

You are looking at the seventeenth issue of the Newsletter published by our Project!

This issue is features coverage of activities that CED Project partner communities of Stryj Rayon are engaged in.

News from Stryj Rayon Communities

In 2005, four village communities of Stryj Rayon, Lviv Oblast, became involved in the CED Project. Since that time, inhabitants of those villages --- Banya Lysovytska, Volya-Zaderevatska, Velyki Didushychi, and Podorozhne --- were successful in establishing core groups, carrying out participatory base-line research and designing operational plans for each community. Supported by the CED Project, all four communities completed social projects.

A number of active community members attended various educational programs and went on study trips. Most objectives set forth in operational plans are being successfully achieved. People in the villages are informed about the progress of project implementation through a monthly informational newsletter.

The community-based organization, Western-Ukrainian Center of Human Rights and Civic Initiatives, has been providing Stryj Rayon communities with strong support of methodic and technical nature. Recently the CED Project was joined by a newly-created entity – the Agency for Regional Development: Prospects of Stryj, with headquarters in the city of Stryj itself and 10 branches in nearby communities, including the four communities which first became involved in the CED Project in 2005.

In 2007 the involvement of Stryj communities increased in the economic sector of the CED Project. According to Vasyl Shchekun, the CED Project regional coordinator in Stryj Rayon, over 20 active community members attended a practical hands-on course on the issues of how CED skills can be practically applied. Three of them drew up business plans and applied for a low-interest credit within the CED Project. The Banya Lysovytska community has initiated a feasibility study for a milk processing plant in the territory of communities involved in the project.

There has been certain success in implementing the Clean House project within which all four village councils joined their efforts to solve the issue of handling solid domestic waste and cleaning their territories of garbage. The process involves different target groups: local deputies, men, women, young people. Green Patrol groups have been vigorously staffed by local schoolchildren.

Each of the communities has its own peculiar features and advantages that affect the process under way within the CED Project. For example, Banya Lysovytska has an interesting history and other preconditions favorable for the development of rural or farm tourism. Velyki Didushychi managed to make community members relatively more active and united as to the solution of the problem related to starting one more group in its pre-school program. The local high school became a kind of center of civic activity in Volya-Zaderevatska. In Podorozhne, implementation of the CED Project helped to reveal considerable potential that local people have, adults and children alike. Feedback from communities' members contains more detail on these aspects of each community.

In the short-term, the core groups of all communities plan on extending research into needs and capabilities of respective communities and updating operational plans of development. Bill Parady, a Canadian volunteer who is to devote much of his time to Stryj Rayon from now on rather than only to Zakarpattia communities, will help them in this respect.



*Improving the grounds of the kindergarten,
Podorozhne, 2007.*

The Agency for Regional Development: Prospects of Stryj

The Agency for Regional Development: Prospects of Stryj has been playing a significant role in the economic development of Stryj Rayon communities. This organization is to become a common tool for the authorities, community, and business in the area of economic and social development of an isolated territory. Such territories, in this particular case, may include certain village communities, village councils or towns of Morshyn or Stryj, and Stryj Rayon on the whole. The Agency was established in January 2007 by the Western-Ukrainian Center of Human Rights and Civic Initiatives (CHR). As early as February, the newly created community-based organization was registered as a regional entity with centers in 10 settlements of Stryj Rayon.

The Agency took over the Clean House project that was implemented by the CHR within the framework of cooperation with Lviv Oblast Development Project. The Agency also continues elaborating its strategy of development. Several areas are becoming more pronounced including support for the development of agricultural tourism, sharing of experience handling solid domestic waste acquired through the implementation of the Clean House project, and creation of a training center expected to deliver educational programs to interested target groups from village and town communities. For example, there are plans to popularize knowledge and skills gained by the Ukrainian partners within the Community Economic Development (the CED Project). To put it in a nutshell, the Agency for Regional Development: Prospects of Stryj indeed has exciting prospects for future operations.

This issue introduces partners of the project located in Stryj Rayon (Lviv Oblast) - Village Communities of Velyki Didushychi, Volya-Zaderevatska and Podorozhne

The village of Velyki Didushychi is located in the Pre-Carpathian district between the rivers of Svicha and Sukil 20 kilometers to the east of Morshyn.

The village was there as early as the times of the Halych and Volyn Principality. According to the archives, its first mention dates back to 1371 when Queen Elizabeth of Hungary transferred title to Velyki Didushychi to Danylo Dazhbohovyeh, owner of the village of Zaderevach. In the first half of the 15th century the village changed hands again and was transferred to Ivasko and Yuriy Didushytski. The village was transected by an ancient salt route going from Carpathian salt-works to Stryj and Zhydachiv and was home to commercial deals en route. This is supported by German and Danish money dug up in a clay pot by Stefaniya Andriyivna Khomyn and dated 1515, 1525 and 1532.

A milk producer association was founded in 1910. It was vigorously developing and had a sizeable market (Didushychi-produced butter was dispatched to Vienna and Carlsbad-based sanitariums and resorts).

Raiffeisen's Savings and Loan Union was developing well, and activities of the Village Master association were evident. The Bread-Making Youth School united young people living in the countryside. The reading hall of Prosvita was responsible for cultural and educational development. There were an amateur drama group, a church and lay choir. Young Prosvita was organized for young people. The first parish school was opened in the village in 1862.

Currently, there are 1,867 residents in Velyki Didushychi, an active general education school of 1-3 levels of accreditation, a branch of Dashava music school, the Pivnyk kindergarten and People's House. The main industries here are represented by individual farming, cattle raising and development of small businesses.

Residents compare their community's life to that of an active volcano: at times it goes down for an indefinite period of time only to reawaken. So, they always have to be alert.

Within the CED Project the community of Velyki Didushychi implemented the idea of opening one more pupils' group at the pre-school level. This particular achievement must have put across to people that together residents are a force capable of solving a number of problems. Thus, as of today they have redecorated the church, extensions to the school stadium are coming to a close, and the community is actively involved in the Clean House project. Short-term plans include renovating street lighting and roads. Residents genuinely believe that a rallied community confident of its capabilities may accomplish a number of positive activities.



*Discussing the strategic plan
for development of Stryj Rayon
communities, 2007.*

The village of **Volya-Zaderevatska** is located in the Pre-Carpathian district between the rivers of Svich and Sukil ten kilometers to the east of Morshyn resort town and has a long history. The first known mention of the village dates back to 1664. The most renowned monuments which have been preserved up to the present include St. Michael's Church built in 1807 and the Museum of the Country-Seat of Stepan Bandera, a famous Ukrainian national leader.

The Volya-Zaderevatska community has been quite active for a very long time. For example, in 1868 the Vienna Ministry of Education allowed the establishment of Prosvita. At those times this organization enjoyed a constantly-improving reputation throughout Halychyna. In 1925 the village launched a reading hall and opened a kindergarten. Cultural and educational activities were undertaken by the Prosvita reading hall, the People's House which is currently in operation, the church and lay choir. The first parish school was opened in the village in 1864.

Stepan Bandera, a famous Ukrainian politician, lived in Volya-Zaderevatska from 1933 to 1936. January 1 2007 marked the 98th anniversary of the birth of Stepan Bandera, the legendary leader of the Ukrainian nation. The village of Volya-Zaderevatska is a remarkable nook of the Pre-Carpathian region with its own history and heroes. As long as patriots are alive its history will never pass into oblivion and residents will remember those who did not spare their lives in the name of Ukraine's statehood.

Today the Museum of the Banderas' House-Seat is a kind of Volya-Zaderevatska's business card. A small-sized neat house with Stepan Bandera's bust in the village center attracts tourists from everywhere in the world. The tidy country house has been decorated by warm hands of talented villagers like an Easter egg. The Museum displays a number of flyers regarding the revolutionary movement of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Resurrection Army, battlefield achievements of insurgents and people who fought for the freedom and independence of the country. The visitor's eye is drawn to photos of Stepan Bandera as a young man and a student, of his father, mother, and siblings actively involved in the liberatory movement.

The village school plays an important role in enhancing community-aimed activities. It is the brain center responsible for defining main trends for the enhancement of the community's involvement and its development. The school houses the office of the CED Project local coordinator and hosts a number of events related to the CED Project such as meetings of the core group members and villager gatherings. The school was inaugurated in 1995 on Independence Day. This community has the experience of joint effort as it was involved in SERTSE (Heart) Project managed by Western-Ukrainian Center of Human Rights and Civic Initiatives. The initiatives of Volya-Zaderevatska's community in the school premises included inauguration of a room for preliminary school students (Small Miracle Project). This work was promoted by village council members, the core group, the village head, and the most active community members. Village head Ruslan Ivanovychh Khomyn and Principal Iryna Vasylivna Kushyna not only supported the operation but also attracted financial resources to enable the opening of one more group for children aged 5. Funds were raised towards redecoration of the premises. As a result, three young people were given a job as mentors.

The cooperation successfully established among local authorities, education, community sector and business is of particular importance. The local soccer team has been reestablished, the quality of utilities has been increasing, elimination of unauthorized garbage dumps is under way, and a program has been initiated to collect solid domestic waste. The village is alive...

It is obvious that effective measures taken to facilitate community economic development cannot consist of one-time inadequately coordinated steps. Regular effort needs planning. In this community, most active members of the core group, council members, and business representatives were all involved in making up the operational plan or its certain parts. As a result, the plan became more insightful and balanced and the community was mobilized. The planning process made it obvious that CED is impossible without such components as the system of education, cooperation with local authorities and local business.

There are a number of new hopes, ideas, and projects ahead. The important thing is believing in success, being an active member of the community, and being willing to change life for the better.



*Improving the communal well,
Volya-Zaderevatska, 2007.*

Podorozhne is a Ukrainian village located on the left bank of the Svich river 22 kilometers away from the town of Stryj (Rayon center), Lviv Oblast. In addition to Podorozhne, the settlements of Zarichne and Lany Sokolivski are subordinated to Podorozhne Village Council. The first historical mention of the village dates back to 1464. Over its lifetime it was renamed several times: from Balychi in the 18th century to Balychi-Podorozhne in the 19th century. The village developed in chain-like strips over a vast plain between rivers where the Sukil flows into the Svich. The Rudka rivulet flows through the village.

Different people joined the core group team headed by Mariya Vasylyvna Butserka, head of the local pre-school institution call Vyshenka. Elaboration of a number of ideas later included in the operational plan enabled implementation of plans. The core group's main trend of activities included involving as many people as possible to cooperation for the community's benefit because joint effort makes the impossible possible. It was resolved that the community was best united through joint activities for the benefit of the entire community involving the village inhabitants, and that the People's House operations were to be improved through involvement of active youth. Cultural and educational events and enhancement of physical education of the next generation were recognized as the most important issues.

What are the achievements? They aren't few. To start with, the very community members managed to change their thinking and views on life. The acquired experience, educational workshops within the CED Project, and people's creative initiatives made obvious changes in community life possible. The village publishes a local weekly newspaper mainly devoted to the development of local talent and tips on farming. The poetic word along with the study of the region's history, traditions, customs, celebration of anniversaries of Ukraine's eminent people, and national holidays promote a reassessment of a number of historical events and more active social and economic involvement of villagers. Podorozhne's newspaper is published by Ihor Yaroslavovych Borsheyk, a member of the community's group.

Joint efforts and partial financial support of the CED Project (a project financed by the Canadian government and managed by the Canadian Bureau for International Education) enabled creation of a sports and playground based in Vyshenka pre-school institution which has become the village's attraction.

In addition to this, a drugstore has been opened, the local soccer team has been reestablished, the quality of utilities has been increasing, elimination of unauthorized garbage dumps is under way, and a program has been initiated to collect solid domestic waste.

While assessing the project's operation one has to give all core group members credit for their efforts with Bohdana Fedorivna Sydor, the local coordinator, playing the crucial part. But for Bohdana's perseverance and single-mindedness, such results would not have been achieved. But life poses new objectives. There are new ideas awaiting to be implemented. Needs change with time. What was essential yesterday may seem unimportant today. Time poses new challenges and arouses new initiatives. What remains immutable is the residents' desire to make their village better, wealthier for people to want to live and create in it.

Forthcoming Events

- In late June, leaders of partner communities of the CED Project are to go on a short study visit to Poland, and in early July – to the Slovak Republic to learn success stories and visit organizations involved in the CED processes.

The newsletter is issued within the Community Economic Development Project (January 2004 – December 2007), a Ukrainian-Canadian initiative managed by the Canadian Bureau for International Education and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency.

You can find further information about activities, publications, and other materials of the Project on our web-site at www.ced.org.ua. This web-site contains links to other organizations working in the CED area, presents information about the Project's partners, describes activities of partner communities within the Project, provides materials for CED academic courses and seminars. There are a number of exciting photos – you are most welcome to visit our web-site!!!

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