

Contract title: Support to the Implementation of the Roma Strategy

Contract number: 2010/258-484

Subject: Report on the Training Needs Assessment

SUMMARY

Approach

One of the means for achieving the project's objective is planned to be the provision of capacity building and organizational development to the Beneficiary institutions at national and local level, which includes human resource development to ensure effective implementation of the Roma Strategy and Decade for Roma Inclusion.

In view of the purpose of capacity building of the Beneficiary institutions and organisations, the present training needs assessment (TNA) was conducted in the period May-June 2011 with the aim to design and plan the trainings envisaged as part of the project activities. The TNA also helped develop the most appropriate training approaches according to the identified needs.

Purpose of the Report

The aim of this Report is to assess and identify clearly the training requirements common to participants from all beneficiary institutions and structures as well as the requirements specific to different institutions and individuals.

This report also provides an assessment of the capacity of staff in different beneficiary institutions with a view to their absorbing the training. The report is also designed to help make the final decision as regards the exact number of trainings and participants from each beneficiary institution and target group, as well as the possibilities to complement with other similar capacity building activities on the ground.

The planning of the training for the UISDR, the Cabinet of the MwP, the NCB, the RICs and staff from selected municipalities, and the NGOs, follows an integrated approach to ensure that there is no overlap and that the project makes the best use of resources. The method of data collection was tailored to each specific beneficiary, taking also into account the areas common to some or all beneficiaries. The TNA was designed and carried out for all beneficiaries by the same approach, using separate but similar data collection methods for each target group.

Structure of the Report

The Report offers a through examination of the training needs of the representatives of the beneficiary institutions and target groups. During the assessment, emphasis was given to



their own perceptions and expectations for trainings to be delivered for building their capacity particularly with reference to their preparedness for implementation of the Roma Strategy and activities related to the Decade for Roma Inclusion. The comprehensive questionnaires designed separately for each target group were filled in by a high percentage of the respondents addressed as part of this assessment. Next, on the basis of the answers received and the review of relevant documents, the Report presents key findings which provide the main directives for defining the substance and objectives of the trainings. The concrete outcome of this TNA is the training plan consisting of proposed training topics and tentative time, duration and target groups for each training session. The Report consists of a number of annexes which complement the information provided in the body text.

Methodology

The purpose of the survey is to establish the training needs of the beneficiary institutions and organizations participating in the project. Important aspect of the methodology applied in this TNA is the specific training topics to be covered – they must relate to building their capacity for implementation of the Strategy and the Decade for Roma inclusion. In this respect, the surveying team paid the necessary attention about not creating expectations that they will receive all of the training that they ask for. This particularly refers to the NCB members, municipal administration staff, and NGO staff. This was highlighted to them in the course of the survey.

The method of conducting of the TNA was a mix of face to face interviews, group discussions and sending of questionnaires. The method depended upon the size and the level of homogeneity of the target institutions and organisations. There are 6 different target groups addressed by this TNA –

- The UISDR staff – 2 advisers and 2 staff of the project *Involvement of Roma Children in the Pre-School Education*;
- The MWP Cabinet staff – the chief of cabinet and other 3 staff;
- The NCB members - the TNA for them was done using a representative sample consisting of the institutions who until now have been active and present in the project activities;
- Administration of the target municipalities – this group was divided into 2 sub-groups –
 - municipal officers for relations with minorities, and
 - other municipal staff in charge with implementation of plans and activities related to the Roma inclusion;
- Roma Information Centres – all the 14 staff currently employed in the 9 RICs;
- Roma NGOs active on national and/or local level;

As seen from this list, the target groups are quite diverse comparing to each other but also between individuals inside them. Homogeneity was rare to find - the surveyed individuals differ in many ways, to mention here some of them -

- Age and experience
 - Expertise
 - Qualifications
 - Location
 - Level of formal education
 - Central vs. local level institutions and organisations.
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In the process of this TNA, the experts used as reference the already existing training methodology developed by the Civil Servants Agency, as recommended by the project's ToR.

Face to face interviews

This method allows exploring additional topics raised by an interviewee as well as clarification of points in the course of the direct communication. The purpose of the interview is to establish the type of training needed and the priorities for training.

For our purpose, the TNA team conducted face to face interviews with 4 members of the NCB who represent key stakeholder institutions and have been most active in the project-related activities so far – Ministry of Education and Science (MES), Ministry of Transport and Communications, (MTC), Employment Service Agency (ESA), and State Statistical Office (SSO).

Interviews were held also on the field visits conducted as part of the project activities on local level. The interviewees were representatives of municipal administrations, RICs, and NGOs.

The interviewer had a printed set of questions in front of him and worked through them one by one. The approach was to use the same questions with each interviewee to ensure consistency of the information that was gathered.

Interviews were held also with representatives of the international organizations which are currently delivering trainings to some target groups of the project – OSCE, IOM, and Habitat for Humanity.

The interviews were arranged in advance with allowed specific time for them to take place. The purpose of the interview was always set clearly at the start of the process. The approach of structuring the questions was such that allowed the interviewees to develop their thinking.

Group discussion

A group discussion was conducted with the UISDR staff. Discussed were their expectations from the trainings under the projects, previous trainings they had received and the way they benefited from them, as well as the questionnaire which was subsequently sent to them and to which they provided written answers.

Questionnaires

Sending out questionnaires and receiving answers to them provided a considerable part of this TNA. Further in this report a table is included to enlist all the respondents to which questionnaires were sent. Most of them sent back their written answers. In addition to this some questionnaires were also filled in during the face to face interviews mentioned above. The information gathered through these questionnaires served as the main basis for the analysis and the recommendations of the report.

The questionnaires differed depending on target groups and their different roles in the project. The questionnaires for some of the groups – for example, staff of UISDR, MWP Cabinet and RICs – were more comprehensive and included more in-depth questions, comparing to those for the NCB members for instance. For that matter, questionnaires also differed for the municipal officers for relations with minorities comparing to other municipal administration staff.

Moreover, since these target groups taken together comprise of a large total number of people, the TNA team considered conducting interviews where appropriate and necessary as well as sending questionnaires possibly to every individual or organization being considered as potential trainees. With regard to NGOs for example, this meant that not

everyone in the organisation was included individually in the survey – we gave them the opportunity to provide written answers on behalf of 1-2 of their representatives. This is because it is not realistic to include in the trainings all the staff of the NGOs willing and appropriate to participate. We deemed also useful to interview some NGO staff along with the provision of their written answers, and such interviews were conducted during our field visits.

As part of the questionnaires, lists of training topics were proposed to the respondents, so that they assess themselves in terms of knowledge and understanding of those topics. The selection of those topics was done in line with recommendations of the project's ToR

Consultations

All the steps and phases of the TNA were consulted and agreed with key representatives and contact persons from the beneficiary institutions on central level – the MLSP and the MWP Cabinet. This was the way how the TNA questionnaires were finalized, and second, this was done in order to ensure effective use of human resources and no duplication of activities.

Analysis

The final step in the process was the analysis of the information gathered and its conversion into a training plan. In the course of the survey, the TA team had in mind that the survey work was not necessarily the only source of information on training and the plan might address topics that had not been raised by respondents during the survey – for example topics recommended in the project's Terms of Reference (ToR) or contained in the conclusions of the assessment of the Roma Strategy implementation.

Key findings

- *Variety of target groups* – the TNA was to a certain extent complicated by the fact that the target groups assessed are quite different in a number of aspects – size, types and levels of operation of organizations and institutions, prevailing level of education, knowledge of and experience in the area of Roma inclusion.
- *Relevance of training topics* - most of the TNA respondents have received a large variety of previous trainings; on the other hand, not all representatives of the respective target groups have participated in all the trainings mentioned, nevertheless, the trainings received have been taken into account while developing the training plan.

The TNA team have summarized the respondents' answers and considered the training topics that were most frequently mentioned as preferred.

The capacity building purpose of this project is not to satisfy all expectations of the target groups in terms of training. The project aims to build the capacity of the target groups at central and local level for the implementation of the activities related to the Strategy and the Decade for Roma - this was a guiding principle when defining the topics to be included in the training plan.

- *Training format* - the large majority of the respondents prefer 'workshop' as a training format. On some occasions, mentioned also were 'coaching' (on-the-job training), 'debates', 'discussions', 'study tours', and 'internships'.
 - *Composition of training groups* – for this purpose considered were –
 - the role of each group in the project,
 - the needs and lack of necessary skills identified by the TNA;
 - the present interactions between different groups;
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- the needs for better communication and cooperation among them in view of the project's objective and purposes.
- *Critical assessment of findings* – the TNA team have paid attention to avoiding overlaps and ensuring consistency with the overall role of the respective institutions and organizations. Basically, two main areas of capacity building were considered: (1) Capacity building for programmatic purposes: and (2) Capacity building for institutional/organizational development. The proposed training topics aim to fill some gaps to the extent possible with regard to these two areas.
- *Use of existing training methodologies and training materials*

The project's ToR recommends that "the already existing training methodology and training materials, e.g. as part of the Civil Servants Agency training provision, will be adapted and included in the training package, if need will be."

The TNA team received and reviewed a package of training outputs from the IPA-funded project "Technical Assistance to the Civil Servants Agency and Strengthening the Implementation of the National System for Training Co-ordination." These include explanation of training standards and a number of guidelines for –

- TNA,
- trainer selection,
- monitoring of training,
- training of trainers (ToT),
- curriculum development,
- understanding the training cycle,
- strategy to planning of trainings,
- planning, organizing and evaluating training;
- course development.

The above TNA guidelines in particular have been used for reference for the purpose of this assessment. The TNA team will recommends using the rest of these guidelines to the trainers of the present project.

Also, the above-mentioned package contains training materials on a number of different topics. For the purpose of implementation of the training plan provided by the present assessment, the TNA team recommends using the materials available especially on the topics of Working in Teams and Conflict Resolution.

Training plan

The training plan is given as an annex to this Report. For the development of this plan, taken into account were the key findings of this TNA as well as training recommendations provided by the project's Terms of Reference (ToR) and conclusions of the Roma Strategy assessment conducted also as part of the project.
