

ENRD Seminar on
Stakeholder Involvement

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Engaging remote rural stakeholders through an animator/facilitator network in Lesvos

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The practice in 3 lines!

- **Setting up an LDS** needs an intensive and extensive dissemination process.
- **Work in the office**, intensive consultation building know-how.
- **Work in the Field**, a network of local animators diffused throughout the island, in order to reverse the idea of abandonment of remote areas.

Main purpose - *Why?*

- The LDS must reflect local needs, local capacity, motivate and inspire people, so we need to reach out to people and get them involved.
- Emphasis on animation and mentoring, “exhausting” discussions and expression of view points, especially from remote areas.
- Emphasis on “mobilizing people”. It is very important to get the message to the far ends of the area. The remote parts offer the best pilot examples and ideas.

Stakeholders concerned - *Who & how?*

Capacity building, working intensively with:

- The Agricultural Association of Cooperatives of Lesvos, the Fishermen Cooperative of Lesvos, create proximity, visit people on their work, make them believe that living in a remote area does not mean they are secluded.
- The Chamber of Commerce and e.g. the Association of Tourism Entrepreneurs, discussions with all the sectors and units in small seminars, keeping records of their needs which vary from village to village, especially in remote parts.
- Local collective schemes – new clusters that have recently emerged as a result of the economic crisis in Greece in an attempt to strengthen their defenses through collective approaches and efforts.

Lessons

What worked well...

- We got to know in depth the area and feel the real needs of the community.
- We became more realistic and down to earth without losing our enthusiasm and vision.
- We realized what “tailor-made” planning means, even in our island it is completely different to realize the needs of people in the capital and people in a remote fisheries village .
- We have become more able to transform ideas into custom made actions.

What worked less well...

- Inherent conservatism of a rural – insular community
- High level of paperwork and red tape.
- Time constraints, difficulties to keep up the pace.
- Limited degree of freedom to be as flexible as we want.
- Lack of self confidence of the community in the years of the crisis.

Achievements/Results

- Networking makes us become more pervasive and able to deal with local controversies.
- A long lasting commitment to a LDS, helped us see results with real impact.
- Be more able to diagnose problems and the necessary capabilities to deal with them.
- Built know-how, allocate human resources and funds more efficiently/effectively to particular activities
- More qualitative projects fitting the local identity utilizing local resources, sparks of innovation.
- Most important, we enjoy **trust**, we can trust people and people can trust us, it makes work much more rewarding.