



Focus Group 1

“Implementation of the bottom-up approach under LEADER Axis”

“Main conclusions and key elements from Extended report”



Panagiotis Patras, ELARD

Leader subcommittee 12 November 2010, Brussels



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 competence



Decentralisation of project approval (local global grant)



■ First Model ■ Second Model ■ Third Model



Connecting Rural Europe



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 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



Connecting Rural Europe