

Creating an Ecological „Village House” in Kóspallag project description

Aims

Local communities often do not know their past and values deep enough. Although this could be the base of such a local identity, with which their settlement and community can value up. Therefore pride, local prosperity, and the desire for doing strengthen instead of being disinterested and the desire for migration. People do not trust each other due to the adverse effects of socialist past and globalism, the gap between generations and degrading communities signifies the countryside. We are looking for a solution to this problem with the present project. The aim of the project is to establish such a new institution in Kóspallag village, which would serve as a village house, as an education site, as a community place and a local product marketing place. The aim is to create an exhibition with real, authentic objects in an authentic building, with which the past of the village can be demonstrated in an interactive way and link up the generation and can also serve as an effective tool for primary education. The new community place of the village house with the objects and education garden gives chance for various community building programs from temporary exhibitions, concerts and folklore dancing events till common fruit jam making and sour cabbage making. According to our plans, we would like to stress the question of human co-living with nature during the exhibitions, in the education garden and in the programs. The above aims can be realised only if during the establishment we try to involve as many local citizens as possible in the common work. The need for creation of an village house has been asked by local NGOs, and our future goal is to involve as many local people as possible into the realization of our common dream with community design methods, and deep-participatory approach. Thus the joint work will serve not only the establishment of a new institution but the development of local community.

Mode of realization

The site owner hires out in the long run the site for the Association. The project has 3 main parts: 1) the restoration of the past, authentic form of the building with the participation of possible most local citizens, 2) the community design of the exhibition and the programs, 3) ethnographic research on the village's past.

Main points

One of the main problem, on which the project would like to reflect, is the cascading of the communities, and the solitude, segregation, which concerns particularly the elder generation. With the reduction of the gap between generations, thus with a more intensive intergenerational communication we can aid elder people to stay as full members of the family and society. The main point of the realization is the participatory design. This has main importance in our view as local people will feel the site as theirs, if they have participated in its creation, otherwise the site will become an empty exhibition. Therefore during the realization we aim to involve people from the widest possible age and social groups to the collective work (although we count with and prepare for the difficulties of this).

Organizational aspects

The project was initiated by local civilians. There was a long-standing demand from local residents to create a local collection, and they required professional help from a team of 12 young social scientists. The plan was finally adopted by the Biber Association, with the support of the local government, the Pandal Association and the Cooperation for Kóspallag Association.

Results

We held the first ethnographic - anthropological research camp in the summer of 2018. We also started the research for documents in Hungarian museums and archives. The members of the local NGOs joined the researchers in the making of the interviews. During our work, we focused not only on collecting the memories of the past, but we also started building human relationships with the elderly, informing them of our plans, and asking for their opinions on the plan of the Village House. At the same time, we conducted a full-scale, professional architectural survey of the building under the leadership of the architect of our project. We made the event completely open, so anyone could come in and get to know our work and future plans. There was a nice number of visitors to the event. During the autumn, we carried out a preliminary inventory of the objects in the house, also as a public event. In addition, a detailed oral opinion on the rehabilitation of the house was given by Miklós Buzás, the main architect of the Szentendre Open Air Ethnographic Museum. In December, we presented a playful, interactive museumpedagogic class to the students of the Kóspallag Primary School, introducing them to the history of the building and involving them in the creating of the museum. In the spring of 2019, we will present a picture exhibition

of the village's history in the building. In February, we are organising an event where we will identify the people depicted on the archive photos of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography and the MTI of Kóspallag with the elderly. During March, we will hold a handicraft workshop, involving locals of several generations. At the end of April, we are holding a Village House Day, where we publicly introduce the idea of the project to the locals with a presentation, we present them good practices of existing Village Houses, and we offer crafts and music programs for all ages. We are already preparing these events. The most important result for us is the beginning of the meeting and dialogue of generations. During public encounters, both young people and elderly have expressed their enthusiasm for the project, which has reinforced the validity of our plans and raised our hopes for the success of the project and the revival of the community.

Finances

Our budget so far

- 1.) We received 150,000 HUF from the President of the Pest County Municipality for the interior of the village house. We have purchased extended licenses for images of the past of Kóspallag from the MTI Archive, so we can legally display images in an exhibition.
- 2.) There are major patrons in the village, who not always support us with money, but with various services. For example, during the one-week research camp in 2018, the 12 ethnographers stayed at the Szépvölgy Guest House for free.
- 3.) We reclassified smaller amounts to the project from other incomes of the Association. For example, for providing food and drink at the open events or buying the licences of photos of Kóspallag from the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, and then framing them.

Future financing

- 1.) We are planning to cover the cost of materials generated by the project primarily from tender sources. So far, the following options have been identified:
 - Folk Architecture Tender: Announced Annually, Reconstruction of the House Covered by 20%.
 - Kubinyi Tender: offers an opportunity to implement exhibitions for licensed village houses.
 - National Cooperation Tender: Operational Support for NGO-s.
- 2.) However, we build on other sources of funding during the project. Until now, the following options have occurred to us:

- Volunteering: the most important resource of the project is the voluntary work of both researchers and civilians.
- Donations: donation collecting concert with local musicians, fundraising cooking and cake sales, fundraising box; “Support” tab on the project website.
- Support of local businesses: it mean both money, or material and asset support, or services.
- Event Venue: if the Village House is ready, the shed and the barn will serve as an event room, which we might be able to offer for rent.