

One cannot discover a new ocean  
if one has no courage leave a shore

# 1. Investment Fair Bulletin

BOSNA RIVER DISTRICT



REGIONAL REPERESENTATIVE GROUP-**ReeRGe**

## THE FIRST INVESTMENT FAIR – *BELIEF IN FUTURE*

As a rule, fairs are the events that take place once a year, they become traditional after some time, they are accompanied by great sales and the people who want to have fun often forget the basic idea of the Fair. So, most of the fairs do not even “live” in the period between two events.

Like Dusko Radovic said 25 years ago: “Come to the Fair, hey have best burgers in town.”

Investment Fair does not comply with any of this. It is traditional, it does not take place in the same city every year and its success is measured by the activities between two fairs.

The guiding idea for **ToPeeR** and the basic plan of the **Investment Fair** was meeting between non-governmental, government and business sectors (as the main parts of the community) in one place, where – through constructive conversation, debates, exhibitions, project presentation, regulation plans and investment plans – they can realize what are the needs and possibilities of the region, the Bosna River District.

Organization board of the First Investment Fair where ToPeeR members and partner organizations in this project.

1. Jusuf Makarević, Fair coordinator
2. Svetlana-Snežana Šešlija, Fair organizer
3. Zejneba Mehinagić, contact with participants
4. Denis Kruškić, Fair secretary
5. Zorica Lazić, catering organizer
6. Nedjo Lipovčić, funds procurer
7. Jasenka Živković, funds procurer
8. Jevra Stojčinović, funds procurer
9. Representatives of Association “Women of Doboj”
10. Humanitas Center, media support
- 11.-15. Members of the Youth Forum as members

The idea of having an event like this was “born” during the Second Theme Conference of ToPeeR called “Ecology and Viable Development” – of the region in the Bosna River District, which had been held in August 2003. An initiative was started by those that were present there to establish a Regional Representative Group (**ReeRGe** of the Bosna River District), which was to gather together representatives of non-governmental, government, business and public sectors.



(One of the ReeRGe meetings)

The decision of holding an Investment Fair had been made during the second meeting of **ReeRGe** of Bosna River District in October 2003.

The First Investment Fair, which was held in Doboj on January 16, 17 and 18 2004, was open by Mr. Drago Despotovic on behalf of the Mayor of Doboj.

There were 93 participants at the Fair, out of which 32 were non-governmental and 15 government organizations, 22 economy subjects, 2 development agencies, representatives of 4 media houses as participants, 9 international organizations, one bank and interested individuals members of informal groups of citizens.

The main donor of the First Investment Fair were the kind staff of „Vuk Karadzic” school in Doboj who opened the School’s door, not requesting compensation. This may not represent a great value for some, but when you have the support of the people who need financial support just like you do, the donation seems even more valuable.



(Project presentation at the Fair)

The partners in organizing the First Investment Fair were Association „Women of Doboj” and Humanitas Center Doboj.

The main sponsors were the city bakery „Dobojka” that provided bread, pastry and baked goods for three days for the Fair participants and juice factory DSW that donated refreshments. Other sponsors were “Bolero” Doboj, Damjanovic Dragan, “Kosuta” Doboj and “Pcelica”.

The participants were greeted by Jusuf Makarevic, the ReeRGe coordinator and Svetlana Seslija, the president of ToPeer.

Most of the NGOs, participants of the Fair arrived on the first day, when the work meeting was held where the Fair documents were adopted: the Agenda and schedule of project presentations.

The moderator of the round table “Self-viability of NGOs” was Svetlana Seslija. Considering the joint opinion of the NGOs that it is necessary to maintain complete independence of non-governmental sector from donors, it was especially emphasized how important it is to have partners’ relationship between NGOs and government organizations. Final conclusion could be summarized with the wish and striving of NGOs to take part in development plans in local communities where they are working and operating, which means that they have to impose themselves in such projects and find their place for financing from the municipal budget.

The second day of the Fair was dedicated to the presentations and informal meetings of the Fair participants.

Presentations were held by:

1. NGO BIO PLUS
2. PRARAPLEGICS ASSOCIATION
3. NGO CGSA - ODZAK
4. NGO MAK BRIDGE - DOBOJ



5. DOBOJ BAKERY DOBOJKA
6. IPLAS - GRAČANICA
7. MUNICIPAL PARLIAMENT - TESLIĆ
8. "GRADNJA INVEST" - ODZAK
9. AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE «KOOPERATIVNA PODVUČJAK» - ODZAK
10. "INTECOOPERATION" - MDP DOBOJ
11. BRANO BELIĆ –ARCHAEOLOGIST, DOBOJ
12. NGO "HOUSE OF HOPE" - ODZAK
13. NGO "VIKTORIJA 99" - JAJCE
14. MUNICIPALITY ILIDZA
15. NGO UMCOR
16. NGO HUMANITAS CENTER - DOBOJ
17. NGO MOTHERS' CENTER "PLAMEN" - ZAVIDOVIĆI
18. "GOLDEN BEE" - DERVENTA
19. NGO "BONA FIDA" - TESLIĆ
20. STR "PČELICA" - DOBOJ
21. UNDP - SARAJEVO
22. "SCHOOL OF NICE GROWING UP" - ToPeeR
23. REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE GROUP OF BOSNA RIVER BASIN –ReeRGe

Debate table on *Development with participation of the community – What others are supposed to do so I can live better* were held on the third day of the Fair.

#### **Debate table 1**

1. NGOs –global partnership for development
2. Networking - coordination in projects

**Moderator:** Svetlana Šešlija

#### **Debate table 2**

3. Building the local community

**Moderator:** Svetslav Vasiljević, head of the Department of Social Affairs and Work of Local Communities

4. Ecology and Viable Development

**Moderator:** Kremic Zahid, head of the Department of Housing-Communal Affairs and Ecology

#### **Debate table 3**

5. The role of the media in rising awareness of citizens about the need of their participation in decision making on the development of the local community

**Moderator:** Vojislav Stjepanović, director of Radio Doboj

6. Board members and NGOs – partnership in responsibility on decision making of the local community development (making direct contact with DECISION MAKERS and those who can solve problems is a step towards being a part of the solution, not part of the problem)

**Moderator:** Ranka Ivic, president of Doboj Parliament

#### **Individual presentations:**

VIKTORIJA 99 – Jajce: The Fair is a significant event because it gives us the opportunity to meet each other. NGO sector can only survive if it has fresh and good information and if it has a possibility to give it to the others. Our work should be characterized by transparency, procuring funds, emphasizing our own successes, our binding and mutual support. The NGO personnel should be open and influence in educational way, and not only their members.

Personal interest of each individual in NGO sector, which means also non-governmental organizations, is to help the citizens to comprehend their significance and their role in the process of

decision-making. The years behind us we can remember by good, but also by bad experiences and results. There were donors who were bringing money "in suitcases", which naturally ended up in "wrong" hands. The time ahead of us is the time of filtering the non-governmental sector. Those NGOs that have strong motif and actually live in their local community will prevail.

Suggestion: To "unite" basins of the rivers in Bosnia and Herzegovina in a fight for a healthy and acceptable environment (for a man).

MERHAMET - Doboj: This is a very significant Fair. NGOs in Doboj have passed many seminars on fund procurement and proved to be able for self-viability, but this is still not enough. Biding of non-governmental organizations is a significant action. Four years ago, Doboj municipality sector had started activities on creating an NGO Forum. Even with a lot of work and effort we did not succeed because NGO sector did not get support from the local authorities.

Sometimes NGOs cannot hold the burden of responsibilities and consequences that disunity brings. Now the work conditions for non-governmental sector in Doboj municipality is significantly different and there are realistic chances to achieve certain steps forward in the joint action of all organizations in this area.

KREMIC ZAHID: There is certain statistic data that should worry us. Namely, there are over 100 organizations registered in the area of Doboj municipality that claim to be NGOs. It is well known that many of them were established for the personal interests of certain individuals. This is why it is necessary to make a selection among NGOs and determine which ones this city needs and which doesn't, which ones are active and which only serve one or two members. But this is the job for NGOs themselves. There is no municipality in the world that is able to make this selection of justification of existence of such organizations. The selection, that is, determining justification of existence of NGOs is very important for the future projects that the international organizations are to fund. All the projects, you know this, are going to be directed through the local self-governing, through the municipality. Distribution of these funds is going to be strictly controlled because huge amounts of money have entered this region but their consumption was outside of regional, true development.

ECO SOCIETY MARCH 20 - Breza: Our organization is involved in education and we try to prove that we are not communal company or garbage people. This organization's vision is to establish municipal and regional eco associations. I believe that all organizations should join together in Eco Association of Bosnia and Herzegovina and that, only in this way, it will have the power that could influence the way of thinking and acting in BiH.

It is also very important for all organizations to stick to the fundamental principle of democracy - the basis of every action is free access to information. Partnership is the foundation of non-governmental sector. So, we should create partnership relations, determine the criteria of partnership with authorities, create partnerships with resource ministries and try and diminish the aversion of authorities towards NGOs.

Although this organization has 1300 members, celebrating 350<sup>th</sup> radio show, it must not be satisfied with the successes and the main message is we should all "stick" to the Agenda 21 and hold Fairs like this one.

HUMANITAS CENTER - Doboj: The work of NGOs is tightly connected to the work of authorities. There are organizations that are working for the well-being of everyone, there are those who only work for their members, but there are also those who work in the municipality, who have heard there would be some money coming to the municipality and founded NGOs for this reason only. We cannot forget or neglect the fact that non-governmental organizations are discordant, not only in Doboj

municipality, but also on the BiH level. The authorities are in the position to broaden this discord (having favorites among NGOs), so we should also discuss the government's responsibility for this problem.

WOMEN OF DOBOJ: Our motto is look at the future, not past. There had been mistakes made and some of the problems in the community had been overlooked. It is significant that we, just like other NGOs, have noticed – identified the greatest problems that are the obstacle to development. Our work and direction are conditioned by the state of our municipality, which is reflected in the statistic information about women: 3500 unemployed women, difficult financial and health state, uneducated women, increased drug abuse, violation of family institution in society. We are aware of the fact that the situation is the same or similar in other municipalities of Bosna River Basin, which is exactly why it is necessary to exchange experiences and create strong network organizations and activities, because we cannot do much with individual projects and if we are disunited.

The past 15 years has been the most difficult period in our lives, but events like this should be used to overcome all that can disunite us and we should, with tolerance of all our differences, cherish the values that will make us stronger.

CPCD GRADACAC: Because the state agencies had acted in a “wrong way”, the international community did the same with the NGO sector. We, as organization stand for joining together and networking, but not by political and entity borders but in the way so that our vision and our mission be guidelines of our gathering and joint work. We are aware of the fact that international organizations are giving money for projects and direct those who implement such projects. We were also forced to “play as we were paid” and it is going to be like that until partnership with authorities is made. Economy development (local, regional or on the state level) should be reflection of our aspirations and needs, and not a wish of some donor.

A lot more and better could have been done in every municipality, just like in ours, if only we had been united and if we had exchanged our experiences and implemented certain projects in partnership.

NGOs should not only be based on the work in the city. Problems should be solved in the local community, we should be more active in villages, because in the city problems sometimes get solved “by themselves”.

NGOs are to blame for their own languor. They accept initiative to create a strong coalition of government, non-governmental organizations, public and business sector. It is significant also that NGOs are organized to “fight” for the right to follow the Parliament's work and the work of its agencies.

RANKA IVIC, president of the Municipal Parliament: Local authorities and non-governmental organizations should have joint responsibility for the bad decisions the government makes. At the moment the discussion on division of responsibility between local authorities and NGOs is illusory, because the authority is not divided equally either. A parliament member should be representing the interests of those who chose him – the citizens. But today, a parliament member represents his/her own personal interest. The Municipal Statute and the Rulebook on the Parliament's Work should have been changed long time ago, since they do not reflect the reality of the moment. These documents are at public discussion now, which is also an opportunity for the citizens to show their interest and take part in division of responsibility, that is, to give their contribution to decision-making.

The pressure of social problems is huge and it is hard to work in such conditions. Having in mind that the parliament members are the main idea-carriers and those who are going to prepare documents for the next 4 years, NGOs and citizens should find their own place and create a bridge between those who are decision makers and those on whom the decisions will have impact. The authority

should be brought back to the local level, higher levels of authority do not have direct contact with the real life of the population.

Viability of the domicile population in our community is on a poor level. I think that such a big number of NGOs is actually a desperate appeal to save what could be saved, that is, that local economy development should be our priority in our way of thinking as well as in acting.

Ivic's suggestion was that this event be more significantly supported by the Municipal Parliament in the future and that it should be ready to really share responsibility in making development programs.

TANJA JANKOVIC, OSCE: We need a new way of work – a platform for partnership. With this Platform NGOs would step out of the frame in which they do not know what they want. Parliament sessions do not contain work analysis and contribution of NGOs, especially in development programs. NGOs should adjust their projects to the development plan of the municipality they work in. I suggest that other NGOs in Doboj join ToPeer's initiative to start a Platform for Cooperation of Local Authorities With NGOs – making Criteria for Accepting Projects of NGOs in Municipalities. A Fair of this kind deserves highest credits.

ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS OF DOBOJ REGION: Informing the public is a category defined by the Constitution, since the state is obliged to organize informing. The Regional Association of Journalists is working on promoting the work of journalists and on organizing this branch. It is obvious that anyone can be and IS a journalist today. The CRA has brought a little order to electronic and other media. Only a journalist does not have to prove he/she is a journalist. A shoemaker cannot work as carpenter.

But the problem is not only in journalism and journalists. Our fellow citizens do not want to call and create a program jointly.

CGSA - Odzak: NGOs have to fight for free (media) place with the local media.

PEACE TREES - Zavidovici: NGOs have realized and, mostly, they act that way, that they are always on the market and that they can prosper only with their projects, which means that the authority will be better and citizens more content.

His suggestion to the Organization Board was to hold the next Fair, in 2005, in Zavidovici.

ASSOCIATION OF PARAPLEGICS - Doboj: The area of environmental protection should, in its plans and programs, include the needs of disabled persons. Experiences from the rest of the world should be our guidance. There will be no program of local economy development if these categories of local population are not included, starting with employment to creating possibility of moving around town without obstacles.

BECIR HONDZO - Ilidza municipality: the idea that the Fair should be held in another municipality in the Bosna River Basin each year should be supported and it should be financed from the budget of the host municipality.

NGOs have a great responsibility and obligation, since they are the ones that lead the people to a better future, in direction of positive development and that is why they should use all the possibilities of joint acting between themselves and with other sectors.

### Instead of a conclusion:

Initiatives were started at the Fair:

**First:** That the Investment Fair becomes a program activity of the *Regional Representative Group of Bosna River Basin*, regardless if it is going to act as informal group in 2005 or it will already be registered as an independent Forum or an organization.



**Second:** That the Fair should be a caravan and be held in another municipality of the Basin each year.

**Third:** To make a catalogue of the Fair which would be available for all the possible investors.

**Fourth:** To create cooperation and joint acting with the Basin of Una River.

**Fifth:** That all the other NGOs in Doboj should join the initiative started by ToPeeR to create a Platform for Cooperation of Local Authorities With NGOs – making Criteria for Accepting Projects of NGOs in Municipalities.

### Instead of final word:

For a future like this we do not need anyone's help we have shown to be very competent to destroy everything that took millions of years to be created and is still being created. Not one hour can be a warning if we do not realize ourselves that we do not have any reserve and that we should be changing picture for as long a time as we have been creating it and that we do not only create the future for ourselves and our children but our children's children as well.

The fair took place and is in the past now. It was organized with good will and positive energy, with our own staff and, unfortunately, very little means. The value of such an event in, we are sure, in contacts and our mutual relationship in the period between two fairs. Measurable results are also our partner relationships and our joint projects before the donors. Our friendly association with each other should not be forgotten during the Fair itself, but also on other occasions where we had been meeting each other.

There were also some negative reactions, but they are soon forgotten since they do not have realistic background, but they are reflection of helplessness of those who think they are alone and that they can get more as individuals. They forget that the power is in numbers and that this individual is worth more (and gets more) if it has support.

ToPeeR would like to thank all the participants of the Fair for their selfless help to organize and hold this event, especially because the participants paid for their own expenses. But, NGO "Viktorija 99" from Jajce deserves a special place in the records of the Investment Fair for selflessly sharing their experiences with all the interested. Mrs. Senka Zulum gave a special tone of cheerfulness to this event.

- Think about new ideas, get out of the mold to become a better person
- For triumph of evil it is enough if one good man does not do anything
- A thousand mile trip starts with one step
- It is always easier to oppose something you haven't even tried to understand
- Do not allow your tongue to shout if your strength is whispering
- We are a part of the community, let's take part in its development

**Doboj, January 2004**

## EUROPEAN CHARTER ON WATERS

1. Water does not know borders, water is the problem of all mankind.
2. There is no life without water. It is a precious good, necessary for all human acts.
3. Fresh water resources are not inexhaustible. It is necessary to preserve it, control and, if possible, enlarge it.
4. To change quality of water means to endanger the life of man and other living creatures.
5. Water's quality must be preserved to the level adapted to its consummation, which predicts and meets special requests of people's health.
6. If the water is returned to the nature after its use, this should not endanger other users, public or private.
7. Preserving appropriate plant cover, primarily forests, is of great importance for conserving water resources.
8. Good water management has to be a subject of a plan legalized by the authorities.
9. Protection of water needs significant effort in scientific research, in forming specialists for public information.
10. Water is public heritage whose value everyone should know. The task of each individual is to economize with it and use it carefully.
- 11. Managing water resources must, above all, be done within a basin, not within administrative and political borders.**

### To remind

- ❖ Essence of life is contained in every drop of water.
- ❖ Bosna River runs deep through our lives. This is the conscience we have to live with.
- ❖ Words and declarations are easily made and even more easily forgotten.
- ❖ For Bosna River one should fight truly. Those guilty for its destroying must be punished.
- ❖ For preserving Bosna River it takes knowledge, patience and money. Together with our neighbors we will preserve it faster and easier – because it is their obligation as well.
- ❖ The time we live in could be called the time of spiritual filth, for it is the only way to justify those who endanger survival of their own children and their children's children.
- ❖ What we lack today is ecology democracy
- ❖ Ecologic crisis requires that politicians and those who are managing the environment replace verbal and paper demagoguery with ecology ethics.
- ❖ All we need is to start using in practice already adopted declarations and conventions.