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EDUCATIONAL SISTEM IN RURAL AREAS ON THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL IN TOWN MUNICIPALITY OF LJUBLJANA

Description: The difference between the approaches to education on the national and the local level.

Introduction:

The different educational courses in rural areas in Slovenia are mainly focused on the farmers. You can hardly get any education or courses for non farming people in rural areas even thou the system is opened. It is still considered: rural equal's farmer, even thou the structure of inhabitants of rural areas is changing rapidly. Except in distant mountain areas the towns, where you can find other education as well are in vicinity. Slovenia has 60% of rural areas 40% of urban areas.

The education of farmers consists of technological knowledge (for primary production and supplementary activities) and of contents focused on the family and women (health, recreation, ...). Education was until recently in the hands of Agricultural advisory service – well organized structure that operates under the Chamber for Agriculture (in the frame of Ministry for agriculture forestry and food) and the only employees were agronomists and every now and then an economist.

In the late 90. different private originations appeared with there programs and the primacy of Agricultural advisory service was at risk – instead of working together they became rivals and on the field you could notice the beginning of stagnation and chaos – there was no proper educational strategy. Now we have an official educational program for those farmers that enter **SAEP - Slovene Agri-environmental programme**, advice for those that need it – we have specialists and general advisors. The role of Agricultural advisory service is now changing – because of disagreements between the Chamber of agriculture and MAFF, advisory service is becoming more and more a service for filing out formulates for subventions and is loosing the contact with the field work and people.

Activities

Until the year 2001 the education of farmers in the Town municipality of Ljubljana was depending entirely on the advisory service and some other educational organizations (Institute for sustainable development – organic production, Faculty for agriculture - strategies, experiments on the field of new plants and Slovenian institute for agriculture). Because of the long-sightedness of people in the office for Agriculture in Department of economy and tourism the structure of employees was changed – the ethnologist and cultural anthropologist was hired as an adviser for rural development.

She took over all the educational system and created a system that now consists from:

- primary sector – role of coordinator
- supplementary activities
- cultural heritage
- social contents
- entrepreneurship

- marketing and promotion
- creating of new market products

The education is now targeted – the focus is now on the group and in that group we deal with individuals as well. Every group has a different focus of education and it is closely observed and looked after from the beginning of the program and during the process. When the group develops and creates a structure of different roles and when we know the name of the leader of that group then we step aside – let the group live and offer them support for the work and other educational needs they have.

Special emphasis is on the cultural heritage. We developed a model for ethnological field research in the form of research camps where students from faculty come to the field, stay there with people for 10 days, talk to people and the results are presented to all the inhabitants in the form of exhibition, paper and in the form of suggestions for new products. In one of those research camps we detected the knowledge of making paper flowers. After the camp we managed – with the great help of local school teacher to put this course in the working curriculum of local school – and now it is also the content of the tourist package that was developed recently for school children.

We also researched mills and traditional food and rituals connected to it. The result is the cooking book and we are now working with the group of local tourist farms so they would put that traditional food on their menus.

We developed another program for farmers that is focused on the entrepreneurship – we introduce to them entrepreneurship from basics to the level where they elaborate their own project from objectives, goals and vision to the staff and marketing. The process lasts for 3 years and after that they are prepared for the market – they know what target groups to contact, how to advertise and how narrow or wide should the offer they have be.

The most important is that they start to think about the values as well, start to change the way of thinking and this is a long procedure.

Lessons learned:

You have to have different professional profiles working on rural development!

It is necessary to combine the academic and field sphere!

You have to work with groups and then focus to the individual otherwise you get lost'

At the beginning of the work you have to have in your mind the whole picture where you want to lead that group to, talk to them what they want and create a program that is just for them!

It is not important how many educational programs you have, but what results you get from them – what is the impact!

The rural development is based on the changing someone's mind – and that takes TIME and PATIENTS!