

FINNISH NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

FEM-project

The National Action Plan of the FEM-project is an upper level plan. In addition, it also includes the action plans of the partners as well as Finnish plans for each Work Package (WP). It refers even to parts of the personal development plans (that are more precisely written elsewhere) of the participating individuals, partners, advisers from FEM's national network as well as the entrepreneurs who are the objects of the measures.

During the project we evaluate and check the action plan together with the Finnish partners every six months. The point is that we examine our own actions.

1. Background

In the administrative structures and regional policy, the feminine viewpoint is invisible. According to studies in which gender is an issue, man is the standard in the administrative structures and regional policy. The objective of the European Union is strong social equality between men and women. The Finnish Government Programme and its Equality and Entrepreneur Policy Programmes wish to bring a feminine viewpoint to the visions and strategies of regional development. The FEM-project aims at changing the structures of entrepreneurship, to activate women and to increase the participation of women in the development work.

In Finland the following organisations enhance entrepreneurship: Finnvera, Employment and Economic Development Centres, Association for Women Entrepreneurs, The Finnish Crafts Organisation Taito, Rural Women's Advisory Organisation and the Regional Resource Centres. During the FEM-project the networks of those quarters that support women's entrepreneurship will be strengthened. By developing the collaboration of these organisations we try to find functional services and structures for the companies.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop the administrative and advisory structures as well as the collaboration networks in a way that especially the administrative structures take the special issues of women into consideration.

The purpose of the project is to develop the strategic abilities of the actors and the impact of the measures.

3. Objective

1) The objective of the project is to develop international collaboration, to increase cooperation skills as well as to create international networks. With the help of developing collaboration and networks we will be able to create new practises to promote women's entrepreneurship.

2) The aim is to develop the strategic and purposeful expertise of the participants and to change through this the national structures.

3) The project becomes a national discussion forum. A genuine development process will develop between the Finnish partners.

4. Means

4.1 Principles that go through the whole project

Equality

Every participant has her own starting points and interests (both on the individual and organisational level). In order to achieve the common goals, every participant has an equal right and responsibility to contribute to the project. The participants are active on different levels of the administrative hierarchy: ministry, regional administration, local administration, organisations, entrepreneurs and individuals. This principle creates influential opportunities and it encourages many actors on different levels. The interaction is equal and has two directions.

Cooperation

Cooperation in the FEM-project means bilateral cooperation as well as cooperation with all participants in a well adapted way for each individual and organisation.

Joint responsibility

Joint responsibility in the FEM-project means solidarity between all participants and organisations and reciprocal good will. Solidarity is based on the idea; both (or all) win.

Collaboration

The principles of solidarity, democracy and cooperation include collaborative thinking. The main principle is that everybody is responsible both for oneself and all the other partners as well, and all partners are responsible for every individual together. In this way each participant has a real opportunity to develop herself and thus to increase the expertise and influential activities of her own organisation.

Learning by experience

Learning by experience in the FEM-project means the way in which everybody observes and thinks about one's own experiences and consciously tries to understand both her own activities in the project, the meaning of the experience one gets from participating in the project and to conceptualize both one's own learning (individual development) and the impact of the project on the development of the organisation.

The fundamental factor in learning by experience is reflectivity; one's own activity, critical analysis and consideration of its grounds and consequences. Reflectivity and learning by experience give us above all material when we evaluate the quality of the project.

Influencing

The FEM-project gives us an opportunity to act in a way that we can through our own actions participate in changing and developing the surrounding society to a direction in which women's everyday needs and livelihood are taken into account. These structures should get developed in a way which makes women's position better and promotes cooperation, partnership and well being between both sexes.

Participation in the decision-making processes

The FEM-project offers the participants readiness, skills and abilities as well as social relationships and networks that improve their possibilities and make them more active. In this way they also get better opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes in society.

4.2 Resources

The Project's resources are the participating individuals and the organisations they represent. The four participating regions each have a budget of 60 000 euros, the Centre of Rural Women's Advisory Organisation has a budget of 25 000 euros and the Association for Rural Women Entrepreneurs has about 5000 euros to deal with. For the organisation of national measures the project has about 16 000 euros.

4.3 Measures

Agreed concrete measures and that will be carried out nationally etc.

In the autumn 2005 a seminar will be organised for the advisers, trainers and entrepreneurs. People work themselves and participate according to the principles of the project. There we shall also prepare the ground for internationalisation and how to give information about it etc.

In the autumn 2005 there is the international seminar in Lithuania where the advisers from different countries present and exchange models, the entrepreneurs as well as different partners meet each other and make contacts.

In the autumn 2006 a common national seminar of the project will be organised where all Work Packages will be united. The seminar gives information and presents some of the best practises of the project. The target group of this seminar are for instance associations and administration.

Both national and regional information meetings will be held during the project. The first one will take place when the web pages of the project are ready in September 2005. The web pages are an important channel. Each partner will be obliged to produce information for the pages. Presentations of business enterprises as well as contacts will also take place through the web. Under the Work Packages partners write articles to different magazines and bulletins about the contents and the steps forward of the project.

4.4 Target groups

The internal target group are all the participating partners and actors as well as entrepreneurs, advisers and Resource Centre leaders.

The external target groups are those who are able to influence structural changes and enhance women's entrepreneurship: ministries, authorities, organisations on national, regional and local level. The media is also a target group as well as the public at large.

4.5 Qualitative evaluation

Qualitative evaluation will be carried out as self evaluation and evaluation. Self evaluation means that every participant regularly gathers impressions and thoughts by keeping a process diary.