INTERNAL MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

Exploiting Potentials of Social Enterprises through Standardized European Evaluation and Development System

SOCIAL SEEDS
Interreg Europe

SME competitiveness

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

IFKa
PUBLIC BENEFIT NON-PROFIT LTD.
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDUSTRY

TABLE OF CONTENT

Introduction

This Handbook gives an overview of the organization of the SOCIAL SEEDS project. The Lead Partner of SOCIAL SEEDS, which has full administrative responsibility for the management of the project, has undertaken the task of producing this handbook that will act as the reference document for management, decision-making and reporting. The size of the handbook has been limited to make it an accessible and user-friendly manual.

To meet these goals, this handbook will cover the following aspects:

- ❖ Management

- ❖ Decision making process

- ❖ Roles and tasks among the partners

- ❖ Internal Communication

- ❖ Documentation

- ❖ Reporting

- ❖ Monitoring and evaluation

1   Management

1.1   SOCIAL SEEDS management structures

A management structure has been set up to allow partner regions an effective and sound implementation of the SOCIAL SEEDS project. It includes various different bodies that correspond both to the administrative and technical levels. A brief description of each of the management structures follows.

- Project Partners (PP)
- Regional Stakeholder Group Members
- Steering Committee (SC)
- Project (Central) Management Teams (CMT) of the Lead Partner

1.   Project Partners (PP)

Regional partners are comprised of 6 partner organisations and 1 associated strategic partner. They will meet at least once every 6 months, mostly co-organized with the Seminars and Study-visit, if possible. They are responsible for carrying out and implementing their part of the project according to the standards required by the INTERREG Europe Joint Secretariat (JS) and by the terms of reference agreed between all partners.

The Project Partners are responsible for the following activities:

- Daily management of the project in their respective regions.
- Disseminating and promoting the activities of the work of SOCIAL SEEDS in the region.
- Drafting and submitting audited progress reports to the Project Management Team of the Lead Partner organization.
- Carrying out the tasks agreed by the SC for the project's implementation in the respective territories.

2.   Regional Stakeholder Group

The regional stakeholder group is composed by relevant actors working in the field of social entrepreneurship in the given territory. By stakeholders in SOCIAL SEEDS we understand social entrepreneurs, social enterprise catalysts, ethic banks, social finance service providers, representatives of policymakers and auxiliary organizations. Non-exhaustive list of stakeholders per partners can be found in the Application Form.

3.   The Steering Committee (SC)

The SC will consist of at least one representative of each Project Partner – being in charge of or indirectly through the letter of support – responsible for the improvement of the policy instrument addressed within the project, which will meet at least once a year. Additional meetings will be envisaged if required.

4.   The Central Management Team (CMT).

The CMT composed of the Coordinator (Co), the Financial Manager (FM) and Communication Manager (CM) working together with the Project Partners (PP) and

manages and coordinates the implementation of the project. IFKA as the Lead Partner (LP) will set up the CMT and will provide with enough resources for an efficient management system setting up clear guidelines for the project's implementation.

- The CMT will act as the project's Secretariat.
- The CMT will prepare the administrative and financial issues to be discussed during the seminars.
- The CMT will make the compilation of Progress reports to be submitted to the JS.

IFKA as LP will be responsible for the overall implementation of the SOCIAL SEEDS project following the Lead Partner principle. Therefore, the CMT is closely connected to IFKA. All reports, correspondence and EU money flows from the INTERREG EUROPE programme administration goes via the LP. EU grants are only paid afterwards based on the implemented activities and expenditure. Project Partners shall finance the activities in advance from their own budget. The project partners are responsible for carrying out and implementing their part of the programme according to the standards required by the terms of references agreed between all partners. Besides project managerial assignment, the Coordinator will actively participate in the policy learning platform activities (two participants per project per event is recommended) and programme annual events and preparation of communication material organized by the JS. For more details please see INTERREG EUROPE Manual (pp. 67).

The partners have to ensure that they are actively involved in the development of the project; by reporting to the CMT, by carrying out the tasks agreed in the Steering Committee (SC), providing the assured co-financing and checking the proper use of the funds in their regions.

The Financial Manager as part of the CMT, who works for the LP has the responsibility for the financial matters. Progress reports will be submitted on a 6 months basis to the LP. An audit certificate, made up by an external certified auditor will be done for every 6-month period. Each Progress report and audit certificate will be sent to the JS in Lille. Payments will be forwarded to each regional partner as soon as the LP receives the funding from the Paying Authority.

The Communication Manager as part of the CMT, who works for the LP and together with the WP2 Communication and Dissemination leader will be in charge of creating, updating, maintaining the project website, designing of brochures and reports as well as monitoring all SOCIAL SEEDS communication and dissemination activities carried out by partners following the SOCIAL SEEDS Internal and External Communication and Dissemination Strategy. S/he will be the key contact person for the JS on all communication-related tasks.

2   General Decision-making process

The decision making body is the Steering Committee (SC). The LP is chairing the SC and the CMT provides the secretarial backup.

As a general rule, consensus will be applied for all decision making procedures. In taking decisions the SC shall seek to promote the interests of all members of the partnership. If all efforts to reach a decision by consensus have been exhausted, partners will be entitled for abstention in the decision making process. The SC may defer the taking of a decision in order to facilitate further negotiation whenever it appears that all efforts at achieving consensus on a question have not been exhausted.

3   Roles and tasks among the partners

The SOCIAL SEEDS project foresees different methodologies for dividing the tasks between the partners:

- The division of the components of the project between the various regional partners.

  - IFKA (LP) will be responsible for WP1 Project Management.

  - EURADA (PP6) will be responsible for WP2 Communication and dissemination.

  - Abruzzo Region (PP2) will be responsible for WP3 Exchange of experiences in collaboration with the LP.

Hereby the component leaders will be asked to be responsible for the overall implementation of that WP within the project.

- The division between regions with extensive experiences in regional strategy building and partnership which will play a stronger role in the overall implementation of joint actions such as seminars, workshops or conferences.

- The equal participation in carrying out the main tasks of the SOCIAL SEEDS project (compiling information, moderating the co-operation and joint implementation).

- Ad hoc division between the regional partners based on Steering Committee decisions. For responding to unforeseen developments it will also be possible that partners will take over specific responsibilities given by a Steering Committee decision.

4   Internal communication

Internal communication refers to the process of information exchange done by the Project Partners in the framework of the project.

Although the main decisions should be taken within Seminars, through the daily internal communication a high amount of project tracking is done. Therefore, procedures for the "registration" of the communications are defined.

4.1 Communication channels

Communication must be traceable. Therefore, channels in which evidence remains will be used for most of the communications for the Phase 1 – Focus on the interregional learning process.

Although other channels may be used (e-mail, fax, letter) the main internal communication channel will be <u>INTERREG EUROPE project sub-site (internal area)</u>.

Furthermore, opportunities provided by the setting-up of Policy Learning Platforms will be fully exploited by the LP through exchanging ideas and good practices gained with other LPs under the same priority. Policy Learning Platform meetings will be organized once a year, most likely co-organized with annual programme events. Online access to the platforms is through the INTERREG Europe website: www.interregeurope.eu.

- **Messages**

SOCIAL SEEDS website and emails should be used for internal communication within the partnership. PPs will not apply any project management tool for communication purposes.

- **File sharing (Dropbox)**

This feature should be used by PP to upload files, categorize, track versions and share working documents and deliverables. Dropbox account will be created and all PPs will be invited to join the group. All PPs will receive notifications, if any changes might happen in their partner folders.

- **Milestones**

This feature should be used by the CMT to effectively monitor the progress of the project in relation to the activities and outputs detailed in the Application Form. The steps would be:

The CMT should add the main expected outputs of the project when starting to use Basecamp. Some dates for these outputs are already fixed like the reports, meetings, events, etc, and other are more continuous throughout the life of the project.

The CMT should closely monitor that expected outputs are accomplished in due time or delayed.

4.2 Responsibilities in communication

SOCIAL SEEDS project will appoint a Communication Officer (CO). Communication will be mainly circulated through the CO, as contact person. The internal procedures will ensure that this responsible has access to all information concerning communication and publicity measures.

4.3 Internal documents

After all the contributions have been gathered and integrated, the Responsible PP will circulate the integrated version of the document. In a general case If, in two weeks time, no comments have been produced, the document will be promoted to version 10 and considered as final version, and included in Dropbox and uploaded to the SOCIAL SEEDS website hosted by the programme site.

Minutes of meetings must be produced during a 2 week period after the end of the meeting, and must be sent to all the partners for comments. All partners will have a 2 weeks period for send back comments in order to include on the final minutes document. Final minute's document will be sent to all the PPs and uploaded to Dropbox too.

Documentation: Creation, Identification and Circulation

Documentation stands for the set of files related to the work carried out under the SOCIAL SEEDS workplan by the partners of the project, (or by external entities under the responsibility of SOCIAL SEEDS partners).

Documentation will not be limited, but should follow agreements reached in the Seminars and project meetings (conclusions and tasks on the minutes), in formal communications or at least in bilateral meetings between partners. Circulation of documentation will be defined in the same manner.

4.4 Type and Formats

Project results that may be used and disseminated:

- Documents in various formats
- Studies and technical reports
- Knowledge gained by the participants

Partners must produce documents that enable the participants to influence the activities and policies of the European Union and other bodies. Contributions to other bodies, journals, international conferences, etc. will have the format of press releases, multi-media information, slides, technical information, etc.

a. Documents (Word or PDF)

This is the conventional form of project results documents. They shall be structured in such a way to address different kinds of users:

- High-level executives, addressed by an executive summary (main relevant information)
- Technical managers and experts with decision-making competence, addressed by the whole volume of relevant information
- Experts and implementers who use the information in their work, addressed by full technical information
- General public, addressed by mainly press releases and other promotional activities

b. Website (under construction)

c. Multimedia information

The project can produce results that may be effectively presented using multimedia material.

d. Publicity material and newsletter

The Partnership will produce 1 brochure, 1 poster and 5 newsletters as externally appealing documents as this serves to publicise and exploit the work and results of the project. The target groups of this promotional material are people both inside and outside the project.

e. Project slides

Projects are requested to apply slides for presenting the project and its work centrally designed and distributed by the JS. The slides will then be stored on Dropbox, so the partners may make use of them.

4.5   Working languages

The official language with INTERREG JS is English. All the official documents of the Operation with INTERREG JS will have to be available in English.

The Project language of the partnership is English

Partners' national languages can be used in regional documents (e.g. programmes and invitations to regional stakeholder events, brochures), and in other documents, that exceptionally might be produced in national languages.

4.6   Codification of documents

The codification of documents tries to clearly identify a relevant set of information: the type of documentation, the deliverable it contributes to, author/responsible and version. Files will be identified according to the following structure:

SOCIALSEEDS_WP_FILENAME_author_version.EXTENSION
(SOCIALSEEDS_WP_FILENAME_Y_ZZ.EXT)

Where:

- Workpackage (WP) designates the work package of the project the documents belongs to. WP is followed by a number from 1 to 3, according to the WP it concerns.

- FILENAME: Filename is a non-restricted name. Just what the author considers a logical name such as: Agenda (A), Minutes (M), Progress Report (PRx), etc.

- AUTHOR: (Y) Number of the participant entity as shown in the Application Form.

- VERSION: (ZZ) Two-digit codes identify the document version. Intermediate versions 01 to 09 Final versions 10 Further modifications to final versions 11 to 99

Examples

Progress Report 2 (first version) from RERA	SOCIALSEEDS_WP1_PR2_PP3_01.doc
Consolidated PR2	SOCIALSEEDS _WP1_PR2_10.doc
Newsletter 1 (prelim. Version) from EURADA	SOCIALSEEDS _WP2_Newsletter1_P6_01.doc
Final Minutes of Kick-off meeting in Budapest 26-28/04/16 by IFKA	SOCIALSEEDS _WP1_BUD26_28_04_16_LP_10.pdf

4.7 Categorisation

Dissemination documents are categorised according to whether external review and/or Steering Group approval is applicable. This is decided by the partnership during the Seminars based on the expected content and type of document.

The existing categories shall be agreed at the set-up of the project, though the categorisation influences the quality assurance and the scheduling of the document publication. The individual categories take into account the different target audience and the different purpose of documents, so that unnecessary review and approval can be omitted.

Results	Editing and language check	Reviewers	Approval	Publication
Brochures, newsletters, etc	Compulsory	PP / ResPP	CO	Print and web
Website	Only on demand	PP / ResPP	CO	Web
Technical reports (wide interest)	Compulsory	PP / ResPP / External	CMT / SC	Web, Dropbox, social media
Technical information (focused interest)	Only on demand	PP / External	CMT / SC	Web, Dropbox, social media

4.8 Availability and storage

Project documents will have its latest version available through Dropbox. The LP will keep in its internal records the final version on paper and computer supports.

4.9 Confidentiality

Although the nature of the implementation of the operation is public, part of the information exchanged in the context of its implementation between the LP and the PP, the partners themselves or others bodies can be confidential.

Only documents and others elements explicitly provided with the statement "confidential" and "for full publication" shall be regarded as such. Others documents, without any mention of confidentiality will be considered as internal.

Whenever a document should contain confidential information, it will be clearly stated as a formal decision in a project meeting or communication. The confidentiality classification is decided by the Partnership.

The LP and the PP commit to taking measures to ensure that all staff members carrying out the work respect the confidential nature of this information, and do not disseminate it, pass it on to third parties or use it without prior written consent of the LP and the PP that provided the information.

The confidentiality classification may be changed by a decision taken by all partners during the progress of the project. This confidentiality clause shall remain in force exceeding the termination of the SOCIAL SEEDS project.

The SC has the authority to approve documents and their distribution.

The PP may also decide to make project results available to external parties in their own regions and to European Institutions.

4.10 Quality

The generation of documents must go through different phases:

- Quality internal control
- External review and quality approval

The internal control includes the assembly and integration of the contributions based on the project internal results into a coherent document. Documents are generated through the co-operation and interaction of many people working for different partners and in different countries. This process depends on clear procedures, strictly adhered to by all people involved. The process will need the interaction of:

- Authors, who generate the parts comprising the document making use of project internal results
- Project Partners (PP), who submit documents
- Responsible Regional Partners (ResPP), who assemble and finalise the draft and final version of documents.
- Internal reviewers in charge of quality check (LP/ResPP)
- Comunication Officer (CO), responsible for editing, checking and preparing the document for publication and dissemination

Furthermore, to set up and maintain a high quality level, a basic quality management system has to be implemented, for a continuous improvement of performances and satisfaction of parts involved in the project. Hence, two basic criteria are defined:

- Respect of the planned deadlines submissions of the Progress Reports/ Studies/ Publications / Other documents
- Respect of the content of the Progress Reports, studies, publications and other documents (returns due to lack of information, non fulfilled data, failures, ...)

If necessary, additional criteria might be defined, and validated by the CMT.

5 Reporting

5.1 Progress Reports

- The progress of the INTERREG Europe operations will be monitored and checked according to the requirements set out in the EU regulations governing the use of EU funds. For the purposes of verifying the progress of operation implementation, the operation shall submit regular Progress Reports to the Joint Secretariat in Lille. The Progress Report will consist of an Activity Report and an audited Financial Report. The Progress Report will serve as a basis for payments and will be used for reporting on the Programme's progress to the Monitoring and Steering Committees and the European Commission.
- A report on preparatory costs must be submitted by the CMT together with the first Progress Report.
- Regularity and Submission of Reports: Reports will be linked to the payment schedule and will have to be submitted on a regular basis using reporting periods of 6 months.

  The exact reporting periods and deadline for submission are for Phase 1 (six-monthly):

  01 February – 30 July   →   01 November

  01 August – 31 January   →   01 May

  The exact reporting periods and deadline for submission are for Phase 2 (annual):

  01 February – 31 January   →   01 May (31 January for the last progress report)

- The Activity Report shall include information on the project's progress, as well as a comparison of initially established targets and those achieved.
- The Financial Report will contain a retrospective accounting of the total costs incurred during the reporting period. Only reimbursements are allowed and only for the incurred expenditures that have been paid out during the reporting period and supported by receipted invoices or accounting documents of equivalent probative value. Costs not accounted for or not reported in due time will not be reimbursed. The CMT shall also ensure that the expenditure stated in the Financial Report has not been included in a previously submitted Financial Report.
- Customised progress report templates will be provided to each PP.
- As stated previously, the Progress Reports will have to be audited by the first level control (FLC) of the PP before it is submitted to the CMT and through them to the JTS.
- After finalisation of the operation, a final report must be submitted to the JS. This report must provide information about outputs, results and impacts of the project, as well as final financial details. The report shall also include outputs elaborated during SOCIAL SEEDS, including publicity and dissemination materials. A model form of the final report will be published on the Programme's website.

- Every PP commits to providing the CMT with the information needed to draw up progress reports and other specific documents required by the MA/JS or other bodies taking part in the implementation. The reporting periods as laid down in the subsidy contract as well as instructions in the reporting forms shall be observed.

- The CMT shall systematically send every PP copies of the progress reports submitted to the JS and keep the PP informed on a regular basis of all relevant communication with these bodies.

- It is the responsibility of each PP to send their correctly fulfilled and signed cost statement in due time to the CMT.

- The online reports will be submitted through the iOLF system including most of the instructions and clarifications needed to fulfil them. Should any doubt arise; the CMT will clarify it with the JS and will inform all the Partnership –if required- about the answer.
- The template of the SOCIAL SEEDS progress report will be found in Dropbox.

5.2   Time Cycle

Progress Reports (Activity Report + Financial Report) must reach the JS according to the dates programmed and validated within the "Subsidy Contract".

The dates in which these Progress Reports are due in are, therefore, known by all the PP as they are implicitly mentioned in the Contract, has been communicated to all of them, and also explained in this Management Handbook.

The responsibility of the CMT lays mainly in submitting in due time and format the Progress Report to the JS. The contents in the PR are responsibility of each PP.

The formats and templates of the Progress Reports will be made available by the CMT, as soon as received from the JS, and will be included in Dropbox.

The following summarizes all that in the framework of the SOCIAL SEEDS schedule.

> **The exact reporting periods and deadline for submission are for Phase 1 (six-monthly):**
> 01 February – 30 July   →   01 November
> 01 August – 31 January   →   01 May
>
>
> **The exact reporting periods and deadline for submission are for Phase 2 (annual):**
> 01 February – 31 January   →   01 May (31 January for the last progress report)

The LP Project Manager will not necessarily wait for the remaining Progress Report contributions, further to the above mentioned date.

6   Monitoring and Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation activities is on the one hand to control management activities, and on the other to quantify and value the accomplishment of specific objectives of SOCIAL SEEDS project

Activities can be grouped into three categories, namely: Monitoring, Evaluation and Mainstreaming.

Monitoring:

Monitoring is regularly and systematically checking progress of SOCIAL SEEDS implementation against planned activities - allowing bringing in contingency plans if the result or the impending results of planned activities vary significantly from the original workplan.

The main activity is the further refinement of monitoring indicators and their quantification for the subsequent use in reporting (to the JS) and as a basis for evaluation.

Evaluation:

Evaluation is the process of checking after the activities, how effectively and how efficiently an activity achieved its objectives; and of learning from this how future performance can be improved: The main goal of evaluation is to estimate the net impacts achieved by the activity

A mid-term and a final evaluation are foreseen during project implementation. It is foreseen to engage an external contractor to carry out the evaluation of the project.

Furthermore it is foreseen to carry out regular participant satisfaction surveys during the course of the meetings carried out in a standardised form.

Mainstreaming:

Mainstreaming is aiming to disseminate and promote project results and to encourage their transfer and application in other programmes and policies and thus build a basis for further cooperation initiatives – strengthening the partnership and widening the portfolio of cooperation.

7 Annexes

Annex I - Management Structure

	Partner name	Members of SC	Members of PP
LP	IFKA Public Benefit Non-Profit Ltd. for the Development of the Industry	Mária Baracsi	Noémi Koppendorfer
P2	Abruzzo Region	Nicoletta Vittorini	Germana Di Falco
P3	RERA Regional Development Agency of South Bohemia Inc.	Tomas Cilek	Matous Radimec
P4	BSC, Business support centre Ltd., Kranj	Helena Cvenkel	Alenka Sluga
P5	RARR Rzeszow Regional Development Agency	Marek Duda	Agata Ziemiakowicz, Danuta Kandefer
P6	EURADA European Association of Development Agencies	Esteban Pelayo	Tessa Anné
P7	EAC Estonian Advice Centre	Tanel Matlik	Tanel Matlik

Annex II - Abbreviations

CMT: Central Management Team
Co: Coordinator, responsible of the overall coordination of the project
CO: Communication Officer
EE: Expert Groups
FM: Financial Manager
JS: Joint Secretariat
LP: Lead Partner
MA: Managing Authority, responsible for management and implementation of the Programme
MC: Monitoring Committee, the central decision-making body of the Programme
PA: Paying Authority, which manages the ERDF funds and handles payments
PP: Project Partners
PR: Progress Report
ResPP: Responsible Regional Partner
SC: Steering Committee