Results of the group work

Targeted data management for evidence-based evaluation in Rural Development

Budapest, 8-9 October 2012

Results of the group work

- **What are the participants' recommendations for setting up a targeted data-management system until the end of 2013?**
  - Key aspect 1: Framework conditions & EU requirements
  - Key aspect 2: Responsibilities & cooperation in data management
  - Key aspect 3: Human resource development & availability
  - Key aspect 4: Proportionality
  - Key aspect 5: Data needs & evaluation plan
  - Key aspect 6: (Re)design of IT systems
  - Key aspect 7: Calculating impacts at RDP level

Key aspect 1: Framework conditions & EU requirements

- **Clarify performance framework** (e.g. use financial and output indicators) → Guidelines to quantify milestones?

- **Clarify multi-fund approach for CLLD**: create links between funds → Guidelines, best practices from past

- **CMEF for RD**:
  - Define at EU-level a small set of core indicators (e.g. targets),
  - use and improve current set of indicators
  - Allow for programme-specific indicators (set-up already at ex-ante stage)
  - Clarify consistency between different funds
  - → Provide guidelines (incl. coordination between the whole CAP and other CSF-funds)

- **M&E for whole CAP:**
  - Use existing data from statistical sources

- **Enhanced AIR 2017:** provide further clarifications (e.g. what is the task of the evaluators?)

Key aspect 2: Responsibilities & cooperation in data management

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- **Set-up an integrated data platform** by MA (geo-data warehouse for evaluation)
- **Set-up an evaluation unit** within the MA (to ensure continuity in needs assessment and evaluation)

Key aspect 3: Human resource development & availability

- Provide **written Handbook on data management** at the level of MA (e.g. for new staff incl. definition of tasks, timing, coordination)

- Provide appropriate **guidance at EU-level** (incl. FAQ, best practices)

- Establish a **platform for cooperation** and knowledge-sharing (working-groups, trainings)

- **Organize trainings** dedicated to RD evaluation (involve also representatives of other funds)

- Establishment of **quality control at level of MA** to ensure good evaluation practice (e.g. by external experts)

- **Dedicate TA-resources** to the establishment of an integrated evaluation system

- **Establish team of experts** (IT people, economists etc.) to ensure data-quality

- **Ensure continuity of staff** (incl. training, financial incentives and motivations)

Key aspect 4: Proportionality

Managing Authority:

- Define priorities of evaluation (and indicators) in the evaluation plan

- Identify relevant data for evaluation & monitoring (drop superfluous data)

- Adapt the IT-system incl. application form for beneficiaries (distinguish between application form for measure or project; publish application forms on the web, in clear language)

- Ensure visibility of results; ensure sufficient resources; keep flexible

- Clarify the level of detail needed (e.g. in application forms)

Beneficiaries

- Focus on quality of data, explain use and results (→ provide feedback to stakeholders), ensure visibility of results

European Commission:

- Communicate on the use of evaluation results to MA, PA, beneficiaries

- Focus on priorities, ensure flexibility

- Compare results of evaluations; clarify the level of detail needed (e.g. is age and gender-breakdown really needed?)

- Reflect on electronic transfer of data (e.g. send EXCEL-tables or application)

Key aspect 5: Data needs & evaluation plan

- **Define minimum requirements** for Evaluation Plan (e.g. contents) → provide guidance to MA

- **Ex-ante testing of alternative evaluation plans** (covering specific needs of RDPs) in "creative thinking workshops"
  - focusing on risks, problems,
  - Test against constraints (what is the evaluation need and what is the data we have?); human resources, evaluation methods

- **Keep flexibility of Evaluation Plan** in order to react to new RDP preconditions (→ has also implications on costs)

- **Testing of measure-specific evaluations** (prepare data for evaluations, consider cost-effectiveness)

- **Ex-ante creative thinking workshop** (MAs, evaluators) → think about RDP's future, possible approaches, match knowledge & expectations

- Be aware that the **devil is in the details** (Do a testing in advance.)

Key aspect 6: (Re) design of IT systems

- **Maximize electronic data** and minimize manual data
- **Find the best existing data** for integration in the system (application forms)
- **Clarify data-collection** at closing-stage of the project (either from evaluator or from monitoring system)
- **Improve quality of reported data** (establish control system within the database) → introduce quality checks of reported data (consider proportionality of control)
- Shared, clear and common **definitions for data collection**
- **Manage all data within the system** (in particular for area-based measures)
- **Take data from existing databases** rather than from beneficiaries
- **Ensure compatibility** of different data in the system
- **Manage reporting**: Define different reports for different users

Key aspect 7 : Calculating impacts at RDP level

- **EC guidance on impact indicators** (not too prescriptive, leave flexibility to evaluators, learn from best-practices)

- Give flexibility to evaluators to **focus on relevant impact indicators** for their RDP → no need to cover all impacts, no aggregation for all indicators

- **Organize Good practice workshops** / **know-how-exchange,** e.g. on topics such as

  - How to calculate impacts at regional level if data is only available at national level?

  - How to assess net-impacts (learning on methodologies); e.g. how will the 7 impact indicators be assessed in the ex-post evaluation?

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Thank you for your attention!

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