



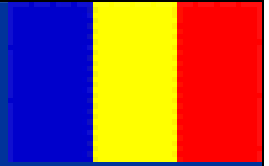
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Rural Entrepreneurs – A Dream Come True

Lack of strategy for economic empowerment of rural women in Romania impedes their equal access to resources, employment, market and trade. They feel discouraged, inadequately capable of coping with the changing economic environment and they have been vulnerable to the transition-taking place in Romania since 1990. Thus, UNDP is supporting the empowerment of women to reduce gender disparity in governance and rural community development through the project “Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Romania”.

UNDP and Government of Japan (JWIDF) have officially concluded the project in “SC Vicora Femina SRL” in Floroaica village, one of the four pilot sites that were successfully implemented. Some of the units are currently running their own business on a self-sustainable basis without the external support of UNDP now. It is an excellent role model for rural women and other institutions to replicate the project further.



Closing ceremony at the Seed packaging unit, Valcele in presence of high officials and media

The closing ceremony was held on 21 April in the presence of Ms Soknan Han Jung, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Coordinator; Mr. Naotoshi Sugiuchi, Ambassador of Japan; Mr. Vasile Iliuta, Mayor of Valcelele; Prefect of Calarasi County; Representatives of Calarasi County Council, Ministry of Labor, Social Solidarity and Family and Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Rural Development; Local and National media.

This project offers an alternative employment and additional income for women in rural areas. To empower women, they were encouraged to participate in project design and implementation from the very beginning” remarked Ms Jung. “UNDP is playing a significant role in supporting the social and economic development in Romania and this project is one example of such efforts. This project, aimed at reducing gender disparity and alleviating poverty, can be easily replicated in other regions of the country thus giving women new opportunities to improve their condition” said Mr. Sugiuchi.

Four pilot demonstration units were established with financial support from UNDP and JWIDF. They are vegetable processing plant in the village of Sageata, Buzau county in eastern Romania, a milk processing plant in Negresti, Vaslui county, a seed packaging unit in Valcelele, Calarasi County and a bakery unit in Comana, Giurgiu county. Some of the units are currently running their own business on a self-sustainable basis without the support of UNDP at all. It is a great achievement for the rural women to be self-dependant.

This UNDP project has provided the government and other interested institutions with a self-sustainable model on how to increase the role of rural women in the development process, and efficient ways on supporting them to overcome any forms of exclusion that can hinder their progress. It has also improved the quality of life in rural communities. For more information please contact UNDP Romania at socio@undp.ro



Vegetable Processing Unit, Buzau; Bakery, Giurgiu; Milk Processing Unit, Vaslui