

# Summary of outcomes 18<sup>th</sup> NRN Meeting

6<sup>th</sup> June, 2013

Tomar, Portugal

## Agenda Item **Opening of the Meeting**

### Discussion Points

The General Director of DGADR<sup>1</sup>, Mr. Pedro Teixeira, welcomed participants at the 18<sup>th</sup> NRN Meeting in Tomar, Portugal. He stressed the important role of all National Rural Networks and their value as vast platforms for exchanging information, experiences and knowledge between rural development stakeholders. Highlighting the demanding challenge faced in programming the future RDP, Mr. Pedro Teixeira mentioned the involvement of the PT NRN in demonstrating the value of networking, the importance of stakeholder's engagement in RD process, the need of developing communications channels and in fostering innovation in agriculture, food production, and forestry in rural areas. Finishing by saying that NRNs have also an important role in improving and simplifying the delivery of RD policy, the participants were invited to enjoy and obtain the maximum benefit from the meeting.

## Agenda Item **NRN Self-assessment**

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### Discussion Points

**Back to the Future: Making best use of network self-evaluations – Edina Ocsko, ENRD CP**

The presentation focused on the following messages:

- Networks produce many 'intangible' results that are difficult to measure – qualitative findings/ case study approach are useful to investigate results & impact
- Evaluations are there to learn from past experience
- Intervention logic (logical links between objectives, activities, outputs, results and impact) is important both for networking activities & their evaluations
- There are a wide range of tools already available on the website that can assist networks in their self-evaluation
- ENRD self-evaluation provides useful lessons; its results will be on ENRD website in the upcoming weeks
- ENRD has made considerable achievements in terms of producing and disseminating new information. A few potential areas for improvement have been identified (e.g. with regard to the

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<sup>1</sup> ADR is the Department in charge of Rural Development Policy within the Portuguese Ministry for Agriculture.

#### Action points

dissemination of TWG and FG results at national and regional level; identifying the use of website information by wider rural stakeholder groups). Some of these issues will need to be followed-up by detailed case studies.

NRNs are invited to contribute with new networking success stories and common statistics. This information will complement the current web resource on the **“Added Value of Networking”**. For further information please click [here](#).

#### Agenda Item

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Discussion Points

#### **The role of NRNs in supporting LEADER/CLLD programming**

##### **Views of Member States on the adoption of CLLD- Sarah Watson, ENRD CP**

The mapping exercise sought to determine the current state of play of CLLD in different Member States. Thirty programme managing authorities responded with eleven still undecided, twelve developing their approach and seven already decided. Various permutations of funds are being explored within multi-fund options, although those who have decided to use this approach are working with EAFRD and EMFF. The biggest obstacle to deciding upon an approach has been identifying ways of successfully harmonising the differing fund regulations.

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Discussion Points

##### **Launching of the new NRN thematic cluster on CLLD - Agnes Kiss, Hungary NRN (HNRN)**

The HNRN will take the leading role within the CLLD thematic cluster, and will be primarily responsible for the coordination of the cluster’s work. During the setting-up phase, NRNs were asked to identify some of the key issues of interest that the cluster should address; and a final set of questions/issues will be defined for the purpose of the cluster. Cluster members' commitment to take an active part/leading role in the activities is essential for the initiative to be successful.

The CLLD cluster involves a wide range of stakeholders, including NRNs, MAs, PAs and LAGs. Active cluster members will be involved (and take lead responsibility for a specific activity). The CLLD cluster builds on a set of common interests and objectives; among others it aims to:

- Enhance cooperation and exchange of experience among key stakeholders;
- help to concentrate and economise the efforts of networks (and avoid duplication of work) in understanding the possible forms and operation of CLLD (e.g. carry out joint surveys; rather than addressing NRNs through a range of surveys)
- produce practically-focused tools and guidance that can assist NRNs and other key stakeholders in the CLLD implementation;
- articulate the needs and information gaps in view to inform the development process of the CLLD Guidelines and other strategic documents.

The presentations on CLLD state-of-play and CLLD cluster were followed by a discussion by interested stakeholders. Future active members presented their proposals/ suggestions for key issues to be covered, together with suggested key activities and planned timing. On this basis a draft work-plan was compiled as a result of the cluster-discussion.

#### Action points

Following the meeting, some key actions were identified and HNRN will propose planned activities/ work-plane for the cluster on this basis (for cluster members to comment). A conference is planned in Hungary on 22 July 2013.

Suggestions/work-plan will be sent to all NRNs, and stakeholders that already signed up as active members of the cluster or observers. Expressions of interest for participation in the cluster from NRNs and other stakeholders are still welcome.

**Follow the progress of the new CLLD Thematic cluster by visiting the dedicated webpage [here](#)**

#### Agenda Item

#### CAP communication Networks

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**Overview of the Rural Development Communication Gateway and follow up required – Amalia Ripea & Adrian Neal, ENRD CP**

Discussion  
Points

The main objectives and evolution of the ENRD' Communication on Rural Development Gateway ([http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/policy-in-action/communicating-rural-development/eafrd/en/eafrd\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/policy-in-action/communicating-rural-development/eafrd/en/eafrd_en.cfm)) was

explained to participants. The content covers all types of communication tools starting from the classical publications and printed materials to audio-video materials, on-line events and targeted campaigns. A short presentation accompanies each communication product providing relevant information and an assessment of the effectiveness of the tool.

Currently the CRDG includes 153 communication experiences, covering all of the EU-27 and Croatia.

Starting from the conference held in Milan ([See here](#)) and the Cyprus NRN's meeting ([See here](#)) various surveys and interviews with representatives of NSUs have been undertaken.

Looking towards the programming period 2014-2020 the importance of communication and information processes at all levels is clearly emphasized. Cooperation and networking functions in support of communication activities are recognized to be increasingly important aspects of information and publicity campaigns. Enhanced partnerships between MAs, NRNs, Monitoring Committees, LAGs and project beneficiaries are foreseen to improve communication. Participants recognized this growing importance and the need to promote a more effective dialogue and exchange between practitioners, providing better opportunities for integrating communication initiatives supported by NRNs, MAs as well as at the European level. The CRD Gateway and the examples now available provide a solid platform to support both current and future programme communications. A more pro-active practitioners' network will also help to foster a better understanding amongst key actors (Managing Authorities, National Rural Networks, etc.) of what is expected from them in order to plan and programme the networking communication functions more effectively and efficiently.

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Discussion Points

**The CAP Communication Awards 2013 – Cristina-Gabriela Marasescu & Nicolas Cuesta, European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development**

The first part of the presentation aimed at informing the participants about the European Commission's activity for communicating the CAP as an overall policy, including both the first and the second pillars.

The objectives, the target audience and the timing of the communication strategy for the Common Agriculture Policy were explained.

The second part of the presentation focussed on the CAP Communication Award, an initiative launched in 2012 for the CAP@50 Communication networking event, aiming at identifying and rewarding the best communication initiatives around agriculture and rural development in the EU.

As the first edition was a success, a second edition is going to be launched in 2013, that will count with two special prizes, one from the jury, and one from the broader public. The application period will be open from July.

Issues raised for further discussion included:

- The need of more complementary between the two CAP Pillars.
- Difficulties in identifying common messages for RDPs, as each MS tends to focus on its own priorities.
- Better coordination among Regional Programmes.

Further discussion and group work were undertaken on day 2 in the framework of the 3rd NRN Pilot training initiative.

Action Points

**Conclusions from Days 1 & 2:**

- DG AGRI suggested to consider the NRN communication plan for 2014-2020 as a theme for the next NRN meeting.
- Peer-to-peer training and experience exchanges were recognized as a positive tool from the majority of participants
- The Dutch NRN proposed to host a training and exchange initiative on effective use of social media tools for which both the English and Swedish NRNs also offered their support and contributions
- An on-line forum will be launched on MyENRD to exchange and share draft communication plans.
- A practitioners' expert list will be developed and shared, on a voluntary basis. It will include names of NRN's members (*Please confirm*) specifying their specialist communication knowledge,

skills or experience.

- The ENRD CP will develop a draft plan of next steps to share with participants to guide the planning of the next activities, ideally to be jointly supported by organizing initiatives with at least 2-3 Member States in order to assure commitment and on-going growth of the practitioners group.

#### **CAP Communication Awards**

NRNs were invited to participate in the second edition of the CAP Communication Awards.

### **Agenda Item**

Discussion  
Points

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### **Other Networking Activities**

#### **The NRN calendar of activities**

The floor was given to NRNs to introduce their upcoming activities for the forthcoming months. (See Annex I).

#### **19th NRN meeting–Paweł Szabelak, Poland NRN**

The Polish NRN kindly proposed to host the next NRN meeting in Poland on September 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The theme of the meeting and of the possible accompanying peer-to-peer training has to be defined, based on the needs expressed by NRNs.

## Annex I

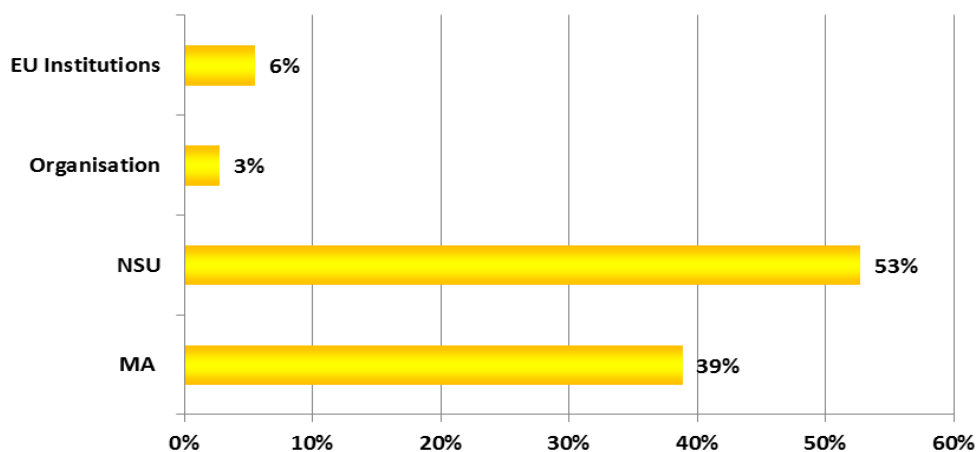
### NRN Plan of Activities – (June-Dec 13)

Who? (NRN)	When?	What?	Where?
Poland	11-13 September	19th NRN meeting	Gdansk, Poland
Estonia	26 September	The Nordic Baltic LEADER Cooperation Gala Awards	Tallinn, Estonia
Cyprus	October (tbd)	International State Fair	Cyprus
Spain	October (tbd)	Best Practices Award Ceremony  Transhumance Fest	Spain
Belgium - Flanders	7 November	Final of Competition on RDP Projects	Brussels, Belgium
Belgium-Wallonia	21-22 November 2013	Conference "Rural Economy"	Abbaye de la Paix Dieu –Amay, Belgium
Sweden	26 November	Rural Gala & Best Practice Award	Sweden
France	26-27 November	20 <sup>th</sup> NRN meeting/LSC	Bourgogne, France



## Annex II-Evaluation of the Meeting

### Composition of the participants



### Results from the feedback form and comments

#### 1. Do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Communication about the meeting was good	18 (51%)	16 (46%)	1 (3%)			35
Organization of the meeting whilst in Tomar was good	25 (69%)	11 (31%)				36
The venue was appropriate for this kind of meeting	20 (56%)	13 (36%)	3 (8%)			36
There was enough time for questions and discussions	16 (44%)	11 (31%)	7 (19%)	2 (6%)		36
The CC meeting provided me with new and relevant information	4 (11%)	26 (74%)	5 (14%)			35
The NRN meeting provided me with new and relevant information	5 (15%)	22 (67%)	6 (18%)			33
I made new and useful contacts during the meeting	10 (29%)	21 (60%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)		35
I was able to fully express my comments, questions and ideas	13 (39%)	17 (52%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)		33

2. What is your satisfaction with the following parts of the meeting?

	Excellent	Good	Neither	Poor	Very Poor	Total
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Coordination Committee meeting</b>						
The Rural Development Regulatory framework 2014-2020	5 (15%)	24 (71%)	5 (15%)			34
Tourism related activities and initiatives	5 (14%)	24 (69%)	5 (14%)	1 (3%)		35
Outcome from the LEADER event and further follow up	8 (23%)	20 (57%)	4 (11%)	3 (9%)		35
Update on Knowledge Transfer and Innovation (KT&I) Focus Group and the initiative on Youth and young farmers in rural areas	9 (26%)	24 (69%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)		35
ENRD in Year 6: Initial and further ideas	7 (21%)	21 (64%)	5 (15%)			33
<b>18<sup>th</sup> NRN meeting</b>						
NRN Self-assessment	7 (19%)	23 (62%)	5 (14%)	2 (5%)		37
The role NRNs have to play in supporting LEADER/CLLD programming	5 (14%)	22 (61%)	7 (19%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	36
<b>CAP communication networks</b>						
Overview of the Rural Development Communication Gateway and follow up required	4 (12%)	23 (70%)	6 (18%)			33
The CAP Communication Award 2013	6 (18%)	21 (62%)	7 (21%)			34
<b>Other Networking initiatives</b>						
Getting back to NRN calendar of activities	6 (19%)	21 (66%)	4 (13%)	1 (3%)		32
Introducing the 19 <sup>th</sup> NRN meeting in PL	5 (17%)	20 (67%)	5 (17%)			30

- 3. On the question “Please briefly identify three of the key messages, lessons learnt or new information that you take away from your event and can use in your work” the following topics were indicated as those on which important messages / new information were acquired during the meeting:**
- CLLD development in other countries;
  - Communication and how to make a communication plan
  - Information on youth and young farmers and KT&I
  - NRN self-assessment
  - Better knowledge of action plans for tourism and offered opportunities
  - CAP communication award
  - Chase up Rural Development Gateway for ideas
- 4. On the question “How can we better organize similar events in the future?”, the following answers were made:**
- Study tour half day would be good
  - Good idea to have CC and NRN meeting together
  - More time for thematic discussions in small groups
  - Too many topics for a day, no time to go deeper, more focus on the agenda of the meeting
  - Better management in case of time shortage, feeling we skipped something very important (self-assessment) in favor of other things.
  - PPT were not readable in all parts of the room, also they should be circulated in advance and handouts should be provided.
  - Define exactly the needs of NRN and provide clear answers
  - Organize meetings in rural areas close to capital cities
  - Wifi in the hotel rooms
- 5. On the question “What would you like to discuss during next NRN meeting?”, the following answers were made:**
- Fostering innovation: how can NRN contribute. Links with the EIP network
  - Simplification of the EU legislation
  - Networking: how to involve stakeholders
  - NRN action plan and communication plan in preparation for the next period
  - Best practice examples from NRNs organizational structures to prepare the future. Examples of successful activities organized by the NRNs

- ENRD can help NRN to prepare on the light of new programming period
- Evaluation and indicators at LAG level; budget allocation to LAGs; multi-funding
- More details on the next Programming Period and the newly created networks; EC requirements for 2014-2020

## Annex III

### List of participants at the 18th NRN meeting

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