



Supporting the Local Self-Government Development to Improve the Quality of Life in Rural Areas

LSG Development

Priority 3 Promotion of people to people cooperation

Measure 3.1 Development of local initiative, increasing administrative capacities of local and regional authorities





Short summary of the project

The role of local self-government institutions is increasing rapidly in the context of world economic crisis. The rural areas and especially the areas remote from economic centres suffer the lack of efficient local self-government structures which could be the essential means to insure the needs of the rural communities to be included in the agenda of the regional development and the adequate activities to be carried out in order to meet the demands of rural settlements' inhabitants and to ensure the appropriate level of life quality. The level of involvement of rural communities into the processes of territorial development is low and, as a result, regional authorities even at districts level are not aware of the actual needs of rural areas.

The system of local self-governments in rural areas has its specifics and needs to be supported both in Latvia and in Russia. The local self-government structures become more open for international cooperation and take active part in regional development processes, but need to have special skills and capacity to provide high quality services. NGOs, such as Associations of local governments, have also the need to improve their capacity in order to provide sustainable support to the local self-governments.

This project is aimed at developing local self-governance system in remote rural areas that will lead to improvement of life quality of local communities. Additional support is needed for protection in emergency situations, but daily life as well could be changed by improvement of quality and increasing of the number of social, housing and utility services. The efforts of the project in Russia will be focused on Elder Institute for rural areas - it exists informally, but to make it operational it is necessary to create institutional conditions and elders should be trained to fulfill the representation function. In Latvia the work will be focused on improving municipal policy and LSG practice in rural areas.

Capacity building is another crucial element of LSG development. Relevant studies will be carried out to provide the actual evidence base for the development of the recommendations for regional and municipal levels on LSG issues in rural areas. Part of the project activities will be aimed to enhance productive exchange of experience between partner countries and approbation of best practices, enhancing the joint efforts on fundraising for further common project on municipal level, establishing the sustainable P2P contacts and professional networks among Partners and pilot regions

Overall objective

To improve the quality of life in rural areas of the target regions in Russia and Latvia

Specific objective

- ✚ To increase involvement of rural communities in the regional development processes through catalyzation of the social dialog
- ✚ To improve institutional conditions for LSG system development in rural areas thus raising the capacity of rural LSGs to provide the evidence base for decision making and competence growth
- ✚ To develop sustainable cooperation between Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG) and Association "Council of municipalities of the Leningrad Region" (CMLR) in order to enhance the efficiency and administrative capacity of local and regional authorities and to promote the cross-border contacts

Beneficiary

Association "Council of Municipalities of the Leningrad Region" (Russia)

Partner

Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (Latvia)





Expected results

+ Improvement of the social dialog

- Municipalities and Associations get the actual information for decision making about the level of satisfaction with openness of dialog with LSG representatives and involvement in the regional development (4 public opinion polls, at least 250 inhabitants involved in each)
- Municipalities, Associations and elders get the actual information about the needs, problems and initiatives of the remote settlements (2 focus groups, at least 40 persons involved)
- Improvement of communication channels to promote the more effective dialog between the rural settlement communities and administrative centers (2 public hearings, 50 persons involved)
- Provision of a basis for communication and extended dialog among LSG bodies (LSG forum and publication of LSG Info-Brochure - 300 copies)

+ Education for local self-governments

- Study on rural LSG Best practices and communication to form a theoretical basis of the educational programs
- Educational program including the set of trainings (4 modules, 2 days) for 35 participants (elders of rural settlements, heads and representatives of municipalities, initiative groups)
- Experience of education program included in project report and disseminated through the partner networks of Associations
- 1 study tour to Latvia for 20 Russian participants combined with conference on best practices for no less than 40 people
- Exchange of staff for 8 people
- Handbook for elders in 3 languages (300 copies) and brochure on Rural Elder Institute in Russian (250 copies)

+ Capacity building for LSG in rural areas

- Concept of rural elders' activity based on Study on Rural Elder Institute (disseminated via web-resources)
- Recommendations to local and regional authorities (300 copies)
- Cooperation Agreement between the municipalities of the target region area
- Cooperation Agreement between the project partners (LALRG and CMLR).
- 35 settlements provided with the emergency communication equipment
- Informational materials about emergency communication (500 copies)

Final beneficiaries

- + Local self-governing initiative groups of population
- + Local authorities
- + Associations of local governments in both partner regions
- + The population of rural areas

Duration

12 months

Budget

Total budget: **204 600,00** EUR

Programme co-financing: 184 104, 00 EUR (89,98%)

Project co-financing: 20 496, 00 EUR (10,02%)

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