

## Partners in rural development

Tourism is a priority for SNV in our goal to promote sustainable development that directly impacts and benefits the rural poor. Our approach places people at the centre of development, promoting participation, non-discrimination, openness and transparency as well as responsibility and accountability.

Support through tourism development addresses poverty issues by promoting sustainable tourism strategies that focus on creating employment and income for lower income people. It has been proven world-wide that tourism is a very effective sector in which to address poverty due to the fact that it is a service industry that requires numerous people at all levels to meet the needs of tourists. The tourism sector also lends itself to the development of indirect support through the production of necessary materials, foods and services thus creating more opportunities for rural people to benefit.

SNV has successfully utilized its Tourism Action Plan (TAP) process to assist local and regional areas to develop their tourism potential. This 'user-friendly' process allows areas new to the tourism sector to understand this industry's multi-faceted aspects while working toward developing a strategy that will best position them to take advantage of their tourism assets and overcome problems. SNV is presently developing a 'Destination Management' process that will allow areas to better organize, thus enabling them to better control the development and marketing of their tourism sectors.

SNV follows a value chain approach to maximize the potential income of rural households utilizing the direction provided by the TAPs and Destination Management Strategies in areas such as handicraft production & sales, traditional food/drink production, selling & packaging, tour guiding and traditional village family accommodation. SNV works with all sectors to improve tourism knowledge & brokering, to improve the supply of quality products & services and increase impact by capturing a greater share of the domestic and international tourism markets.

## Tourism as an entry point for good governance

Realizing that it is the government's role at all levels to develop the enabling environment in which tourism will prosper, both the TAP and Destination Management processes directly involve the public sector and relevant NGOs in conjunction with the private sector to ensure that all aspects of tourism development are addressed. SNV assists local and regional partners translate political will into practical actions that promote decentralisation, empowering rural areas to secure rights and economic benefits. To ensure that rural areas are supported in the development of their tourism sectors SNV also works with relevant national public and private sector agencies assisting them in the development of the necessary policies and regulations these areas require to succeed.

## Proven track record

In the three years that SNV Balkans has been involved in the tourism sector it has had a substantial impact at both the local, regional and national levels. Six TAPs have been developed in Albania with a number of others pending, while two TAPs have been developed in Macedonia with another two pending. SNV assisted the Albanian Ministry of Tourism in finding the necessary resources to develop this country's first National Tourism Law.

Having recognized the strides that SNV has made in developing tourism at the local and regional level, there is a growing interest from other multinational donors and agencies wishing to partner with SNV and its clients toward implementing tourism initiatives.

We have so many possibilities and tourism resources that should be known and supported ...

**Genc Ruli**  
*Minister of Economy, Commerce and Energy*

I want to thank SNV (and others) for their interest, contribution and support ... without their commitment it would have been impossible to achieve this level of quality ....

**Naim Begaj**  
*Mayor of Ballshi Municipality*