



Achieving Results the CLLD Way: Putting the Method to Work

7-8 December 2016, Sweden

Elevator Presentations

The 'Achieving results the CLLD way' seminar focused on three main themes related to the implementation LEADER / CLLD method. Each of these themes was addressed during workshops each of which covered three sub themes, specific aspects of the way the method is put into practice. These workshop discussions were informed by selected expert CLLD practitioner inputs, 'Elevator Presentations' which illustrated their experience of working with a specific aspect of working with the CLLD method.

Financing, Delivering and Reporting

Under the Financing, Delivering and Reporting theme the three sub themes discussed were:

- Delivery Systems;
- Multi-funding and Local Financing; and
- Evaluation and Added Value.

Exemplar Practices

Tasos Perimenis: Lesvos (GR) LAG/FLAG – 'The importance of a good delivery system'

Tasos emphasised the need for a robust delivery system to enable a successful CLLD implementation process, justify the funding and demonstrate positive impacts for the area.

Managing financing and reporting in a consistent manner in different areas allows consistency and comparison between areas. There is a danger however that this can lead increased bureaucracy, this may constrain implementation and can adversely affect some essential parts of the results and impacts.

In Lesvos they recognise the importance of focusing on achievement, 'not just the numbers'. They use their robust and systematic selection process and criteria as the basis to follow projects through their whole life cycle. This allows ongoing strategy delivery to be monitored and adjusted quickly to take account of both performance and local and wider socio-economic changes. Their strong delivery system provides the back bone that allows flexibility in planning local development in order to achieve the potential of CLLD.

Peter Rundkvist: LAG Längs Göta Älv (SE) - 'CLLD along the Göta Älv river'- How a LEADER LAG has used and combined multiple funds

This LAG has taken advantage of working with multiple funds (EAFRD, ESF and ERDF) in peri-urban zones of Gothenburg to tackle the needs and opportunities of different areas and communities and strengthen rural urban links. The LAG strategy recognises that divisions between the LAGs urban and rural areas are reflected in social and economic segregation, this includes demand for and access to good quality local food. This project focused on reducing deprivation in peri-urban housing districts by linking these areas and their food production potential to the city centre where demand for locally produced organic food is growing rapidly, local food awareness and access in peri-urban areas was also improved.

The EAFRD is used to promote more vibrant, attractive and accessible urban – rural zones for visitors and those who live there, the ESF to reduce segregation between the inner city – suburban areas – rural areas. The ERDF and ESF work together to support a good climate for creativity, entrepreneurship, learning and business, the EAFRD and ESF combine to foster sustainable production and consumption.

Jela Tvrdonova: European Evaluation Help Desk for Rural Development – Evaluating the Method

Jela discussed how the added value of the method and its seven principles can be measured through evaluation and how this can help to validate the use of CLLD in the ESI funds. This involved looking at the CLLD delivery mechanism, the rules and procedures used at local level and through evaluating them discovering how they work best and demonstrating that the method delivers added value. A common complaint is that bureaucracy is killing the CLLD method. Through evaluation of the implementation of the method itself it is possible to see whether specific administrative procedures foster or weaken specific CLLD principles and then take the appropriate action. For example, if specifying a limited number of eligible operations puts constraints on implementing bottom up, area based or multi-sectoral approaches the lesson may be to broaden the menu of measures.

Working with Local Assets

Under the Working with Local Assets theme the three sub themes discussed were:

- Central importance of the integrated area based LDS;
- Making the most of cooperation and networking; and
- Developing and fostering innovation.

Exemplar Practices

Reet Kokovkin: Hiiumaa (EE) LAG - 'Central importance of the integrated area based LDS'

The island LAG of Hiiumaa is located in the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme area (MAB) that aims to establish a scientific basis for improving relationships between people and their environments thus promoting innovative approaches to economic development that are socially and culturally appropriate, and environmentally sustainable. Until recently the community did not realise

the benefits arising from this status, they saw it as a tool of restriction against both social and economic activities.

In 2013-14 a new 'overall development strategy for Hiiumaa County' was developed with the participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders. The emphasis of the strategy is on sustainable use of local resources focusing on an open society with the population as the most valuable resource. For the first time the MAB was highlighted as the main tool for sustainable development of the island and the LAG recognised this in basing its 2014-2020 LDS upon the same central strategic vision. The LAG strategy focus is:

- ✓ Innovative SMEs using sustainable local resources and creating value-added jobs;
- ✓ Quality living and business environments providing services required by the community;
- ✓ Joint activities to gain new experience and knowledge; and
- ✓ Active, targeted community cooperation for the islands sustainable development.

Within this the development of local food is highlighted as a unifying topic bringing people to understand the liaisons between agriculture, job creation, community and identity.

Annika Nilsson: Linné Småland LAG (SE) - 'Making the most of cooperation and networking'

Cooperation and networking are at the heart of the LEADER method facilitating sharing and transfer of knowledge, ideas and experiences between communities throughout the member states. Annika discussed the differences and links between networking and cooperation, contacts met through networking can often lead to cooperation projects.

With a much stronger emphasis in the 2014-2020 RDPs LAGs are encouraged to start identifying cooperation projects and partners early on in the programme. An important part of this process is helping LAG members and local communities understand the value of cooperation and the benefits achieved. Understanding the rules and regulations clearly can substantially reduce barriers to cooperation, particularly transnational cooperation.

Annika suggested that networking should happen at all levels, right the grass roots of the project implementers right through the delivery chain to the MAs and the EC. Networking encourages people to get to know one another and start the process of understanding things from each other's point of view, this strengthens LAG capacity and knowledge which in the long term can lead to better projects being implemented in local areas.

Judit Racz: Felso LAG (HU) - 'Developing and fostering innovation'

Innovation is a word often seen as 'trendy' or 'scary' but in actual fact it simply refers to something that is 'new', with an innovator being the person who introduces 'change'. Innovation in changing the way we do things can help to find ways to speed things up and in order to move forward we must innovate. Judit explored the connection between innovation and the LEADER method, suggesting that the very existence of the LEADER method is based on innovation. Many people find change and risk uncomfortable and there can be huge opposition to innovation in our every day jobs. Innovation

always contains some risk but failing to innovate may be riskier. This makes it important to work to integrate and create awareness with local stakeholders.

Cooperation projects often involve innovation. Judit's experience includes a project to address deficiencies in the development of key (innovation) competencies in the Vocational Education Training curriculum in Central Eastern Europe. A course containing training methods and materials based on real end user needs assessment and will be developed through the strategic partnership of knowledge seekers, knowledge providers, knowledge transfer institutions and end-user representatives. They aim to provide a new training toolkit with excellent training materials for innovators and to bring innovation closer to the ground developing local community innovation skills and thus increasing innovation and change in their region.

Local Partnerships and Governance

Under the Local Partnership and Governance theme the three sub themes discussed were:

- Active local partnership development and inclusion;
- Governance; and
- Bottom up participation.

Exemplar Practices

Jenny Nylund: LAG Gästrikebygden LAG (SE) - Active local partnership development and inclusion

Jenny highlighted the need to think carefully about how Local Action Groups (LAGs) are designed in order to strengthen the partnership and deliver the Strategy and Action Plan. She stressed that the process of choosing the LAG members should be transparent, open and inclusive. LAG members must have broad knowledge and the capacity to complement each other, as well as reflect all the stakeholders and citizens of their area. Training helps to ensure that the LAG has the capacity and knowledge to implement all parts of the Strategy/Action Plan according to plan. Don't be afraid to put pressure on the LAG – it is not a social club - it has great responsibilities in allocating public tax money. Do not underestimate the importance of a well-functioning LAG! They can do miracles for the delivery of the Strategy!

Mireille Groot Koerkamp: LAG Salland (NL) – Governance and Theory U

For their new Local Development Strategy Salland LAG thought very hard about governance and 'how can you make sure everyone is involved?'. They did not just want the 'LEADER in crowd' – they wanted to involve those who had never even heard of LEADER. Their chosen method, 'Theory U' <https://www.presencing.com/theoryu> recognises that to avoid mistakes of the past you must first let go of your existing ideas and opinions and listen, listen and listen again.

The LAG interviewed 50 people who knew their area, but not LEADER (a policeman, a hairdresser, a priest, young people etc.), they organised big events and everyone was invited. They held workshops where they did not just work with their heads (talking), but also with their hearts and hands. These workshops created a common sense about: What is happening here? What is needed here?

Now, at the “bottom of the U” everyone had to ask themselves: What does this situation ask from me, personally? How can I contribute? and that is when the ideas started to come and develop into prototypes.

More people wanted to meet, network meetings ‘Salland Cafés’ were organised to share ideas, inspiration, good practices, help each other and connect to one another. The results of this continuing U process were:

- A Local Development Strategy written with input and support of hundreds of people
- New ideas and projects were implemented
- So far 12 Salland Cafés have been organised
- The network is growing, 600 people are involved. After every Salland Café they have an extra 20 people.

Once you start the U, you can never stop!

Helle Breindahl Djursland LAG (DK) - Bottom up participation

Djursland LAG initiated this project in response to the decline in local grocery-stores, these stores were a key part of rural infrastructure. The LAG decided to turn the problem upside down, instead of accepting that the store closing was inevitable, they operated on the assumption that if the store is inviting and attractive enough, the customers will shop there. The LAG organised and supported six customer involvement workshops in the six stores participating in the project. This involved working actively with the community and the customers to decide what they wanted from their local grocery store giving them direct involvement and input into what they wanted the stores to be and to mean in their local village. As a result, the stores adapted, more local people got involved and the stores sustainability and importance improved.

The project shows that working bottom up, not only creates great results in feelings of ownership etc. but also that it can have a direct financial impact, that otherwise would not have happened.