Cooperation between farmers

The problems

- “The voice” of small farmers is weak and their requests are not heard and considered (due to internal and external obstacles)
- Internal: ownership issue and quality of work (planning, organizational structure, beneficiaries and human resources management)
- External: political, institutional and “international” issues
Identifying the problems through:

- Field research through LEDnet (the network of organizations for local economic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina) – defining methodology, interviews, data analysis, preparation of report
- Meetings with farmers (part of everyday work)

What have we done?

1. Capacity building of associations
2. Establishing a coalition of associations
3. Implementation of joint actions of the academic community and associations
4. Monitoring of key governmental policies and raising public awareness about operations/lack of operations of the key ministries
Initiator and partners

- The initiator of the action was LEDnet (LiNK Mostar, UPIP Žepče, NBR Modriča, PREDA Prijedor and PLOD Bihać)
- The partners that helped are EC Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Oxfam Italia (SeeNet) and 15 other local organizations from the country

Policy actors contacted

- International community level: EC Delegation, USAID, SIDA, UNDP, TIKA, SDC...
- National level: MOFTER
- Entity and cantonal level: 10 ministries in charge for development of entrepreneurship and agriculture
- Local level: 5 municipalities
Achievements

- Raising awareness
- Stimulated creation of 10 new and strengthened 15 existing associations
- Platform with over 50 concrete requests created (only 0.1% is achievement so far)

Next steps

- Strengthening LEDnet and associations
- Encouraging the farmers to associate
- Implementation of LED net standards with the associations
- Expanding the Platform
- Lobbying and advocating for implementation of the platform
Lessons learned

- We need more REAL sector success stories
- There has to be strong leadership and clear joint interest if we want to see associations working together
- More concrete assistance from EU and other actors

- Insisting on standards could help us to build good image
- Informal associations are very often better solution than formal
- Proactive approach toward farmers with clear benefits to them but also responsibilities from them

Thank you for your attention!