

INTRODUCTION

The present inception report proposes details for the implementation of the project *Agricultural Land Utilisation Project, EuropeAid/120769/D/SER/KOS*, funded by the EU through its European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR). The Terms of Reference (ToR) specify the purpose of the project as to increase productivity and utilisation of agricultural land. The project aims to achieve this by defining 5 project components (“results”), which respectively relate to (i) legal and regulatory framework, (ii) land consolidation, (iii) spatial planning and environment, (iv) access to land through a land trust and (v) improved coordination mechanisms.

Three pilot areas will be established as a part of three of these project results.

The principal implementing agency of the project is the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD). Other involved agencies will be the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP), the Kosovo Cadastre Agency (KCA) and the Kosovo Trust Agency (KTA).

The technical assistance has been awarded to the consortium consisting of:

- *GFA Consulting Group, Germany*, a leading multi-disciplinary German contracting firm. GFA is the leading partner.
- *The Directorate for Food, Fisheries and Agri Business (DFFE), under the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Denmark*. DFFE is the lead agency for land consolidation and land banking in Denmark
- *Bodenverwaltungs – und – verwaltungs GmbH (BVVG), Germany*. BVVG is a state-owned agency responsible for administration and privatisation of state owned agricultural and forestry land in Germany

The date of project team mobilisation was February 13th, 2006, The inception period started at that same date with the kick-off meeting at EAR and lasted up to April 3d 2006. In order to be able to prepare the inception report in that short period, an inception team was formed, comprising the two long term international experts and two short term international experts (two weeks each) . Support was given by the project director of GFA and one week of office staff of the GFA Headquarter.

This inception report follows the same lines of thought as the GFA proposal, but has been detailed and adapted in accordance with the information gained during the inception period. Many meetings and discussions were held, in Pristina and in various municipalities. Visits and meetings were conducted together with the projects' counterpart officials and choices and decisions were made jointly. A wide range of information, visions, recommendations , suggestions and expectations was received by the inception team. This information was gratefully used to prepare a project programme which is ambitious and realistic at the same time.

We think that the requirements of the ToR and the project proposal are well met in this Inception Report. An exception is made for the set-up of Result 4, the land trust. It appeared that the original ideas as formulated in the ToR were not anymore feasible, and after discussions with MAFRD and KTA it was decided to investigate other possibilities fulfilling the ambitions of Result 4 as much as possible.

The content of the report is as follows. Chapter 3 gives an update of the background of the project. Chapter 4 discusses some assumptions and risks. Chapter 5 elaborates on the project activities and presents the entire plan of operations, and zooms in on the activities during the next quarter. In addition, the activities during the inception period are reviewed. Chapter 6 gives details on implementation arrangements, including the training programme.

We warmly thank all those persons who openly shared their views, ideas and experiences with us in view of a successful start of the project implementation.