GOVERNMENT OF MALTA

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CELEBRATING

Gozo's Rural Progress

WITH

LEADER



HONOURING THE PAST,
SHAPING THE FUTURE OF GOZO'S
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Co-funded by the European Union

gozo action group

The Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF) has been operating since 2008 with the overarching aim of promoting the sustainable development of Gozo's rural localities, enhancing the quality of life, and fostering economic prosperity across the region. It serves as the Local Action Group responsible for implementing the LEADER Programme within the Gozo territory of Malta, which covers an area of approximately 70.5 km², including Comino.

The Foundation is directed by a Decision Committee (DC), composed of seven members representing both the public and private sectors. Public sector representation includes the 14 Gozitan Local Councils, while private sector members comprise a number of organisations, including the Gozo Business Chamber, the Gozo Tourism Association, the Gozo Confederation of Agriculture and Fisheries, and the Gozo NGO Association. Other organisations may join the Foundation subject to the approval of the Decision Committee. The DC serves as the governing body responsible for the administration of the Foundation and for overseeing the implementation and management of the LEADER Programme and related initiatives.

The GAGF successfully implemented the LEADER Programme in Gozo under the Rural Development Programme 2014–2022 and currently administers measures under the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan (CAP SP) 2023–2027, among other responsibilities.

LEADER Programme

The LEADER Programme (LEADER – Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale) was established in 1991 and is financed through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). It was introduced in Malta under the 2007–2013 Rural Development Programme (RDP). The programme operates at the local level, adopting a bottom-up approach to rural development. Its primary aim is to support small-scale community projects that are innovative, enhance the capacity of local rural communities and business networks through knowledge and skill development, and promote cooperation to address specific local development objectives.

The LEADER Programme entails the establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs) in designated territories. These LAGs comprise representatives from public and private organisations within rural villages, ensuring broad representation across diverse socio-economic sectors. Through the EAFRD, LAGs may apply for financial assistance in the form of grants to implement their Local Development Strategies, which are specifically designed to address the specific needs and challenges of each territory.

In Malta, there are three such territories, each encompassing multiple localities and served by its respective LAG: the GAL Majjistral Foundation, the GAL Xlokk Foundation, and the Gozo Action Group Foundation. Each LAG is responsible for managing the LEADER funding allocated to its territory. For each area, the strategic priorities for funding are delineated in the corresponding Local Development Strategy, thereby providing a structured framework to guide sustainable local development initiatives.



Message from the Chairman

Gozo's journey toward sustainable rural progress has been one of shared vision, resilience, and community spirit. It gives me great pleasure to present this commemorative publication, marking a moment of reflection and pride for the Gozo Action Group Foundation as we celebrate the achievements of the LEADER Programme implemented under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014–2022. Through the dedication of our local stakeholders and community entities, we have transformed ideas into action, strengthened Gozo's rural identity, and fostered sustainable growth rooted in collaboration and respect for our unique environment, culture, and heritage.

As we look ahead, the LEADER spirit continues under the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan (CAP SP) 2023–2027. Together, we renew our commitment to community-led local development – empowering Gozo's people to shape their future through initiatives and impactful projects that enhance the quality of life on our island. Let us continue working hand in hand for the prosperity and well-being of our beloved Gozo.

Joe Cordina

GOZO ACTION GROUP FOUNDATION CHAIRMAN



Message from the Minister

The Gozo Local Development Strategy 2014–2022 highlights the power of vision, collaboration, and European solidarity in serving the community. It demonstrates how local councils, NGOs, associations, and private enterprises have implemented projects across various sectors, including culture, tourism, social development, education, and the environment.

These investments go beyond financial support; they reflected a belief in Gozo's potential, its people, traditions, and capacity for innovation. The projects in this publication exemplify how cross-sector cooperation can create lasting benefits and reinforce Gozo's identity as a vibrant, inclusive and resilient island.

I sincerely thank everyone who contributed to this success—beneficiaries, partners, and the Gozitan community—as their participation brought these initiatives to life. Their collective efforts have left a meaningful legacy for the island's future.

Looking ahead, the Government remains committed to investing European funds to sustain Gozo's progress, promote innovation, and enhance the quality of life for all residents.

Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi

MINISTER FOR EUROPEAN FUNDS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELECTORAL PROGRAMME

Rural Development Programme 2014–2022 (LEADER)

Local Development Strategy for Gozo and Comino

The Rural Development Programme 2014–2022 (LEADER) – Local Development Strategy for Gozo and Comino, prepared and administered by the Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF), provided a comprehensive framework for addressing the island's rural and socio-economic priorities. Developed through a participatory, bottom-up process, the Strategy reflected the principles of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD).

The Local Action Group (LAG) employed a systematic methodology to translate regional needs into six key objectives and a set of concrete actions. These objectives focused on encouraging innovation and sustainability, attracting and retaining young people and families, promoting Gozo's cultural, environmental, and lifestyle assets through collaborative partnerships, and stimulating investment and employment opportunities.



To realise these goals, four targeted measures were implemented. *GAG1 – Gozo in 21st Century Media* created an ICT-based media platform to promote Gozo's identity and foster digital innovation. *GAG2 – A Truly Holistic Gozitan Gastronomy* strengthened connections between agriculture, food production, and tourism, enhancing Gozo's culinary heritage and economic value. *GAG3 – Gozitan Attractions and Innovative Events for All Seasons* developed year-round tourism through different cultural initiatives, complemented by infrastructure investments and innovative events. *GAG4 – Rejuvenating Gozo* improved amenities and community activities to make the island more attractive for residents, particularly young families.

Together, these measures empowered local communities, diversified the rural economy, and reinforced Gozo's distinctive identity – laying a strong foundation for sustainable progress and continued community well-being.

Projects

Funded under Measure 19.2 (LEADER) of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2022 in Gozo

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01.

NAME OF PROJECT

Timeline Gozo

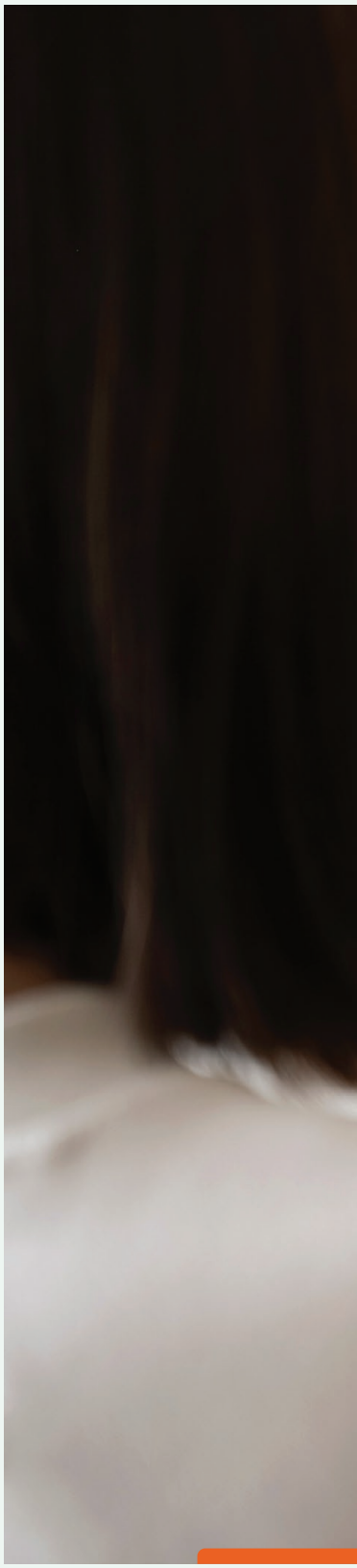
BENEFICIARY

Harbour Solutions

PARTNERS

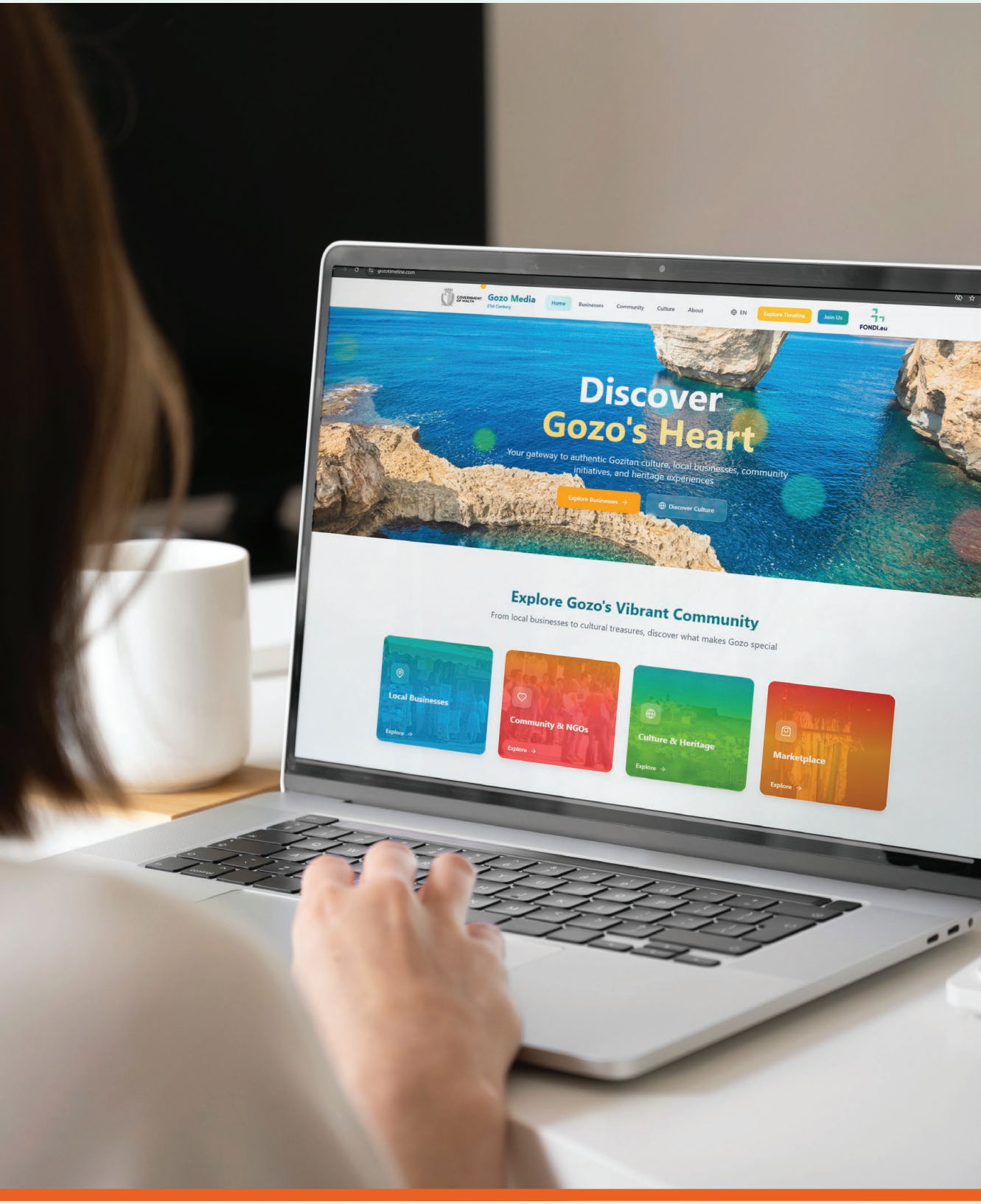
Gozo Business Chamber

Għaqda Filarmonika Mnarja



TimelineGozo central concept is the setting up of an innovative ICT platform and website that focuses and includes information related to anything that has to do with Gozo. Information related to very diverse topics is presented on the web pages in the form of timelines that include concise excerpts of text organised in a chronological order. It shall be possible for the user to select and display more than one timeline on the same webpage, side by side at the same time.

The TimelineGozo website provides the users with the possibility to drill down, investigate, obtain further information and compare to other related topics. This happens in a user friendly and intuitive manner. Information assimilation and knowledge acquisition is greatly aided when the content is presented within a context that is already familiar to the recipient. The TimelineGozo idea stems from this notion. The scope of the project was to provide a digital platform for organisations operating in Gozo that would increase their presence and exposure for their activities, products and services on the internet.


Gozo Media
Home
Businesses
Community
Culture
About
Explore Timeline
Join Us
FONDI.eu
Discover
Gozo's Heart
Your gateway to authentic Gozitan culture, local businesses, community initiatives, and heritage experiences
Explore Businesses
Discover Culture
Explore Gozo's Vibrant Community
From local businesses to cultural treasures, discover what makes Gozo special
Local Businesses
Explore
Community & NGOs
Explore
Culture & Heritage
Explore
Marketplace
Explore

02.

NAME OF PROJECT

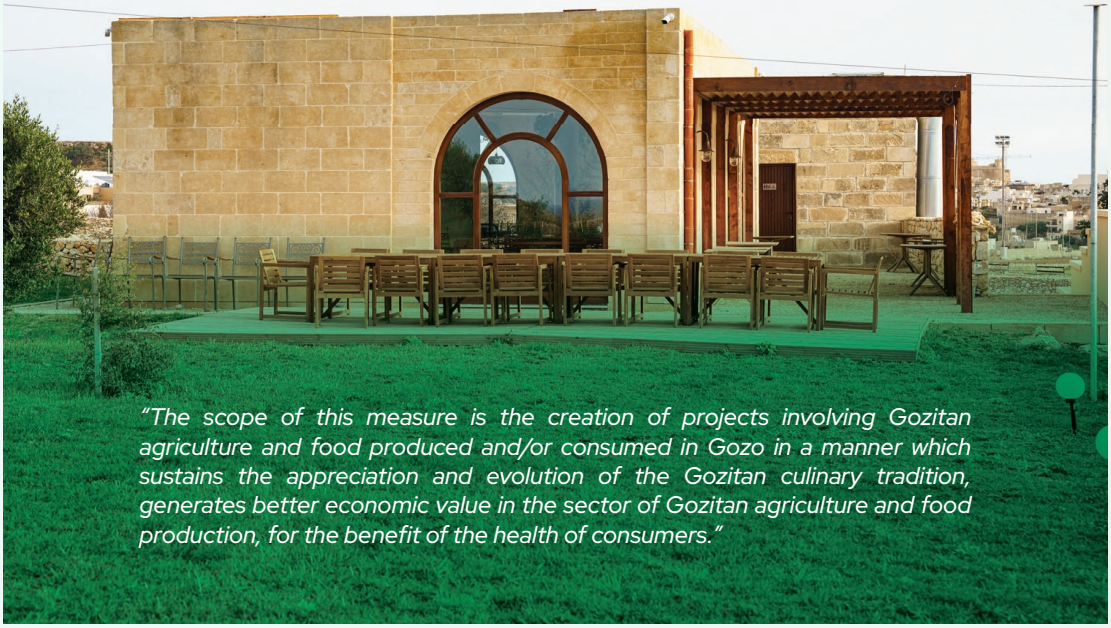
Għajn Tuta Agri Tourism – Eno-Gastronomic Destination

BENEFICIARY

Jochen Tabone

PARTNERS

Stephan Tabone
Fritz Patrick Tabone



"The scope of this measure is the creation of projects involving Gozitan agriculture and food produced and/or consumed in Gozo in a manner which sustains the appreciation and evolution of the Gozitan culinary tradition, generates better economic value in the sector of Gozitan agriculture and food production, for the benefit of the health of consumers."

The project materialised through an 'on farm investment' comprising of a preparation area and restaurant that shall allow for the processing of different agricultural products on farm, including cheeses, meats, carob syrup, olive oil, capers, tomato conserves, jams and herbs, and provide consumers with the opportunity to savour different menus and typical Gozitan foods in an on-farm setting.



This investment enhances the sustainability of the farm holdings in the area, through a supplementary on farm activity, using farm inputs directly sources from the applicants' holding and/or the operational territory of Gozo. This project shall therefore also contribute towards the development of community farming, an aspect that offers many benefits in terms of exploring and developing new and more resilient farming systems by promoting sustainability.

The project also enhances the overall competitiveness through an increase in productivity, ensuring better on farm utilisation, possibly finding alternative markets for on farm produce and providing an avenue to the general public in search of healthy and fresh local agricultural products.

03.

NAME OF PROJECT

The Gozo Conference and Expo Centre

BENEFICIARY

Soċjetà Filarmonika Leone

PARTNERS

Gozo Regional Council
MRC Audit Ltd



The project aimed to create a large space primarily geared towards the organisation of conferences, expos and other events. The space targeted a conference capacity of over 150 people, which will be versatile for various other uses. In fact, the Centre is flexible and dynamic as possible, given it was structured in a way that it can be easily divided in smaller segments to accommodate varying specific needs. The project was an ambitious one and continuous development is in the pipeline in order to update the technological aspects of the centre and also ensure a wider utilisation of the centre in the years to come.

The centre was aimed to repurpose an existing unused and dilapidated space whilst also merging it with another hall. This enabled the project to be not only environment-friendly but also cost-effective. The project specifically aimed to cater for a new touristic niche for Gozo where international conferences are targeted and brought to the island. The touristic opportunity of this project is unique and the team believed that such a project has the potential to attract a new type of tourism to Gozo.

Furthermore, the project aimed at creating two annual themed events to develop more awareness on the region's climate and environmental responsibilities, making it a better touristic destination and exhibit the island's unique cultural heritage. The events which were organised also brought a number of interested visitors to the centre.



04.

NAME OF PROJECT

Identity of an Island – Gozo: Art between past and present

BENEFICIARY

Soċjetà Filarmonika La Stella

PARTNERS

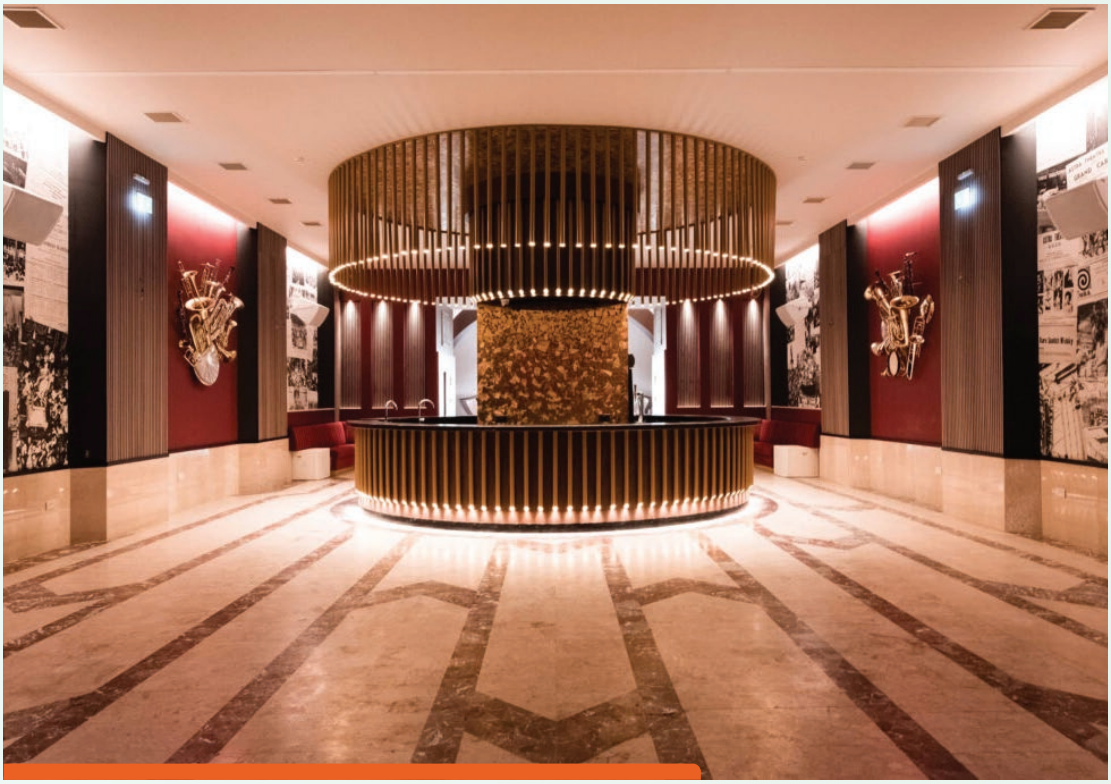
Rabat Città Victoria Local Council
Andrew Portelli

This project transformed a prime site area into a fully equipped space to house and promote various forms of artistic expression and enhance the experience to visitors. The large element of the project's investment was directed towards the site of Teatru Astra – in view of this extensive footprint which was underutilised/unutilised potential and in dire need for refurbishment.

The Soċjetà Filarmonika La Stella also presented a series of events which were held in 2022 and showcased the island's identity, culture, architecture and arts in its widest form in the newly refurbished spaces, principally at Teatru Astra. The newly refurbished spaces, through this project, were reimagined and for the first time hosted a large-scale collective art exhibition and conferences, concerts, amongst other events. It is expected that on the basis of such experience, further initiatives are then taken in the future, especially in view of the potential that the refurbishment project created.







05.

NAME OF PROJECT

Enhancing the locality's environmental, cultural and artistic value

BENEFICIARY

Munxar Local Council

PARTNERS

Sezzjoni Żagħżagħ Pawlini Munxarin
Munxar Falcons F.C.
Gozo Tourism Association



The main scope of the project was twofold: investment in a Natura 2000 site, thus enhancing the environmental aspect of the locality of Munxar, and the promotion of the Gozitan lifestyle within the locality in order to attract tourists during the off-peak season.

The investment completed a revamp of the green belt between Munxar and Fontana, and created also a belvedere and the regeneration of a public garden within the area.

In addition to the physical investments, activities which contributed and supported local traditions such as fireworks and local cuisine, were organised, showcasing also local talent. In fact, these events focused on promoting traditional Maltese cuisine and locally produced wine, and gave also a platform for performances by local renowned artists.

These activities were held in the area in which the physical intervention was completed, creating the necessary synergy between the infrastructure developed and the events presented.

The project planned to demonstrate and promote the Gozitan lifestyle and cultural heritage, whilst strengthening Gozo's tourism offering.



06.

NAME OF PROJECT

Regional Astronomy Park

BENEFICIARY

Għarb Local Council

PARTNERS

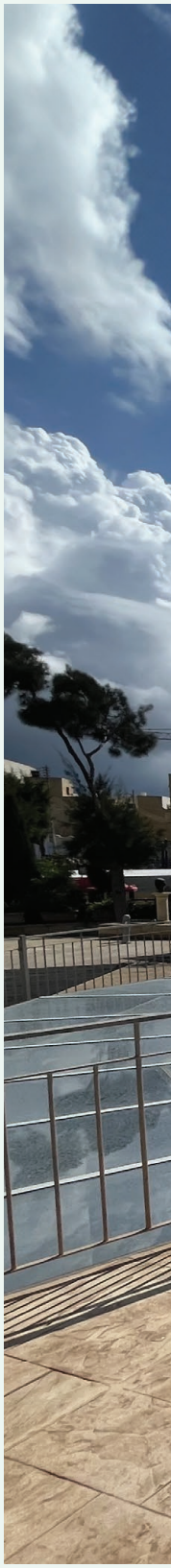
Għaqda Mużikali Viżitazzjoni
Gozo Village Holidays

The Għarb Local Council together with the partners in the project, Gozo Village Holidays and Għaqda Mużikali Viżitazzjoni, have managed to create an attraction in the locality of Għarb – the Gozo Astronomy Park – dedicated to space experiences and education.

This park has created a set of science and learning assets that will further attract additional tourism to Gozo and Għarb including tourism coming from Malta and from international travellers visiting the islands. Moreover, these new facilities are also available for the population of Gozo, including schools (STEM), Further Education, special interest and hobby groups, universities and the general population.

The Astronomy Park includes a metal and glass structure with an observatory with a highly professional telescope which gives a unique experience to all amateur astronomers, ecologists, engineers and much more.

Events have also been carried out in line with this project where a good number of enthusiasts and the public in general have attended and participated to these extraordinary events.





07.

NAME OF PROJECT

Enhancing the rural artistic characteristics of San Lawrenz

BENEFICIARY

San Lawrenz Local Council

PARTNERS

Ta' Ċangura Folk Group San Lawrenz
St Laurence Spurs F.C.
Gozo Business Chamber





The main objectives of this project were to develop all-season attractions based on Gozo's cultural and natural heritage to target Gozo's tourism seasonality. Specific events were implemented throughout the project's duration that created a synergy between interventions, as well as effective collaboration and networking between different stakeholders. Specific components included infrastructural works for an Art Residency Hall, astronomical installations, a business breakfast, the Niesna Festival, a 3D Festival, and an Artist Residency Programme.

Scientific content of the unique flora and fauna found within the locality of San Lawrenz was also provided, together with the printing of information booklets and information plates.

The project aimed to enhance competitiveness, innovation and quality of life, in providing a solution to attract off-peak tourism in Gozo through the undertaking of complementary infrastructural developments and events.

A bottom-up approach was also promoted throughout the project's implementation, where close collaboration was held between NGOs, public governance and business operators.

Overall, the project saw investment in infrastructure and new and innovative events for Gozo which strengthened its tourism offering across all seasons in a sustainable manner.



08.

NAME OF PROJECT

Frott il-Qamħ u Ilma Ġieri

BENEFICIARY

Ta' Kerċem Local Council

PARTNERS

Għaqda Għajn Tuta Kerċem
Paulo's Restaurant



The project focused on the upgrading of one site – l-Għolja ta' Għar Ilma at Ta' Kerċem – which was included as part of the heritage trail that exists in the locality. Currently, the heritage trail features a number of sites and areas across Ta' Kerċem. In addition, the project also involved the purchase of a *magna tad-dris* – an agricultural machine historically used to process wheat into flour – which has been showcased at one of the heritage trail's locations. This was complemented by an event focused on music, while also highlighting traditional crafts that have been practiced in Malta and Gozo for many years.

The project aimed at addressing and achieving a number of objectives. For the first objective, which focused on developing infrastructure to attract tourists during off-peak times, the project centered on the rehabilitation of the Għar Ilma hill, integrating it into the already established heritage trail. The enhancement focused on various aspects of the site's embellishment and surroundings. With the restoration and upgrading of Għar Ilma, the trail's appeal was further strengthened, making it a more integral and attractive part of the overall visitor experience.



The second objective, which aimed to develop innovative events to attract both international and domestic tourists year-round (especially in the off-peak season), presented two key activities: the upgrading of the heritage trail itself made it more attractive to visitors, and the project delivered a dedicated event that highlighted traditional Gozitan crafts and music.

Ta' Kerċem is also widely recognised as a hub for traditional crafts in Gozo, and the project promoted this cultural heritage through the event. Held at one of the heritage trail locations, a newly acquired *magna tad-dris* was showcased. Craftspeople demonstrated skills such as lace making, glass blowing, and traditional fireworks craftsmanship, offering tourists and the general public a unique insight into local artisanal traditions.

09.

NAME OF PROJECT

Gozo... The Destination of Tales and Trails

BENEFICIARY

Żebbuġ Local Council

PARTNERS

Soċjetà Filarmonika Santa Marija
Nicholas Cini

By creating a link between cultural heritage and creativity, through various events, the Żebbug Local Council aimed to derive the idea of having the Maltese Islands promoted as a staple sun-and-sea destination. The Council aimed to promote the locality of Żebbuġ, the northern areas of the island, Gozo in its entirety and the whole Maltese Islands as a long-year-round destination, by offering a holistic package targeting different tourist interests, including cultural, artistic and religious.



Thanks to this project, the Żebbuġ Local Council and its partners have successfully implemented a comprehensive cultural project transforming the locality into a year-round tourism destination, particularly with the successful presentation of the Salt Festival and the Colours of Spring Festival. Malta's inaugural Salt Festival notably celebrated the traditional salt industry through educational seminars, harvesting demonstrations and cultural preservation workshops.

Thanks to this project, now, a fully operational Visitors Cultural and Creativity Centre (VCCC) serves as the cultural hub, offering multi-lingual information including Braille transcription, audio-visual productions, panoramic belvedere views, and traditional food services, all powered by environmentally sustainable solar panels achieving complete energy self-sufficiency. Moreover, this structure encompassing this centre is the base for the installation of Photovoltaic panels, which are sustaining the consumption for the same centre.

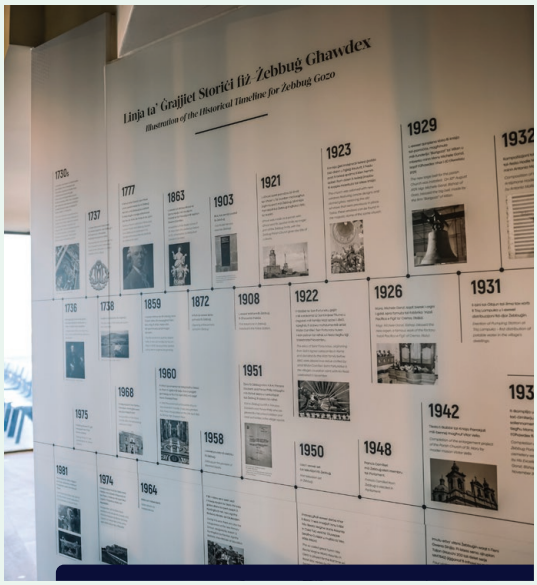






The innovative Heritage Trail connects 15 significant cultural sites through QR code-enabled interactive experiences, providing self-guided tours accessible via smartphone technology.

These integrated projects have successfully established Żebbuġ as a comprehensive cultural tourism destination, promoting environmental sustainability while preserving and showcasing the rich heritage of Gozo's northern areas.



10.

NAME OF PROJECT

A Multi-Purpose Museum for all seasons

BENEFICIARY

Fondazzjoni Belt Victoria

PARTNERS

Gozo Regional Development Authority
GBK (Malta) Ltd



Il-Ħaġar Museum has become one of Gozo's leading attractions, showcasing heritage, art, and culture. This project builds on that success by introducing new permanent and temporary exhibitions that will strengthen the museum's role as a cultural hub.

This project enhanced Gozo's tourism offering through three main interventions at the Il-Ħagar Museum: the permanent embellishment of the "crib space" as a dedicated exhibition area; the installation of an Augmented Reality (AR) system to enrich the crib exhibition; the delivery of six temporary exhibitions and one official crib launch event.





The main investment focused on a permanent nativity crib, installed in a recently restored room. The AR system further enhanced visitor engagement, allowing personalised, interactive experiences. The crib is also accessible online, boosting Gozo's international cultural visibility.

In addition, a special launch event introducing the crib project as a permanent, high-quality exhibit, celebrating the cultural tradition of cribs in Gozo and reinforcing the island's potential as a unique cultural destination was also organised.

Besides, the Museum prominently worked to develop Gozo's year-round tourism offerings through several events. The six temporary exhibitions presented featured artworks by local and Gozo-linked artists, as well as pieces that reflect the island's natural beauty, identity, and character.



11.

NAME OF PROJECT

Valorising Gozo's potential and the quality of life for young persons and young families

BENEFICIARY

Munxar Local Council

PARTNERS

Otters A.S.C.
Munxar Falcons F.C.



The Munxar Local Council, in collaboration with the Munxar Falcons F.C. and Otters A.S.C., invested in a range of equipment to enhance the effectiveness of their operations and improve the quality of their services.

The project aimed to strengthen and diversify their service offering by improving local amenities and facilities in Gozo, thereby enhancing the quality of life for young people and young families. Through this initiative, Gozo became more attractive to this target group and better equipped to adapt to current demographic and cultural changes, ultimately helping to retain valuable skills within the community.





The project included the installation of a synthetic football pitch, innovative safety flooring for the Munxar playing field, and the organisation of a swim polo campaign. This investment specifically targeted young people and young families, providing them with improved facilities and greater opportunities for participation in sports and community activities.

12.

NAME OF PROJECT

Reviving Għadira

BENEFICIARY

Ta' Kerċem Local Council

PARTNERS

Għaqda tal-Armar Madonna tas-Sokkors
Għaqda Mużikali San Girgor



This project seeks to incorporate an informal public garden and landscaping at L-Għadira ta' San Raflu in Ta' Kerċem. This investment is particularly aimed at efforts in improving Gozo's quality of life amenities, whilst giving the region better spaces to be enjoyed by young people and young and new families.

The project has taken place in the area right next to the San Raflu pond, which is a natural waterhole where natural freshwater accumulates and is home to several frogs and ducks. This is an attraction not only for locals, including children, but also for many tourists who are trekking in this area. The need for an area where one can stop and take a rest or have some lunch was long overdue.

Many young families are enjoying this area now that it is embellished and keeping up with the environment. It is an ideal place where one can visit with his family and take children to enjoy, explore and learn about its flora and fauna.



13.

NAME OF PROJECT

Meeting Hub Għarb

BENEFICIARY

Għarb Local Council

PARTNERS

Għaqda Mużikali Viżitazzjoni
Pauliana Said Accountancy and Tax Consultants

The aim of the project was to provide targeted social, recreational and well-being activities to assist young people and their families to reach their full potential. This is to be achieved through a varied selection of educational sessions which will be offered at the Meeting Hub, and includes support to parents on their parenting journey, from getting ready to be parents and giving birth to the child's toddler years and starting school. This is also complemented with sessions helping children with homework after school. Education sessions on topics which improve quality of life are also being held.

The project helps in supporting identified target groups by providing opportunities for upskilling and helping them reach their full potential, creating an incentive for them to remain in Gozo.

This investment specifically outlines this measure's target for development of infrastructure aimed at improving the quality of life and the environment for young people and young families.





14.

NAME OF PROJECT

Sports – A pillar for rejuvenating Gozo

BENEFICIARY

Gozo Football Association

PARTNERS

Gozo Youth F.A.

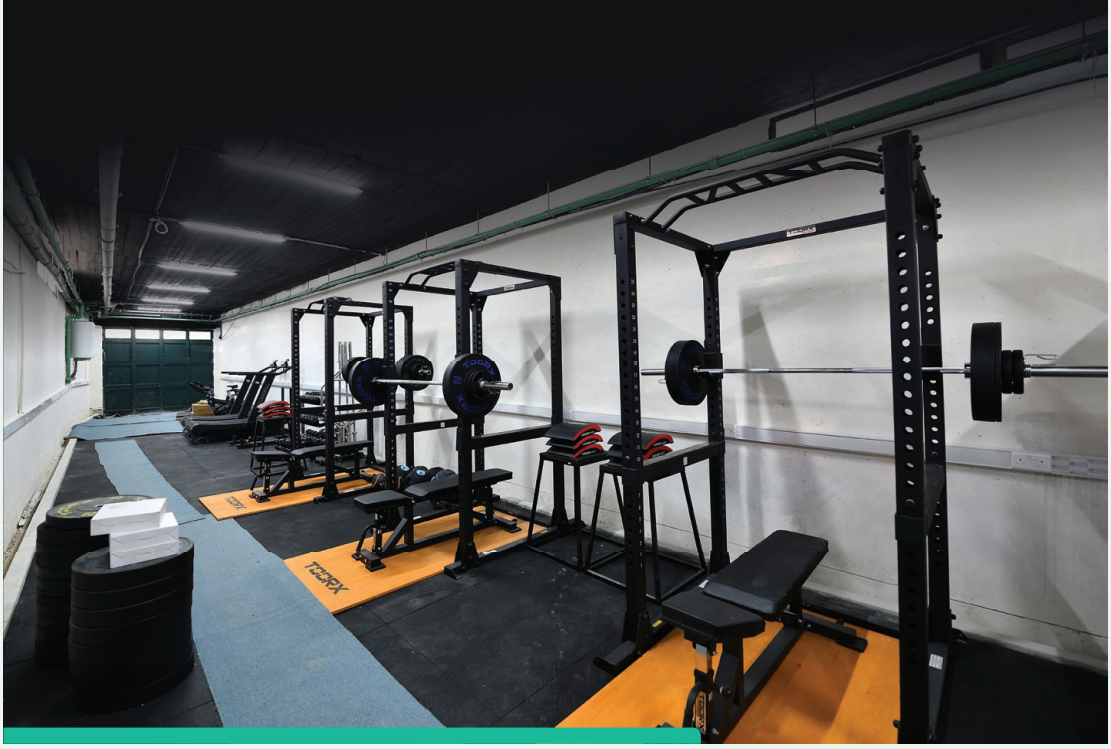
Gozo Business Chamber



The project resulted in the development of a new venue hosted within the Gozo Stadium, enhancing the organisation's facilities through additional investments in sports and sports-related equipment. The newly established venue successfully caters to both the wider community and the member clubs of the organisation, comprising seven clubs in the First Division and six clubs in the Second Division.

The football nurseries, overseen by the Gozo Youth F.A., also play a crucial role in nurturing young talents, emphasising football's integral role in our social and cultural identity.

The venue has successfully achieved its goal of boosting professionalism in football, expanding to accommodate other disciplines. It now serves as a central hub, providing an alternative recreational space for young families and the broader community. The project promotes wellness and embraces a healthy work-life balance philosophy, contributing to the overall enhancement of our community's lifestyle.



15.

NAME OF PROJECT

Elevating and crystallizing Gozo's music potential

BENEFICIARY

Soċjetà Filarmonika La Stella

PARTNERS

DCapital Big Band
Nathaniel Zammit

This project was a targeted intervention within Gozo's flourishing artistic scene, which, despite its vibrancy, sometimes lacked a professional touch. Artistic activity, particularly in vocal and musical performance, has always played an important role in the island's cultural life; however, there was clear scope for a more professional approach that could attain international recognition.

The project, spearheaded by the Soċjetà Filarmonika La Stella, aimed to create a professional space in Gozo equipped with high-quality acoustics and state-of-the-art recording facilities. The initiative provided artists and ensembles with access to professional equipment within the newly built hall, enabling them to rehearse, record, and produce musical works to a professional standard.



Through this investment, the project sought to generate new opportunities for local artists – bands, singers, ensembles, and soloists – while fostering talent that could reach international audiences. It also contributed to business and employment growth within Gozo's creative sector and supported the sustainability and development of local talent on the island.

Ultimately, the project strengthened Gozo's position as a hub for music and artistic production, while making the island a more attractive place to live and work. By providing the community with adequate artistic facilities, it reduced the need for young people to relocate to Malta for creative opportunities, thereby reinforcing Gozo's cultural identity and long-term artistic potential.

16.

NAME OF PROJECT

Għajnsielem Learning Garden

BENEFICIARY

Għajnsielem Local Council

PARTNERS

Birdlife Malta

Gozo Federation for Persons with Disability



The Għajnsielem Local Council benefited from European funds to carry out infrastructural interventions to fully renovate the playing field located in the area known as Gudja in Għajnsielem, transforming it into a modern and attractive Learning Garden.

This initiative provided learning opportunities through play and interaction with the surrounding environment. Its purpose was to enable the public, especially children, to learn about nature within a natural setting. An area was also created where school children could grow their own vegetables and flowers while learning about the cultivation process.

From an educational perspective, the garden included an amphitheatre where students could hold learning sessions and gain knowledge about the indigenous plants introduced in the area, as well as about the local habitats observable from the site's strategic location overlooking a valley. The garden was equipped with informative signage, including visual aids and Braille signs to assist visually impaired visitors.

For adults, the garden featured a *boċċi* pitch to promote intergenerational interaction while preserving and celebrating local traditions. Additionally, the project encouraged active and adventurous play – such as running, jumping, balancing, and coordination – promoting the importance of physical activity in a safe and engaging environment. The space was completed with play equipment designed to inspire action, adventure, and reflection, offering children a diverse and challenging play experience. Full accessibility was ensured for persons with disabilities, and specific activities were included for children with autism.





17.

NAME OF PROJECT

Nurturing Gozo

BENEFICIARY

OASI Foundation

PARTNERS

Athletix A.C.

Friends of the Sick and Elderly in Gozo

The project was a joint multifaceted initiative aimed at strengthening community infrastructure and support services in Gozo. Through targeted investments, it addressed key gaps and delivered tangible improvements for residents.

The OASI Foundation modernised its facilities, making them better equipped to host professional and community events, while ensuring resources remained accessible to the wider Gozitan community.



Athletix Gozo Club enhanced sports infrastructure by introducing much-needed equipment, reducing barriers for athletes and encouraging wider participation. This investment also helps in supporting underrepresented disciplines, providing local athletes with better access to quality training resources.





Friends of the Sick and Elderly in Gozo improved home-based care through essential equipment, such as motorised beds and lifters, that supported comfort, independence, and family wellbeing.

Together, these investments in wellbeing, healthcare and sport created a more connected, active and supportive community, to collectively drastically elevate the quality of life in Gozo and promote a stronger, more inclusive rural community for Gozo's residents.

18.

NAME OF PROJECT

Enhancing Gozo's lifestyle through sports, technology and community engagement

BENEFICIARY

Munxar Local Council

PARTNERS

Sezzjoni Żgħażagħ Pawlini Munxarin
Munxar Falcons F.C.

The project, led by the Munxar Local Council in collaboration with Sezzjoni Żgħażagħ Pawlini Munxarin and Munxar Falcons F.C., has enhanced the Gozo lifestyle and strengthened community engagement through sports, technology, and cultural activities.

The Munxar Local Council invested in the upgrade and beautification of Xlendi Bay, a highly frequented touristic and recreational area. This included the installation of hard stone benches and picnic tables, replacing old deteriorated structures, as well as the placement of new mosaic-cladded planters along the promenade. Together, these improvements have enhanced the comfort, aesthetics, and usability of this popular coastal destination for both residents and visitors.

The Sezzjoni Żgħażagħ Pawlini Munxarin focused on strengthening its role in Gozo's cultural and artistic events. The organisation enhanced its in-house wireless firing system, enabling the synchronisation of fireworks with music in a more robust and reliable way. Beyond this, it also invested in raw materials (such as steel, wood, tripods, racks, and props) to improve safety, staging, and setup during fireworks events, as well as sound and audio equipment to deliver high-quality cultural experiences. To ensure long-term sustainability, the organisation also procured computer and network equipment, allowing it to securely store research, photos, and videos of events, while supporting future innovation. This holistic investment has strengthened the organisation's ability to deliver professional, creative, and safe cultural events in Gozo.



Meanwhile, the Munxar Falcons F.C. invested in new sportswear and related accessories for its youth and adult members. This has improved the overall experience and sense of identity for players while reinforcing the club's ability to engage the community in regular physical activity, teamwork, and wellbeing.

Overall, the project has provided a wide range of benefits from improved public spaces and enhanced cultural experiences to stronger support for local sports. This initiative created lasting value for the Munxar community and contributed positively to the broader Gozitan cultural and social landscape.



19.

NAME OF PROJECT

Rejuvenating the Don Bosco Oratory Theatre for an all-year service

BENEFICIARY

Don Bosco Oratory Gozo

PARTNERS

Victoria Local Council
Oratory Youths F.C.

The Don Bosco Oratory Theatre has traditionally given the best performing arts training and opportunity to showcase the talents of the young generation of Gozo. It is the oldest still-functioning theatre in Gozo (doubling itself also as a cinema), thanks to the continuous presence of volunteers, especially youths, and also to the updating and renovation of the premises and equipment of the theatre which make it still relevant to today's society.

One of the drawbacks was that the theatre had no air-conditioning system. This meant that it was not possible to use it during the hot summer months. Since it always wanted to target the young generation of Gozo, accomplishing the Oratory's mission statement, it was imperative for the young to find the necessary climatic conditions which they find in their homes today.

The project also intended to attract especially the young generation to the theatre during their holidays, offering them a good venue where they would practise their performing arts skills, and showcase them to the general public. Therefore, with the performing arts space having an AC System installed, this offered the opportunity to the young generation to join in the performing arts local sector throughout the whole year and not just in the winter months.





Through this project, this community theatre was further adapted to today's exigencies, thus enticing the young generation of Gozo to "return" to their roots. In this sense, rejuvenating the Don Bosco Oratory Theatre truly meant rejuvenating Gozo!

20.

NAME OF PROJECT

Upgrading the Hall at Soċjetà Mużikali Santa Margerita V.M. Band Club to attract and empower

BENEFICIARY

Ta' Sannat Local Council

PARTNERS

Soċjetà Mużikali Santa Margerita V.M.
OIDFA (Malta)

Over the past two decades, Gozo has experienced a notable increase in outward migration, particularly of young people and families moving to mainland Malta. Recognising the need to improve quality of life and cultural infrastructure to help counter this trend, this project aimed at enhancing lifestyle amenities and cultural heritage assets within the village. The Ta' Sannat Local Council partnered with local voluntary organisations – Soċjetà Mużikali Santa Margerita and OIDFA (Malta) – to create a stronger cultural offering and attract young people and families to remain in, or return to, Gozo.

At the core of this initiative was the renovation of the Hall at Soċjetà Mużikali Santa Margerita, the only large community space in Ta' Sannat. Previously limited in use due to its basic condition, the hall has now been transformed into a modern, multi-functional cultural and educational facility. The project included electrical works, interior finishes, installation of an air-conditioning system, and a state-of-the-art audiovisual system.

The upgraded hall has become a central hub for community activities, fostering greater youth engagement and cultural participation. This investment has not only strengthened the village's social fabric but has also provided a tangible reason for young people and families to remain in, or return to, Gozo – supporting efforts to reverse outward migration and enrich the island's cultural life.



21.

NAME OF PROJECT

Rejuvenating our past for the present and future generations

BENEFICIARY

San Lawrenz Local Council

PARTNERS

Ta' Ċangura San Lawrenz Folk Group
St Laurence Spurs F.C.

The San Lawrenz Local Council, in collaboration with Ta' Ċangura San Lawrenz Folk Group and St Laurence Spurs F.C., has completed structural renovations and upgrades to the parish hall (Ċentru tal-Komunità), the only public community space in the village.

The hall, located in the village square, has long served as a cultural and social hub for over a century, hosting countless events, meetings, courses, and theatrical performances. It also serves as a vital base for NGOs without premises of their own.

This project addressed structural issues through restoration of walls, ceilings, floors, and apertures. Key improvements included the installation of air-conditioning, upgraded lighting, sound, and plumbing systems, and the addition of CCTV and fire safety systems. A modern audiovisual setup now eliminates the need for rented equipment. To enhance the hall's atmosphere and appeal, aesthetic upgrades were also made. These improvements have not only preserved the hall's heritage but have transformed it into a comfortable, modern, and welcoming space, reinforcing its role as the heart of community life in San Lawrenz.



22.

NAME OF PROJECT

Voice for Inclusion Talent Centre: Together we flourish

BENEFICIARY

Voice for Inclusion Gozo Association

PARTNERS

Magic Steps Childcare Centre
Malta Rescue Corps (Gozo)



The project transformed an existing hall in Gozo into a multi-functional therapy centre designed to improve the quality of life for youths, young families, and children with disabilities. The renovation included six therapy rooms, a sensory room equipped with various facilities, a music therapy room, and an ICT room. These additions offered comprehensive therapeutic interventions, making it easier for families to access essential services without needing to travel to Malta.

The primary objective of the project was to provide local, consistent and high-quality therapeutic services for children with disabilities in Gozo. Previously, families had to travel to Malta for these services, which was both inconvenient and disruptive to their daily routines and work-life balance. By establishing a therapy centre in Gozo, the project reduced this burden, allowing families to access the necessary services locally. This led to better developmental outcomes for children, as regular and timely therapy sessions were crucial for their growth and wellbeing.



The project also fostered stronger community ties by enabling local therapists to provide services, creating a more supportive and inclusive environment for children with disabilities and their families. This local support system enhanced the overall quality of life, offering children the opportunity to integrate more fully into their community while boosting their confidence and social skills.

The hall's renovation included gypsum works, vinyl flooring, an interactive whiteboard, and the installation of adapted cinema equipment. The sensory room was equipped with specialised facilities to cater to diverse therapeutic needs, ensuring that each child received personalised care. The inclusion of these varied therapeutic environments supported physical, cognitive, and emotional development, providing a holistic approach to therapy.

Most importantly, the project helped to mitigate the effects of double insularity that had long placed Gozitans at a disadvantage.

23.

NAME OF PROJECT

NEXTGEN Nadur: Rejuvenating Nadur for young generations

BENEFICIARY

Nadur Local Council

PARTNERS

Nadur Teen & Youth Centre
Għaqda Filarmonika Mnarja



The project NEXTGen Nadur, spearheaded by the Nadur Local Council, the Nadur Youth and Training Centre (NTYC), and the Soċjetà Filarmonika Mnarja, was a collaborative initiative aimed at enhancing the living conditions of young people and young families in Gozo. The project focused on providing lifestyle attractions that catered to the needs and aspirations of the younger demographic.

The Nadur Local Council led the renovation of Ġnien il-Kunsill, transforming it into a modern, more inclusive playground. The works involved the installation of new, accessible equipment designed to cater to children of all abilities. This initiative created a safe, engaging, and enjoyable environment where young families could spend quality time together. The inclusive design ensured that children with disabilities could equally participate in play, fostering a strong sense of community inclusion. Additionally, the upgraded playground incorporated eco-friendly materials and sustainable practices, aligning with the project's environmental objectives.





The Nadur Youth and Training Centre investment focused on the critical upgrade of its health and safety features. Recognising the importance of a secure environment for its young users, NTYC implemented several key improvements to ensure that the centre met the highest safety standards.

The Soċjetà Filarmonika Mnarja investment focused on improving music education in Nadur by making learning music more engaging and accessible for the younger generation. The initiative also involved acquiring a wider range of musical instruments, giving young learners more opportunities to explore and develop their musical talents.

NEXTGen Nadur represented a significant investment in the future of Gozo, targeting the wellbeing and development of its young residents. By providing modern, inclusive and sustainable facilities and opportunities, the project made Nadur a more attractive and vibrant place for young people and families to live and thrive.

24.

NAME OF PROJECT

ARB Health and Recreation Centre

BENEFICIARY

Għarb Local Council

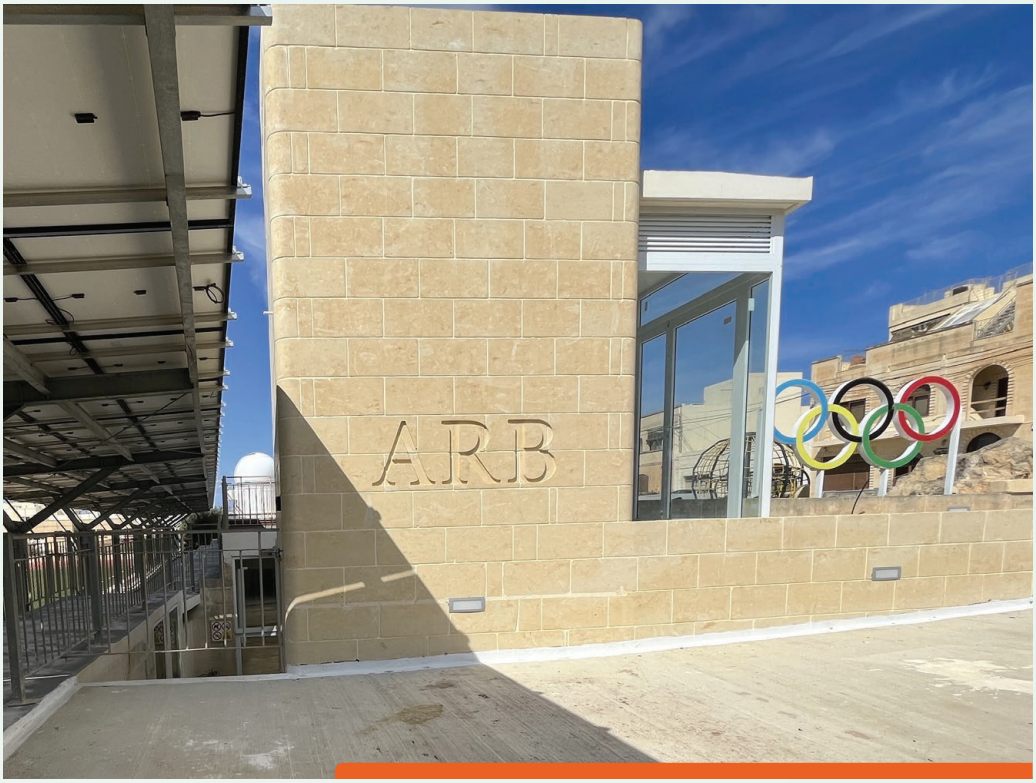
PARTNERS

Għaqda Mużikali Viżitazzjoni
Assoċjazzoni Maltija Espressjon Arti Għarb

The ARB Complex is an innovative project set up by the Għarb Local Council, with its main aim being to improve residents' quality of life. The project promotes security and accessibility through technology, with the goal of creating a space that encourages activities, creativity and public recreation for children, adults, the elderly, and families from the locality and beyond.

Through this project, the Council invested in installing a lift to make the complex more accessible, thereby reaching a greater number of residents and visitors who can benefit from the wide range of services offered in this space. The investment also includes the installation of ventilation and air-conditioning systems in all areas to ensure the highest quality of service.

Investing in such a comprehensive facility benefits the entire community of Gozo and has several positive impacts on the attractiveness of living there for young people and young families.


ARB



CAP Strategic Plan 2023–2027 (LEADER)

Local Development Strategy for Gozo

The CAP Strategic Plan 2023–2027 (LEADER) – Local Development Strategy for Gozo, prepared by the Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF), provides a structured framework for the island's sustainable rural development. Developed through a community-led, bottom-up approach, the Strategy draws on previous programming experience, extensive stakeholder consultation, and detailed territorial analysis. It addresses Gozo's rural character and socio-economic context while promoting innovation, inclusion, and environmental responsibility.

The Strategy identifies seven key needs that guide its vision: diversification of the economy, support for youth entrepreneurship, sustainable agriculture, environmental and climate protection, enhancement of Gozo's lifestyle, preservation of cultural heritage, and safeguarding of traditional values. These priorities underpin strategic objectives that strengthen local resilience, promote sustainable growth, and improve quality of life.

To achieve these aims, four core measures are implemented. *Measure 1 – Keeping the Culture and Traditions of Gozo Alive* enhances community well-being by preserving and revitalising culture, traditions, skills, and crafts, while fostering intergenerational exchange and social cohesion through shared cultural experiences. *Measure 2 – Youth Entrepreneurship in Gozo: Taking Ideas to the Marketplace* supports young people and micro-enterprises in developing creative business ideas and accessing new opportunities. *Measure 3 – Empowering Communities to Act as Environmental Stewards* enables local actors to implement initiatives to improve the quality of the environment of the Region as addressing water conservation, biodiversity, climate adaptation, and waste management. *Measure 4 – Promoting Health and Sustainable Lifestyles in Gozo* encourages well-being through improved public spaces, supporting local gastronomy and healthy diets, and initiatives supporting physical and mental health.

Together, these measures reinforce Gozo's identity, resilience, and sustainability, fostering innovation, inclusiveness, and cultural continuity while enabling the community to flourish.



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