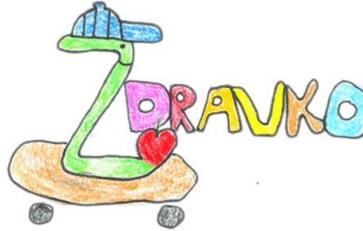




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**Project: Testing of systematic step-by-step implementation model introducing healthy school menus and enhancing physical activity in primary schools and preparing guidelines for its use in other school environments - ZDRAVKO**

# PROJECT EVALUATION INTERIM REPORT

**Work package Number: 3**

**Reporting period: 1 January 2015 – 30 September 2015**

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## I. BACKGROUND

This paper describes the first evaluation period for project ZDRAVKO, funded by the European Commission within the Call for proposals for preparation action on Healthy diet: Early years and Ageing Population.

The project ZDRAVKO tackles the issue of health which is a very ambivalent topic in schools. There is a big gap between declarative recognition of health as a value and supporting every-day activities that require new attitude, skills and knowledge. Regardless of many EU and national recommendation for implanting healthy school menus and enhancing physical activity majority of school staff still does not widely accept and follow them. The evaluation is directed in assessing the changes in understanding health and achieved progress in everyday activities that stakeholders are expected to do.

The purposes of the evaluation activities are above all to help the lead partner and collaborative partners to improve the project and to take decisions. Nevertheless, the project's evaluation will concentrate not only on the question if all activities have been carried out as planned but also if their conduction leads to the achievement of the project's objectives.

Two monitoring reports will be prepared during the project. The first evaluation report in the middle of the project is prepared with the ambition to support the decision making process and enable better implementation of project activities. The majority of evaluation activities will be executed for the second evaluation report in the last months of the project. Report will show the effectiveness of the project and assist project partners in planning sustainability activities.

## II. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

According to the project aims and objectives the evaluated assesses:

- Product quality, especially the guidelines for using the project model in other schools;
- Evaluation of the promotion activities and dissemination and exploitation success;
- Main and collaborative partner cooperation and communication.



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Evaluation reports serve as a quality measure of project implementation and as a basis for changes in project implementation if required.

Progress and success of implementing healthy menus will be especially closely evaluated. Also the effectiveness of dissemination and promotional activities will be evaluated in order to see the multiplication effect.

### III. FOCUS OF THE EVALUATION

The bases of the evaluation are the objectives defined in the project application. We have divided them into short and long-term objectives and put them into sub groups according to the topics.

#### SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES

The evaluation activities will measure if the following short-term project objectives have been reached:

##### Objectives regarding healthy diet:

- **Objective 1:** Raising awareness about the importance of healthy diet and good nutrition status of school-age children among the children, their parents, principals, teachers, kitchen school staff and general public;
- **Objective 2:** Increasing awareness of the importance and advantages of locally grown food and self-supply of food (also because of greater nutrient values).
- **Objective 3:** Raising the individual "self-care" and responsibility for healthy living.

##### Objectives regarding physical activity:

- **Objective 4:** Contributing to greater physical activity in the school environment;
- **Objective 5:** Increasing awareness of physical activity as a prerequisite for happy, independent old age;

##### Objectives focusing on professional work of kitchen school staff:

- **Objective 6:** Informing, educating and supporting key actors that are responsible for school diet;



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- **Objective 7:** Promoting and strengthening the use of online tools, designed to help the organizers of school meals with nutrition values of specific foods and with composition of healthy school menus; nutritional values of specific meal/food and consequently when planning a balanced meal;

## LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

If a follow-up evaluation will be made after the completion of the project also the following general objectives could be measured:

- **Objective 8:** Raising the individual "self-care" and responsibility for healthy living in the future;
- **Objective 9:** Reducing possibilities of diseases, linked to unbalanced diet, inadequate nutrition intake among young population (overweight, obesity, high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure etc.);
- **Objective 10:** Contributing to better health, general well-being of school-age children (greater mental and physical ability) and subsequently to active ageing in middle as well as in old age;

## IV. METHODOLOGY

Main methods of the evaluation are questionnaires, observation techniques and interviews.

The steps of the evaluation process are:

1. Definition of evaluation priorities: prepared in the project application
2. Definition of quality criteria/indicators: prepared in the project application and elaborated during project implementation
3. Data collection and analysis: during project implementation
5. Data interpretation and preparation of recommendations: in mid-term and final project monitoring reports

Mid-term evaluation report is based on the following documentation:

- Project application
- Internal annual narrative and financial reports prepared by the project manager



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- Analysis of the questionnaires on school food completed by pupils
- Analysis of the questionnaires on workshops completed by organizers of school menus
- Project website [zdravko-luk.si](http://zdravko-luk.si)
- [Project Facebook profile](#)
- Webpages of the main partner and collaborative partners

## V. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS MATRIX

In the evaluation we are interested to examine the changes in attitude of different stakeholders. Since there is a big difference between objective and subjective interests regarding health – people support it as a value but are often against health enhancing activities the project must very carefully define its stakeholders and choose most suitable approaches to introduce the project activities.

<b>Stakeholder group:</b>	<b>Interests and how effected are they by the problem:</b>	<b>Capacity and motivation to bring changes:</b>	<b>Actions to address stakeholder interests:</b>
Mayors of municipalities	Have a general interest in long-term health effects.	Have limited capacity to influence the project success.	Ask for support and Inform about the project results.
School principles	Have a general interest to address healthy life-style in schools.	Are under pressure because of introduction of novelties in school life.	Meetings to discuss progress and difficulties in the project implementation.
School teachers	Their personal views are not always in line with the general interest for healthier activities in schools.	Teachers vary in their interest and support of the project activities.	The project has to be very careful to gain their support with awareness rising activities.



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Organizers of school menus, kitchen staff and gym teachers	As the main target group they will benefit most from the project in their daily work.	Have limited capacity. Need to change their attitude, working habits and invest extra work in project activities.	Trainings and workshops for additional knowledge and motivation.
Pupils	Most effected by the project activities – a change in their attitude towards health in their life span is expected.	With the right approach can be easily motivated to participate.	Set of activities during and after their school classes.
Parents	Are aware of the long-term benefits for the children.	Have an indirect but powerful influence.	Workshops and promotional activities to present positive outcomes and health benefits.

## VI. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The evaluation is broad since it includes all the following criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Evaluation includes a combination of descriptive and normative questions that are listed below. Some of them are mentioned already in the project application and some are added at the beginning of the evaluation.

### Evaluation criteria 1: Relevance

Evaluation questions:

*Question 1.1: What is the project objective from perspective of different target groups?*

*Question 1.2: Do the project activities address the needs of target groups?*



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Evaluation questionnaires were prepared and filled in by pupils of 5 collaborative schools online. Their answers define the opinion about school food and healthy habits. The questions tackle beverages, breakfast, school snack and school lunch. The pupils explain what are their favorite and less favorite fruit, vegetable and dish.

Health is an objective goal for the school children. Pupils are very eager to participate in all project activities and we conclude from their engagement and work done so far in this project that they understand very well that health issues are important in their life. In the questionnaires they were asked if their schools follow the guidelines for healthy menus and 74% think they do. They were also asked which dishes are in their opinion healthy but are not on the menu frequent enough. The pupils gave many different answers.

In the questionnaires that were filled in by organizers of school menus the majority of them claim that the workshops have so far fulfilled their expectations that had at the beginning of the project and they have gained expected knowledge.

In the second evaluation reporting period we will again test these questions and extend our evaluation to all project target groups (including mayors of three municipalities involved in the project) with questionnaires or interviews. In line with the project application simple evaluation questionnaires will be given to the participants (organizers of school menus, cooks, pupils and parents) at the end of training activities.

## **Evaluation criteria 2: Effectiveness**

Evaluation questions:

*Question 2.1: How was the project implemented?*

*Question 2.2: To what extent has the project achieved the indicators of success?*

So far the following activities were implemented:

- Project website and Facebook profile operating,
- 2 meetings with school principals,
- 4 workshops for organizers of school menus,
- 5 workshops for school kitchen staff,



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- 1 meeting of school gym teachers,
- 3 growing vegetable gardens: 2 growing vegetable gardens and 1 garden with garden beds (first year),
- First parent meetings (one on each collaborating school).

According to the internal narrative report prepared by the project manager the project implementation follows the timeline envisaged in the project proposal. Organizers of school menus claim in majority that they are satisfied with the content of the workshops and that they have gained new knowledge (80% answered yes to the question).

Regarding the evaluation question 2.2 on success of the project more will be prepared in the second evaluation report where we will evaluate the implementation the following activities that need to be implemented till the end of the project:

- 8 workshops for organizers of school menus,
- 5 workshops for school kitchen staff,
- 10 cooking workshops for pupils and their parents in each of 5 cooperating schools,
- 3 growing vegetable gardens: 2 growing vegetable gardens and 1 garden with garden beds (second year),
- 5 minute physical activity breaks in schools,
- 2 new dishes every 2 months on school menus,
- 2 meetings of school gym teachers,
- Second parent meetings (one on each collaborating school).
- 2 meetings with school principals,
- Booklet with 50 recipes,
- Guidelines for using the project model in other schools,
- Final conference of the project.

### **Evaluation criteria 3: Efficiency**

Evaluation question:

*Question 3: Were activities cost-efficient?*

We have studied the current internal financial reports prepared by the project manager regarding financial efficiency of the project. We claim that the costs



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regarding staff, travel, equipment, consumables, sub-contracting and other are justified. Financial management of the project is solid and no unnecessary or extensive spending was noted.

We will follow again the financial efficiency of the project at the final project reporting.

#### **Evaluation criteria 4: Impact**

Evaluation questions:

*Question 4.1: How many people were reached by the project?*

*Question 4.2: Did the dissemination activities reached the EU target audiences?*

This project has two main project audiences:

- Local general public that needs to understand and support the project in order to ensure its success on the local level and
- Interested public all over EU that can benefit from project results and can copy the model of introducing healthy school menus and enhancing physical activity in their primary schools.

There was a media conference and press release prepared at the beginning of the project. Local radio, TV and web and newspapers have all reported/published articles about the project.

An interesting promotion event was organized twice in September on the local food market. Vegetables from the school gardens and plans to include new healthy dishes in school menus were presented and well received by the visitors. School children (1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade) from two schools included in the project joined the event. We can conclude that the local general public is informed well about the project.

We welcome an extensive project web site and Facebook profile. News about the project is regularly put on the main partner's website and Facebook. We lack the promotion of the project on websites of collaborative partners. The majority of their web sites do not have a link to the project on web site and in some cases do not mention their collaboration in the project ZDRAVKO not even under news. The majority of collaborative partners do not have Facebook profiles.



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Besides vital local support it is of crucial importance that the project results do not stay unrecognized by a wider group of teaching staff across Slovenia and other EU countries. We would like to see more results on cooperation on the eTwinning platform where teachers should exchange knowledge and build cooperation with their colleges across the EU.

Planned promotional activities till the end of the project are:

- Regular promotion on local radio and in local newspapers,
- Regular news on project development on project website and main partner website, project Facebook profile,
- Cooperation of teachers, involved in the project on the eTwinning platform.

The project evaluation will count the number of directly and indirectly involved in the second reporting period. We will pay special attention on the dissemination on the EU target audiences.

### **Evaluation criteria 5: Sustainability**

Evaluation question:

*Question 5: To what extent are the benefits of the project expected to continue after the completion of the project?*

The rate of sustainability will be assessed at the end of the project when also the evaluation will finish. It would also be interesting to evaluate the sustainability of the project after a year and in longer time-period.

Since this is a pilot project with strong emphasis on its possible use in other school environments the evaluation will also pay attention on its dissemination and exploitation success.

Prepared by Financea, poslovno svetovanje, Mira Grabeljšek s.p., Ljubljana, 1 October 2015

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