

Added Value of Networking



Provision of networking activities for advisors & innovation support services:

“School of Rural Development Animators”

Basic information	
NRN:	The NRN Regional Secretariat of Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship
Keywords:	Rural animators, training.
Coordinator:	‘Association of Goleniowo Powiat Gminas’ Local Action Group
Partners:	The Centre for Local Action Support (CAL)
Resources:	26 603,05 €
Period:	2011 - 2013

Background to the networking/innovation support activities

The NRN Regional Secretariat of Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship (Western Pomerania) took over an initiative started by the ‘Association of Goleniowo Powiat Gminas’ Local Action Group which had first been implemented in 2011. ‘The School of Rural Development Animators’ project had received a lot of attention due to the positive results achieved; consequently the Regional Secretariat of the NRN recognised a need to continue the training programme into subsequent years.

Purpose and description of the networking/innovation support activities

The School of Rural Development Animators is targeted at people whose everyday work is related to the development of rural areas. This includes for example village administrators, members of village councils, village-club operators and all those working for the benefit of rural communities who want to increase their skills and knowledge.

The project assumed that each of the 15 LAGs operating in the region would delegate at least one representative to participate in the training. The training programme - organised for 24 participants - is conducted using participatory methods, according to a programme developed specially for that purpose by NRN Partner – The Centre for Local Action Support (CAL).



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The programme focuses on animating development and encouraging people, institutions, groups and communities to collaborate in partnership with regional and local government institutions and NGOs. The programme of the School of Rural Development Animators is delivered through three, three-day training modules and a study visit:

Module 1 – Myself as an organiser of the local community in collaboration with others.

Module 2 – Knowing your local community. From activity to development.

Module 3 – Mobilising people in to action - building local partnerships.

Module 4 - A study visit – sharing animation activities within the area of Western Pomerania and making best use of the resources available in your area.

Who benefited from the activities and how

The rural animators are the direct beneficiaries of the activity as they are able to improve their skills and knowledge. The main beneficiaries are however the gminas and villages the animators work within, where the implementation of their skills supports more effective and robust rural development activity.

Main results of the networking/innovation support activities & added value of the chosen delivery approach

The programme seeks to improve animators' core competences and skills. By the end of the training Programme it is hoped the animator will have learnt and gained confidence in supporting:

- The development of relationships within the community by building understanding and developing a desire to work towards a common goal;
- Communication among potential social partners through networking and building relationships with and among key stakeholders;
- The process of defining a community profile – getting to know local inhabitants, history, problems, etc;
- Joint decision making through consensus building;
- Working based on the intragroup dynamics phenomenon;
- The involvement and motivation of others;
- Formation of networks – working on boundaries, fostering relationships;
- Management of information and resources.

Animators with these skills can then act as catalysts for successful village and community development.

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Success factors

It is a genuine challenge for animators to watch their local community moving to a higher level of organisation, dialogue and social culture by developing local networks and associations – both formal and informal. Creating mutual contacts and collaborative networking is the key to successful animation and sustainable community development in an area composed of complementary partners.

Positive emotions, being open to change and innovation play a major role, along with the manner of communication, which should be direct, friendly, clearly understood and oriented at joint solution seeking. Regardless of their goals, workshops should be a great social and educational experience to be delivered in a creative atmosphere. The cycle of education based on the methodology of social animation for leaders of small communities in Western Pomerania is to help build and reinforce positive relations which support the development of local communities.

Thanks to this methodology, the participants learn what features, knowledge and skills characterise a leader, how to foster teamwork, what are the features of a local community, what are the models and factors which support and hinder development, why people want to act for their communities, how to establish an NGO and various social organisations, and why to build partnerships.

The School of Rural Development Animators has become such a success that it is going to be organised for the third time before the end of 2013.

Description of NSU and other partners contribution

NSU – financing, promotion of the project

Association of Goleniowo Powiat Gminas' LAG – selection of participants, coordination of the training, reporting

CAL – conducting training

Additional information and useful resources

<http://szansebezdrozy.pl/archiwum/380-szkoa-animatorow-wiejskich-2013>

<http://zachodniopomorskie.ksow.pl/news/entry/3828-szkola-animatorow-wiejskich-2012.html>



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Pictures

1. School of Rural Development Animators 2011



2. School of Rural Development Animators 2012



Source: The NRN Regional Secretariat of Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship

Last Update

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