



Leader Focus Groups 1, 2 and 3: Results

Ave Bremse, Estonian NRN
Coordination Committee, 9 December 2010
Brussels



Connecting Rural Europe



FOCUS GROUPS



- **FG 1: Implementation of the bottom up approach**
 - Lead : ELARD & IT NRN
 - 20 MS + 3 NGOs
 - 2+3 meetings
- **FG 2: Preserving the innovation/experimental character of Leader**
 - Lead : DE & NL NRNs
 - 12 MS
 - 2 meetings
- **FG 3: Implementation of the "cooperation" measure**
 - Lead : EE & FI NRNs
 - 13 MS + 1 NGO
 - 2+3 meetings

MS representatives include MA, PA, NRN and LAG level





Objectives of Focus Groups

- Identification of main difficulties / obstacles in the implementation of Leader axis and good practice
- Reflection on possible solutions
- Definition of recommendations for the future





Focus Group 1: 3 major LEADER implementation models



- Decentralisation of project selection competence
- Decentralisation of project selection and payment competence
- Decentralisation of project approval competence





Focus Group 1: Main Issues (first step)

1. Lack of clear distinction of roles of MA and LAGs
2. LAG capacity constraints
3. Inability of LAGs to implement complex and integrated local strategy
 - Predominance of measure by measure approach
 - Lack of complex projects
4. Unsuitability of rules for LEADER approach
 - No specific rules for Leader typical projects (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 requirement too onerous
 - Non-involvement of LAGs in controls
 - Threat of 3% sanction





Focus group 1: Main issues (step 2)

Specific aspects of Leader implementation – analysis:

- 1. LAG running costs - difficulties:** securing bank guarantees for advances; providing “own funding” ; ineligibility for VAT; payment delays.
- 2. Complex projects** - projects consisting of several operations – package of actions eligible under several measures or under a Leader specific integrated measure.
- 3. Small scale projects** - positive aspects: simplified documentation; faster procedure; not so much heavy responsibility for LAGs.





Focus Group 2: Main issues

- **Definition of innovation in RDPs or LAG level:**

Some examples: new methods, new products, new policy, new service, new process, new involvement, new combinations, new collaborations new.....

- **Main aspects discussed:**

1. Eligibility rules
2. Control rules
3. National co-funding
4. Eligibility to one or several EU funds





Focus Group 3: Main Issues

Four main issues discussed:

1. Different timing in decision-making and different administrative rules
2. Different expectations towards beneficiaries in different programmes (eg definitions of common action and common costs)
3. Information needs of different partners involved in implementation
4. What are the key areas in which cooperation projects are most needed?





EN RD dissemination of Focus Groups products

Through different channels:

- Website:
 - Public
 - MyEN RD
- TWG 4
- New LAG event and others
- TNC Guide
- Case briefs/studies:
 - Articles in publications
 - RDP project database



To different target groups:

- NRNs, MAs, PAs
- RD organisations
- LAGs
- DG AGRI
- Other DGs
- Wider public





THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Contact: info@enrd.eu

Website: <http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/>



Connecting Rural Europe

5th CC meeting – 09.12.2010

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