# Outcomes of the Working Group B on Monitoring & Evaluation of National Rural Networks

The task of workshop B was to discuss monitoring and evaluation of National Rural Networks based on the draft intervention logic proposed by the Contact Point during the meeting and to develop a set of relevant indicators. **The specific approach** of the workshop was to develop in an exemplary manner for a selected networking aim (2014-2020) the definitions of key terms, to propose some indicators and to carry out a SMARTness-test of the proposed indicators. In this way the participants of the workshop should be enabled to better understand the concept of intervention logic, to develop indicators which are relevant for their NRN and also feasible in terms of data availability.

The working steps consisted in

(1) **a screening of the 4 networking aims** mentioned in Article 55 of the draft RD regulation. The aims "Foster Innovation in Agriculture" and "Informing the broader public and potential beneficiaries on rural development policy" were regarded as novel and to a certain extent distant to the current activities of the NRNs. On the other hand the aims "Increasing involvement of Stakeholders in the implementation of rural development" and "Improving the Quality of RDPs" were considered to be more familiar.

(2) The working group decided to work further on the specific aim **"Increasing involvement of Stakeholders in the implementation of rural development**" and the related operational objectives which were used as a basis for the intervention logic. It was decided not to complete the intervention logic with the strategic objectives (CAP or other horizontal objectives) due to the complexity of impacts which could not be discussed within the limited time.

(3) The next step was to **define the key terms that were used in the specific aim and operational objectives** e.g. what is meant by "involvement" - does it mean passive information, participation, active co-development? etc. In this sense it was easier to define they key terms of the operational objectives (which were closer to activities).

(4) **Participants proposed several indicators**. Two of them were defined indicatively as output indicators ("no of developed tools" and "no of participants"). For some other indicators, the group discussed their hierarchy position (output or result?) more in depth and finally decided to move three indicators at the result level ("no of web site hits", "increase in number of applications" and "number of common projects").

(5) The participants **checked the feasibility** of the proposed indicators in terms of data availability, differentiating between what can be collected "automatically" via the Monitoring System and what needs the involvement of evaluators.
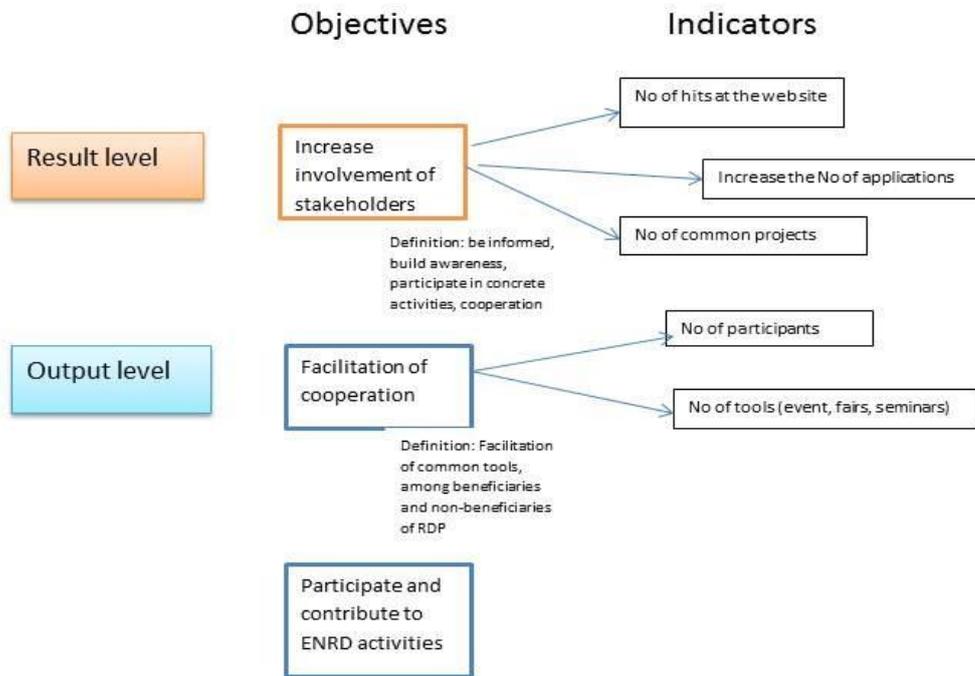
In a final working step the participants **checked the SMARTness** of the proposed indicators.

Indicators		Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Timely
Output	No. of tools	+	+	+	+	+
	No. of participants	+	+	+/o	+/o	+
Result	No of hits at the web site	+	+	+	-/o	+
	Increase the no. of applications	+	+	+	+/o	+
	No. of common projects	+	+			

All proposed indicators were found to be specific and measurable within the context of the NRNs. However the relation between the availability of the indicator data at an acceptable cost and the relevance of the provided information was seen as more controversial and may therefore need further discussion in the future.