Village Street and connecting road
Restitution in Viscri and Malancrav

Description: Sensitive conservation of natural heritage, sustainable infrastructure rehabilitation
Beneficiaries: Inhabitants of Viscri and Malancrav
Project Implementation: Laslea and Bunesti Town Halls and MET
Timespan: October 2004 – December 2005
Estimated Cost: 186,000 : 10,000 Euro each village street + 166,000 euro for road rehabilitation and minibus
Partners: Bunesti and Laslea Communes and village inhabitants.
Origin: This project originated through a partnership relationship between local NGOs, Fundatia Alba Iglesia, and Fundatia Mihai Eminescu Trust and the councils of Laslea and Bunesti.
1. Title of the Project
Village Street Restitution in Viscri and Malancrav (Romania)

2. Location of the Project and Area of Coverage
Viscri and Malancrav Villages (Bunesti and Laslea Communes, Brasov and Sibiu County, Romania)

3. Justification
   - Many of the Saxon villages of Transylvania have the common problem of village street degradation in structure and maintenance. The functions of effective drainage (of waste water, rain water and livestock water), have been severely harmed as has the aesthetic appeal of the combination of grass, stream and cobbled walkways. Furthermore these villages have connecting roads in serious states of disrepair that is effecting the educational opportunities of the resident children. Two “lead” villages in the MET’s Whole Village Project in Bunesti and Laslea communes have been chosen: Viscri and Malancrav.
   - The seven fortified villages of Transylvania have been inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1999 (extension of the site of Biertan). They are part of the so-called Saxon villages (about 230, most of them being of similar character as the World Heritage villages and situated in the ‘Saxon triangle’).

   - The reasons for this degradation are:
     a) lack of maintenance in bank up-keep, tree management and protection
     b) lack of systematic rubbish clearance to keep waste from blocking or disrupting other forms of drainage and disposal
     c) lack of maintained, streams, wells and troughs for village livestock to drink while not degrading the surrounding drainage system.
     d) inappropriate bank and street reinforcement (with concrete and other materials)
     e) Fatal disease in some variety of pear trees
   - This project aims to both re-constitute the traditional structure of village streets as well as to provide a maintenance system to prevent repeated degradation. Furthermore, this project aims to be a prototype (best practice model) in cost, implementation and management that could be applied to any number of the 230 villages throughout the region.
   - The streets and waste water system have to be conserved and reestablished in their traditional way in order to conserve the values and authenticity of the World Heritage site. They are under threat by degradation and modern construction that cover the traditional constructions and destroy the built environment leading to destruction of the villages.
   - Well known, the fortified churches themselves have received the
attention of several donations and have been partly restored during the last decade. This isolated restitution has not stopped the degradation of the village streets and houses.

- As a consequence, the Mihai Eminescu Trust has set up several house restoration projects and hopes to complement the restoration works with the street’s restitution.

4. Objectives of the Project

a. Long-term objective

Village streets throughout the region to be both hygienically and aesthetically improved – thereby increasing the health and well-being of the inhabitants as well as encouraging tourist interests in the villages (a sustainable income source when combined with guesthouse and heritage tourism).

For this activity to be financed by local village councils and/or village associations that derive revenue from tourism or other handicraft enterprises. This is to be reflected in the best practice model.

For the villages to be connected by usable roads so that the economies and educational needs of inhabitants are connected to the region, rather than being left to wither and die.

b. Immediate objectives

- For there to be an operating bus taking high school students from Malancrav to Sighisoara and back.
- The road from Malancrav to Laslea to be repaired.
- For the Viscri and Malancrav village streets to be both hygienically (see PBN 29 and 31) and aesthetically improved – thereby increasing the health and well-being of the inhabitants as well as encouraging tourist interest in the villages (a sustainable income source when combined with guesthouse and heritage tourism).
- Restore the traditional character of the village streets. The traditional street structure forming an integrated part of the Saxon villages has been degraded throughout the last decade and hereby put in danger the authenticity of the World Heritage site(s).
- A main output (apart from the actual works in Viscri) will be the reporting/evaluation and documentation of the project in order to serve as best practice model for other councils to take up.

5. Activities of the Project

- A minibus and road repair tractor to be bought and the Malancrav connecting road to be repaired.
- Bank work: to re-plant pear and apple trees; prune and graft existing ones (their root systems both support the banks, provide shade for good grass growth, fruit for villages and help sponge up rain water), to integrate willow supports in the riverbank streams (which then grow organically into the soil and need annual pruning; to remove concrete slabs that are separated from the river banks and obstruct the orderly flow of stream water).
- Street level: remove some concrete and repair the street where immediately necessary with cobbles and/or terracing.
- Waste disposal: to organise regular and systematic waste disposal at street level in concert with the village councils.
- Troughs and wells: to repair and re-construct effective drinking troughs at correct intervals throughout the village that do not result in large volumes of constant un-channelled water discharge.
6. Inputs

a. Human: The project will be implemented by a team consisting of project management from Fundatia Mihai Eminescu Trust and Fundatia Alba Eglesia and the local councils of Bunesti and Laslea.

b. Materials: Minibus, Tractor, trees, soil, willow saplings, gravel, stone, sand etc equipment and bins will all be sourced locally using sustainable village resources and craftsmen where possible.

c. Financial:

School Bus and Road Repair:
Minibus: 15,000 Euros
Operation and Maintenance: 15,000 (over 3 years)
Road Repair Tractor: 16,000
Road Repair manpower: 13,000
Road Repair materials etc: 120,000

Streets (each village cost): 10,000 euros
Bank and street and trough work: 6,500 Euro
Waste disposal: 1,000 Euro
Technical Supervision 1,500 Euro
Documentation and Reporting (Best Practice): 1 000 Euro
Total: 10 000 Euro

7. Requirements from outside the project
Supporting letter and commitment of support from the mayor’s office in co-financing – in the first instance to use some local unemployed workers to clear existing rubbish.

8. Calendar of Activities and Budget

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<th>Street</th>
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<th>Oct-04</th>
<th>Jan-05</th>
<th>Apr-05</th>
<th>Jul-05</th>
<th>Oct-05</th>
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Total in Euros 186000

Key
Start
Ongoing
Complete