



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development



European Network for  
Rural Development



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**LSC Focus Group 4**  
**Better Local Development Strategies:**  
**Draft Report**

**8<sup>th</sup> LEADER sub-committee meeting**  
**31 May 2012, Brussels**

Belgium



## Objectives

- To advise the Member States with regards to the current and the next programming period; *and*
- To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the LEADER approach.

**The two main operational objectives of the focus group are:**

- **To identify the critical requirements in the design of the Local Development Strategy; and**
- **To collect tools and good practices used at Local Action Group (LAG) level ensuring an efficient implementation of the Local Development Strategy.**



## FG 4 Working Method

- Joint Chairs
- > 50 active participants
- Supported by ENRD Contact Point

### Tools

- **Design stage**
- **Webinars**
- **Questionnaires**
- **Focus group meetings**
- **Analysis**
- **Feedback e.g. LSC, LEADER event etc.**

Phase 1  
**LDS Design, development and  
assessment**

(151 LAGs, 24 MAs, 27 Member States)

Phase 2  
**Implementation, monitoring and  
evaluation**

(242 LAGs, 15 MAs, 22 Member States)



## Phase 1 Conclusions (1)

### Making a start

- Start early, LAGs should take responsibility
- Allow enough development time for process
- Involve people, local stakeholders
- Ensure continuity, support and resource development
- Knowledge transfer, mentoring etc.
- A staged approach, allow time for quality

### Guidance

- Coordinate for effectiveness: what, when and how
- Guide the LDS method, supportively
- Assess and meet diversity of LAG needs
- Training: build the capability, improve standards, invest in the people and process



## Phase 1 Conclusions (2)

### The Local Development Strategy

- Specify content and process more clearly,
- Target improving the essentials.
- Strengthen the logic, needs, objectives, targets etc.
- Improve/understand innovation
- Include training action plan
- Plan in monitoring and evaluation

### Strengthen alignment of both local and wider strategic fit

- Flexibility within the parameters, enhance autonomy

### Strategy selection

- Competition but based on quality
- Using objective criteria
- Use feedback to improve, develop winners
- Budget based on evidence and analysis



## Phase 2 Conclusions (1)

### Funding:

- Most got what they asked for
- But its often not enough
  - Needs improved financial planning re costs, match and elasticity.

### Delivering objectives:

- Half can concentrate on this
- But financial imperative can dominate
  - Improve through planning their proactive pursuit
  - Use the LEADER methods
  - Reflect, review performance



## Monitoring and indicators

- Strengthen M&E planning, structure
- Improve LAG/MA understanding of indicators & their use
- Better LEADER specific indicators reducing demand for additional indicators
- Strengthen and support the system e.g. better use of existing systems and data

## Evaluation

- Design a common structure, strengthen consistency and comparability
- Align evaluation purpose and methods and guide to strengthen learning
  - ✓ (and the application of the lessons!)
- Make better use of feedback, structure and target for improvement



## Self evaluation

- Broaden involvement, strengthen relevance
- Improve the methods and design, add real value to LEADER evaluation
- Build in consistency
- Build capacity and capability
- Training, guidance and best practice

## Monitoring and evaluation support

- Improved evaluation and self – evaluation needs strengthened knowledge, skills and capabilities
  - Linked to the LDS process
- Underpinned by*
- Better definition of M&E
  - Clear consistent and understood methods
  - Proactive targeted and needs based support
  - A common framework.







## Some common improvement themes

- ❖ Linking LDS design, implementation and M&E in an effective way is a priority.
  - ❖ Capitalise on the depth and breadth of LEADER experience in an organised and structured way.
  - ❖ Build on this for improved LEADER, LAG and LDS organisation, structure and delivery;
  - ❖ Greater consistency and clarity to improve LAG autonomy, accountability, exchange and learning;
  - ❖ Being proactive, taking a lead, starting now.
- ❖ Implementing of the 'full' LEADER method, particularly its bottom up, integrated, innovative and local needs focused basis, but ;*
- ❖ in an improved, better structured, more accountable and well supported way.*

