

GREECE

Local development

Location

Archanes

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P6 – Social inclusion & local development

Measure

M19 – LEADER/CLLD

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 55 805.46
EAFRD 50 224.91
National/Regional 5 580.55

Project duration

2019 – 2020

Project promoter

The “Filius Zeus”
“PROTEKTA” Team of
Volunteers of the
Municipality of Archanes –
Asteroussia

Contact

filius.zeus@gmail.com

Website

www.filiuszeus.gr

A voluntary rescue team used LEADER support to obtain equipment to enable the volunteers to increase the range of incidents they can respond to, as well as to raise awareness among the local population about volunteering.

Summary

The ‘Filius Zeus’ Team of Volunteers is an Association of civil protection volunteers based in Archanes, on the island of Crete. In cases of emergency, state agencies contact the team which is ready to offer its volunteers and equipment promptly, and to be of assistance as and when requested. Support from the LEADER programme enabled the team of volunteers to acquire equipment that would allow them to increase the range of incidents where they can intervene, such as in natural disasters prevention and management, as well as to better organise public information campaigns.



Results

In just the few months following delivery of the equipment, the Association has been requested by state agencies to provide assistance in the following cases:

- patrol missions (50) for forest protection purposes during the summer season;
- locating people missing (ten incidents) in remote, difficult to access mountainous areas, in cooperation with the Natural Disasters Special Rescue Force (EMAK);
- providing health services such as first aid (90 interventions);
- helping vulnerable social groups that are affected with mobility restrictions during lockdown (50 incidents); and
- organising (40) community actions (collecting basic goods for people in vulnerable social groups, hosting blood donation sessions, etc.).

Furthermore, the Team has gone on to inform and raise awareness with teenagers of issues relevant to volunteering and responding to natural disasters.

Lessons & Recommendations

- Today, more than ever before, the importance of the role local communities play in volunteering activities needs to be underlined. Local communities play a critical part in developing volunteering as a movement of solidarity and social cohesion. In this context, the mission of the Team of Volunteers is a good example for other areas which may be facing issues likely to be handled in a similar way.

Context

The 'Filius Zeus' Team of Volunteers is an association of civil protection volunteers which is based in Archanes, a town 15 km south of the Cretan capital Heraklion. The Team of Volunteers started with 20 members in 2013, which has risen to a current membership of 70 volunteers. All members received training by state agencies to become volunteer rescuers, so they are competent in first aid, mountain rescue and in dealing with the aftermath of natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes, floods and fires). Two members that received the highest level of training were placed at the head of the venture. They continue to train relentlessly and inspire the rest of the team with their enthusiasm and dedication.

The Team's role is supplementary to the mission of state agencies responsible for civil protection (the General Secretariat for Civil Protection/GSCP, the Fire Brigade, the Natural Disasters Special Task Force, as well as local government authorities). The Team is featured on the official list of organisations liaising with the General Secretariat of Civil Protection (GSCP). In an emergency, state agencies contact the Team which is ready to offer its volunteers and equipment promptly, and to be of assistance as and when requested.

LEADER support provided an ideal opportunity for the Team of Volunteers to become better equipped in fighting and preventing natural disasters, as well as to better organise public information campaigns.

Objectives

The project objectives included:

- improving the equipment available to the Association to provide higher quality services for forest protection, and in the prevention and management of natural disasters;
- informing citizens about the prevention and management of natural disasters and first aid; and
- creating awareness amongst local communities and agencies of the benefits of volunteering.

Activities

As an association, 'Filius Zeus' already had the necessary equipment to provide first-aid services to civilians. During sporting and cultural activities hosted in the wider area the Team was ready to provide first-aid services (for

example, in the event of bruises, injuries, burns, bone fractures, fainting etc.). However, the Team lacked the equipment that would enable its members to help in case of fire or other natural disasters.

In this context, 'Filius Zeus' Association applied for funding under the community-led local development LEADER programme run by the Heraklion Local Action Group which was financed at 100 % towards:

- the purchase of a special purpose vehicle to carry dedicated firefighting equipment, appropriately equipped with towage gear, ensuring its compatibility with official Fire Brigade vehicles;
- the acquisition of specialist mountain rescue equipment (drones, helmets, ropes, safety plaquettes (clips) and belts, drills, a tent and a foldable stretcher, first-aid kit etc.);
- equipment to enable the organisation of public information sessions (a projection screen, a tablet, a multipurpose scanner/printer/photocopier machine etc.); and
- the production of informative and awareness-raising material for local communities on issues relevant to civil protection (information brochures, banners, a dedicated webpage, etc.).



All decisions critical to the various project implementation procedures were adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Team of Volunteers, a process that ensured full transparency and integrity in the management of the resources.

During all stages of the project Team members have been consistently supported by Local Action Group of the Heraklion Development Agency.

Main Results

The project was completed in 2020, despite the particularly challenging circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in just the few months following delivery of the equipment, the Association has been requested by state agencies to provide assistance in the following cases:

- patrol missions (50) for forest protection purposes during the summer season;
- assistance to the victims of floods;
- locating people missing (ten incidents) in remote, difficult to access mountainous areas, in cooperation with the Natural Disasters Special Rescue Force (EMAK);
- providing health services such as first aid (90 interventions);
- helping vulnerable social groups that are affected with mobility restrictions during lockdown (50 incidents); and

- organising (40) community actions (collecting basic goods for people in vulnerable social groups, hosting blood donation sessions, etc.)

Furthermore, the Team has gone on to raise awareness with young people of the issues relevant to volunteering and responding to natural disasters. This initiative has slowly led to the creation of a team of teenager volunteers.

Key lessons

The importance of the role of local communities in volunteer actions needs to be underlined, today more than ever before. Local communities, through their representative institutional bodies, as well as through various civil society organisations, play a critical part in developing volunteering as a movement of solidarity and social cohesion. In this context, the mission of the Team of Volunteers is a good practice example for other areas which may be facing issues likely to be handled in a similar way.



Additional sources of information

Facebook: [protekta.archanon.asterousion](#)

Instagram: [filiozeus](#)