

## POLAND

# Local development

**Location**  
Miłosław

**Programming period**  
2014 – 2020

**Priority**  
P6 – Social inclusion and  
local development

**Measure**  
M20 – Technical Assistance

**Funding (EUR)**  
Total budget 4 300  
EAFRD 3 750  
National/Regional 400  
Private 150

**Project duration**  
2017 – 2017

**Project promoter**  
Community Miłosław

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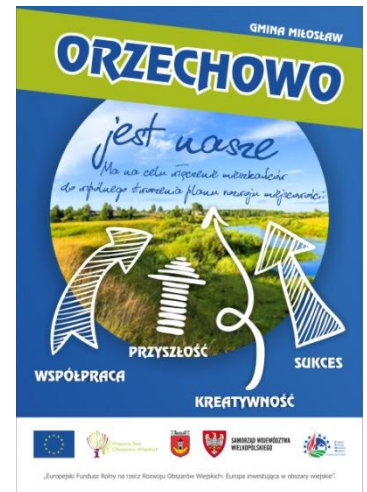
**Website**  
[www.miloslaw.info.pl](http://www.miloslaw.info.pl)

**A bottom-up project that mobilised the inhabitants of a small town to create their own development plan.**

## Summary

Orzechowo is a small town in the west of Poland which was considered by its inhabitants as not a socially active place. To reverse this trend of abandonment, a local association of pensioners decided to take action and revitalise the town by mobilising the locals.

In a bottom-up participatory way, inhabitants completed a questionnaire to identify the needs of their place and the changes they would like to see to their town. An extensive communication campaign helped to disseminate information and activate the locals. A workshop supported by an experienced facilitator helped them to develop their own action plan, which includes a list of concrete actions for helping the local people change their town on their own initiative.



## Results

A development plan was created that runs until 2030 and outlines actions on tourism and recreation; economy and entrepreneurship; transport infrastructure, social activities and aesthetics.

One of the first activities of the plan organised was an old photo exhibition comprising more than 300 photographs from which an electronic database was created.

Participants planted trees and shrubs by the streets. In total 124 trees and shrubs were planted.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Such bottom-up projects can help identify the development prospects of a small town by changing residents attitude towards their place and helping them take initiatives to improve their situation themselves.
- ❑ The success of the project was also the result of the participation of a professional trainer who was also a specialist in local development planning.
- ❑ The information campaign carried out in parallel with the implementation of the planned tasks, had a big impact in the local society and contributed hugely to the project success.

### Context

Orzechowo is the largest town in the Miłosław commune and it was considered by its inhabitants to be not very socially active. The town didn't have a suitable place for meetings and public spaces were neglected. Though Orzechów boasts the oldest wood processing plant in Poland, it is not widely known and promoted as a cultural asset. Furthermore, the town has an attractive natural environment, which was not being promoted among tourists.

To reverse this situation the residents decided to make the town a more attractive place for living and working. In 2016, an association of pensioners was established that identified the unused potential and professional experience of skills seniors, which could be harnessed for the social and economic development of the village.

The call of the Regional NRN Unit of the Wielkopolskie region for projects related to the social and economic development of rural areas was seen as an opportunity. Due to the fact that the association did not have sufficient financial capacity to implement the project, the Municipality of Miłosław was appointed as the beneficiary.

### Objectives

The overall project objective was to increase social and economic activity in Orzechowo. The operational objectives of the project were to:

- Develop a sustainable development plan in line with the Commune Development Strategy for 2016-2022 using the potential of non-governmental organisations, public institutions and business entities operating in Orzechowo;
- Create a map of needs of the various age groups and link it with potential social activities to address these needs;
- Encourage private enterprises to create jobs; and
- Familiarise the project stakeholders with the village development plan and support them in implementing it.



### Activities

The project included the following activities:

- A poster was prepared and printed providing information about the project;
- A survey was conducted on the needs and opinions on the changes and improvements expected by the locals. In total 92 people answered the survey questions.
- A study trip was organised to six towns that implemented similar projects, during which the participants became acquainted with the initiatives undertaken by the inhabitants of these towns. 20 people took part in the trip, who were then engaged in drawing up the Orzechowo development plan.
- Radio broadcasts were recorded and broadcasted by the local radio twice a day.
- Three articles about the project were published in the local newspaper, Gazeta Radio Września. The same newspaper published the survey results presenting inhabitants' needs for the development of the town.
- Three workshops were organised attracting 60 people and supported by a specialist in local development planning. The outcome of the workshops was the Orzechowo Development Plan 2030.
- Task teams made up of project participants were created to implement the foreseen activities.

### Main Results

- The main result of the project was the Orzechowo Development Plan 203, which identified the following domains for action:
  - Tourism and recreation
  - Economy and entrepreneurship
  - Transport infrastructure
  - Development and social activity
  - Order and aesthetics

Within each of the specific areas, a large range of actions was planned to be implemented by local residents in cooperation with local government and the local businesses. Examples of action included: organising bicycle rallies; building a canoe marina; creating a space for outdoor events; developing a land development project for a kindergarten; conducting a study about the needs of the elderly and their potential; and organising a seniors' club.

The implementation of the activities are scheduled for 2018 to 2030.

- Participants also organised a traditional event that takes place on midsummer night, the first for many years.
- An old photos exhibition, 'History enchanted in photography – people, events, places', was organised. It consisted of 300 photographs, which were then collected in a electronic database.
- Pensioner took part in the planting of trees and shrubs in appropriate places, such as apple trees on Apple Street. In total 124 trees and shrubs were planted in the Orzechowo.

### Key lessons

The added value of the project was to examine the town and identify its development prospects. Residents ceased to see only the lack of sidewalks and holes in the roadways, and instead they took initiatives to improve their quality of life, creating spaces for joint activity, and supporting young people.

A key success factor was the focus on engaging a wide range of the local population and social innovation. For the first time in the history of Orzechowo a survey was conducted that allowed residents to comment on the changes that they would like to see and the desirable directions of development.

It was key to employ professional trainer who was also a specialist in local development planning.

The information campaign, which was carried out in parallel with the implementation of the planned tasks, had a big impact on the local society and contributed hugely to the project success.

The project triggered a discussion about the possibilities of Orzechowo. People started talking to each other about what can be changed in Orzechowo. Talks about establishing a non-governmental organisation for the development of Orzechowo became more realistic. As a result, the Orzechowo 333 association was established. Its name refers to the meeting place of the inhabitants of Orzechowa on the Warta River, whose mouth is 333 km from the Oder river. The newly formed association has created a place for rest and recreation called the "nutty corner".

The project is innovative due to the participatory method used in drawing up the rural town development plan.

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### Additional sources of information

n/a