

Institutional Transformation

Example 9: Developing Gender Equality Competence

Gender Equality Competence Training approach in Finland

The “gender glasses” project was set up in 2007 with the aim to educate the national administration staff on gender mainstreaming. The training sequences are offered to administration staff in regard to their concrete tasks - for example preparing legislation and decision-making or planning of projects and programs.

Three steps are defined to exercise the way a gender perspective can be mainstreamed in all phases of planning. First staff is asked to “Put on your gender glasses” and have a gender analysis. Secondly, a gender impact assessment should be done. In the third step, results of the first and second step should be considered in the practical planning of policies.

At this point also a gender perspective in monitoring and follow-up is recommended. There is also a manual: “Gender Glasses in use. A handbook in support of the government ministries’ gender equality work”(2013). The handbook also has a section to test ones knowledge and a glossary.

Questions and answers

- **What does the example show?**

The training is tailor made to the concrete tasks of administration staff. Therefore gender equality competence development is strongly embedded in gender mainstreaming. At the same time the training created sensibility and a higher acceptance toward gender equality issues.

- **Why is the example suitable for promoting institutional transformation?**

In the course of the project gender mainstreaming methods, guidance and training material was developed, which shows that there was a learning process also going beyond the specific training but promoting organizational learning.

- **What was the example’s line of action?**

A review of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of 2006 showed limits in the practical

implementation of gender mainstreaming. One of the reasons identified was the limited understanding of the objectives and methods related to gender mainstreaming among ministries. The Gender Equality Action Plan 2008 to 2011 explicitly encouraged ministries to organize gender training for directors and staff.

- **Which lesson can be learned in terms of success factors?**

It is important to have a competence development approach which is embedded in a gender mainstreaming implementation plan. Also, a coherent training approach, using clear concepts as well as statistical evidence and knowledge on gender disparities is a factor of success.

- **Which lesson can be learned in terms of success factors?**

It is always difficult to transfer the idea of gender mainstreaming into practical action. When it comes to persons or actors who are not experts in that field it gets even harder. The published manual offers a step-by-step guidance to implement gender mainstreaming with a various and field-tested number of methods and tools.

Resource

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Development of Administrative Capacity of National Authorities in the Field of Gender Mainstreaming in Estonia.

The project was part of a [Phare Twinning Project](#) between Estonia and Germany from July 2004 to December 2005. It aimed at promoting the implementation of gender mainstreaming in Estonia. The project had four components: conducting research, defining a gender mainstreaming implementation strategy, a web based “Centre of Expertise” as well as trainings.

The training component encompassed training of trainers because local trainers could transfer the concepts and objectives of gender mainstreaming to the Estonian administration context in a better way. All in all 17 trainers were recruited from Estonian Universities and Adult Training Institutions. The knowledge then was transferred to 300 civil servants and local government officials.

- **What does the example show?**

Gender and gender mainstreaming cannot simply be transferred to any country. The example shows that it is necessary to adapt and adjust the idea of gender and gender

mainstreaming when applying them into a certain cultural context. The realities of post socialist countries (especially in regard to gender equality) differ from countries in the Western part of Europe. This needs an approach which is sensitive to the history and the political context of an institution.

- **Why is the example suitable for promoting institutional transformation?**

The offered gender training is not only about gender mainstreaming. Furthermore participants learn about broader concepts of gender and became enabled to transfer their knowledge.

- **What was the example's line of action?**

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- **Who was involved and in which way?**

The programme was carried out by an Estonian-German project team. Representatives came from ministries in Germany and Estonia and from the Department of Gender Equality in Estonia, located in the Ministry for Social Affairs. There were also researcher from Estonia as well as external gender experts and trainers from Germany.

- **Which lesson can be learned in terms of success factors?**

This question cannot be answered because the twinning project is over and there is no current information on the course of the gender mainstreaming and training process.

Resource

Kuhl, Mara (2007): Gender Mainstreaming in Estonia:



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