandemic, all the projects dealt with procurement procedures /tender preparation / works / supplies
- Regular on-line, in person and on the field coordination/technical and monitoring visits are showing increasing improvements in project management / implementation.
- The provision of the capacity building (project management and monitoring, reporting, procurement, visibility, etc.) has impacted on the successful implementation of projects.
- Making compulsory the integration of local authorities as partners (2nd and 3rd CfP) in CBC operations.
- The “Municipality Support Programme” will contribute to strengthening the capacities of municipalities to establish sound CBC and local partnerships, and preparing and implementing good quality cross-border projects.
- Common communication and visibility activities (*Conference on tourism. Projects fair and opening RESCUE CENTRE in Ohrid on 10th of July 2019, Media Brunch Skopje 10th of February 2020; Visibility Event in Korça on 21 October 2021; Signing of co-financing agreements & and launch of the thematic networks*) March, 2022 in Skopje;

Example of good CBC practice

Project Title: “**CROSS BORDER FIRESHIELD**”. Thematic priority: 3 - *Protecting environment, promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management.*

The **overall objective** of the project is to contribute towards environmental protection in the cross-border area by upgrading the public infrastructure for risk management. This will be secured through:

1. Introduction of joint risk management for (wild) fire prevention in the cross-border area;
2. Establishment of unique inter-municipal fire protection system (new fire station, special forest fire extinguishing vehicle in Vrapciste / Bogovinje and 9 firefighters to be employed and 23 firefighters across the border to have increased capacities for responding to natural disasters;, Special natural disaster responding gear / fire extinguishing vehicle to be purchased for Mun. Cerrik fire department;
3. Build-up of the capacities for responding to natural disasters in the cross-border area and
4. Raise of awareness for environment protection in the cross-border area of Polog-Elbasan.

Partners: Mun. of Vrapcishte (lead applicant) and Mun. of Bogovinje (MK) Municipality of Cerrik (AL) and CSO Caritas (AL)

Duration: 1 February 2022 – 31 July 2024; **Budget:** € 859.196,00 (€ 730.316,00 *EU contribution*)

The implementation of this project is a positive innovation in the relationship between cross-border regions as an efficient way of cooperation in expanding the possibilities of interaction in order to meet environmental protection challenges in an over-border territorial framework

This project had shown so far a very strong partnership and CBC spirit.



Technical Assistance

- 3rd (last) TA contract covering the implementation period 1st November 2022 – 31st October 2023.
- The administrative support to the OSs and JMC of the programme was enhanced.
- The technical and administrative capacity for programme management and implementation was increased.
- The visibility of the programme and its outcomes was guaranteed.
- The continuity of JTS staff has been ensured.

YouTube Channel: [Youtube - IPA CBC MK-AL](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKSmFqKrbaE&list=PLNnle62KOSry4k3V8P4KxCxq6oLxj-8tt&index=2>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7cIP0zsqDQ&list=PLNnle62KOSry4k3V8P4KxCxq6oLxj-8tt&index=3>

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1MxPgLU9thN84DKTwDCwIOCPVYST1-lvD?usp=sharing>

Technical Assistance

Implementation challenges

- The first time that the OSs had TA service contract and that they had to act as project partners (e.g.: partnership agreement, transfer of funds);
- Challenges with underspending of the TA funds due to the pandemic situation across the countries (some activities in delay / many activities implemented online). Based of the unused TA funds new activities were developed (MSP, Student research papers increasing of visibility / promotion of both programmes);
- Fluctuation of the staff responsible for the Programme in Both Oss / JTS. The positions of P.M. of the TAs in MoLSG and its counterpart in AL, as well as CVO and FO have been occupied by different people; Since 1st of November 2022 we are without Project officer in the Antenna in Elbasan;
- Create the necessary working conditions to ensure the continuity and professional development of the staff within structures of the programme. Governmental changes should have no impact in this respect;
- The programme web site has not been properly functional between July 2021 and the beginning of 2022. Since March 2022, everything is back to normal;



Thank you!!!