

## 1. Annual Work Programme (AWP) 2012: priorities supporting RDP implementation



- The Portuguese NRN maintains an annual Work programme. In the next years the network will probably shift to a multi-annual work programme that will cover a bi-annual schedule.
- In a context of severe budget constraints the NSU's focus was on promoting the networking and on turning NRN more autonomous and sustainable by stimulating the participation of stakeholders, by sharing and disseminating information, knowledge and experience and by promoting cooperation.
- The main priorities of the NRN's AWP are:
  - Capitalizing experience and knowledge (support the exchange of knowledge and experiences – good practices);
  - Facilitating Leader cooperation;
  - Monitoring the rural world and the implementation of rural development policies (improving the rural development policy design by supporting the analysis of the rural areas and the assessment of the effects of RD policy);
  - Facilitating information access (dissemination and communication).
- NRN's activities used to implement its priorities:
- Studies and analysis, workshops and seminars, working groups, study trips, meetings, surveys/members consultation, written information such as brochures and reports.
- NSU's activities used to implement its priorities:
- Workshops and seminars, meetings (NRN and ENDR), support LAG in cooperation activities, meetings, mailings, participation in working groups, written information such as NRN magazine, NRN newsletter; organizing PIKSE and NRN-P project information (database of relevant projects).
- The Last NRN's AWP (2011) is available on: <http://www.rederural.pt/images/stories/zira/planoactividades2011versaofinal.pdf> .

## 2. Thematic Initiatives launched by the Network

### • **New thematic issues that the network is planning to address:**

- The PT-NRN initiatives are promoted by NRN members or by NSU, framed by RRD AWP and are decided and approved by MA.
- NRN's programme is now supporting 79 initiatives regarding the main priorities of the current AWP. The members will continue the work they are developing with the support of NRN-Programme, and the network doesn't expect to introduce more thematic issues, since the priorities planned in the NRN-P cover already the most significant themes / issues of RD.
- The NSU, taking into account the work that NRN members are developing in a project related to this theme, will eventually address "innovation" (in the NRN magazine) or issues related to the next programming period. In cooperation with LAGs, NSU is preparing a seminar about LEADER approach and CLLD.

### • **Status info and plans about continued thematic initiatives:**

- The NSU did not launch continued thematic initiatives, but works on relevant experiences identification (PIKSE) and follows themes like: local food and short supply chains, innovation, rural entrepreneurship, rural tourism, networking, CAP 2014-20, CLLD, EU 2020 strategy, rural youth and rural women, agriculture and forestry, climate change.

### • **Issues addressed by the events and working groups:**

- The NRN members NRN promoted many initiatives which are still going on. Each activity works on theme; all of them with workshops, seminars, working meetings or working groups. We can highlight: rural economy diversification, aromatic and medicinal plants, young rural entrepreneurship, rural tourism and short food supply chains (local products), CAP and other policy design in 2014+, territorial dynamics to promote rural and local development, environment and renewable energy and biodiversity etc.
- The thematic issue that NSU will address directly in 2012 by organizing a seminar is local development strategies and CLLD (leader related issues). NSU participates in events organized by members and others entities, that addresses the themes referred above and also others subjects like social agriculture or rural heritage.

• **Issues addressed by committees/steering groups:**

- The Portuguese NRN (NSU) was co-coordinator (with FI and ELARD) of Focus Group 4 of the LEADER Subcommittee that studied how to improve local development strategies.
- Issues subject of surveys/consultation/analysis:
- Some of the members initiatives mentioned in questions 3 and 4 may include surveys, consultations and analysis. NSU plans to ask members to answer an inquiry about the effectiveness of NRN networking.

• **Thematic issues addressed in other ways:**

- Eventually, members may be developing initiatives that address thematic issues in other ways. NSU is building a NRN projects database that will give a better understanding about what kind of initiatives members are developing supported by NRN-P funds.
- Information about thematic initiatives available on: The NSU is preparing a NRN-P initiatives database that intends to share on-line on the NRN website.

## 2.1 LEADER-related activities

- The NSU/MA has staff dedicated to LAGs support.
- The NRN knows that the challenges faced in preparing the next programming period are demanding at different levels, namely at the level of the several national structures involved in programming and at the level of local partnerships that support the Local Action Groups, in particular in the process of the construction of participatory Local Development Strategies. So that, NRN (NSU) in partnership with Federation "Minha Terra" intends to start a process of reflection and information for the qualification of partnerships and LAGs' technical staff. With this purpose we will organize the Seminar "Leader and CLLD in the programming period 2014-2020", on 29th November, in Lisbon. During next year NRN intends to organize some training (for LAGs) regarding the "new" LDS.
- Information about these events can be required by e-mail.
- The MA has prepared a "Technical Guidelines" and other documents to support the analysis of the applications and the requests for payments. This document can be requested by e-mail.
- The MA gives additional support by phone and e-mail to all questions asked by LAGs.
- The NSU supports inter-regional and transnational cooperation by providing the LAGs with information regarding cooperation offers from other MS.
- The NRN organized 3 thematic cooperation workshops to discuss different themes. The themes are: local products and marketing; tourism and sustainable development; LEADER and Cooperation. The workshops are an opportunity to have the LAGs together and develop partnerships for inter-territorial cooperation projects. In each workshop we invited an expert, for each field, and a couple of LAGs to present their cooperation projects related with the issue of each workshop. As a result of these workshops some LAGs wanted to join the partnerships becoming partners in some cooperation projects. The network intends to organize the workshop 1 or 2 times more in 2013. Information about these events can be requested by e-mail.
- The NSU provides partner search facilities and has translated into Portuguese the ENRD Cooperation Guide and it communicate to the LAGs information regarding cooperation offers from other MS.
- Information about cooperation offers can be requested by e-mail.
- The NSU also organizes visits to Portugal for LAGs coming from other MS. In September 2011 the network organized a work visit to Portugal for an Estonian LAG. The network organized a technical meeting in Lisbon and then the Estonian LAG visited 3 projects in the Center and North of Portugal.

## 3. Relevant Experiences/Good Practices

• **Identification of EAFRD-funded projects representing relevant experience:**

- The NSU asks collaboration to the regional departments of the ministry (regional NSU elements – NSU focal points) to select relevant projects. The ministry, based on its knowledge about the field, about promoters and about the territory, working in co-

operation with the management authority, chooses the stories and sends them to the NSU. In a more informal way, NSU collects information in workshops, members, newsletters, media, websites in general, or anywhere NSU (central and regional) hears about some interesting experience.

- After this phase, the NSU analyses the information, contacts directly the promoter in order to get more information and to confirm that it is really a relevant experience.
- **Communication and dissemination of relevant experience:**
  - The NSU disseminates relevant experiences in NRN website and through the ENRD dissemination tools. NSU is preparing a national database in order to organize and to disseminate on-line the information related to relevant RDP projects and to communicate all the NRN initiatives.
  - NSU also plans to disseminate this kind of information in NRN magazine.
  - NSU also uses (when possible) the NRN newsletter.
  - Relevant experiences/good practices are available on:
    - <http://www.rederural.pt>;
    - <http://www.rederural.pt/index.php/membros>.

## 4. Monitoring and evaluation of networking

- The network assesses its performance through an NRN-P external evaluation.
- The network doesn't assess its performance through RDP evaluation and doesn't produce quantitative or qualitative assessments.
- The network implements other self-assessment activities and produces an annual activity report and intends to send an inquiry to NRN members to examine the effectiveness of rural networking.
- The NRN-P evaluation (external) is available on: <http://prn.proder.pt/index.php/Centro-de-Informacao/Relatorios>.

## 5. Communication

- The network has a communication plan which is available on: [http://www.rederural.pt/images/stories/actividades/rrn\\_planode-comunicacao.pdf](http://www.rederural.pt/images/stories/actividades/rrn_planode-comunicacao.pdf)
- The communication tools mostly used by the networks are contacts through direct mailing to members when in need for a quick answer. The NSU also uses the website, newsletter and the NRN magazine (future).
- It has created a logo that allows the public to easily identify the NRN and applies it every time communicates in or out of the network.
- NSU plans to ask members to answer an inquiry.

## 6. Cooperation interests of the Rural Network

- Fields in which the network seeks or offers cooperation with other rural networks:
  - Local food and short supply chains.

## 7. Documents

- NRN magazine: «emRede» (1st edition in Nov. 2012) and NRN newsletter «emRede» (1st edition in June 2011):
  - <http://www.rederural.pt/index.php/listacon/189>
- Jornal Pessoas e Lugares – Federação «Minha Terra»: <http://www.minhaterra.pt/spip.php?article924>
- Revista «Territórios em Rede» - Federação «Minha Terra»: <http://www.minhaterra.pt/spip.php?article928>
- Radio Programme – About rural development projects
- Latest version of the NSP and RDP available on: <http://www.gpp.pt/drural/>