

NEWSLETTER N°4

Newsletter published by "COOPERATION BETWEEN EMPLOYMENT AGENCY OF MONTENEGRO AND SOCIAL WORK CENTRES" PROJECT

Operational Programme "Human Resource Development 2012-2013"

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Persons with disabilities and the RE population are one of the most vulnerable groups in Montenegro in terms of their access to education, employment, social services, etc.

Within the framework of the Component IV of the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance programme project "*Cooperation between Employment Agency of Montenegro and Social Work Centres*" was designed with the purpose to increase employability and improve access to the labour market for persons with disabilities and RE population.

The project started in December 2015 and will run for 18 months.

Project Beneficiary:

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW), the Directorate for Social Welfare and Child protection

Target groups:

- MLSW
- Employees from Employment Agency of Montenegro (EAM) and its local branch offices
- Employees from Social Work Centres (SWC)
- Persons with disabilities
- RE population

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Component 1: Analysis of present situation in the sector of social inclusion mainly in local branch offices of EAM and Social Work Centres including analysis of business solutions and capacities for the activation and support of most disadvantaged groups into the labour market
- Component 2: Conduct series of workshops and joint trainings for EAM and EAM local branch offices, SWCs and representatives of social partners as regards social inclusion policies in Montenegro
- Component 3: Develop and prepare a detailed agreement between EAM and SWCs and its dissemination, as well as to undertake campaign for the most disadvantaged groups (persons with disabilities and RE population) on the new improved working methods
- Component 4: Provide support to potential grant applicants and grant beneficiaries:
 - 4.1. Training for potential grant applicants to ESF (European Structural Funds) type of projects;
 - 4.2. Training for grant beneficiaries on the grant scheme "Implementation of trainings and employment projects for persons with disabilities and RE population".



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TRAINING FOR POTENTIAL GRANT APPLICANTS TO ESF (EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS) TYPE OF PROJECTS

The first step in preparing the training program for potential grant applicants was to assess the current level of knowledge and skills in relation to preparation and implementation of EU funded projects. Therefore, the aim of the TNA was to provide information on knowledge and skills of employees of EAM, SWC, NGO's dealing with PWD and RE population and other social partners' staff related to EU project preparation and implementation. TNA was implemented through e-questioner which was sent to three groups of respondents. EAM regional offices, Social Work Centres and other organisations including: NGOs, Professional rehabilitation providers, Adult education providers, Local self-government units and other social partners. In order to have more in depth understanding on EU projects preparation and delivery project team has organized additional events, e.g. focus group meetings with relevant stakeholders (EAM) and one to one interviews. All together project team has received 217 completed questionnaires and together with the information from the focus group meeting and interviews developed a training programme. Following topics have been identified as the lowest competence from all three group of respondents.

EU project preparation

- Preparation of project budget
- Evaluation of project proposal
- Funding opportunities

EU project implementation

- Secondary procurement
- Risk assessment

Training Needs conducted in the period from November 2016 till February 2017.

The three-day training programme included most important aspects of EU project preparation and implementation. It

should be noticed that from the results of the analysis it can be concluded that knowledge and skills of representatives of NGO's are on a higher level compared to their colleagues from EAM and CSW. This was taken into account during preparation and subsequent delivery of the programme.



Following topics were included in the training programme:

EU project preparation

EU FUNDS CONTEXT (Institutional framework for IPA II funds, programing of EU funds in Montenegro, Responsibilities of Government Institution in EU programing process, Main programing documents, Types of EU projects with special focus on Grant scheme projects, info on structural funds with focus on European Social Fund)

EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (funding opportunities on EU, regional and national level, examples of funded projects from different EU funds, where to find information on EU funds)

PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT (what is a project, project cycle management phases)

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK APPROACH (Call for proposals, stakeholder analysis, problem analysis objective analysis, strategy analysis, logical framework matrix design)

APPLICATION FORM (concept note, full application form)

BUDGET DESIGN



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MONITORING AND EVALUATION.

- In Berane, from 4th to 6th April 2017;
- In Bar, from 10th to 12th April 2017; and
- In Podgorica, from 25th to 27th April 2017.

Training in Berane:



Training in Bar:



Training in Podgorica:



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ON THE JOB TRAINING FOR GRANT BENEFICIARIES OF THE GRANT SCHEME 3.1. "IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAININGS AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND RE POPULATION"

Within 3.1 Grant Scheme "Implementation of trainings and employment projects for persons with disabilities and RE population" nine projects were contracted during end of January and beginning of February:

List of grant beneficiaries and their actions:

1. Municipality of Nikšić, Training and employment of members of RE population in the Municipality of Nikšić – health RE mediators
2. Employment agency of Montenegro, Step up to the labour market
3. Diocese of Budimlje and Niksic, ARTOS – Opportunity for everyone
4. HELP, Social inclusion of Roma and Egyptians through employment
5. Centre for Investigative Journalism of Montenegro, Employ RE population and tell the full story
6. Local Public Broadcaster Radio Rožaje, Encouraging the Discouraged Ones (EDO)
7. Public Institution Centre for Social Work of Bar and Ulcinj municipality, "We care, we act" – Fostering social inclusion and employability of unemployed persons with disabilities from Bar and Ulcinj
8. Centre for Social Work for municipalities Niksic, Plužine and Šavnik, Craft RE Call Centre
9. NGO Young Roma, Waste no chance! – Enhancing employability and labour rights of Roma waste collectors.



On the job trainings were organized in different in forms of workshops and individual meetings/trainings. The aim of the on the job trainings was to provide support to nine contracted grant beneficiaries in all aspects of project implementation, but mainly focusing on secondary procurement and reporting.

The first support was organized after the signature of the contract – project team in cooperation with CFCU and MLSW has organized a two day Implementation workshop on 6th and 7th March 2017 in Podgorica. The first half of the first day of the workshop was organized as a promotional event where grant beneficiaries have presented their projects to representatives of EU delegation, CFCU, MLSW, TA, their colleagues other grant beneficiaries, relevant stakeholders and media.

Implementation workshop

The main aim of the implementation workshop was to thoroughly explain the contractual obligations of coordinator/grant beneficiaries, more specifically - explain reporting and payment arrangements as well as supporting documents that should accompany the progress and final reports, explaining the eligibility of the costs, clarify the procedures related to public procurement; explaining procedures for Contract modification, provide information on the management of the implementation (reporting, financial management, visibility).



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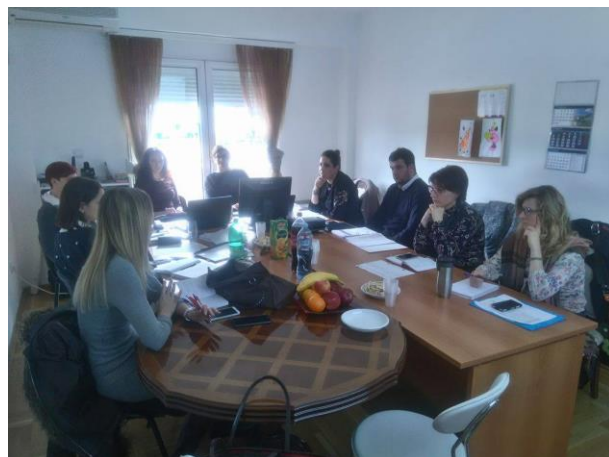
The workshop was a place to exercise together with their colleagues grant beneficiaries their first obligations of grant beneficiaries – development of procurement and communication plans on specific examples from previous projects.



The on the job support through individual trainings/meetings was organized in three rounds:

On the job training – round I

The first on the job support to grant beneficiaries was organized to support them in preparation of procurement and communication plans. Apart from the TA experts at the meetings with grant beneficiaries CFCU - contract managers and financial controllers were presented and as well monitoring officer from the MLSW. The main outputs of this job support were prepared procurement and communication plans. Additionally, through on the job support some of the mistakes in the budget were discovered, e.g. human resource budget lines were planned under budget heading 5. The grant beneficiaries subsequently informed the CFCU on the changes and asked for the approval. The first round of on the job trainings was organized from 8th to 10th March 2017. Representatives of all grant beneficiaries were present on the first round of the job meetings.



On the job training – round II

Second round of on the job trainings was organized to support grant beneficiaries in preparing their documentation for secondary procurement. The support was mainly provided for the single tender procedure. There were two competitive negotiated tender documentations, one service and one supply contract. Also, there was one single tender procedure for work contract. The grant beneficiaries have chosen themselves for which tender procedure they need TA support. The on the job trainings were organized from 29th to 31st of March. Representatives of eight grant beneficiaries were present at the meetings, only one beneficiary was excused due to justified reasons.

On the job trainings – round III

The purpose of the third round of on the job support through trainings was to provide additional support to Grant beneficiaries with their secondary procurement documentation. Only four grant beneficiaries have expressed need for additional support, this includes those with Competitive negotiated procedures and single tender for works. The on the job trainings were organized from 17th to 19th of May 2017.



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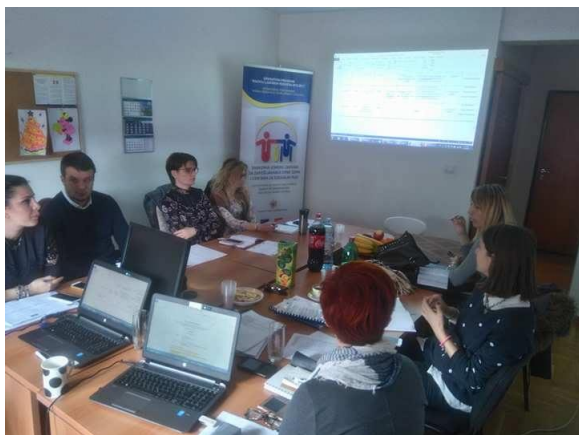


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Workshop on reporting and individual meetings with Grant beneficiaries

The TA has decided to organize on the job support for reporting in form of one day workshop and individual meetings with grant beneficiaries. Two workshops were organized – one in Nikšić, on 7th of June 2017 and one in Podgorica – on 8th of June 2017.



The aims of the workshop were to:

- Prepare the grant beneficiaries to write first Progress Report
- Go through all the elements of the narrative and financial part of the Progress Report
- Inform about the method of submission and

accompanying documentation to be submitted with the Report

- Agree to support the preparation of the final version of the report before submitting the CFCU

Representatives of all grant beneficiaries were present at the workshops. Representatives of CFCU and MLSW were present as well.

On line consultations

Support in preparation of narrative and financial progress report continued through on-line consultations with grant beneficiaries. The on line consultation lasted from 19th of June to 26th of July 2017. Eight grant beneficiaries have asked for support of the TA team for preparation of their first progress reports team through on-line consultations

Individual meetings

After the workshops and first on line consultations TA team has organized Individual meetings with six grant beneficiaries in the week of 26th to 30th of June 2017. . The purpose of the individual meetings was to go through the comments provided through on line consultations, if there was a need, and to go through the supporting documentation which needed to be send with the report.

On the spot checks

On the spot checks are obligation of the Contracting Authority with an aim to check the progress of grant financed project. The on the spot checks are tool for identifying possible risks and problems in implementation. TA team supported the process in conducting on the spot visits in order to increase capacity of both grant beneficiaries and CFCU/MLSW. On the spot checks will take place from 4th to 9th September 2017. All grant beneficiaries will be visited.



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