Process of ex-ante evaluation for RDP 2014-2020 in Latvia

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Outline – Preparing the ex ante evaluation

• Process and steps
• Stakeholders involved including roles and responsibilities
• Resources (human, financial)
• Methodologies, data, and indicators
• Using available evaluations findings for an informed policy making - Lessons learned
Introduction

Ex-ante evaluation of Latvian RDP 2014-2020

• The ex-ante evaluation started September 2012 and ended December 2013
• Contracted evaluator: Institute of Agroresources and Economics (engaging experts from other institutions) → the same institution as for ongoing evaluation
• Important – Ex-ante evaluation project manager, as well as experts, are familiar with RDP structure and substance
• The ex-ante evaluation was done according to the ‘Guidelines for the ex-ante evaluation of RDP 2014-2020’
• The ex-ante evaluation included also the SEA
Process and steps

1st Stage:
- Ex ante evaluation and SEA
- Rural Development Programme design, including consultation
- SWOT analysis, needs assessment

2nd Stage:
- Evaluation and SEA expert’s feedback
- Construction of the programme’s intervention logic, financial allocations, setting up targets and performance framework

3rd Stage:
- Evaluation and SEA expert’s feedback
- Finalisation of the programme document

Ex Ante and SEA report

Timeframes:
- 1st Stage: 7 weeks
- 2nd Stage: 9 weeks
- 3rd Stage: 3 weeks
Appraisal of SWOT and needs

Challenges:
- Volumes of the situation description and SWOT analysis to align with the importance of each field
- Needs assessment to align with RDP budget

Lessons learned:
Understanding of necessity of:
- Explanation of experts approach to MA
- Discussions with the MA to explain the evaluation findings

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Resources for the ex-ante evaluation of RDP 2014-2020

Financial resources available
  • For ex-ante evaluation
  • For SEA

Human resources
  • 10 researchers from different Universities and research institutions in Latvia (9 of them with Dr. degree)
  • Time spent varies greatly between experts

Evaluation skills
  • Some experts have been involved in evaluation processes before for ongoing evaluation
  • Some have experience in the specific field (agricultural economics, sociology, climate change, environmental analysis, etc.)
Methodology, data and indicators

Mixed-method approach used:
  Triangulation of methods – descriptive and qualitative (focus group)

Data: Public databases (CSB, Eurostat, FADN) and Paying Agency - PA (Rural Support Service information system)

Indicators:
  ✓ A common understanding of the breakdown of indicators: outcome, result, impact, context
  ✓ Indicator fiches
  ✓ Linking with measures objectives
## Using available evaluation findings for an informed policy making

### Reflections from the 2014-2020 period:
- More precise context indicators were suggested
- Criteria for beneficiaries were specified
- Separate financial envelopes for small and medium sized farms were created
- Indicators were collected through the PA information system and discussed with evaluators
- There was close co-operation between MA, PA and evaluators

### Lessons for the future:
- MA resistance to lobby pressure is crucial
- Measures and activities selected should be more focused on needs
- Common understanding of the breakdown of indicators and linking them to measures and objectives
- Criteria for beneficiaries to be elaborated very carefully
- PA should collect all necessary indicators in the data system before launching the programme
- Maintain iterative process between NGOs, MA, evaluators
- Evaluators should have appropriate qualifications and understand the industry/sectors and structure of the programme
State of play of the ex-ante evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan in Latvia

• A working group (WG) has been created to describe the situation, and to carry out the SWOT analysis and assessment of needs
• The WG involves: staff from MA, PA, Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre, researchers
• Ongoing discussions within the MA and between stakeholders
• *There is no contract signed yet, only mutual agreement with evaluators*

**Support needed:**
• to specify the difference between the ex-ante evaluation of the CAP and the RDP, taking into account the inclusion of Pillar I in terms of indicators, measures, special objectives
• a brief guidance on how to link each proposed indicator (result and context) to the measure and the special objective would be useful
Thank you

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