

SLOVAKIA

Technical Assistance

Location
Slovakia

Programming period
2007 – 2013

Measure
Technical Assistance

Funding (EUR)
Total budget 71 435
EAFRD 53 576
National/Regional 17 859

Project duration
2011 – 2014

Project promoter
National Rural Development
Network of Slovakia

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The National Rural Network of Slovakia used Rural Development Programme funds to support the organization of farmers' markets in different Slovak regions.

Summary

The NRDN decided to use funds provided under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) to support the organization of farmers' markets in different Slovak regions. Some of the markets were organised as stand-alone activities (e.g. Christmas Farmers' Markets) while other markets were organised as a part of other bigger socio-cultural events.



The members of the NRDN organised, facilitated and partially financed the events. The NRDN was also responsible for administering and coordinating the stakeholders involved as well as for the communication with the participating farmers.

Results

24 farmers' markets were organized for around 50 000 visitors involving 356 stallholders, both farmers and craftsmen.

The NRDN succeeded in motivating people to continue to organize farmers' markets regularly, either in the capital city of Bratislava or in other towns in various Slovak regions, without direct support by the NRDN.

Farmers' markets contributed to the promotion and selling of high quality Slovak agricultural, food and handicraft products, and to the promotion of regional attractions and folk art

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ It is essential to communicate regularly with all stakeholders that are involved and to deliver clear information to all partners, especially with those who are quite new or have little experience.
- ❑ It is also important to be familiar with all related organisational and legislative norms and requirements (national and/ or regional ones) in order to avoid any problems or conflicts.

Context

Nowadays, it is very important to promote the quality of products and their contribution to health, whilst not forgetting one's national sense of cultural or folk traditions. The NRDN decided to use funds provided under the Rural Development Programme (RDP) to support the organization of farmers' markets in different Slovak regions.

Objectives

The project aimed to support the promotion and sales of folk handicraft products and traditional products from Slovak farms and specialties from Slovak regions.

Activities

Farmers' markets were organised by the Central Unit of the NRDN and its regional branches acting in the Slovak self-governing regions. Some of the markets were organised as separate activities (e.g. Christmas Farmers' Markets, Opening and Closing "Bánoš", From Sheep farm to Town, the Trenčín Biojarmok Fair, MŇAMFest, Festival of Wine and Traditional Products or Tastes of Žitný Ostrov). Other markets were organised as a part of other bigger socio-cultural events (e.g. the Rural Day in the Žilina Self-governing Region, Ovenálie, HaluškyFEST, Turčianska FARMtastická Sobota and many others). Many of those events were organised annually in the years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

The markets took place in squares, pedestrian zones, municipality parks, but also inside exhibition pavilions. Visitors had the chance to sample the quality of various traditional Slovak food products – dairy products, meat products, honey, vegetables, fruits, different regional specialties etc. Special attention was paid to local products with a regional brand - a guarantee of product uniqueness in a particular region. Almost all markets were enriched with folklore performances and presentation of handicrafts and handicraft products.

The main responsibility of the NRDN was to guarantee the quality at of the market events. The members of the NRDN organised, facilitated and partially financed the events (e.g. the renting of selling places for local farmers, the complementary cultural programme, the promotion of the farmers' markets and the production of information campaigns). Costs that were not eligible under the RDP 2007-2013 funding scheme, were covered by stakeholders who were involved in the initiative, such as municipalities or local NGOs, acting as partners with the NRDN.

The NRDN was also responsible for administering and coordinating the stakeholders involved as well as for the communication with the participating farmers. Dates and places of the markets were chosen by the NRDN either to reflect a particular season or holiday. There was one further motive for selecting the venues: The NRDN tried to take responsibility for longer term timetabling of markets aiming to ensure that both dates and venues were capable of attracting a good number of stallholders and a large number of visitors.

Main results

- 24 farmers' markets were organized for around 50 000 visitors involving 356 stallholders, both farmers and craftsmen.
- the NRDN has succeeded in motivating people to continue to organize farmers' markets regularly, either in the capital city of Bratislava or in other towns in various Slovak regions, without direct support by the NRDN.
- visitors appreciated the opportunity to buy healthy, fresh regional products with a clearly defined origin.
- farmers' markets contributed to the promotion and selling of high quality Slovak agricultural, food and handicraft products, and to the promotion of regional attractions and folk art.
- the idea of regional branding was promoted.
- markets offered an ideal place for networking and exchange of experiences between all those involved – farmers, producers, craftsmen, municipality representatives etc.

Key lessons

The key to a successful farmers' market is communication – it is essential to communicate regularly with all stakeholders that are involved and to deliver clear information to all partners, especially with those who are quite new or have little experience. Currently the NRDN communicate with all the stakeholders individually, but would recommend to organize meetings for groups of stakeholders where participants can also share their knowledge and experience.

It is also important to be familiar with all related organisational and legislative norms and requirements (national and/ or regional ones) in order to avoid any problems or conflicts.

A key factor in motivating the actors to continue to organize farmers' markets is making sure everyone knows that there are benefits for all involved.