



European Commission
Agriculture and
Rural Development



European Network for
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LSC Focus Group 4
Better Local Development Strategies:
Draft Report

8th LEADER sub-committee meeting
31 May 2012, Brussels

Belgium



Objectives

- To advise the Member States with regards to the current and the next programming period; *and*
- To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the LEADER approach.

The two main operational objectives of the focus group are:

- **To identify the critical requirements in the design of the Local Development Strategy; and**
- **To collect tools and good practices used at Local Action Group (LAG) level ensuring an efficient implementation of the Local Development Strategy.**



FG 4 Working Method

- Joint Chairs
- > 50 active participants
- Supported by ENRD Contact Point

Tools

- **Design stage**
- **Webinars**
- **Questionnaires**
- **Focus group meetings**
- **Analysis**
- **Feedback e.g. LSC, LEADER event etc.**

Phase 1
LDS Design, development and assessment

(151 LAGs, 24 MAs, 27 Member States)

Phase 2
Implementation, monitoring and evaluation
(242 LAGs, 15 MAs, 22 Member States)



Phase 1 Conclusions (1)

Making a start

- Start early, LAGs should take responsibility
- Allow enough development time for process
- Involve people, local stakeholders
- Ensure continuity, support and resource development
- Knowledge transfer, mentoring etc.
- A staged approach, allow time for quality

Guidance

- Coordinate for effectiveness: what, when and how
- Guide the LDS method, supportively
- Assess and meet diversity of LAG needs
- Training: build the capability, improve standards, invest in the people and process



Phase 1 Conclusions (2)

The Local Development Strategy

- Specify content and process more clearly,
- Target improving the essentials.
- Strengthen the logic, needs, objectives, targets etc.
- Improve/understand innovation
- Include training action plan
- Plan in monitoring and evaluation

Strengthen alignment of both local and wider strategic fit

- Flexibility within the parameters, enhance autonomy

Strategy selection

- Competition but based on quality
- Using objective criteria
- Use feedback to improve, develop winners
- Budget based on evidence and analysis



Phase 2 Conclusions (1)

Funding:

- Most got what they asked for
- But its often not enough
 - Needs improved financial planning re costs, match and elasticity.

Delivering objectives:

- Half can concentrate on this
- But financial imperative can dominate
 - Improve through planning their proactive pursuit
 - Use the LEADER methods
 - Reflect, review performance



Monitoring and indicators

- Strengthen M&E planning, structure
- Improve LAG/MA understanding of indicators & their use
- Better LEADER specific indicators reducing demand for additional indicators
- Strengthen and support the system e.g. better use of existing systems and data

Evaluation

- Design a common structure, strengthen consistency and comparability
- Align evaluation purpose and methods and guide to strengthen learning
 - ✓ (and the application of the lessons!)
- Make better use of feedback, structure and target for improvement



Self evaluation

- Broaden involvement, strengthen relevance
- Improve the methods and design, add real value to LEADER evaluation
- Build in consistency
- Build capacity and capability
- Training, guidance and best practice

Monitoring and evaluation support

- Improved evaluation and self – evaluation needs strengthened knowledge, skills and capabilities
 - Linked to the LDS process
- Underpinned by*
- Better definition of M&E
 - Clear consistent and understood methods
 - Proactive targeted and needs based support
 - A common framework.





Some common improvement themes

- ❖ Linking LDS design, implementation and M&E in an effective way is a priority.
 - ❖ Capitalise on the depth and breadth of LEADER experience in an organised and structured way.
 - ❖ Build on this for improved LEADER, LAG and LDS organisation, structure and delivery;
 - ❖ Greater consistency and clarity to improve LAG autonomy, accountability, exchange and learning;
 - ❖ Being proactive, taking a lead, starting now.
- ❖ Implementing of the 'full' LEADER method, particularly its bottom up, integrated, innovative and local needs focused basis, but ;*
- ❖ in an improved, better structured, more accountable and well supported way.*

