

HUNGARY

Improve the quality of life in rural areas

Location

Rimóc

Programming period

2007 - 2013

Axis

Axis 3 – Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy

Measure

M321 - Basic services for the economy and rural population

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 210 946

EAFRD 145 673

National/Regional 48 557

Private 16 716

Project duration

2009 – 2014

Project promoter

Rimóci Kobak Association

Contact

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Website

<http://rimoc.hu/ikszt/index.html>

An association used RDP support to redevelop the inadequate building of an old community centre into a multiple service centre covering both cultural and information needs of the local residents.

Summary

The Dr. Manga János Community Center in Rimóc was owned and operated by the local government. However, the center could not adequately respond to the local community needs. The financial resources were very limited and the arrangement of the building was not adequate to hold events and organise other cultural activities.



The local association Rimóci Kobak used RDP support to redevelop the building and organise it as a multiple service centre which would operate as both a cultural centre and service and information point for local residents.

Results

On average, 80 programmes are organised per year in the settlement.

The number of cooperation and joint programmes of NGOs and municipal institutions has increased.

The number of users of the Centre services and information points has increased.

The number of participants in the programme has increased.

2 new jobs were created.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The good collaboration between the Association and the Municipality was crucial in order to ensure the viability of the project.
 - The VAT changed during the implementation phase and this resulted in additional costs. Only thanks to the financial and moral support of the local government, the problem was eventually solved.
 - Post-financing was also a problem as the association was only able to carry out the project by taking out a loan. Due to the small income of the civil organisation, the local government provided assistance with regard to credit interest rates
- ❑ The right people in the right places are key with regard to the preparation and implementation of such initiatives.

Context

The Dr. Manga János Community Center in Rimóc was owned and operated by the local government. However, the center could not adequately respond to the local community needs. The financial resources were very limited and the arrangement of the building was too small for events. There were also no service rooms, the equipment and information system was outdated or incomplete. These bottlenecks made it impossible to hold events and programmes providing opportunities for entertainment, recreation, and cultural activities. As the condition of the infrastructure was unsatisfactory, there was a lack of local community programmes.

This is why the Rimóci Kobak Association - which beyond its environmental protection objectives, it also aims to support local cultural life, preserve cultural heritage and traditions, to organise programs and events – decided to submit an application in order to take over the redevelopment of the community centre's infrastructure and services for the benefit of the whole community.

Objectives

The objective of this project was to transform Dr. Manga János Community Centre into a Multiple Service Centre in which:

- as a communal space it would encourage, coordinate and join up community activities,
- strengthen co-operation
- would provide services and information to the public.

Activities

Specific activities financed for the re-development of the Centre included:

- the floor area of the building increased by 192.22 m²
- a 198 m² large hall was built with associated infrastructure (sound system, stage, chairs)
- set up service rooms including a kitchen, a storage room, a cloakroom and a dressing room
- establish a computer room with new computers, with internet access and available to the general public
- set up smaller rooms (one for 10 people and one for 30 people), where different meetings can be organised at the same time

- make the building energy-efficient to reduce its operational costs
- establish an information and service office where members of staff assist local residents in their transactions with the public sector

The building is owned by the local government and an agreement was signed with the association to take over the re-development of the building, its operation and maintenance until 2019. The association needed financial resources to proceed in the redevelopment of the centre and for this reason they applied for RDP support in a two-turn tender call in 2008-2009. Due to administrative and technical difficulties, the renovation of the building started only in 2012. After refurbishing the premises, finalising the arrangement of the systems and equipment, the building was handed over on the 23rd of October 2013. From 2014, two employees have been working in the centre. The submission of the last payment claim and the closure of the tender was on the 30th of April 2014. Following that, the Community Centre started its operation as a Multiple Service Centre on the 1st of May 2014.

The two employees of the Centre are in charge of day-to-day tasks and organise compulsory programmes and other activities.

Events vary greatly in topic and age of the target group, so everyone can find something suitable. The Centre supports and cooperates with local institutions (schools, kindergartens), non-governmental organisations (Youth and Civic Guard, Sports Association) and non-formal groups. Thus, through jointly organised events, it provides programmes for all local residents.

The commemorations of the municipality and events linked to national holidays are also organised by the Centre.

The centre assists in collecting, documenting and preserving valuable cultural items and identity elements of the local community such as the Rimóc national costumes, dances and chants.

The Centre is also the base for local media and communicates information to the public. It has a presence on the internet and social media sites, and produces posters and flyers, while it plays an important role in the editing of the monthly published local magazine, Rimóci Újság.

Main Results

- on average, 80 programmes are organised per year in the settlement
- the number of cooperation and joint programmes of NGOs and municipal institutions has increased
- the number of users of the Centre services and information points has increased
- the number of participants in the programme has increased
- 2 new jobs were created

Key lessons

- During the implementation of the project, the tender writer who was the president of the Rimóci Kobak Association, played a key role by following the whole development of the project. Meeting the deadlines was indispensable during the project, therefore there was a need for continuous coordination.
- The good collaboration between the Rimoc Kobak Association and the Municipality of Rimóc was crucial in order to ensure that the project was implemented in the best way. The post-financing structure of the project, the financial and professional support of the local government, among other things were critical to the success of the project:
 - During the implementation, an unexpected event occurred: the VAT changed in the implementation phase, which resulted in additional costs. Thanks to the financial and moral support of the local government, the problem was eventually solved.
 - An initial difficulty was the post-financing, as the association was only able to carry out the project by taking out a loan. Due to the small income of the civil organisation, the local government provided assistance with regard to credit interest rates.
- Later on, other local NGOs, institutions and communities joined the project. Nowadays this collaboration continues, so it can be said that

cooperation to achieve a common goal at community level is of great importance to develop both the community and its infrastructure.

- The right people in the right places are key with regard to the preparation and implementation of such initiatives. During the operation of the Centre, it was possible to employ staff who felt and still feel responsible for the operation of the building, the organisation and management of high quality programmes, the development and prosperity of the settlement and the community.
- The success of the project would be greater if the programmes organised in the Centre would involve a larger number of people. Involving the local community to a larger extent strengthens local identity awareness, instils a positive sense of belonging within the community, and countless positive effects. However, taking into account local characteristics (lagging behind, unemployment, ethnic composition, under education), it is clear that this problem requires a more complex solution.



Additional sources of information

www.facebook.com/rimoc.iksz/