

Thematic Working Group 2 - Guidelines on NRN evaluation in 2014-2020

Experiences collected in the Member States during the previous programming period have shown that the evaluation of NRN is faced with **methodological challenges** due to the specific character of NRN interventions. These challenges are mainly linked to the set-up of a coherent intervention logic, the definition of appropriate programme specific indicators, conceptual challenges in assessing rural network's results/impacts and to capture NRN's effects on broad networking, as well as the generation of NRN's added value.

With a view to assist Managing Authorities and evaluators in the assessment of National Rural Networks, the Evaluation Helpdesk has prepared guidelines on the evaluation of NRNs in 2014-2020, building on previously collected experiences, information and documents. The Guidelines cover both the NRN as part of a RDP and the NRN as self-standing programme. The Guidelines further give advice on how to assess the networks' added value, the contribution to rural development policy objectives, and the broader rural development networking and governance in rural areas in **the context of rural development policy 2014 - 2020**.

The objectives of the Guidelines on the evaluation of national rural networks 2014 - 2020 are to help Member States:

- Address challenges related to the evaluation of national rural networks;
- Strengthen their knowledge on existing experiences in the evaluation of rural networks, including consulting relevant evaluation stakeholders to overcome the methodological and practical challenges;
- Identify and design effective solutions and approaches in assessing national rural networks.

The Guidelines – on NRN evaluation 2014-2020, have been prepared in a user-friendly manual, which consists of four parts:

- **Introduction** (relevant for all NRN related stakeholders): provides an explanation of networks and networking in rural development policy, the role of the evaluation and self-assessment of NRN activities, focus and evaluation elements.
- **PART 1** (primarily for Managing Authority and Network Support Units): provides information and

recommendations on how to plan and manage the evaluation of national rural networks, what activities shall be implemented (including arrangements for data collection etc.) and what are the roles of the various stakeholders; reporting, dissemination and follow-up.

- **PART 2** (primarily for evaluators): describes the conceptual framework for the NRN evaluation, recommended evaluation methods and respective data requirements.
- **Toolbox**: linked to chapters of previous parts of the Guidelines (practical tools, templates, check lists etc.)

Download the Guidelines - [“Guidelines on NRN evaluation in 2014-2020”](#) [1]

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[1] https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/evaluation/publications/guidelines-evaluation-national-rural-networks-2014-2020_en