Case 01
Olive Press Company

Background
There are a number of reasonably well developed oil press companies in the area of Borsh and Qeparo that sell their oil to local olive grove owners and as bulk product to wholesalers in Tirana, other Balkan countries and Russia. In some cases the oil is branded and sold on local and national markets. The entrepreneur in question is considering leaving the area and moving to Tirana.

The companies are not at all benefitting from tourism in the area and tourists are not made aware of possibility to buy high quality oil or even visit the factory. This leaves unused potential.

Potential Business Case
One company is situated by the road that separates the olive groves in the valley from the coast. It has a second floor that provides rooms to let and a space that is currently unused. By combining B&B with the company and use vacant space for a store for olive oil and related products as well as for an information point on tradition and industry of olives in the area maximum value can be added and this place can act as a showcase for an integrated approach for tourism agriculture (and nature preservation).

The investment in a simple and artisan store above the olive press factory (and maybe covering the bare walls with plants) does not have to be a big investment and can potentially be done together with olive grove owners.

Potential Business Partners
This case is of interest to Local olive grove owners providing them with a place to make their tradition and product visible, to NGO’s such as GIZ and US Aid for adding value to interventions that are already financed by their organizations such as is the case for the olive oil company financed by US Aid at the entrance of Qeparo National stakeholders that can play a role are government and non-governmental organizations interested in creating individual examples of cross sectoral integrated approach to tourism agriculture. International involvement can come from organizations such as air B&B, Trip Advisor, Elisa was here when a certain level of quality is reached.

Next Steps
1. The olive oil company, B&B and shop form one of the possible eye catchers when entering Qeparo along the coastal road. Therefor it should be developed into a place that fits the vision of what Qeparo has to offer. Lessons can be learnt from Home fresh shop in Himare town center. Furthermore the model for developing Qeparo should be taken into account. Shop will be on the second floor overlooking stretch of olive trees and the sea.
2. Seeing that the building has not been built in a traditional or otherwise attractive style for visitor it can be “equipped” with a vertical garden covering the facade and thus creating a green and agri-tourism look and feel.
3. If this location is not suited effort should be put in finding alternatives for presenting and selling olive oil and related product such as cheeses planks or plates made from old olive wood.
Case 02
Guidelines Accommodation

Potential Business Case
Albania has a great potential to remain an authentic destination and offer personal and authentic hospitality which are routed in the small scale. In order to meet the travellers expectations, the means to meet these expectations should not be by inviting large corporate hospitality multi nationals but by explaining the expectation to the local hosts preserving the local flavor, care and authenticity. Therefore a set of guidelines is needed. A set of guidelines that is relatively inexpensive to produce can be distributed and raise the level of the tourist product immensely.

The case consists of three parts: First, develop the guidelines. Second, developing a training course for local people working in the hospitality industry needs to be done. Providing the respective information during workshops, in an e-learning course and with a small handbook/manual could make the training even more efficient. An additional manual will support this process. Third, in order to maintain the quality up to standards a mechanism should be developed to assure or audit the offered quality.

Potential Project Partners
- National: International hospitality schools
- GIZ, Municipality Himara, Albanian Tour operators such as Our own Expedition and outdoor Albania
- International: For tips AirBnB.com and Wanderal

“Albania is very attractive for people who have seen the whole world. But they have also seen a lot of hotels and know what to expect.”
- Nancy Tare, Our Own Expeditions.

Background
There is a large gap in the market between the needs of travellers for authentic, affordable, but quality accommodation and the existing offering in Albania. Especially high value travelers with basic requirements, as simple as a functioning shower and a healthy breakfast are required to seek refuge to big chains and 5-star hotels. However, they are actually looking for carefully maintained small scale accommodations (6 to 12 persons).

According to several owners of local accommodations, they don't have access to the necessary knowledge how to professionally run their business and to which standards they have to adhere to.

Next Steps
- Research into basic hospitality standards, collection of data and best practices, documentation of status quo, develop a questionnaire for guests, innovative ways of coaching (see for example AirBnB’s assistance to their hosts).
- Micro loans for investments such as furniture and house textiles.
- Identify beneficiary organisation, attract funding for content development and training, and establish distribution channels.
- Decide on mechanism to audit/maintain the standards.
Case 03
Eco Camping with the Olive Grove

Background
During desk research the functional zoning of Qeparo was studied and plot T3 was identified as eco-camping.

During presentation in Qeparo the validity of the zoning map was confirmed by the mayor of Himare but a chance encounter during a field visit with one of the proprietors of the area, we found out that he wasn’t aware of this potential. He currently runs a beach-café but would be happy to expand his business. He needs guidelines and needs to cooperate with owners of different plots.

Potential Business Case
The area determined as eco-camping is currently an Olive orchard. The camping activities can be developed under the olive trees, which would add value to the camping because they shade the area and give it a natural ambiance and quality.

It is a very small effort to maintain the camping and it could be easily done on the side. A good eco camping will attract more adventurous travelers from outside Albania that often travel off-season. Comparable camp-

“There is a growing worldwide demand for what is called ‘barefoot luxury’. Eco campings sites and basic accommodation can provide in that need and create new market.”

- Gerben Hardeman, Dutch Tourism association ANVR

Supporting the development of an eco-camping with replication in mind can greatly contribute to sustainable tourism development along the coastline. There are examples of eco-camping sites although first inquiries show that there is still a lot to be improved before these are really ECO.

sites for example Lake Shkodra resort had very high occupancy rates, even in September/October.

The site is currently subdivided in several plots, based on certain regulations. People use the plots for very small scale agriculture, mainly Olive trees. If they could reach an agreement with one entrepreneur to lease the land to him and have him exploit it as Camping there would be additional profit without additional effort.

A local entrepreneur and owner of one of the plots in the zone has expressed great interest in setting up the camping. Ecovolis in Tirana, who run eco-camping sites elsewhere in the country have shown readiness to support the effort.

We well organized eco-camping will bring additional tourist to villages such as Qeparo and can prolong the season. This will certainly have economic benefits for an area: restaurants, shops, tours etc.

Potential Partners for the Project
- Ecovolis
- Municipality
- Local land owners of different olive groves
- Risi Albania
- Lift

Next Steps
1. Bring potential partners together
2. Decide on ownership of plots
3. Decide on ownership of camping that runs on the plots
4. Agree on rent conditions
5. Conduct a market scan for demand for eco-camping sites and desired level of luxury

www.coolcampings.co.uk
Case 04
Development of Festivals & Events

Potential Business Case
Besides prolonging the season and creating economic activities, creating a modern festival that attracts young Albanians with sense of culture and art as well as interest in cuisine can contribute to a change of image for an area that suffers from an ongoing exodus of young people.

Potential Project Partner
- National restaurant association
- Local restaurant owners, Restaurant owners and chefs in Tirana such as Masterchef winner Arber Togani
- Organisations and entrepreneurs with experience with event organisation in Albania and abroad in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany
- NGO's with a focus on developing entrepreneurial skills
- NGO's with a focus on cultural development

Background
Just like other places along the Riviera Qeparo has high occupation of accommodations during peak season. To prolong this high season effort needs to be put in developing additional attractions and events to attract new national and international client groups.

Description
A Riviera Food and culture festival end of summer season could stimulate additional tourism to Qeparo and help to position the region as a centre for agricultural and culinary tourism. The festival can showcase local products prepared by acknowledged chefs (national, international). Existing restaurants can be included in the festival.

Additional pop-up restaurants created by local artist (under the olive trees, on the rooftops) will be set up as an additional attraction point. Cultural components such as music and dance and art are added in the concept to enrich it and have a broader audience.

“Food and cultural events can really work in Albania, if the right example is set others will follow. We see the same with other sustainable trends such as juice bars.”

- Celeste Gocalves, hostel owner in Tirana

Next Steps
1. Identify local parties ready for the task of organizing festival
2. Develop a concept together with local parties
3. Identify potential financial partners
4. Find committed media partners
5. Organize (local) restaurant owners, hotel owners, food producers and festival organization into a committee for the festival
6. Draw up a business plan
7. Connect with financing
Case 05
Restore Terraces and Aqueduct

Background
The topic of water repeatedly appeared while talking with local farmer. Although there are abundant rainfalls during the year, there are nearly no rains during summer months. Locals also explained that the lack of maintenance in the terraces is often due to the lack of water. We immediately found out about an old irrigation channel of the 40s not in use anymore, the channel use to bring water from a reservoir in Borsh to Qeparo. After the realization of hydropower station in Borsh the water level of the reservoir decrease below the level of the channel; furthermore an electricity pylon was built next to the infrastructure in Qeparo, interrupting its track. As a first step, we walked along it and mapped it, stumbling into an outstanding landscape experience.

Potential Business Case
The old irrigation channel bears the potential of reactivating terraces by providing continuous irrigation. A surface of 161,000sqm of terraces would need an amount of water ranging from 9660-20,125 cubic meters. Solving the summer irrigation demand can foster a more intensive cultivation (mixed-farming) of the terraces and consequential better maintenance. That will result in a drastic improvement of the local landscape aesthetic and productive qualities. By restoring the water inlet the, channel can feed the terraces and becomes a touristic attraction as well. In fact, a very simple path can run along the infrastructure rendering it accessible, and becoming a new alternative pedestrian connection to link Qeparo with Borsh.

Potential players should include the Municipality and the Hydro power station company on the one hand, and spatial design and agriculture expertise in the other hand.

Description
The very reasons of the neglect of the irrigation channel need to be tackled. The water inlet at the Borsh source needs to be re-established, probably by a mechanical pump. The damage caused by the electricity pylon in Qeparo needs to be fixed. An extensive maintenance of the primary and secondary channels is crucial for the restoration of the infrastructure, and the local community can play an active role in that direction.

Potential Project Partners
- Main counterpart: Himara Municipality, Hydro Power station company
- Possible funding: World Bank, Southern Development Cooperation, University of Tirana
- Landscape design: Openfabric
- Agriculture: Alterra Wageningen

Next Steps
Next step are the following:
1. Finding extra funds in order to develop a more advanced spatial and agricultural strategy.
2. Present the project to the main local counter parts (Himara Municipality, Hydro Power station company)
3. Seek for larger scale (national and international) subsidy sources in order to make the project feasible.

“I would love to see tourists walking in front of my garden.”
Timolea Komehilli, Qeparo
Case 06
Mixed-farming

Potential Business Case

The goal of the ‘Perfect Hectare’ is to create a model of mixed-farming for Qeparo (and around) area. The case is about growing more crops beneath the olive grove canopy, bearing in mind that the light and moisture conditions are peculiar. Some crops will not grow well under lower light conditions in terms of general growth and yield. Some crops also will have problems with pests and diseases due to higher moisture levels in the crop, favoring e.g. fungi. Therefore a selection of crops is needed.

The hectare is a square of 100m edge, containing 196 olive trees and divided in 4 equal areas as following: 1. Lettuce and Radicchio, 2. Zucchini and Pumpkin, 3. Grass and Alfalfa, 4. Asparagus.

The first 3 areas have to rotate every year while the Asparagus has a 10 years life span.

The consequential yield of each crop is:

Species | Normal yield | Estim. under tree
--- | --- | ---
Lettuce | (70000) | 45,500 pieces/ha
Zucchini | (60000) | 39,000 kg/ha
Pumpkin | (16000) | 10,400 kg/ha
Green Asparagus | (5000) | 3,250 kg/ha
Rucola | (7500) | 4,875 kg/ha

Training is a must for enabling the ‘Perfect Hectare’, and it’s twofold: it should prepare the farmers to grow crops they are not, in some cases, familiar with, and create knowledge about the rotation techniques. On the other hand, training should prepare farmers to process and conserve food, increasing the quantity and diversity of the supply, overcoming the seasonality of the demand.

Alongside the training, food events as markets and fairs can be organized, to advertise and sell the (new) local products, both raw and processed.

“We absolutely prefer to use local products. But especially in the main season it’s difficult. Some more unusual crops, like Rucola are even difficult to get here.”

Marinela, Veranda Restaurant, Qeparo

Background

The agriculture areas of Qeparo, similarly to other villages of the region, are characterized by the monoculture of the olive tree. Although the climate and soil typology allow a broader range of potential crops, there is an extremely low agro-biodiversity. Not taking advantage of the local production capacity, results in a very limited diversity in food supply, which damages both the farmers and the food outlets.

The farmers who often own olive groves, and grow vegetable gardens only for family-use, reported this issue redundantly. Furthermore, the area has plenty of abandoned lands, which at the moment are not worth cultivating.

I personally have not received input of farmers specifically on the more agronomic side of the cultivation system, i.e. an expressed need from their side of doing more with the olive grove land. Hence I cannot really add to this paragraph. So feel free to base this on your findings.

Description

Potential Project Partners

- Municipality of Himara, farmers
- University of Tirana, Arber Togani (Masterchef)
- International partners: World Bank, Alterra (agriculture), Openfabric (landscape architecture)

Next Steps

First step is to find a farmer (or more) who is/are willing to use part of their land as test site. Landscape architecture practice along side research centres will lay down a plan of the ‘perfect hectare’ in order to efficiently exploit the land and integrate it with the surrounding landscape.

Research centres (Alterra, University of Tirana) will follow the 1-year process and evaluate the outcome. After the first test-year, a system of subsidies and basic training for farmers should be organized.
Case 7
Pig Farm and the Connection with Restaurants

Background
There is a constant mismatch between supply and demand when it comes to fresh produce such as meat and vegetables in areas such as Qeparo due to fluctuations in demand caused by high and low season in tourism. This makes it extremely hard for producers to tune their supply. In the end it comes down to either overproduction in low season or lack of supply in high season. Food processing can be part of the answer to this predicament.

Potential Business Case
With relatively small investment pig holders can diversify and create new markets for their product. This specific case could serve as a showcase for others to others in Albania.

Success rests on individual initiative but should be discussed with micro finance organization.

Possible project partners: Mr Kokedhima, mr Togani, local international entrepreneurs interested in investing in quality meats. Suppliers of equipment for climate control etc.

Next Steps
• The alterations that need to be done to the facilities need to be defined. Important is to take sustainability, hygiene and animal welfare into consideration in all decisions.
• Investigate if facilities can meet Albanian or even international standards and what is needed to do so.
• Make a simple business plan with cost and benefit calculation based on available market information.
• Price for one kilo raw pig meat has average price of 600 Lek. Price for cured ham: 1500 to 3500 Lek.
• Explore possibilities to link to space in training centre and make it into a more publicly backed initiative.

Tourism Potential
At the same time Western customers are not used to understand the whole process behind the products on the supermarket shelf or on their plate. In Albania these value chains are still very short and potentially accessible. Tourists who value the food chain and would like to see the process of animal farming, can visit a farm and find out how it works. In contrast to the Western meat industry farming, the tourists can see an traditional, honest and sustainable way of farming and potentially also the boning.

In the Netherlands they have one farm that gives the meet lovers a chance to see the farm and meet the animals. You can choose to lease an animal or buy one beforehand. Eventually, the meet lovers who bought half a pig, can join the boning and get to know everything of the meet they will eat, explained by a retired butcher. Customers see the value and are willing to pay more than for the meet on the supermarket shelf.

If done right, this case can be used as an example and replicated for other places and products. It stands model for different value chains in which demand and supply can be brought together by processing food into different products.

If Mister Kokedhima can provide high quality prosciutto in the near future I will commit to buying it. There is a great need for high quality local, processed products. This does not only concern meat but others products as well”

“I would like to hear more about the possibilities for sustainable crudo from Albania”

Company visit to pig farm of Mr Kokedhima, Owner indicated that he and others in the sector have no tradition in processing meat. At the same time Arber Togani (winner of master Chef Albania and restaurant owner in Tirana) indicated the lack of available high quality processed meats in Albania.

“I would like to hear more about the possibilities for sustainable crudo from Albania”

- Jaap Frenichs of Fairmeat, Netherlands

- Arber Togani, winner Master Chef Albania

- Jaap Frenichs of Fairmeat, Netherlands

- Arber Togani, winner Master Chef Albania
Case 8
Entrepreneur Association

Background
A decent living with their business. As is well known they are not particularly charmed by the concept of Entrepreneurs in a village such as Qeparo show a great deal of energy and commitment to develop and earn organizing and working together in official constructions such as cooperatives and associations.

This individualism has led to a lot of development that does not contribute to a coherent picture when one overlooks all that is offered (products and services). When people claim that they need a "Model for development" they are reluctant to admit that what they really need is a model for trust and cooperation across borders of family or clan. What is needed is a model for an active entrepreneur association.

Benefits of Organized Entrepreneurs
By organizing themselves entrepreneurs can create a strong position towards government, inhabitants, customers, and value chain partners. With this stronger position they can contribute to the development of Qeparo (or another given area) in a structural way. We believe that such an association is one of the most important enabling factors for the success of any intervention in an area such as Qeparo. Therefore the business case is not one that stands alone.

“We believe that working together can really help us in our joint and individual efforts to create a better and more prosperous Qeparo.”
- Marinela Papajorji, Restaurant owner in Qeparo

“This association could create leverage to resolve issues such as sanitation, irrigation system, coordination of works, as well as stimulating government intervention to solve these problems.”
- Fotaq Buçi, Supermarket owner and local counterpart in organization of the field mission

Potential Project Partners
- Local entrepreneurs (starting with most active and modern thinking)
- Municipality
- International donor organizations focused on supporting the development of sustainable private sector
- MVO Nederland and Originate to bring in experience in organizing SME’s

Next Steps
1. Identifying local ownership
2. Define development process and steps
3. Write outlines of organization plan
4. Find private (partner contribution) and public (subsidies) finance
Case 9
Old Town Centre as One Big Hotel

Background
Travellers like to see the old ‘charm’ of the village and its buildings. During our visit to Kudhes we discovered funds which we used for the restoration of the old houses. Unfortunately, these houses are only renovated from the outside and therefore not suitable for travellers yet.

An example of a best practice in Greece is Aristi Mountain Resort and Villas. This gathering of houses is part of a little village and has beautifully renovated traditional old houses, that now serve as one hotel. We see a potential similar concept for Kudhes.

Potential Business Case
Renovating the old houses’ interior as well as roofing and using the same model as it has been used in Aristi, would provide an offering for travellers benefitting both from the authentic and small scale look and feel as well as the advantages of having the services and the amenity of the big scale resorts.

Aristi, the resort is highly ranked, fully booked and provides prices of €100 per night! It has even been the winner of “World Luxury Hotel Awards” and has been taken in the collection of “National Geographic Unique Lodges of The World”. Because of its quality this kind of promotion is possible: contributes to a higher value and opens doors to potential tourists who are interested in such authentic and unique places.

Potential Project Partners
- Locally: owners of individual houses.
- On a national level, Initiators of current renovations (e.g. southern development organisation), ministry of tourism for development of pilot, micro credit institutions or larger banks for higher profile approach.
- Internationally: investors and or donors.

Next Steps
1. A model needs to be developed for fair earnings: how to make sure the owners earn a decent percentage? The model should also include guidelines on “how to rent your house”.
2. In addition, people need to be found who are interested in taking the responsibility of being the coordinator of the “Hotel” or resort.
3. Identify the owners of the potential houses and their willingness and ability to invest.

Two potential avenues:
- Low profile: find person that manages 3 to 4 units as separate airbnbs or brings together owners to equip their houses and put online.
- High profile: Find an (international) investor that is willing to develop into a resort comparable to Aristi.

The low and high profile could follow up on each other.
Case 10
Reshaping Public Space

Background

Moving around Qeparo one experiences the national road that passes through the village centre. Vehicles drive fast and they park on the side of the road, often even on the road itself. This results in Qeparo not having public space left and is unsafe for pedestrians. Other things that stand out are the lack of facilities for children such as playgrounds. Where there could be public space there are walls or storage for fire wood. This has an affect on liveability, atmosphere and economy all year round, because young families with children move away. It is not a good place for their children to grow up.

Luckily, the land use plan for Qeparo and region foresees in a by-pass road to be constructed, which would reduce traffic. This only tackles part of the challenge. The rest of reshaping public space will need a plan that fits the model for development of Qeparo so it will look and feel like a gateway to the Riviera, offer barefoot luxury tourism, have a family atmosphere and radiate tradition and history.

Potential Business Case

Albanian government is currently investing in public spaces at the main tourist attractions such as waterfronts etc. but we believe that an investment into the actual village is even more important.

If Qeparo wants to become the new gateway to the Riviera, this entrance should also be marked and given an “entrance hall”, a place to arrive and orient oneself. Making this entrance as a main square, would not only be more efficient for tourists, but also enhance the social cohesion of the locals.

Around this entrance hall/square basic services could be located such as the outdoor centre and tourist information point.

To avoid risk of cars being parked on the road, more parking areas or plots should be realized. Especially in high tourism season. To keep Qeparo authentic and beautiful, the parking spaces need to be designed as a green space.
“Our children have no place to go to when they want to be outside, no sidewalks, no playground. Just the beach.”

- Local Entrepreneur

Potential Project Partners

- Major of Himara municipality, surrounding café’s and businesses
- URI, Albanian development fund
- International donors with a focus on infrastructure and beautification
- Cityforster and Open Fabric

Next Steps

Prepare conceptual design with cost estimate and financing.
Case 11
Guidelines for Traditional Building and Public Places

Background
There is a big contrast between traditional and new buildings in villages such as Qeparo. Although new buildings are starting to predominate it is the presence of traditional buildings is that make Qeparo and surrounding villages authentic and attractive for international tourists.

Some of the new buildings are very colourful and use non-regional materials: this disturbs the authenticity of the traditional buildings and therefore the authenticity of Qeparo. Some of the new buildings are very big which disturbs the view of beautiful buildings such as the ancient monastery on the hill at the entry of the village.

The Case
To keep Qeparo’s value high and to encourage the development of international tourism, Qeparo should cherish its identity. The traditional buildings should not be in the shadow of the new build.

The municipality of Himara could develop and implement new and more strict building rules and guidelines which refer to traditional building style and materials. Regarding for instance the types of balconies, colours, roof tiles etc. Strong and unambiguous statements should be made for the use of material and shape design of the building. Also guidelines for urban planning needs to be taken into account so that individual benefit does not overrule the public interest.

Potential Project Partners
- NGOs with a focus on beautification, traditional building and cultural heritage
- Municipality of Himara
- National planning agency and Atelier Albania
- Local community

Next Steps
- The Guidelines on building can be worked out as a first project in the future training facility/community centre in cooperation with national and international knowledge partners.
- By involving community, companies and local government it can be a test case for a public private partnership.
- Communicate in order to replicate. Each village or area potentially has its own specific guidelines.
Case 12
New Road Profiles

Background
One of the unique experiences visitors take home from Albania is the omni-presence of sheep, goats and cows on the road. It is proof of the pure and simple rural culture in Albania and gives a sense of travelling back in time. It is worth preserving as a unique feature of the country.

It does however also create potentially dangerous situations, especially on curvy roads, at night and confronting drivers with a high speed. Local stakeholders have indicated that dangerous roads form an important challenge for them in providing a safe environment for themselves and for visitors.

A Possible Solution
It is not uncommon for example in Switzerland, a highly developed country with a strong sense of safety to also have cows on the roads. It is a sensible, double use of infrastructure, adding also a certain romantic atmosphere.

It needs however to be thought through and the safety and maintenance aspects need to be covered.

Possibly the roads could contain a segment that is multifunctional and can serve for cyclists and pedestrians as well. Cattle path instead of bike-path.

Potential Project Partners
- Municipality maintaining and cleaning roads, giving permissions for passage of animals.
- National regulation for road safety, signage. Insurance companies.
- Countries with similar issues and their own solutions can be consulted on the topic.

Next Steps
1. Investigate current status of measures for road safety.
2. Compare with policy of countries like Switzerland and Italy.
3. Create pilot area -road or village- where possible new approach can be tested.
Case 13
Outdoor and Tourism Center

Background

It is fairly impossible for visitors to reserve accommodation upfront online and there is no central place in Qeparo to make reservations on site. Furthermore, there is no central point for retrieving information on activities (hiking, walking, tours, water sports, etc.) in the area.

Potential Business Case

Tourists need a place where they get all the necessary information about tourism offers, a place where they can centrally book all relevant services for tourists and rent materials like bikes, donkeys, water sport equipment but also souvenirs.

The new central place of Qeparo could be the hub to all activities in Qeparo and its hinterland has to offer. Therefore the centre could be a starting point of the exploration of Qeparo and the surrounding by providing an outdoor (activities) and tourism centre. Both with an off line and online presence. By doing so, the tourist flow will get better and grow, tourism season will be extended and locals can profit of this.

We believe that an online and off line centre is imperative for the success of tourists coming to the region. Moreover, the tourism centre connects accommodation, existing and new activities (such of them mentioned in this report) and will be serving as a spider in the web for the economic growth of Qeparo and its region.

Next Steps

1. Fund a local tourist association
2. Develop business plan, operation concepts for outdoor and tourism centre
3. Generate necessary funds
4. Find local people who would like to operate the outdoor and tourism centre (possibly run by the entrepreneurs organisation)

Potential Project Partners

Locally:
- Owner of the new centre square
- Fotaq
- Municipality to provide upper floor of the existing school building

Nationally:
- Outdoor Albania

Internationally:
- Sawadee

www.travelnt.com
Case 14
Cross Sectoral Training Centre

Background
As a result of the workshops during “The Traveller and the Olive Grove” project the need for training facility in order to improve quality of available workforce was articulated by different stakeholders. At the same time entrepreneurs have shown a need for refining entrepreneurial skills to develop and enrich their product and service to meet current and future (international) demand. At the same time a training and community centre can function as a centre point for strategy and quality control for projects that are rolled out and safeguarding a local model for development of tourism agriculture and food processing.

Potential Business Case
Qeparo’s main income is from the tourism industry. A training centre will contribute greatly to the development of better qualified personnel for sustainable hospitality, agriculture and adjacent value chains. They will have better insight in business opportunities.

The business case for a training concept can be twofold: proprietor of trainings facility can have an income by providing materials and services. Entrepreneurs and teachers providing the trainings can have additional income for their contribution. Students can pay a basic fee for joining training programs.

Long term business case for local government is the creation of more capable entrepreneurs and employees. Create job opportunities, add value to specific regions and increase attractiveness for (international) tourists.

By providing training before and after the high season specific areas will have a longer period of activities. In the long run this training instrument should help providing a tourism and agriculture models that attract other tourists besides beach lovers such as outdoor tourism, bird watching, watersports and culinary tourism, all of which can be developed (internationally and nationally) for early (May and June) and late (August and September) season.

The training centre could aim at entrepreneurs active in tourism and adjacent agro/processing and young professionals until now only working in tourism area’s in high season and afterwards moving to Tirana or Greece. It should service entrepreneurs not only from Qeparo but also around from other parts of the Riviera or even Albania or abroad. Developing such a training centre is not limited to Qeparo but should provide a model that can be replicated all along the coast or inland.

This training concept relies on the principle of public private partnership. 1. The investment in hardware (building and facilities) as well as the first investments in software (setting up organisation and creating curriculum) the government and NGO play the biggest part. 2. The private part of this value proposition lies in the exploitation of the training facility. Research must point out if there is potential in such a model where individual entrepreneur of cooperatives are responsible for the exploitation and have ownership over the curriculum and training programs.
Potential Project Partners

- Embassy of the Netherlands
- Municipality of Himare.
- National operating incoming agents
- Educational institutes (local and international)
- National government, NGO’s interested in capacity building
- Individual customers: entrepreneurs (young) professionals active in hospitality or adjacent sectors
- International tourism partners, tourism and agro associations in Albania

Organisations represented by members of “The Traveller and the Olive tree” team can play a part in hardware and software design as well as support in implementation of plans.

Next Steps

1. Conduct a needs assessment
2. Draw up a concept paper on training centre
3. Connect with potential financing partners
4. Choose location
5. Draft design training centre

Qeparo as Pilot Location

The choice for Qeparo as a (first) location for training centre might seem arbitrary but is based on a number of observations and conclusions of the expert team connected to this project (see information on project):

- It will become the entry point for the Albanian Riviera when road from Vlora is finished.
- It has a scale of agriculture and tourism that befits the concept of training individuals and companies of small and medium size.
- Qeparo has potential for sustainable agriculture and sustainable tourism.
- It has a potentially perfect facility in the old school based at the entrance of the village.
- Qeparo has a number of entrepreneurs that are interested in the concept of organising and developing their area in a sustainable way.
Case 15
Shepard and the Water Reservoir

Potential Business Cases
The ‘Shepherd Path’ is the experience of following the herd alongside the shepherds; the services are two-fold:
1. The daily grazing: from October to June, is a 5 hours track. It starts and ends at the shepherd downhill shed.
2. The transhumance: in June, the herd moves in the mountain for the summer. Is a 2 days track, 2 nights of camping, where the shepherds cook dishes of the tradition. The track starts from the downhill shed to the mountains.
3. In September, the transhumance goes down-hill following the animals from the mountains to the base shed in the valley.

The potential players are the shepherds and the touristic agent who will organize the tours. Further more the uphill shed area needs some spatial design, implying the contribution of landscape architects and architects.

Background
In our mission we visited some shepherds in the inland of Qeparo and Borsh. Having in mind some reference in the Balkans and in Italy, of touristic trails that follow the herds during the transhumance, we found immediate interest in both the shepherds and local tourist operators. Our case study was a shepherd with a 500 sheep herd, who showed interest in bringing tourists along for, obviously, a small sum of money. We joined the shepherd in the daily grazing to understand, together with tourist operators, the level of trekking experience needed in order to frame the perfect target groups: backpackers and trekkers with medium-level experience.

What also emerged from our discussion is the need of a water reservoir in the mountains to quench the herd.

Next Steps
1. Find interested shepherds and start right-away with the ‘daily grazing’ experience.
2. Establish an effective and reliable communication system between tourist operators and shepherds.
3. Prepare a brochure and expand the service to the transhumance that will include food and camping overnight. Make it simple with the description of the services, location of the shepherds and costs.
4. Look for funds to spatially develop the mountain shed area.
5. Implement the mountain shed with water tank, paved gathering point, basic services for campers.

Potential Project Partners
- Shepherds
- Outdoor Albania
- World Bank
- Openfabric (landscape architecture)
- Cityförster (architecture)
Case 16
New Crops, New Possibilities

Background
The company visits, interviews and workshops with local producers and customers such as supermarket owner and restaurant owners the “crop demand calendar” and “crop supply calendar” were designed: Seasonal gaps between supply & demand. Some crops such as broccoli and rucola are in demand by restaurants, but are currently not cultivated by local farmers. According to available data it should be possible (soil, climate) to cultivate these crops.

Potential Business Case
By diversifying the available crops, a number of advantages can be realized. It will improve the variety of dishes served in local restaurants based on local availability. It will provide supply for future farm markets. It will create seasonal focus of certain crops as well as year round availability of others. In general it will contribute to a local sustainable end circular economy.

This calendar and the transparency of supply and demand can be developed for Qeparo but can easily be used in other places as well. It has potential to be transformed into an application for online use or even on smart phones.

Initial investments are small. Limited to purchasing seed material. Most work is done manually, so no additional machinery is needed. Possibly other pest & disease control agents need to be used and purchased. Other inputs similar to those already used for other crops.

Verification of available varieties of crop concerned to meet local conditions.
Coach farmers and/or assist with market contacts in new sales areas.
Cost-benefit calculations.
If more farmers involved --> economies of scale.
Support on cultivation of crops concerned (improve yields, sustainability of system, and high and constant level of quality & quantity)

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“Combine local demand during tourist season with demand for high quality produce in bigger cities during low season to bridge the gap in the calender.”
- Arber Togani, Winner Master Chef Albania

Next Steps
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- Coach farmers and/or assist with market contacts in new sales areas.
- Cost-benefit calculations.
- If more farmers involved --> economies of scale.
- Support on cultivation of crops concerned (improve yields, sustainability of system, and high and constant level of quality & quantity)

Potential Project Partners
- Local Farmers
- Restaurant and hotel owners
- ASCU, Ministry of agriculture, Agricultural University, municipality, NOA micro-credit scheme, donors
- Local consultants, local crop experts. Possibly “Traveller team expertise” as advisor on how to proceed.
This is one of the best cases to be used as “proof of the pudding” if an entrepreneur association would become a fact!

Crop Calendars

2 bars per crop

- **external bar**: current match between supply and demand
- **internal bar**: potential local production
- **drop of water**: extended supply by increasing irrigation (see the aqueduct business case)

- ✦ introduced crops
- ✦ extended supply
- ✗ current supply/demand mismatch
Case 17
Sweet as Qeparo Honey

Background
When entering the southern coastal area one can not miss the bee hives that are scattered over the hills between beautiful fields of spring flowers. The honey from this area is of very high quality and because of typical vegetation has a unique taste. These qualities can be utilised far more extensively when producing packaging and distributing this beautiful product. It is currently sold mostly locally and in bulk. Only sporadically do you see branded products from a specific area. It is an under developed value chain.

Potential Business Case
This business case offers the opportunity to combine agriculture and tourism. And potentially also to extend the tourism season, since stimulating the local honey production can lead to Qeparo branding and can be integrated in a local harvest fest event off-season. It stimulates local co-operation since the local honey producer will have to join forces with the local store, restaurants, hotels and outlet sites. The same channels can then also be used for other local quality products such as processed/conserved vegetables such as tapenade, olives, bell peppers ‘sottolio’, herb tea etc.

This development can significantly increase the income of the bee-keepers by creating a higher-end market for the honey, where the honey is currently much less valued in local markets. A vibrant honey sector also contributes to maintaining local biodiversity and the landscape that bees depend on. It can be linked to regional branding and a harvest fest event.

Local bee-keepers have shown interest and expressed commitment to develop their business.

Next Steps
1. Work on proper packaging and labelling
2. Hygienic processing and comply to (international) regulations
3. Coach producer and/or assist with market entry
4. Make basic cost-benefit calculations
5. Sample the honey for experts and potential value chain partners
6. Find seeding funds for first steps

Potential Project Partners
- Local honey producer(s)
- The future entrepreneurs association
- Value chain partners such as local hotels and restaurants, Himara home grown shop as well as shops in Tirana and Sarande.
- Possible investment partners ASCU, MoA, the municipality, the NOA micro-credit scheme, and donors.
Case 18

Food Processing

Background

Farmers do not cultivate outside of tourist season because of poor market(s) / market prices. Creating a product with added-value that can be stored offers income opportunities outside of season.

Potential business Case

The same as with cases for honey and ham, processing and conservation of fresh produce creates added value by opening new markets that have so far not been tapped into. It stimulates local co-operation since farmers need to interact with local/regional market players such as restaurants, shops, hotels. And if they are not processing themselves then they also need to cooperate with a local processor or cooperate with other producers of similar products to have shared facilities for processing.

The business case offers the potential for significantly increasing the income of farmers, extended from only 2 months to several months + added-value product and adds value to the local cuisine in restaurants, which contributes to the branding of Qeparo.

This case targets farmers, restaurants, shops, and hotels. The approach can also be used for other localities in Riviera and other tourist-dependent production areas. It contributes to agricultural and rural development and to regional branding.

Potential Project Partners

- ASCU, MoA, municipality, the NOA micro-credit scheme
- Donors with focus on development for small holders and agricultural development
- Future entrepreneur association
- Agricultural University of Tirana
- Ministry of Agriculture
- National and international food processing companies
- “The traveller team” may be involved in follow up mostly through our local/national partners, with back-stopping from international team

Next Steps

1. Find limited seeding funds (25,000 Euro per product) for feasibility study and design and sample of new packaging.
2. Make a sample batch, have local restaurants/hotels taste it, get a starter contract for first batch, if successful expand production even further.
3. Coach farmers and/or assist them with market entry.
4. Make cost-benefit calculations to determine economic feasibility.
5. Maximize number of farmers involved to create economy of scale.
6. Support on cultivation of crops concerned will be required: improve yields, sustainability of system, and high and constant level of quality & quantity of produce.
7. Involve future entrepreneur Association