About GIZ

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) as a federal enterprise supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.

The ProSME programme aims at increasing the competitiveness of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) with focus on innovation and entrepreneurship promotion. It is implemented by the Albanian Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship (MEDTE) as well as GIZ on behalf of the German Government.

Imprint

Published by:
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

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Printed by
Intergrafika, Tirana

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As at
November 2014

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of
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The Day after Tomorrow
Greening the Economy
Introduction

Albania’s valuable natural resources are critical to the creation of wealth and essential for socio-economic and sustainable development. Working towards a balanced economic growth model and a “greener economy” is fundamental for the Albanian people.

Approach

The Regional Environmental Center (REC) Albania and GIZ-EDEP have jointly implemented the pilot project “Greening the Economy” in Albania, October 2013 to May 2014, addressing ‘green’ market opportunities and the young entrepreneurship culture.

The pilot project comprised of four phases:

Phase 1 – A Green Economy course has introduced the concepts and fundamental principles of ‘green’ economy to 200 students at the Economic, Natural Science and Environmental Engineering Faculties of Tirana Polytechnic University (PUT).

Phase 2 – Transforming ‘green’ ideas into ‘Green Business Ideas’ in a process facilitated by two business trainers, this phase equipped 40 selected students with theoretical knowledge and practical skills: how to translate a ‘green’ idea into a ‘green business idea’? How to prepare a business plan? How to start a business?

Phase 3 – Taking ‘Green’ Business to the Market Place and to Competition

• step 1: twenty semi-finalists presented their innovative ‘green’ business ideas to a jury, which judged them according to specific criteria. The jury was composed of representatives from the business community, banking sector, academia, government, and civil society;
• step 2: ‘Green’ Business Ideas were presented in a ‘Market Place’, with students, representatives of the government, private sector associations as well as academia participating.

Phase 4 – Business Start-up Support

The winners of the ‘Green Business Ideas’ competition were supported by being coached and allowed advisory services, given limited financial support, and exposed to existing enterprises in Albania ready for greening their business.

Results and benefits

• Fostering of an entrepreneurial culture and generating interest in ‘green’ market opportunities, to strengthen young people’s employability;
• 200 students have gained a better understanding of the ‘green economy’ concept. They are able to compare the ‘green economy’ thinking and more traditional economic models;
• 40 students transformed a ‘green idea’ into a ‘green business idea’, with a business plan;
• the “ECO kindergarten” idea received support from a business person at the Market Place;
• “Involve us” is the first active business start-up initiated by the competition;
• ‘Green Economy’ principles shall be integrated into the Albanian University (PUT) Curricula;
• ‘Green Economy’ concepts and principles attracted the attention of a wide audience through national media coverage of the Market place and the participation of key actors in the economic development of Albania.
• 4 winners received internships at the ProCredit Bank and 2 winners at TÜV Austria, to further work on green issues and quality standards.

The way forward

Students from the Agriculture University will be targeted by the next GIZ-supported “Greening the Economy” project.