

→ Remapping of earthquake-affected area

Country Turkey

Project title City information & map system

Twinning Municipality of Rotterdam (the Netherlands)

Municipality of Gölcük (Turkey)

Project period 1 December 2006 to 30 September 2007

Project budget € 59,207

Project objective

Improvement of the quality of public services through the updating of the information and map system of Gölcük municipality to facilitate faster and better targeted public services for citizens and businesses.

Project summary

The project targeted the upgrading of the information system and mapping of the municipality of Gölcük, affected by an earthquake in 1999. The municipality of Rotterdam supported Gölcük especially in developing capacity and guiding municipal staff in setting up and maintaining the system.

Core information

Gölcük is a district of Kocaeli province and the centre of the earthquake of 17 August 1999, that caused the deaths of almost 20.000 people in the region. The city has a population of around 110,000, has a large naval yard that has traditionally led development in the city. Industry is tending to replace agriculture as primary employer. Gölcük is the local administrative centre serving the needs of citizens.

Problem analysis

City information systems provide authorities responsible for service provision with the latest, accurate statistical, qualitative and geographical information. Gölcük lacked a city information system for Gölcük and experienced a lack of the required skills, staff and equipment. In addition to the fact that many destroyed buildings have not been removed from the maps, many new features such as some 7,000 new homes constructed for those who lost theirs, have also not been processed on the maps.

A practice to improve service delivery of local governments

Project implementation

Implementation started with an introductory meeting in Gölcük with representatives of Rotterdam. Here the decision was taken to purchase such essentials as GIS computer hardware and software for map revision. For some 25 municipal staff, training in the use of GIS/GPS was provided by experts from Kocaeli university and training in the use of the software was started by NETCAD experts. The core team was created and the capacity of the city GIS office was raised by recruiting a university graduate. A training programme in Rotterdam on city information systems was conducted for 12 political, administrative and technical managers from Gölcük. A training manual was prepared on the laws and regulations affecting municipal services, on the challenge of sustainability, and other relevant subjects. It was illustrated with practical examples from Rotterdam. Finally an action plan was prepared to organize the structure and share acquired knowledge and experience on efficient operation of the system.

Process management

The major process of the project was transfer of know-how and raising the capacity of municipal staff for the creation and maintenance of the city's information system. The project required a sustainable and effective working organization structure with well defined job descriptions and effective information flow between the people and the departments. A participatory approach was effective and important. Meeting reports were prepared and distributed to the relevant stakeholders. Decisions were made jointly by the project teams of Gölcük and Rotterdam.

Recommendations: do's and don'ts

- Ensure competence and skills of staff;
- Prepare a manual to guide operational staff;
- As the information and mapping system requires constant updating, maintaining team skills and staffing, the latest information, motivation and dedication all require special attention;
- The system is dynamic and therefore continued updates should be encountered.