


Capacity building for EUSBSR stakeholders
Training on project design, development and planning implementation
Riga, Latvia
6-7 December 2017

	<p>Title Summary and conclusions on “Capacity building for EUSBSR stakeholders” training on project design, development and planning implementation</p>
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Summary

The NDPHS Secretariat (the Coordinator of the Policy Area “Health” within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)) organised, along with coordinators of the EUSBSR Horizontal Action “Capacity”, a training on project design, development and planning implementation. The training was held in Riga, Latvia on 6-7 December 2017 with 20 experts and trainees from Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Finland, Poland and Russian Federation participating in it.

The training was organised for regional stakeholders active in the Policy Area “Health” and aimed to strengthen their capacity in planning and development of regional collaboration projects. The contents and focus of the training reflected the needs and preferences voiced by the participants during their enrolment for the training.

During the first day, ran by the coordinators of the EUSBSR Horizontal Action “Capacity”, the focus was on the EUSBSR in general, and the Policy Area “Health” in particular. Issues discussed included policy impact, flagship processes and alignment of funding with the priorities of the EUSBSR.

On the second day, the NDPHS Secretariat held the training on project development and implementation for stakeholders active in the Policy Area “Health”. The strategic discussions held on of the first day were then framed into a more practical and design-oriented process with project ideas being elaborated on and developed further. This helped to guide the participants to convert these project ideas into fundable projects.

During both days the interactive participative method was used with several breakout roundtables exercises where the participants split into teams, elaborated on the concrete ideas and actions as well as exercised project management tools (Problem Tree, Objective Tree, Logical Framework Approach).

The training was held as part of a project “Support to coordination and implementation of activities within the EUSBSR Policy Area Health” currently being implemented by the NDPHS Secretariat with co-financing received from the European Union Interreg BSR Programme 2014-2020.

The training organised by the NDPHS Secretariat

The main purpose of the training was to develop project promoters' capacity to design and structure their ideas and concepts into viable and fundable project proposals within the EUSBSR framework which would have a potential to turn into flagship projects in the EUSBSR Policy Area Health. Key elements of a strong proposal were discussed, such as how to: present and analyse a problem that needs to be solved; how to identify and formulate objectives, and choose/develop indicators. Risks as well as dos and don'ts were continuously presented and discussed throughout the training.

To make the training pragmatic and useful, already during the enrolment for the training the participants were invited to present their project ideas, which they agreed could be publicly discussed and used as a hands-on experience during the training.

Five participants submitted their project ideas, which during the training were merged into two project ideas and further developed. As being one of the expected outcomes of the process, the participants learned what are the critical elements that need to be further elaborated on to ensure competitive applications and partnerships be put in place.

Conclusions

Conclusions on cooperation between the EUSBSR horizontal actions and policy areas:

- The training revealed a great added value of cooperation between the EUSBSR HA Capacity and PA Health. Cooperation allowed combining human and financial resources towards the common goal. It enabled the organisers of the training to enrich the event and to meet participants' needs from a broader perspective.

Conclusions on project development:

- It takes time to prepare a good proposal and; there is no gain in rushing the process merely because there is a call open and a deadline approaching. Rather, one should take time to analyse the contexts and build a strong and relevant partnership matching the ambitions of the project. A fair amount of time is also needed to understand each other's needs and challenges, which is must if one aims at developing a solid basis for project.
- A strong proposal is based on real needs and successfully combines donor objectives with local demands and user needs. In other words, the proposal should be aligned with the needs of the donor but should not copy donor aims. Instead, it should be well grounded in one's own needs and challenges faced, just as the project partners define them.
- Projects should be planned and presented in a logical manner to make sure that project activities build one on another and ultimately serve the purpose of achieving the project objectives.
- In order to achieve sustainable project outcomes, the project should be able to ensure the results be implemented not only during but also after the projects lifetime by partners as well as by external stakeholders and other end-users.

Conclusions on the role of the NDPHS and future training needs:

- The NDPHS in its capacity as the Coordinator of the Policy Area "Health" within the EUSBSR should create and uphold a platform for project promoters to connect, inspire one another and get guidance on how to further work with the project planning and development phase to be granted the label of a EUSBSR flagship project;
- There is a high demand for further and continued capacity building of this kind, focusing on different aspects and stages of project development and implementation.



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