

→ Integrated sustainable care system through public private co-operation

Country Romania

Project title Towards an integrated, sustainable care system through public private co-operation

Trinning Municipality of Aalten (the Netherlands)
Municipality of Swidnik (Poland)
Salaj County (Romania)

Project period 21 October 2006 to 30 September 2007

Project budget € 64,644

Project objective

Provide management know-how and skills to project development and management staff of the county of Salaj responsible for care services to its citizens.

Project summary

Staff involved in care services from the Salaj County level were trained to manage project development and implementation with an emphasis on Public Private Partnerships, communication, access to EU funding and writing projects proposals.

Core information

Salaj county has a population of 250,000 and is located in north west Romania. The county's main activities are industry (cellulose and wood, metal, equipment, light industry) and agriculture. In medieval times Salaj was an important place on the salt route to Western Europe. Tourism potential is high as the area has many churches, monasteries, spas and beautiful natural protected areas.

Problem analysis

Major problems in the county included care for the elderly, mentally handicapped and young people in problematic situations, or in families with problems in the countryside. There were insufficient facilities for the task or experience with involving private organizations. To attract future project funds from various donors, including the EU, skills and experience in project development and management were necessary. Also it was seen to be vital to involve the private sector (in the form of Public Private Partnerships) and to better improve both internal and external communication.

A practice to improve internal management of local governments

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Project implementation

The activities included training in the Netherlands of Romanian participants on public private co-operation, and attracting EU funding and communication with the elderly and young. Assessment of possibilities for public private co-operation was done in Romania and experiences in care services of the training partner Swidnik (Poland) were incorporated in the project. Handbooks for public private co-operation and communication materials targeted at the elderly and young were developed. Furthermore a manual on management of care systems was drafted as well as a manual on project management. Civil servants were trained in principles of public private co-operation and application on EU structural funds resulting in a projects pipeline at the county level.

Process management

Some aspects of project implementation were difficult to implement due to the Romanian legal framework. All the trainings and documents produced were linked to internal management and this process aimed at the preparation of project proposals at the county level targeting different international donors. The main stakeholders in the project were the County Council and its departments, Direction of Project Management, External Relations and Regional Development Direction and General Direction for Social Assistance. The former was mainly involved in management of the project, while the latter was targeted for more technical issues connected to social assistance.

Recommendations: do's and don'ts

- Consider all partners' proposals and views on all respective issues;
- Keep in mind that communication is important in winning support from all parties involved;
- Try to take cultural differences into account and deal with them;
- For sustainable results in training sessions use a high ratio of practical approaches;
- Regardless of the level of development in a country, local communities face the same difficulties which often require similar solutions.