“The *ex ante* evaluation of SWOT and needs assessment – prerequisite for a sound RDP intervention logic?”

CASE STUDY: FINLAND

Sari Rannanpää
Consultant, Avaintaito Osuuskunta
PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

- Background for Finnish RDP preparation
  - Timeline
  - Working Groups

- SWOT and Needs Assessment
  - Approach
  - Challenges and solutions

- Ex ante’s feedback on SWOT and Needs Assessment

- Conclusions and lessons
FINNISH RDP PREPARATION TIMELINE

2010
National goals and principles
Scheduling of future work

2011
WGs
Planning for Ex Ante

2012
NA, SWOT, analysis
PC, strategy, measures
Ex Ante
Delivery & M&E

2013
RDP
Public consultation
Ex Ante report
Drafts → FI Gov → COM
WORKING GROUPS

RDP and CAP Reform Coordination

Administrative of Pillar I&II Support

Rural Development Strategy

Agri-Env

LFA

Investment Support

Animal Welfare

Risk Management

Local Development

Rural Business & Regional Development
SWOT AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- **SWOT**
  - MoA (RD unit) responsible
  - Internal work
  - Working Groups discussed
  - Started autumn 2011, finished end-2012
  - Based largely on research commissioned by MoA, for instance “State of Rural Areas” report (Autumn 2012)

- **Needs Assessment**
  - MoA (RD unit) responsible
  - Internal work
  - Spring 2013
SWOT AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT II

- Challenges
  - 3 types of rural areas
    - Rural area close to urban area
    - Core rural area
    - Sparsely populated rural area
  - Large amounts of details to handle in a WG

- Solutions
  - Issues raised for each type of rural area
  - Same people present in several working groups

- Strengths
  - Continuity in strategic focus from current period
  - Early start
EX ANTE EVALUATION

- Started Sep 2012
- Final report autumn 2013

- Consortium
  - MDI Finland
  - Nordregio
  - Spatia (University of Eastern Finland)
  - Circle of associated experts with deep substance knowledge

- Focus group interviews with working groups
- Coaching mentality in evaluation
EX ANTE’S COMMENTS ON SWOT&NA

- Written feedback a couple of times (Oct 2012, Feb 2013)

- Comments
  - Analysis very detailed
  - Strong focus on priorities in SWOT
  - Strategy and central issues should be more visible
  - More background and trends for some priorities
  - Items to be included/removed from SWOT (based on analysis)
  - Regional differences should be taken more into account
  - Strong focus on agriculture and environment

- Solutions
  - Strategy strengthened
  - SWOT items considered
  - Background & trends added where necessary
CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

- Partnership Contract
  - Helped country-wide comprehensive thinking
  - Ministries working on common topics (e.g. broadband)
  - Intra-ministry cooperation

- Priorities
  - Initially difficult to work with
  - Horizontal issues crossed administrative boundaries
  - Ultimately animated discussions
  - Common purpose unified MoA

- Effect of SWOT/NA on strategy design
  - SWOT and strategy walk hand in hand
THANK YOU!

E-mail: sari@avaintaito.com

Phone: +358 50 523 6872