

On-Going Evaluations – Experiences from BG RDP 2007- 2010

Evaluators point of view

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Outline of the presentation

1. Objectives, organisation and activities of the on-going evaluation of BG RDP 2007-2010
2. Experiences and observations from the evaluation, including one external factor
3. Lessons learned: A few concluding remarks

Background

- * Article 86(3) of Regulation (EC) N° 1698/2005 and Article 82(2) (d) of Regulation (EC) N° 1698/2005
- * Budget: EUR 600,000
- * Public tender procedure, won by the Italian company Agrotec Spa for the period 1st June 2009 to 31st December 2010
- * Evaluation team: 2 international and 3 national consultants plus support staff

Objectives and Organisation

- * The objective of the evaluation was to contribute to improvement/optimisation of management, programming, implementation and monitoring of RDR 2007-2013 (ToR)
- * The evaluation covered the 2007 – 2010 period
- * Project Management and Control Committee established in the MAF with RDD representatives
- * Data should be made available by MA and PA to the evaluators

Primary activities and outputs

- * The contract included three major outputs:
 - * The 2008 annual on-going evaluation report to be prepared from 1 June to 15 June in draft, and as final report 15 September, 2009
 - * The 2009 annual on-going evaluation report to be prepared from 1st March to 9th April as draft, and as final 15th June, 2010
 - * The midterm evaluation report 2010, as a draft 1st November and as a final 15th December, 2010

Horizontal analyses, an option

- * Economic impacts of reallocation of funds among measures,
- * Analysis of the causes to low interest for RDP support in the dairy sector,
- * Analysis of the administration of the RDP implementation
- * Revision of the RDP baseline indicators

Workshops for MAF and PA staff

- * M&E of BG RDP: Objectives, content and activities, results of the 2008 and 2009 reports
- * Administrative procedures: Comparison between BG, Austria and Denmark

Setting up the working environment - MA

- Good, open and positive cooperation between MA and evaluators, constructive kick-off meeting and inception phase
- Good understanding of the role of the evaluators, but maybe too much focus on formal EC reporting requirements
- Too little attention on the on-going evaluation concept and the possible contribution from this to the optimization of the program implementation

Setting up the working environment - PA

- Difficult, negative working environment between PA and evaluators
- Data requests for evaluation activities should be made officially by letters from evaluators via RDD and MAF to PA
- Still, data and information was only partly, too late and fragmented delivered due to various MA – PA controversies
- Access to information about procedures and resource utilization difficult to get

Why difficulties with data and information access and quality?

- * Controversies between MA and PA delaying data collection and impeding cooperation
- * IT software to generate reports from the monitoring database missing
- * Missing data in the monitoring database, data not entered
- * Data not always entered correctly
- * Data design in application forms not always structured logical and objectively

Use of outputs

- * Annual reports fulfilled formal requirements for MA to EC
- * Annual reports demonstrated for MA the relevance of
 - * Speeding up programme implementation
 - * Considering reallocations of resources between measures
 - * Considering why the demand for support from specific sectors was less than expected
 - * Updating baseline indicators due to the Health Check

Influence of one external factor: New government

- * Change of minister and deputy minister
 - * 3 deputy ministers in 18 months
- * Change of management in RDD and MA
 - * 4 directors of RDD in 18 months
- * Reductions in staff of RDD
 - * Important share of RDD staff fired
- * Change in PA management
 - * 2 directors in 18 months

Consequences:

- * Lack of ownership for the evaluation exercise in the management and among staff in RDD, MA and PA
- * Even lack of ownership of the RDP!
- * Lack of willingness to contribute to the evaluation activities, in the PA in particular
- * Lack of optimal utilization of evaluation and programme resources

Evaluation as a Partnership

- * The evaluation team attempted to organise the on-going evaluation as a partnership between the MAF, the PA and the consultant
 - * To make the best use of the resources of the consultant with the overall objective of contributing to as smooth and efficient implementation of the programme as possible.
- * It was, however, only a modest success

Main challenges

- * To maintain attention on the on-going evaluation from the MA
- * To convince the PA that the evaluation actually could be useful
- * To get access to data: Fast and effective and of good quality

3. Lessons learned: A

- * Involve PA or similar implementing institutions in the preparation of ToR
- * Do not necessarily make one tender for the full programme period. BG model OK
- * Involve PA in the management/steering committee
- * Make the roles, expectations and responsibilities clear for all involved institutions
- * Confirm roles and responsibilities at a kick-off meeting or workshop, where expectations are balanced

Lessons learned: B

- * Prepare and make ready in advance all relevant data, in particularly data from the monitoring databases
- * Establish a smooth and fast system for exchange of data and information between the MA/PA and the evaluators
- * Define the relationship between MA, PA and evaluator as a partnership
- * Base the partnership on mutual trust

C: Beyond the evaluation

- * Make sure you have a good working environment between MA and PA
- * Try to ensure staff and competence continuity
- * Ensure appropriate monitoring data collection, registration and IT based reporting systems
- * Try to establish a positive partnership with the evaluators. See them as your colleagues!

Thank you for your attention

Time for a few Questions & Comments

Check: www.evaluators.eu

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