

Tool Example of communication tools

Communication is essential for the smooth implementation of a cooperation project. It is important to communicate among partners who are to work together, but equally important to keep informed all cooperation stakeholders, local actors, the local population and the wider public.

Internal communication

→ *Within each LAG / project promotion structure at the local level*

- The project's management team: it is important that project staff in charge of the implementation and monitoring of the cooperation project avoid working in isolation. They should be in regular contact with those members of the LAG who are in charge of the implementation and monitoring of the local development strategy, in order to ensure that the cooperation project remains compatible and complementary with actions undertaken at the local level, even if the context and the actions evolve.
- The meetings of the local cooperation steering committee bring together the different cooperation stakeholders and therefore are a good opportunity to communicate the progress made by the cooperation project since the last meeting (in the local area and in the partner areas): what methods were used, which difficulties were overcome, which were the positive surprises experienced, what results were achieved, what is foreseen until the next meeting, etc. (example: after the first meeting with partners, it is crucial to publicise the meeting's results in order to secure and maintain the involvement of local stakeholders. The use of multimedia, such as films, photos to record the first meeting contributes to and engages in an interactive presentation.

→ *Within the cooperation project: between the partners*

- The management teams from the different local areas involved in the cooperation project need to be in regular contact (e.g. by one of the means described in the tool 'how to communicate from a distance') in order to ensure good information flow and regular updates on the project's operational progress.
- The meetings of the global cooperation project steering committee are the place to provide formal progress updates on the overall status of the cooperation project and related actions in the participating local areas.

External communication

In the beginning cooperation is often perceived as a time consuming activity, where direct impacts are not easy to grasp. Yet, experience has proven that cooperation helps areas and/or local structures to achieve (much) more than they could have possibly achieved on their own. It is therefore important to be as transparent as possible, by disseminating information about the different steps of the project: state of the art, planned meetings, results achieved but also difficulties encountered, delays which might occur (and explanations provided with regards to these delays).

→ *In the local area*

The citizens of the area are one of the main communication target groups of the cooperation project. This may be achieved through:

- Articles: the communication tools of the implementing structure (i.e. the LAG newsletter), the local press, the local radio/TV station and others.

- Local events: during any local event, a brief presentation may be inserted in the agenda to inform about the cooperation project. Technical presentations should be avoided, focusing on basic information about the project, the partners and the expected tangible results/benefits for the local actors and the local area.
- Specific cooperation events may be organised on the occasion of major milestone achievements by the cooperation project. These cooperation events may e.g. be linked to the presence of representatives from the partner(s) areas. Again, technical presentations should be avoided, focusing rather on similarities of the partner areas involved, with local actors from the partner(s) areas presenting what they do and how they do. The idea is to show that, behind the technical aspect of cooperation, links between people have been created who have something in common and who can share and improve their knowledge thanks to the project. It is also a way to attract interest in cooperation and to launch cooperation dynamics in a local area.

→ **The wider public**

- Articles: the regional / national press;
- Interviews / videos: the regional/national television;
- Invite regional/ national representatives to the above mentioned specific cooperation events;
- Organise events which mobilise not only the Leader cooperation partners but also other cooperation stakeholders from twinning, decentralised cooperation and other contexts.