

Harvesting from participants at the ENRD Seminar on Communicating Rural Development

- Lessons learnt -

Workshop 1: Communicating rural development with the broader public

- Customise the communications approach to the audience and understand the relevant constraints.
- Make the message simple and use social media.
- Apply multi-purpose product planning.
- The simplicity of language used.
- According to the experience of the Lithuanian Tourism Association, newsletters cost time and money, but 20% of target audience did not open it.
- Numbers do not show efficiency.
- We have to find the best ways to evaluate efficiency and to make changes in the communication plan if needed.
- Communication is relevant. You have to be patient. Networking is the right tool.
- To find the right target group is the best way to start the communication.
- Test the communication method as part of developing it.
- Keep the message simple.
- Communicating through television is too expensive, so the real methods are videos, Facebook, newsletters.
- Share values, experiences, testimonies to support your strategy and policy implementation.
- The cultural framework must be kept in mind.
- Create emotion, atmosphere and passion.
- Communicate to encourage participation.
- Match the language to the target group.
- Communicate about real examples, relevant to life, tell true stories.



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- Use communication for creating awareness and passion, to engage others with your ideas.
- Think 'upstream' and 'downstream'.
- Use a comprehensive framework for planning.
- Use communication as an animation tool with a LAG.
- Regular updates are important for key stakeholders.
- Policy messages and practice must not contradict.
- It's very important to explain and show the importance of the work you are doing – about LEADER – then maybe more people will want to get involved.
- It was good to hear that communication of rural development is not a success story in other countries either.
- To produce a video does not necessarily require a lot of money. Use of local resources, skills, and alternative ways of filming can make it more efficient.
- Tell simple stories about project and processes behind the project.
- The importance of speaking the language of the audience.

Workshop 2: The effectiveness of communication tools

- Don't be afraid of negative feedback/evaluation.
- Numbers don't show efficiency.
- Be more confident about sharing tools.
- Evaluation of communication tools has to be part of the communication cycle.
- Improve communications internally and then at grassroots level.
- Don't reinvent the wheel – learn from others.
- Don't do it in isolation.
- Multi-level evaluation is essential.
- Use tools – Google analytics, surveys, questionnaires.
- Important elements are transparency and trust.
- Share the feedback and make it transparent.
- Use different evaluation tools to assess different actions.
- Follow-up of communication actions should be an integral part of the communications cycle. Evaluation should be part of the follow-up.
- Provide the right message to the right people. Targeting is important.
- Communication is always a two-way process.
- Be consistent and transparent.



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- Clear, understandable, relevant.
- A lot of evaluation is done 'implicitly' without formal mandate.
- By doing evaluation we also learn a lot about evaluation itself, for instance, about how to design it better and carry out more efficiently next time.
- Use evaluation results to review your communication plan.
- Communication campaigns should be run by professionals.
- Find out the baseline.
- Give feedback to people who contribute to the evaluation.
- Use simple and focused questions.
- On-going evaluation is absolutely important.

Session 1: Intercultural communication and TNC

- Administrative burdens are more important than cultural differences.
- For TNC projects harmonised procedures and documents would be needed.
- Important to do a survey among LAGs/TNC partners about obstacles in TNC.
- Persuade the Managing Authority/Paying Agency that (small) TNC projects are important and adopt user friendly rules for TNC.
- You have to be tolerant and have patience when dealing with international projects.
- Consider the cultural context.
- Regulation and practices should be harmonised for TNC.
- There is no cooperation without patience.
- There is no cooperation without passion.

Session 2: Using digital media

- Using digital media must be accompanied by good professional practices.
- Strategy, tools, training = professional.
- Digital media = more interconnections between different media types, synergy blogs, articles for actual information.
- Documentaries and film stories are better understood than interviews.
- Improve, engage and advertise projects with digital media to get some feedback.



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- Twitter is for special groups and not for the wider public.
- Digital/social media is cheap and free.
- It's worth using if your stakeholders are also active in it.
- Social media is an effective communication tool with specific rules that are worth keeping.
- It's time to make social media part of our daily work.

Session 3: Telling rural stories

- Showing agriculture in practice can be very effective.
- Choose the right message for the right target group.
- Videos constitute a kind of memory of the project.
- Understanding the necessity of producing the films by the LAG itself and not outsourcing it.
- In cooperation it is possible to organise something bigger than alone.
- Targeting your communication at school children can be very effective.
- A good story sells really well.
- Adapt your message to your groups.

Session 4: Networks and rural parliaments

- The rural parliament is more of a method than an event.
- Only the common voice of rural actors can make a change in rural development.
- Organising a rural parliament has to be bottom-up, but in some cases the Managing Authority should support the process.
- In a rural parliament setting, politicians and rural people have equal rights.
- Networks are important for rural parliaments.
- Rural parliaments are not only events, but a method through which participative democracy can be practiced.
- You need to involve local leaders early.
- Participants in a rural parliament are equal.
- Join forces, common voice is stronger.
- There can be opposition from local politicians.



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