

**To:**  
**EU TACSO – IPA III preparation**

**From: Rural Coalition**

### **Comments of the process of programming of IPA III**

First of all, the team of Rural Coalition is greeting this open consultative process on the next IPA III programming. Rural Coalition as a Coalition of 40 local associations is acting in the part of agriculture and rural development and we already have seen that one of the priorities in the window “Competitiveness and incisive growth” is agriculture and rural development and we are very happy that we will have opportunity to participate in this programming to use some funds from the programme in order to make positive impacts in the rural communities in our country.

In this part we just want to put a focus on a sustainability of local small civil society organizations, but also and sustainability of the project activities in the situation of no funds for sustainable development of the civil society organizations that are active in the sector agriculture and rural developments. There were some operating grants that should give some sustainability and certainty in the civil sector, but from that granting scheme was excluded whole sector of agriculture, rural and also local development. Priority was given to the sectors like fight against the corruption, rule of law, democracy etc. These sectors or priority areas are very important to the functioning of one society, but also is very important to start to make the pre-conditions for sustainable local, rural and regional development in the country, because now everything is concentrate in Skopje or around Skopje and there are already very well known and in the most of the cases the same organizations or consortium of organizations that are continuously get funding by EU.

In this IPA III programme our comment is the funds on the way that they are planned by the windows to be focused more on regional and local development as well as building the capacities of local civil society organizations and other stakeholders in order to make the conditions for creation of sustainability of local and rural development which is nowadays very hard to achieve with small actions only through the sub-granting scheme and small time duration projects with low finances. Local and rural development is a key factor also for regional balanced development that we don't have at the moment and it is crucial for the sustainability and upgrading of the processes like local democracy, decentralization, development of civil sector on local level etc. Institutional or operating support is also needed for the civil organizations that are acting in the agriculture and rural development. The last segment of our comment is that organizations even are acting in one area could also work very well in the horizontal themes, so in the part of making decisions about financial support this fact should be also taken in consideration. For instance, we as an organization that is acting in the agriculture and rural development, until now have already



implemented projects with great results in the area of gender equality in rural areas, local democracy, then corruption in agriculture and rural development sector etc.

Thank you very much again for the opportunity that was given to us as civil sector to make and give some comments and we are really hope that our comments are constructive and will be taken in consideration in order to make a programme that will respond to the needs of all sectors and the variety of civil organizations.

*Sincerely,*

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