European Network for Rural Development

Tool 2 - Organising cooperation ideas into a list of priorities

Different ideas may emerge for TNC projects and it is useful to arrange these into a list of priority projects. The projects with the highest priority will normally be the projects that will create the most benefits for your LAG's territory.

After you have collected your projects ideas the next stage involves carrying out a common analysis of each idea so that they can be properly compared.

Analysis can involve considering the following questions for each project idea. These questions are generic and you may also want to include other questions in the analysis that are specific to the objectives of your Local Development Strategy and/or your LAG's defined cooperation strategy.

Fill out one of these tables for each project idea

Questions	Answer
What are the main development challenges and opportunities facing your territory – and what results will be created by this TNC project idea that contribute to addressing the territory's main development challenges and opportunities?	
Is it possible to quantify the anticipated results and outcomes from this project?	
What targets (quantitative and qualitative) will the project have and are these realistic?	
Are the methodologies for measuring the project's performance easy and cost-effective to use?	
Who are the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project, and to what extent will they take advantage of the expected results?	
Who are the local partners involved and what can they contribute to the project?	
How much added value will be created by the cooperation – e.g. why do we need a partner? What advantages are to be gained from working with a partner to address the territory's main development challenges and opportunities? Could we achieve the same benefits for our area from working on our own without a cooperation partner?	

What factors are essential to ensure the project's success and what risks exist that might prevent the project from being successful?	
How much money will we need for this project, and what other resources (skills, equipment, time) are necessary?	
How likely is it that we can obtain all the money and resources that we need for the project?	

Answers to these questions can be organised to help compare project options against some basic criteria for prioritising/selecting TNC projects. In the example below four criteria are used and you may want to adapt this framework to fit the objectives of your cooperation strategy.

The four main criteria used here are: relevance, efficiency, efficacy and participative approach. Projects can be scored against these criteria – e.g. 1 point = low score; 2 points = medium score; 3 points = high score. The sum of the scores can enable a classification of the project ideas. One person can score all the projects or you may want to ask several people to score all the projects to give an average score. It may be useful to provide examples of the types of project factors or features that score high, medium or low.

Relevance	Score
Does the project address a real problem?	
Will the project complement other rural development work in the LAG territory?	
Will there be sufficient added value gained for the LAG area as a result of the project?	
Is the time appropriate to launch such a project?	
Efficiency	
Are the expected objectives and results achievable?	
Are the available resources sufficient to reach the objectives?	
If launched now, can the project be completed on time?	
Efficacy (cost-benefit ratio)	
Is there a reasonable balance between the financial resources and the anticipated results?	
Is it comparable with other cooperation projects?	
Participative approach	
To what extent can the project rely on an active and balanced participation and commitment of the different local partners?	

Further points to consider when prioritising TNC project options are noted below:

It is important and useful:

- To set priorities and concentrate efforts on a limited number of truly strategic actions because **human resources**, **time** and **financial means** being inevitably limited.

- To have a clear idea of the resources (financial and human) that may be allocated for cooperation. This will help LAGs make decisions about what types of projects they can afford. It is important to clarify such matters before going ahead and looking for partners.

- That you know you have enough resources to achieve the TNC project goals and also carry out your other work. Experiences from LAGs have sometimes shown that they invested so much time and resources into their TNC actions that they were not able to properly carry out their main day-to-day duties involved with implementing their Local Development Strategy.

Lastly, TNC often requires inputs from different local actors and so each project idea needs to have a plan for mobilising relevant actors and keeping all stakeholders informed about project progress and the inputs required from them at different times. Establishing and maintaining this

momentum among local partners is a critical success factor for TNC projects and the work involved should be considered as part of the analysis for each project idea.