

→ Improving internal management by setting priorities

Country Romania

Project title Training of top management and council in setting priorities within policy documents as to improve internal management

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

Project period 1 September 2006 to 30 September 2007

Project budget € 16,780

Project objective

To train 16 local and regional top-managers and councillors how to co-ordinate their duties and responsibilities to reach planned results by the municipality of Sibiu and comply with the goals of the local development plan (known as Local Agenda 21).

Project summary

The project broadly consisted of two activities which involved the training of top management and council of the Sibiu Municipality and the Sibiu County council on strategic management and priority setting.

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

The main problem identified was related to the insufficient competences and skills of Sibiu's municipal top management and councillors in organizing their activities and setting priorities. Prioritizing tasks was therefore required and a training programme on this issue was provided by the Dutch partners as to contribute to improving the quality of work within the municipality of Sibiu Municipality and the Sibiu County Council. This was viewed as a solution to better respond to the needs imposed by the decentralization process.

A practice to improve internal management of local governments

Project implementation

A training session in setting priorities within the tasks and responsibilities (strategic management) for four local councillors from Sibiu and four county councillors was organized. The Local Agenda 21 was not prioritized as such, but the training session addressed this issue as well, prioritizing a number of its chapters. A second training session was organized for 4 local top-managers from the municipality of Sibiu and 4 top managers from the Sibiu County Council. An important achievement is that the participants acknowledged the need for the local and county administration to get organized. Moreover, due to the combination of theory with practical sessions, the Romanian participants got the chance to implement the knowledge acquired directly into practice.

Process management

The project generated modifications by raising awareness concerning the importance of long term planning versus an incremental approach to tasks. The inclusion of both local and county council decision makers and top management in the training was intended to bring benefits in the planning process at those levels. Most departments from the county and local level were represented at the training sessions to ensure better inter-departmental co-operation in the longer term.

Recommendations: do's and don'ts

- At the design of the proposal undertake a thorough analysis of the envisaged target group to raise effectiveness in the implementation phase;
- Involve decision maker(s) early in the process to facilitate smooth implementation of activities;
- Good teamwork is inevitable for effective project results.