

→ Strengthening internal management of the Department of Social Welfare

Country Romania

Project title Towards vital social welfare services

Trinning Municipality of Zutphen (the Netherlands)

Municipality of Tartu (Estonia)

Municipality of Satu Mare (Romania)

Project period 1 July 2006 to 30 September 2007

Project budget € 69,279

Project objective

Strengthen the internal management and organization of the Department of Social Welfare of the municipality of Satu Mare in their tasks, responsibilities and position.

Project summary

The project focused on improving the internal management within the Social Welfare Department with the opportunity of extending the achieved results at the whole organization level.

Core information

Satu Mare with a population of 130,000 is a town in north west Romania. Its economy is mainly industrial (food and light industry, furniture) and agriculture-based. It is also an important cultural and tourist centre as it has several museums, libraries, cinemas, orchestras and art galleries.

Problem analysis

The Social Welfare Department of the municipality of Satu Mare experienced poorly organized work, unclear staff relationships, a lack of human resources capacity and poor quality of services delivered. The local government decided to address these issues to create more effective internal management structures and better social service provision to Satu Mare citizens.

Project implementation

The project started with an information campaign targeting the main stakeholders. Data were collected to design the new organization chart and to establish job descriptions and an evaluation system. Procedures for communication were designed and an action plan to assure implementation

A practice to improve internal management of local governments

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of project results was drafted. To ensure project sustainability, additional informal training sessions targeting the new Human Resources manager were added to the initial plan of implementation. The results achieved are job descriptions, an evaluation system and an organization chart for the Social Welfare Department. Based on the experiences of the Social Welfare Department an action plan was prepared for extension of results across the wider local government organization.

Process management

In the Romanian local public administration the role of the mayor is crucial. For all project team meetings organized, the deputy Mayor and a local councillor were involved. The deputy mayor's involvement facilitated approval of the procedure manual for co-operation and communication and assisted in obtaining approval for the evaluation system, job descriptions and the plan for applying the results to the entire organization. The local councillor facilitated approval of the organization chart by the local council. Engaging these stakeholders assured a smooth process and further sustainability of the results. Furthermore it became inevitable that the Human Resources department should be involved so as to assure successful implementation.

Recommendations: do's and don'ts

- Closely involve representatives of stakeholders in the decision making process;
- Inform all parties about upcoming changes;
- Political support facilitates implementation and team commitment;
- Extensive communication and collaboration is the key to successfully implementing changes in the organization.