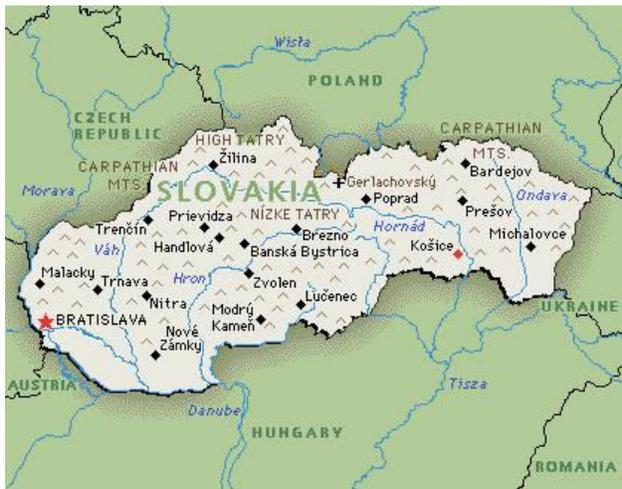


Capacity-Development for Sustainable Regional Development in the Kosice Region in Slovakia

UNDP BRC, 2007-2009

The project provided valuable inputs to the sustainable rural development in the Kosice region as a ‘twin-project’ of the UNDP ‘Cserehat Programme’ across the border in Eastern Slovakia for implementing the same approach and multiplication of its results. It was aimed as a capacity development process that would provide assistance and training to public administrations in the areas of local planning, cooperation and partnerships development for better absorption of EU funds.

Programme background and description. Since the 90s, the Kosice region has belonged to disadvantaged regions of Eastern Slovakia, facing many problems: high unemployment rate, overall increasing out-migration that reduces human capital, lack of modern infrastructure, social exclusion of disadvantaged ethnic communities such as Roma, and significant environmental problems.



Map of Slovakia and the eight NUTS 2¹ regions of Slovakia, including the Kosice region (in yellow)

The project’s objective was to establish a mechanism for partnership, development and funding for sustainable regional development in disadvantaged rural areas in the Kosice Region.

¹ Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics – NUTS statistical regions of the EU

The project was initiated based on needs of the regional self-government authority and was focused on the following issues:

- Strengthen institutional capacity on local level (at micro-regions) to plan, prioritize and manage development priorities in a coherent way thus ensuring sustainable development of the region
- Establish platforms and structures from among local stakeholders
- Identification and preparation of projects for the development of micro-regions, based on local needs, elaborated in cooperation with local partners
- Increase local capacity for preparing and managing development projects and involvement of the business sector in local development processes
- Enhance the capacity of local structures to manage funding schemes, including identification of sources of funding.

Project principles

- Linkage with regional and national strategies and priorities
- Community led planning and project implementation at the local (micro-regional) level
- Integrated and partnership- based approach
- Area based development by focusing on geographical area, a comprehensive people -centered approach and linkage between people and places on shared priorities and opportunities
- Establishment of support institutions at all levels to respond to needs

Key outputs of the project

- Created cross- sector local partnerships, composed of public, private and non-governmental sector representatives in 5 pilot micro-regions (Bodva Valley, Dobsina, Domic, Dusa, Hnilec) in the region which were able to plan and realize common development initiatives
- Integrated development strategies for 5 pilot micro-regions elaborated by the local partnerships, setting development priorities and measures to address them
- Implemented institutional human capacity development on local and regional levels for creating better skills and mechanisms to implement regional and local development objectives
- Improved the access to funding for development needs and provided methodology to sustainable funding at the local/micro-regional level; ensured integration of the community led micro-regional planning process into the regional development set up
- Promoted cross border cooperation and partnership building
- Ensured successful implementation of a micro grant scheme

Project results. The cooperation with the regional government enabled the project to cover the entire region and to harmonize project outputs with regional initiatives. The confirmation that the cooperation was mutually advantageous was the repeated co-financing contribution from the regional partner to the project that altogether amounted to 40% of total project funds.

The most successful project results were the following:

- A number of first time partnerships were established, based on a multi-sectoral principle and with active participation of more than 40 activists in each micro-region. Through the institutionalization of these partnerships, functional boards and working groups, a much necessary synergism was achieved.
- The successful process of building capacities was been evidenced and supported by micro grant scheme implementation and increased absorption capacity within the targeted micro-regions
- Sustainability was ensured through the capacities built up during the project implementation on the level of all involved people and institutions – and multiplication effect was achieved.

Sustainability of the project results. Through the above interventions, the necessary integrated development approach has been elaborated. The human and organizational capacity needed to implementation of the EU LEADER programme has been ensured in the pilot territory, and as a result local communities have become eligible to benefit from the EU LEADER Programme (2010 -), and access the financial resources to implementation of the locally prepared development strategies and projects which it provides.

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