

→ Training of Trainers to improve EU projects' capacity

Country Romania

Project title Creating a ToT team in European project management and EU fund raising

Twinning Municipality of Deventer (the Netherlands)
Sibiu County Council (Romania)

Project period 1 August 2006 to 30 September 2007

Project budget € 55,408

Project objective

Form a Training of Trainer's (ToT) team of 18 specialised staff in project and programme management, including European Union fundraising who have the ability to train and disseminate important information in this field.

Project summary

A change management process at the Sibiu county level was supported by the Netherlands partner municipality Deventer and involved human resources management consultants. A number of on-the-job trainings were held specifically on project and programme management, EU fundraising and information dissemination. Stakeholders were representatives of the municipality of Sibiu, Sibiu County Council and the General Directorate for Social Welfare and Child's Protection Sibiu. In this way implementation at the intra and inter-institutional level within the public administration of the Sibiu County was reached.

Core information

Sibiu County has a population of 420,000 and is situated in central Romania. The economy is driven by several industrial parks in the county and agriculture (corn, potato, barley and sugar beet). Tourism has great potential as there are opportunities for mountain hiking, cultural tourism (museums, historical monuments) and spas. The city of Sibiu has been the European Capital of Culture in 2007, which has brought about a high raise of tourism in Sibiu.

Problem analysis

Sibiu County Council had limited capacity of regional and local governments to effectively apply for and use EU funds. Moreover they experienced a lack of skilled civil servants within the training methods and

A practice to improve internal management of local governments

dissemination of information related to EU funding. The creation of a group of trainers inside the county council was seen as a practical solution to raise the internal capacity for managing projects with European Union funds. Local training providers had a more supply-driven perspective, rather than focusing on tailoring training to the needs of staff.

Project implementation

Four training sessions on project and programme management and two training sessions on EU fundraising were organised. The training targeted subjects as vision and goals, obstacles and priorities, managing risks and expectations, financial management and dissemination of results. Obstacles and priorities were formulated and an internet database on EU funds was developed. A clear model of a successful fund application was elaborated and disseminated. Theoretic trainings were combined with practical cases from the projects developed within the interregional co-operation between Deventer and Sibiu.

Process management

The project produced tangible changes concerning the internal management by increasing the sense of responsibility of those involved, by raising awareness related to the importance of team building and by realizing the importance of communication and mutual information needs. Due to different levels of knowledge of the participants, the training sessions needed to be constantly adjusted to the training needs. A tailor-made training approach was necessary, working in subgroups according to the participants' level. The project resulted in an improved co-operation between the three local and county authorities within the Sibiu county.

Recommendations: do's and don'ts

- Careful selection of the project target group is a prerequisite to achieve project objectives;
- Carefully consider the knowledge level of trainees when designing the training sessions;
- Involve decision makers in project activities and request their full commitment at the beginning of the project;
- Ensure effective communication for the efficient functioning of any organization;
- Involve representatives of several local and regional authorities.