



# Added Value of Networking

## Success Story

Success Story title	<i>Monitoring and evaluation of Leader networking</i>		
Theme	<i>Monitoring and evaluation</i>		
NRN	<i>Italy</i>	Coordinator	<i>NRN LEADER Task Force</i>
Partners	<i>LAGs and Italian MAs</i>		
Period	<i>From February 2011</i>	Resources	<i>See the "additional information"</i>
Beneficiaries	<i>LAGs and MAs</i>		

### Background

*To describe the contribution and value-added of networking in the context of rural development policies is complex. The first step is to try to shape a system of relations that is not identical to same time but it is "ongoing". For example, even if there are structures that work together at "institutional level" (e.g., DG Agriculture, European Rural Network for rural Development and Leader Sub Committee, Ministry of Agriculture, National Rural Network and Task Force Leader) it does not mean that this system can be regarded as a "network" and that the results and products are the result of a networking action.*

*A similar argument applies to local partnerships of LAGs, where sometimes the membership of local actors (institutional and otherwise) is only formal and instrumental to the approval of the LDP (is not this one of the most frequent criticisms addressed to the LAGs?).*

*The NRN - Task Force Leader - with the aim of reporting on the activity, tried to give evidence also of the contribution of the different actors involved and at the same time, in order to propose methodologies for evaluating the processes of networking. For this purpose the NRN – Task Force Leader has set up a system of M&E of activities undertaken to describe the processes of networking enabled. To test this methodology, the Task Force Leader has created a database with information to describe the relationships between Leader actors (both internal, which determine the identity, both external, and activate the dialogue with other systems) the nature of which is not hierarchical and / or functional. Each activity has information was classified by a theme. Below is an example of the activity during 2009-2010 (and continued in 2011) on improving the management and implementation of Axis IV.*

*The 1st Leader Sub Committee (Brussels - November 2008) was the starting point of the process that led to finding common solutions to improving the implementation of Axis IV.*

### Main activities

*Creating a Reteleader system of monitoring and evaluation*





## Contribution of the NSU

*The NSU has:*

- *Created working groups;*
- *Organised meetings;*
- *prepared methods of data collection and analysis;*
- *Processed data; and,*
- *Prepared reports.*

## Success factors

*The result is positive. Participation of all stakeholders (at all levels, regional, national and EU) that have taken charge, beyond the institutional responsibilities, to develop proposals, transfer information, analyze good practices has been active.. The mode of action of the "Leader network system" brands itself as adopting a process that is flexible and opens up a dialogue. The "Network Leader" seems to have actually become a "place" where different actors meet to collect and synthesize different instances. What has changed is not the role of "link" and "facilitator" in the processes of communication and exchange of experience, but how participation of all levels (local, regional, national, EU) to achieve concrete results. For example, voluntary participants try to find common solutions and facilitate the exchange of good practices such as the Working Group on "Implementation of the bottom-up principle: decision-making process and mainstreaming", established under the Sub Committee Leader, following requests from several Members States who were experiencing considerable difficulties in implementing the Leader approach.*

## Additional information

<http://www.reterurale.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/4927> Newsletter AL : pages 13-17

• *Focus tematico: Gli attori di Leader in rete: percorsi e attività per migliorare la gestione dell'Asse IV*

