

1. Summary of Work Programme

The work programme of the National Rural Network (NRN) is set out in an action plan, which set out specific activities and targets, against quantitative and qualitative indicators and timeframes. These will be subject to a process of regular updates and annual review.



The action plan builds activities around allocated themes, including management, events, publications, technical support, tracking indicators and cooperation. In relation to the management theme, the NRN is putting in place a dedicated team, with the relevant technical and policy expertise to implement the project. It will also support working groups focused on specific strategic issues.

Planned events include major rural development conferences. In terms of written communication the RDSU will produce a number of publications. These will include an annual report highlighting the programme impact; quarterly reports presenting quantitative information; a quarterly newsletter presenting qualitative information regarding all four axes of the programme; as well as a monthly e-bulletin/newsletter. The provision of technical support, general information, a referral service and specific technical support to those delivering the programme will be delivered through the network helpdesk. Finally, the analysis and presentation of indicators will form an element of the programme, which will feed into the evaluations and development of best practices.

2. Focus and annual priorities supporting the RDP implementation in 2011

The current work programme of the Irish NRN was approved in Feb, 2011.

The main priority of the NRN is to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of NRN services. However, the NRN does not have a strong policy development role.

The Irish NRN will link with all organisations and administrations associated with the Rural Development Programme (RDP), as well as seeking to develop strong links with farming organisations. In fact, a particular emphasis will be placed on working with farming organisations over the coming year.

3. Thematic Activity

3.1. Thematic Initiatives launched by the Network

- **Thematic initiatives launched by the NRN itself include:**

- » Biodiversity as a resource for agriculture and rural development;
- » Impact of the financial crisis on rural development and the role of the RDP in addressing it.

The biodiversity group was launched in May 2010, and in terms of the second initiative, the NRN completed a study on the impact of the recession and the findings were presented on the 29th April 2010, to all of the members of the network.

- **Events:**

- » Seminar introducing the RDP and the role of the NRN;
- » Seminar on Leader performance & impact;
- » Seminar on Leader procedure manuals;
- » Web Development;
- » Cooperation.

3.2. Relevant Experiences/Good Practices

The task of selecting 'good practice' examples falls to NRN staff in collaboration with the LAGs and the Managing Authority (MA). They are selected on the basis of a desire to feature projects or measures which are a priority within the RDP. Questions considered when selecting projects include:

- » Is the project innovative?
- » Is the project addressing a priority area or measure?
- » Is the project transferable?
- » Is there a lot of useful information available?
- » Does the project demonstrate synergies across axes?
- » Is the project promoter willing to share information?

3.3. Leader related activities and LAG support

- **NSU members dedicated to LAG support:**
No specific NSU staff has been assigned to support LAGs.
- **Training for LAGs:**
No focused training for LAGs is provided by the NSU, specifically at programme level.
- **Guides or other support documents:**
No guidance targeting LAGs Guidance notes are published on any training provided.
- **Other:**
Support is provided to improve the 'online' presence of the RDP.

3.4. TNC Activity

- **NSU members dedicated to TNC support:**
NSU staff provides dedicated TNC support, as and when required. Paul Keating will be the main point of contact.
- **Cooperation fairs and similar events:**
Cooperation fairs are an integral part of the NRN's annual conference.
- **Partner search facilities, guides, other support documents:**
A guide for cross-border cooperation has been developed in association with the Northern Irish Network (available on the NRN's website)
- **Approved TNC projects as of 30 April, 2010:**
 - » The following partners are involved in four TNC projects that have been approved to date:
 - Kilkenny Leader Partnership, with the following partners: Projectbureau Leader Kop van Noord Holland en Texel (KvNH+T); GAL Vastese Inn; ADERCO.
 - Ballyhoura Development Ltd., with the following partners: SECAD, North & East Kerry; South Kerry Dev.; West Cork Dev.; West Limerick Resources; IRD Duhallow; Avondhu-Blackwater.
 - Kilkenny Leader Partnership, with the following partners: Redange-Wiltz (Luxembourg); Urfahr-West (Austria); JOENSUU (in collaboration with LAG JETINA, Finland), Co. Kilkenny Leader; LAG Valle Umbria e Sibillina (Italy); LAG Development Association of Halkidiki S.A. – Annextxa S.A. (Greece).
 - Comhar na nOileáin Teo, with the following partner: Smaoernes Aktionsgruppe.

4. Monitoring and evaluation of networking

» N/A

5. Communication

- **Communication plan for the NRN:**

» The communication plan is part of the Irish NRN's action plan.

- **Communication plan for the RDP:**

» The MA has primary responsibility for the communication of the RDP. The NRN has a PR protocol in development, which defines the role of the NRN with respect to communication.

6. NRN Knowledge Base

- **Publications:**

All publications are available on the NRN website - www.nrn.ie

- **Latest version of the NSP and RDP:**

The latest versions of the NSP and RDP are available at www.nrn.ie

- **Further Information:**

Please find below a link to MA/NSU/RDP's website, where more information is available about financing under the RDP:
NSU: www.nrn.ie