



Focus Group 1

"Implementation of the bottom-up approach under LEADER Axis"

"Main conclusions and key elements from Extended report"



Panagiotis Patras, ELARD

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Connecting Rural Europe





- Leader subcommittee, Brussels, 20 May 2010;
- Focus Group 1 : Summary of Main Issues & Possible Solutions for further discussion;



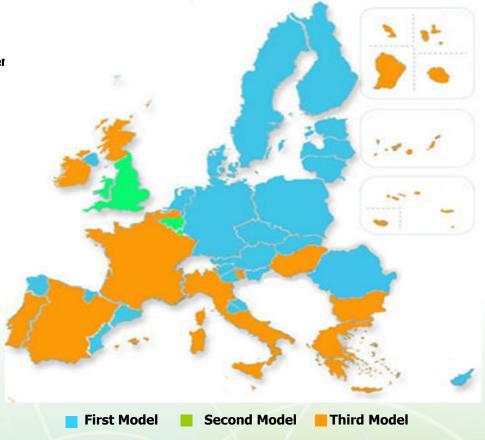


3 major LEADER implementation models

Decentralisation of project selection competence

Decentralisation of project selection and payment competer

Decentralisation of project approval (local global grant)









Main Issues arisen and Possible Solutions

- Lack of clear distinction of roles of MA and LAGs
- LAG capacity constraints
- Inability of LAGs to implement complex projects
- Unsuitability of rules for LEADER approach
- Financial rules frustrate LAG efforts
- Control system discourages and contradicts the LEADER approach







Focus Group 1: Main Issues

1. Lack of clear distinction of roles of MA and LAGs

- Overlap/interference on selection criteria, elaboration of calls, project ranking
- "distance" between LAGs and other implementing bodies

2. LAG capacity constraints

- Very small staff numbers
- Insufficient experience and expertise
- Budget constraint (running costs)
- Lack of strategic approach to capacity building

3. Inability of LAGs to implement complex and integrated local strategy

- Predominance of measure by measure approach
- Lack of LAG capacity/experience to pursue complex projects
- Absence of tools for local strategy monitoring and evaluation







Focus Group 1: Main Issues

4. Unsuitability of rules for LEADER approach

- Arbitrary interpretation of rules
- No specific rules for small projects or coordination projects
- Non differentiation of eligibility rules for LEADER projects

5. Financial rules frustrate LAG efforts

- Match funding issues
- Excessive form filling

6. Control system discourages and contradicts the LEADER approach

- Accreditation requirements too onerous
- Non-involvement of LAGs in controls
- Threat of 3% sanction







Focus Group 1 : Proposals

1. Lack of clear distinction of roles of MA and LAGs

- define more clearly the division of labour
- appointing a single contact person in the MA for each of the LAGs
- holding regular meetings between programme authorities & LAG managers
- informing / involving the LAG in the control task, even if it is not delegated







Focus Group 1 : Proposals

2. LAG capacity constraints

- To increase the management capacity by training actions "a more strategic approach is required for building and maintaining the necessary capacity"
- To provide supporting documents on rules and procedures
- To ensure a critical mass in human resources
- Enable advance payments
- Derogation to 20% ceiling if major project management tasks are implemented at LAG level







3. Inability of LAGs to implement complex projects and integrated LDS

- Eligibility of operations outside the menu of measures
- To provide guidance to LAGs (incl. on on monitoring and evaluation)

4. Unsuitability of rules for LEADER approach

 Develop specific LEADER measures (e.g. small scale projects or coordination projects) and procedure for LEADER approach







5. Financial rules frustrate LAG efforts

- Establish **national**, regional or local funds to ensure that national public co-funding is obtained simultaneously by beneficiaries
- LAG autonomy to manage the financial envelope of its LDS

6. Control system discourages and contradicts the LEADER approach

- define scope of accreditation at EU level
- Introduce independent audit as an alternative to accreditation
- Ensure LAGs participate in project controls
- Derogation for LAGs from 3% sanction







THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

For further information please contact the Contact Point of the EN RD at the following e-mail address: info@enrd.eu

