

**FEM LEAD SEMINAR
AND NETWORKING EVENT
19-21 March 2006, Norway, Oslo**

20th of March (Monday)

Minutes of the meeting

Steering Group with Strategic Working Group (e.g. Country Lead Partners)

Present: Kaisa-Leena Lintilä, Chair, Finland, Lead
Baiba Rivza, Latvia
Orinta Minalgaite, Lithuania
Solweig Eriksson, Sweden
Lisbeth Holmquist-Arbarandt, Sweden
Silva Anspal, Estonia
Tuuli Paaksi, Estonia
Anneli Luisk, Estonia
Ingeborg Knevelsrud, Norway
Elin Sabbasen, Norway
Mirja Erlund, Finland
Sirpa Polo, Finland
Marta Chelkowska, Poland (point 5)
Anna Difort-Dura, Poland (point 5)
Leena Heiskala, Finland, Lead
Laura Perheentupa, Finland, Lead

1. -2.

**What is a strategy and what is the strategy of the FEM?
International Strategy and Action Plan + practical Means to realise them
(connected also to the money left in the Lead Partner budget for this kind of
things) in the FEM**

Laura Perheentupa presented the draft of the International Strategy and Action Plan + Means to realise them.

The Application was a paper we made together for the financier; International Strategy and Action Plan, on the other hand, is made for our own use.

Clarification of the roles of the Steering Group and of the International Strategic Working Group: The overall role of the FEM Steering Group is to steer the FEM project during it's life (three years). The role of the International Strategic Working Group (consisting of the Country Lead Partners and the Lead) is to develop and influence structures of society in such direction that the society better enhances women's entrepreneurship and livelihood, and to create more gender sensitive societies in general. The work of this group goes beyond the life of the FEM.

Laura Perheentupa explained the draft version (distributed beforehand) of the Purpose of the FEM to be discussed, as well as the Goals, Values and Strategy, and the



Situation after FEM. Situation after FEM could concern for example Employment and social life; Function of networks; Changes in attitudes and Financial methods.

Laura Perheentupa went through the Attachment of the Action Plan; the concrete Means to realise our goals and strategy. Laura showed a triangle that has different levels of work: the local and the regional level; national level, and then the international level of co-operation. The Lead partner's role is to enhance the international co-operation as it is written in the Application.

Another clarifying triangle Laura showed about whom all are involved in the FEM. There are on the bottom level Entrepreneurs and Associations, on the second level Regional councils, Universities etc; and on the third level the Ministries, national parliaments, etc.

Means:

The lead stresses co-operation: sharing and exchanging experiences and learning from one another in a positive and trusting atmosphere. The Lead encourages that many contacts between partners in different countries are taken to meet each other. This is necessary in order for things to happen, for the learning process to take place and for the process of creating something new together to take place. Everyone has something to give to each other. The networks that we create are and will be the strength of our common process: they are formed of personal contacts. The lead aims also that there is personal growth of the persons involved in the FEM: and that there is change of thinking that takes place in the participating organisations. Through this we are influencing change in societies.

The Lead also encourages developing of Strategic thinking of the women involved: all countries make their National Strategies, and Strategies by Work Packages. Then after the project is finished we will evaluate our process reflecting to all the Action

Plans.

International trainings are to be organised in co-operation with the relevant WP-leaders, and supported by the Lead partner budget.

Decision:

The Lead also encourages producing and spreading of information about what's happening in the FEM (for the use of the FEM participants and to the use of people outside of the FEM process). This theme will be discussed in more detail in the next meeting of the International Strategic Working Group in May 2006.

Discussion:

There was general discussion also taking into account the written draft of the Vision and Mission, that Kaisa-Leena Lintilä had presented in Helsinki in January 2006, and that was also sent to all before this meeting.

Kaisa-Leena Lintilä underlined that the International Action Plan and Strategy as well as the Means have been prepared for the project's internal use only. The papers can be further developed during the whole project period we have left.

Elin Sabbasen said that action always gives deeper meaning to the written words. Of our Values in particular three following ones Elin finds crucial important in this kind of co-operation process: Trust, Respect and To have fun: They are the basis and the strength of the work.



Lintilä stressed that it is only we ourselves that give the meaning to our mission. There is need to have more and more discussions between countries in order to learn more from each other. We should also start taking part in smaller events organised in the countries. Only then can we guarantee life after the FEM: it is based on personal contacts.

Decision: Baiba Rivza said that our Value is also Developing of rural areas or Regional development. It was decided that we add to the Values Regional benefit and Rural benefit.

Kaisa-Leena Lintilä said that the Strategy says How we do it.

Decision: Mission was discussed (Building female entrepreneurial culture, and gender sensitive society). Baiba Rivza suggested we add reference to the International level in it too. This was agreed upon.

Elin Sabbasen pointed that all levels of the triangles Laura showed are important to our work.

Vision was discussed (* 2007 – FEM is the leading provider/network promoting women's entrepreneurship in the Baltic Sea Region).

Lisbeth Holmquist-Arbrandt said she is happy with the Vision, and that it is brave to write it like that. Good co-operation between countries is important, and it is possible to obtain such a good level of co-operation in this group too.

There was discussion whether we should rather say that in 2007 we are One of the leading providers. Anneli Luisk was happy about how it was originally written.

Decision: It was decided that we write the Vision 2007 as follows: FEM is the leading Co-operator promoting women's entrepreneurship in the Baltic Sea Region.

Decision: Vision 2013 will go as follows: A well functioning structure for the support of women's entrepreneurship in all levels of society.

Goals mentioned in the International Strategy and Action Plan were approved.

Decision: Situation after the FEM. It was decided that the comment about Latvia is taken out.

Gender perspective was underlined to concern all countries, and not just Finland.

The comment about Lithuania was changed: The project will learn the Lithuanians how to attract money for the Resource Centres. Lintilä reminded that this also concerns all of us.

The Means were discussed: Lisbeth Holmquist-Arbrandt suggested that we shall create Contact centres between countries to enhance business contacts for women. These centres could be the same as the Resource Centres built. The Centres would



help entrepreneurs in taking steps to internationalise. Together the Centres would form a network communication actively together.

Lisbeth had also the idea that FEM would provide a new leaflet to enhance business contacts. It would be targeted for the use of entrepreneurs to help them connect more internationally.

Tuuli Paaksi described the training she has been preparing for all FEM advisers, Resource Centre leaders, process leaders on for instance economic and legal questions concerning internationalisation of women's businesses, so that then they have better tools to help women entrepreneurs take steps to internationalise.

Mirja Erlund said that we need a Model of how to internationalise women's businesses for the use of entrepreneurs in particular but also for the advisers etc. A model writing process is under preparation with assistance from the Lead partner budget and the making of the publication will involve a description of all WPs in it too.

Kaisa-Leena Lintilä said that training organised is one part, and an other part needed is a well functioning contact point. This we should create during the FEM period.

Elin Sabbasen suggested we produce a paper with information about the different kind of support persons involved in the FEM. We should formulate a questionnaire.

Decision: Lintilä underlined that different tools are needed, not just one. It was decided that the WP 5 continues to work on how to best make it easier to take contact over borders, and also which contact points will continue to exist after FEM.

Clustering training and cluster creation was discussed. There is a training organised in Tampere next autumn and those of us that take part can work in it as a team and work on our FEM issues during the training.

Lintilä pointed out also an EU Regional Review Publication, where the FEM project shall be presented next autumn.

Lisbeth Holmquist-Arbrandt told everyone that the DVD on Resource Centre building around the Baltic Sea Area will be ready in May 2006. We shall organise so that we can all watch it (maybe in Estonia autumn 2006).

Laura Perheentupa told everyone that Finland and the Ministry of the Interior is again producing a Women's News magazine just before our next EU-presidency autumn 2006. She asked every FEM country interested to participate and make an article in it. The themes would be each country's own particular approach they choose from their FEM themes, as well as a general bit on how they have found it to be to work internationally around this women's theme. The Magazine is produced in the summer 2006.

Laura Perheentupa told that she has recently visited Poland and Szczecin. The Institute of Economic Analyses, Diagnoses and Forecasts organised a Gender Mainstreaming in Economics seminar. Marta Hozer has plans for the Institute to also



produce a Survey based on questions sent to those that have been involved in the FEM (partners, advisers, entrepreneurs etc): questions will be asked on what they feel they have gained and learned in the FEM process.

3.

Countries' third Action Report: Feedback from Leena Heiskala

Leena Heiskala has learned from the ms3 reports that there is significant progress in every country: we have learned and found our ways. There emerge

- **individual applications;** Sweden is starting a micro-credit project with 50 immigrant women, Estonia who has been building the basement for the resource centres, it is they have organised a competition for organisations who will take care of RCs in practise, they also are planning their own Estonian women loan organisation (a credit union)
- **importance of models;** the resource centre examples from Sweden and Germany have proved to be very useful, so as well the study trip to Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to visit the RCs
- **learning of co-operation;** the traditional combinations – Baltic countries had a seminar, Nordic countries discussed a joint portal, Estonia and Finland and Sweden-Poland co-operation
- **attitude changes;** in Estonia there has been realised that women and men need different actions in promoting entrepreneurship; in Poland among the unemployed women who earlier totally denied the possibility of entrepreneurship, have after meetings in RC groups now positive attitude and have built a supporting network.

There has been a lot of different trainings in countries. Gender equality trainings have been organised by Poland and Sweden who has concentrated in advisers. Elin Sabbasen asked if it would be possible to have the trainings listed to give an idea and examples what is possible.

Lisbeth Holmquist-Arbrandt told about Polish adviser practise that an adviser in order to work has to have a legal permit. We have to consider different terms to be used for our RC persons like a support person or a coach.

4.

Countries' third Financial Report + 1 budget change to be made during the project

Laura Perheentupa showed graphs about countries' using of money so far. Latvia and Poland at this point are not ready yet with their third report so those figures are not seen in the graphs yet.

In comparison to what Laura showed in January 2006 to be the situation Lithuania has been really able to increase it's spending level closer to what it should be in order to use the money they had originally budgeted for FEM.

Still, unfortunately, if this rhythm of spending continues we can see that 1/3 of the budget for Latvia, Lithuania and Poland will be left unused.



The average milestone spending of countries', if all money budgeted were to be used would be something as follows: Lithuania 70 000, Estonia and Finland 60 000 euros; Latvia and Poland 50 000, Norway and Sweden 30 000 (these are figures without Lead share).

Decision: The plan is that the Third report is sent to the Interreg Office by Easter. This of course now depends on the Latvian and Polish auditors.

Payments of the second milestone shall be sent to countries. The arrival to the accounts is now approximately also by Easter 2006.

Budget change issue will be taken up at the next meeting of the International Strategic Working Group May 2006 in Helsinki.

5.

FEM web page situation + future FEM Lead seminars

Due to lack of time the web page issue is discussed in detail in the Helsinki International Strategic Working Group meeting in May 2006.

Anneli Luisk presented the Estonian plans concerning their Lead seminar 12-15 October 2006 in Pärnu. She says they are eager to have entrepreneurs come along too and bring their products as well. The training Tuuli Paaksi presented earlier in the meeting will take place before the seminar. The seminar dates stem with the International Rural women's day. It will be celebrated with the FEM participants and organised by the Estonian Ministry of Agriculture. Anneli promised to send out the preliminary programme soon (training is taking place 11 October and the festivities for Rural Women evening of 14 October).

6.

Closing of the meeting + the next time we meet

Kaisa-Leena Lintilä thanked everyone for very active participation especially around the theme of Common Strategy and Action Plan. **The next meeting of the International Strategic Working Group takes place 22 May 2006 in Helsinki.**