



Minutes

TRAINING – Building capacities for planning evaluation of Local Development Strategies

DATE(S) OF EVENT	12 th -13 th May 2015	VENUE	Holiday Inn Lisbon Av. Antonio José de Almeida 28A https://goo.gl/maps/M5M4z
TITLE OF EVENT	TRAINING Building capacities for planning evaluation of Local Development Strategies		
HOSTING ORGANIZATION	Direção Geral de Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural (DGADR)/Rede Rural Nacional (RRN)		
OVERALL ORGANIZATION	European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development		
SHORT DESCRIPTION OF EVENT (Background / main aims)	<p>The main objective of the training was to introduce to participants the evaluation as integral part of designing and implementing their Local Development Strategies (LDS). Further objectives of the training are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the understanding of evaluation in the policy cycle; • Improve the understanding of the EU Common Monitoring and Evaluation System; • Learn how to use the elements of the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System in the LDS; • Build capacities to design the Evaluation Plan of the LDS. 		
SUBJECT(S) PRESENTED OR DISCUSSED	<p>Agenda Day 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome by Filipa Horta Osório, <i>Sub-Director DGADR</i> • Presentation of the agenda and introduction to the Evaluation Helpdesk team and governance structure (Hannes Wimmer <i>Team Leader of the Evaluation Helpdesk</i>) • The evaluation as part of the policy cycle. Participants Check-in: “Why would you evaluate your strategy?” (Enrique Martínez, <i>Evaluation Helpdesk</i>) + short exercise • EU concept of monitoring and evaluation for rural development (Adelina Dos Reis <i>DG AGRI, Head of Unit E.4 Evaluation and studies</i>) • The monitoring and evaluation for rural development – Status for Portugal (Maria da Luz Correia, <i>GPP - Gabinete de Planeamento, Políticas e Administração Geral</i>) <p>Q&A session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of evaluation elements in the LDS design and evaluation (Jela Tvrdonova, <i>Evaluation Helpdesk</i>) + interactive session <p>Agenda Day 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Evaluation Plan (Rui Rafael <i>Mainland RDP, Managing Authority</i>) <p>Q&A session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice breaker exercise (quick survey) (Magda Porta, <i>Core Team</i>) • How to develop the Evaluation Plan for your LDS? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ <i>Session 1</i> – Overview of the crucial topics when planning evaluation at the LAG level. Objective and purpose of the evaluation plan and the arrangements for governance and coordination (Andreas Resch, <i>Evaluation Helpdesk</i>) + Specific recommendations based on current experience (Magda Porta, <i>Core Team</i>) <p>Interactive session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ <i>Session 2</i> - Evaluation topics and activities of the evaluation plan and the arrangements for data collection and tools within the given timeline (Andreas Resch, <i>Evaluation Helpdesk</i>) + Specific recommendations based on current experience (Magda Porta, <i>Core Team</i>) <p>Interactive session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ <i>Session 3</i> - Communication activities and the resource planning to implement the evaluation and communication activities (Andreas Resch, <i>Evaluation Helpdesk</i>) + Specific recommendations based on current experience (Magda Porta, <i>Core Team</i>) <p>Interactive session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main findings (Andreas Resch, <i>Evaluation Helpdesk</i>) • End of training (Enrique Martínez, <i>Evaluation Helpdesk</i>) 		
EVALUATION HELPPDESK REPRESENTATIVE (S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hannes WIMMER (AT) / Team Leader 2. Jela TVRDONOVA (SK) / Evaluation Manager 3. Rein DESSERS (BE) / Good Practices Manager 4. Enrique MARTINEZ (SP) / Knowledge Advisor 5. Andreas RESCH (AT) / Evaluation Advisor 6. Magda PORTA (PT) / Core Team 7. Henrique SOARES (PT) / Geographic Expert 		
DG Agri	Adelina Dos Reis, Head of Unit E.4 Evaluation and studies		



1 INTRODUCTION

(See presentation in separate file)

Hannes Wimmer presented the European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development, its team and its role and responsibilities, making the participants aware of the HD technical structure, aims and activities.

He also presented the agenda and the objectives for the two days training, emphasizing the importance of the evaluation in the policy cycle.

2 THE EVALUATION AS PART OF THE POLICY CYCLE

(See presentation in separate file)

Enrique Martinez introduced the importance of evaluation for the decision making. The presentation was followed by two short interactive exercises. Participants were asked to:

- *Assess the importance of the evaluation.* Most of LAGs pointed out the evaluation as very important.
- *Reflect on the question “Why would LAGs evaluate their strategy?”* Some participants pointed out that the main reason to evaluate is in order receive feedback (information, legitimization, ...); many of them pointed out the measurement of impacts as main reason. Most of them highlighted that evaluation is helpful in order improve LDS implementation and results (correct deviations, improve effectiveness and efficiency, ...).



3 EU CONCEPT OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2014-2020

(See presentation in separate file)

Adelina dos Reis explained the regulatory framework, the common provisions and the role of the monitoring and evaluation in the CAP Pillar I and Pillar II, focusing the content on the following topics:

- Common provisions on Monitoring and Evaluation
- Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF)
- Common Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES)



- CMES: elements with specific focus on LEADER

In the presentation, Adelina dos Reis highlighted that the performance of the CAP in achieving its common and specific objectives will be measured and assessed on the basis of common impact and result indicators. That is the reason why the EC has a Common Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES) aiming to:

- Assess whether the expected results and impacts are achieved in an effective and efficient manner (at EU, Member State and regional/local levels).
- Contribute to better targeted support for rural development.
- Support a common learning process related to monitoring and evaluation.
- Improve policy performance.

For many LAGs, this was the first direct contact with CMES.

CMES: specific focus on LEADER



- Contrary to previous period, the CMES requires **LAGs** to conduct monitoring and evaluation activities.
- At the level of the RDP, **MA** shall describe in the evaluation plan the evaluation topics and activities, which shall include an **assessment of the contribution of local development strategies and the planned support for evaluation at LAG level** (Annex I, point 9.3 of part 1 of Reg. 808/2014)
- In this respect, MA have a role to play in providing to LAGs guidance on their monitoring and evaluation tasks and support in implementing them
- MA may also decide to cover aspects which are not mentioned in the CMES, such as the assessment of the added value of LEADER



- The National Rural Networks shall provide for **training/capacity building** for LAGs and share and **disseminate** monitoring and evaluation findings (Article 54 § 3 b) of Reg. 1305/2013)
- Optionally, National Rural Networks can take a more proactive role in developing and supporting a harmonized approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the local development strategies
- This will make LAG contributions to evaluation even more useful and strengthens the evidence-basis to demonstrate the achievements!



- **LAGs'** local development strategies must contain a **description of monitoring & evaluation arrangements** (Article 33 § 1 f) of Reg. 1303/2013)
- **LAGs** have to **monitor** the implementation of their local development strategy and the operations supported and carry out **specific evaluation activities** of their strategy (Article 34 § 3 g) of Reg. 1303/2013)
- In this regard, LAGs may develop specific evaluation questions and specific indicators for their local development strategies
- **LAGs** have to provide MA and evaluators all necessary information for M&E of the RDP (Article 71 of Reg. 1305/2013)

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Understanding about this presentation:

The LAGs participating in the training became conscious of the necessity to demonstrate LDS progress and achievements through monitoring and evaluation activities and to contribute to the RDP evaluation. The LDS must contain a description of monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

Comments/clarifications on the presentation:

- Given the relative unfamiliarity of the issue of monitoring and evaluation, Adelina dos Reis explained that article 14 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 808/2014, of 17 July



2014, is very important and that LAGs have to respond to this by preparing in the best way to the actual requirements.

- The new CMES is considered an even better system to capture the effects of the CAP.
- The Pillar I evaluation is under the EC responsibility (DG Agri E4 Unit is working on the TORs).

4 THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT - SITUATION IN PORTUGAL

(See presentation in separate file)

Luz Correia clarified the Portuguese situation on the Governance System for 2014-2020 and on the Global/National Evaluation Plan. The presentation highlighted the importance of the planning instruments to help to reflect on the evaluation system and its respective requirements. This reflection has to be guaranteed since the very beginning of the design of the Programmes, ensuring that all important elements for evaluation are provided at the time of implementation.

To ensure that strong links are established between the RDP implementation and the Evaluation Plan, the Mainland RDP created a Technical Evaluation Group, similar to in the previous programming period, which connects the main entities with responsibilities for implementation, evaluation and communication.

Entities	Responsibilities with regard to monitoring and evaluation
Evaluation coordination group	Coordination of evaluation activities, harmonization of guidelines, coordination with evaluation procedures of other funds.
Managing Authority	Governance and functioning of the monitoring and evaluation system and its quality, including the reporting and the contracting of evaluators, evaluation plan and dissemination of evaluation results.
Monitoring Committee	Monitoring and review of the RDP through the use of indicators and the Evaluation plan.
Paying agency	Provision of information on the implementation of the RDP and the measures of the Pillar I.
Beneficiaries	Information regarding the operations - application forms; reports on the implementation of operations; response to surveys and interviews for evaluation studies.
LAGs	Information from the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of LDS and its articulation with the monitoring and evaluation of the RDP.
Policy and Planning Office	Coordination, institutional articulation and follow-up.
NRN	Dissemination through the involvement of a wider public, dissemination of good practices. Capacity building/training.
Statistics Portugal	Suppliers of context information.
Other ministries	Suppliers of context information and of execution of other programmes.
Evaluators	Experts responsible for the RDP evaluation. Entity independent of the authority responsible for the implementation of the Programme.

Comments/clarifications on the presentation:



- How are the LAGs going to manage the evaluation requirements in the context of the integrated approach (strategies/measures multifund)/LEADER (in articulation with the RDP Evaluation Plan and in articulation with the evaluation of the Funds that support LDS – ERDF and ESF))

Luz Correia explained, in detail, the stages to define the Global Evaluation Plan. It is expected to be ready in late September/early October. Although it has different timings of the EAFRD, currently an effort is being made to harmonize the approaches to monitor and evaluate the CLLD.

The coordination work (GPP in articulation with the MAs of the 3 Portuguese RDPs) has been started with the Evaluation Network of Portugal 2020, for the coordination of evaluation activities under the Global Evaluation Plan of Portugal 2020.

- How soon can the Portuguese Authorities start to work with LAGs?

The Internal Regulation of the National Coordination Commission for EAFRD, is in an advanced stage. The approval of this Regulation will allow the work of the Evaluation Coordination Group to start.

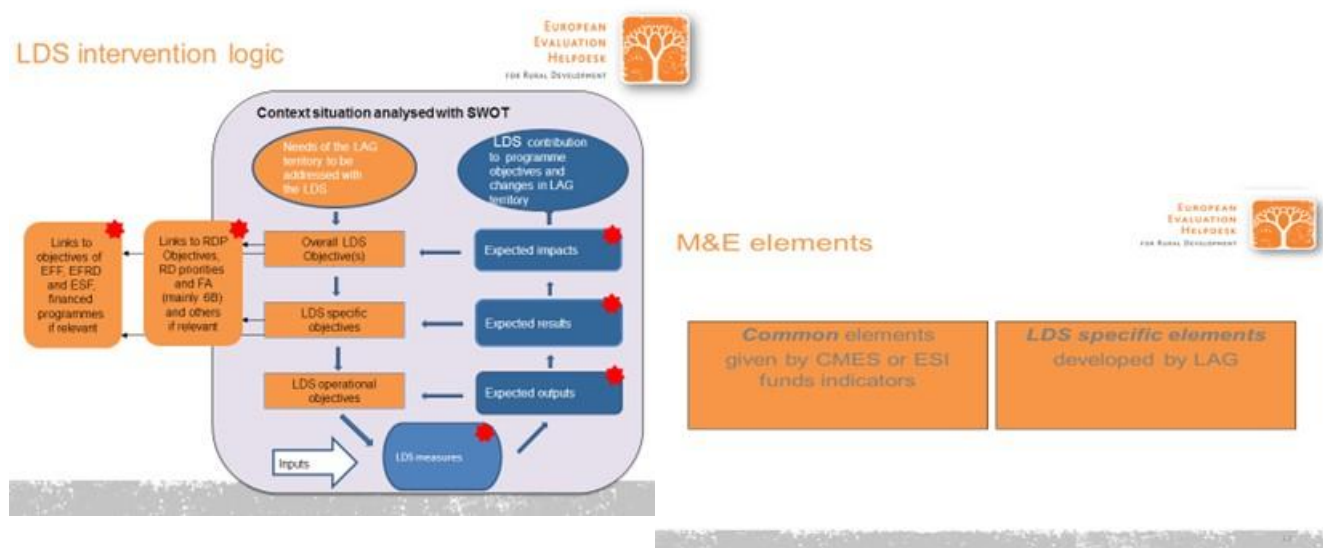
It is expected that this training will be the first of a set of initiatives being organized by the Evaluation Coordination Group.

5 THE ROLE OF EVALUATION ELEMENTS IN THE LDS DESIGN AND EVALUATION

(See presentation in separate file)

Jela Tvrdonova, from the Evaluation Helpdesk, explained the role of evaluation elements in LDS design and evaluation, assuming that the heart of the LDS is its intervention logic.

Designing each LDS around an intervention logic will permit a sound identification of priorities and focus areas to be included, and demonstrate how measures can be implemented to contribute to each of the selected focus areas. This work has to be complemented with the establishment of a solid evaluation base (judgement criteria, set of indicators and evaluation questions, using appropriate methods and analysis, towards conclusions and recommendations).



Jela Tvrdonova introduced an interactive exercise about the development of LDS specific indicators.



In the current period there is flexibility to develop programme-specific elements according to the intervention logic. However it is important to become aware of the consequence of this flexibility on the evaluation framework: specific elements need specific indicators and evaluation questions which not included in the common list.

Participants worked in 7 different groups (10 people plus facilitator) aiming at the identification of missing indicators at result level and defined them according to the RACER criteria. For this purpose the Evaluation Helpdesk prepared in advance four examples of intervention logic which were handed out to participants: local entrepreneurship, jobs and income; living standards; young people; and environment and natural resources.

Reflections on the outcome of this exercise:

- The exercise was useful in order to show the linkages between the intervention logic/LDS and the evaluation (through indicators).
- The exercise would have benefited from some more time to discuss the pre-defined intervention logic and to get familiar with all the links between objectives and allocated measures, expected outputs, results, impacts.
- The LAGs are not yet sufficiently familiar with following the logical sequence in the preparation of the LDS. Nevertheless, all working groups identified missing indicators at result level.
- Some work groups had difficulties in defining specific result indicators accordingly to the RACER criteria. This will be a significant challenge for the LAGs when designing the monitoring and evaluation plan.

6 DEVELOP PLANNING AND EVALUATION SKILLS FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

(See presentation in separate file)

Rui Rafael, from the RDP2020 Management Authority, on the second day, discussed some of the aspects covered by Luz Correia, stressing that, regarding the LEADER approach, it is necessary to establish mechanisms of coordination between the evaluation of RDP and the evaluation of LDS. This mechanism requires the creation of a common approach for the LDS evaluation and training activities and dissemination of good practices, to be carried out through the National Rural Network.

The Mainland LDS will perform complementary actions with other funds, and so, have the obligation to demonstrate the direct contribution to the output and result indicators of those investment priorities in the Regional Operational Programmes. In the Islands the demonstration of the contribution will only be related with the RDP.

Comments/clarifications on the presentation:

When designing the LDS and the Evaluation Plan, the partnerships have to consider the following:

- Clear and objective definition of the goals that the LDS proposes to achieve, with realistic assumptions based on the SWOT analysis and previous experience and statistical information.



- Based on the defined strategic objectives, the LAGs should deduct the specific objectives to be achieved, the implementation of the appropriate measures/actions, as well as the expected results, expressed in physical indicators.
- Clear definition of LDS specific indicators, which have to be measurable and in appropriate number to be worked out and used in the demonstration of results.
- Focus on thematic areas with potential for obtaining the most relevant results within the territories.
- Use of a single information system – in this case, the RDP Information system.
- Define similar and simple application forms, although with special features for each LDS, to ensure obtaining of data for measuring indicators (basic rule – what is not requested in the application form, will hardly be available later).
- In PT there will soon take place the second phase of LAGs selection (invitation addressed only to the pre-qualified partnerships). This phase will mark the submission of the complete LDS to the programme's funding, and the recognition of the LAGs. After this recognition, the LAGs will contract the LDS with the MAs. The process will be concluded in September, the latest.

7 HOW TO DEVELOP THE EVALUATION PLAN FOR YOUR LDS?

(See presentation in separate file)

The second training day focused on the **Evaluation Plan for the LDS**. Andreas Resch and Magda Porta presented and explained to the participants how to develop the Evaluation Plan for the LDS, taking into account specific recommendations based on the current experience in PT.

Main objectives:

- Exploring the requirements to set-up and implement LDS evaluation.
- Reviewing the current experience in the light of the LAGs experience and recommendations for 2014-2020.
- Discussing the practical implementation of LDS evaluation.

Ice breaker exercise (quick survey). Participants voted between the following options:

- I am new to evaluation planning (34%)
- I have created an evaluation plan before (9%)
- I have already attended another training on evaluation planning (11%)
- My LDS has clear measureable outcomes that we all know and agree to (46%)

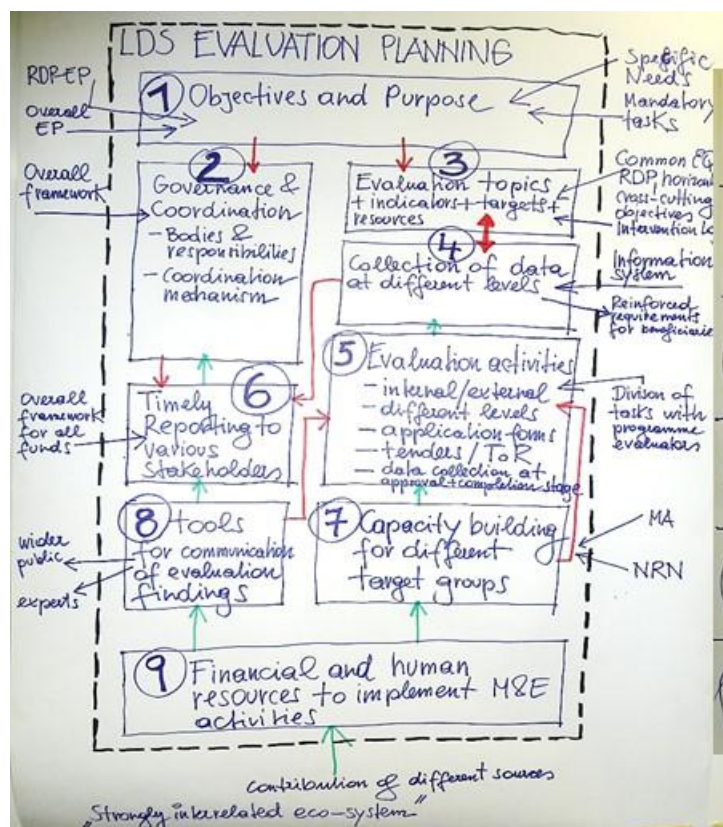
The majority of votes were put at the last option. It can be concluded that most LAG coordinators occupy this function for so sufficient time to know the effects and impacts of the LDS implementation.



PARA MIM PLANEAR
A AVALIAÇÃO É NOVIDADE
JÁ DEFINI UM PLANO DE
AVALIAÇÃO
JÁ ASSISTI A UMA SESSÃO
DE FORMAÇÃO EM
PLANEJAMENTO AVALIAÇÃO
A MINHA EDL TEM
RESULTADOS CLAROS E
QUE TODOS CONCORDAMOS
E CONHECEMOS

This day of training contained three sessions followed by interactive working groups (7 breakout groups with 10 people plus facilitator). Throughout the interactive working sessions, participants reflected about all aspects tackled in the presentations before. They had the opportunity to comment on the aspects that have to be organized for a comprehensive and robust monitoring and evaluation framework for the LDS 2014-2020. This aspect is particularly relevant in a support framework focused on the results and impacts of the policies in the territories and the citizens.

Overview on the crucial topics when planning evaluation at the LAG level



DIMENSIONS OF LDS-EVAL.			
① PA-Level	Common framework		
② ESIF-Programmes	RDP/ERDF	OPs ERDF	OPs ESF
③.1 LDS Level	e.g. Local quality products	e.g. tourism development	e.g. social inclusion
③.2 LEADER APPROACH	- bottom-up - innovative approach - pioneer - integrative cross-sectoral		
③.3 PROJECT Level			



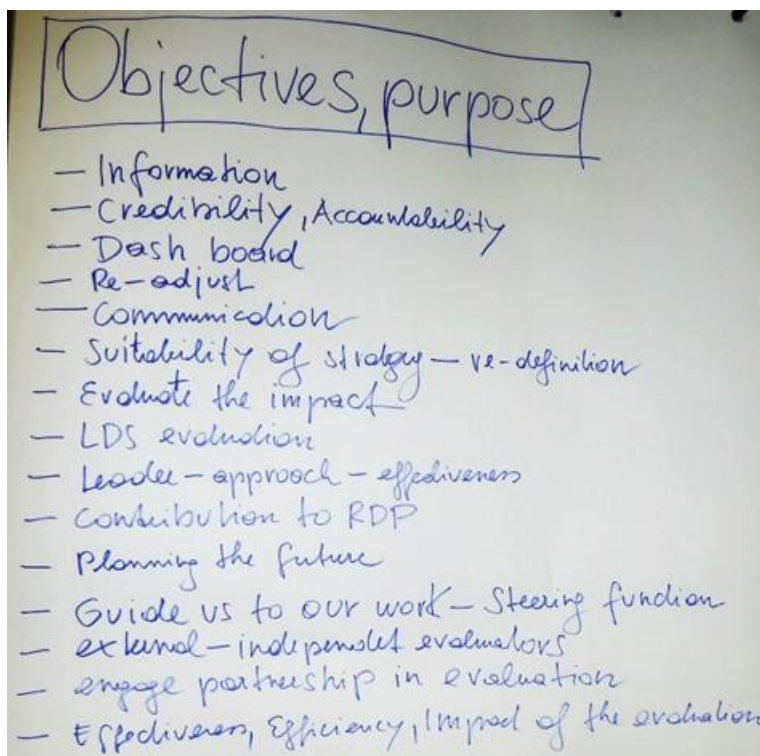
Session 1 – Objective and purpose of the evaluation plan and the arrangements for governance and coordination

- **Objectives and purpose of the LDS Evaluation Plan.** Ensure that sufficient and appropriate evaluation activities are undertaken to provide information needed for programme steering, for the AIRs 2017 & 2019 and ex post; and ensure data availability for evaluation.
- **Governance and coordination arrangements.** Description of M&E arrangements: main bodies and respective responsibilities.

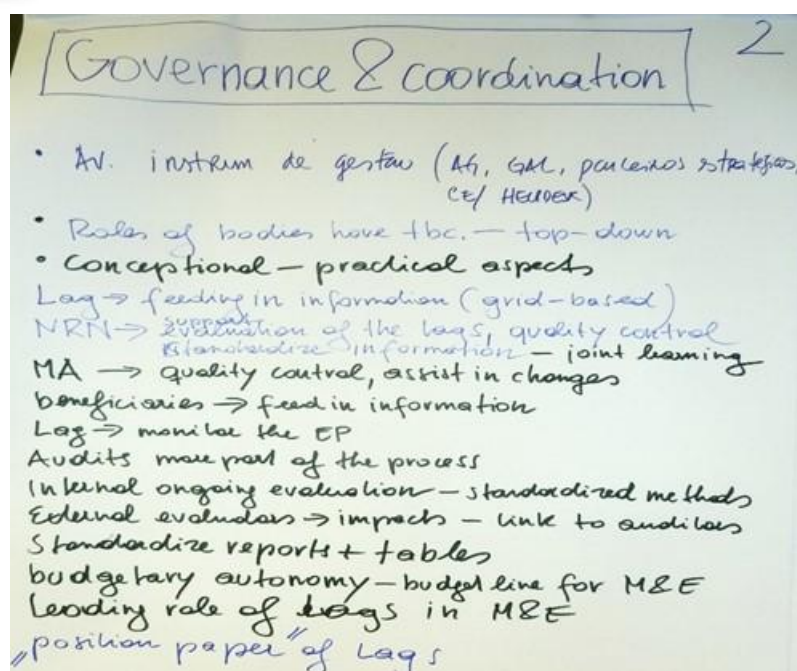
The outcome of this exercise:

- LAGs/partnerships do not perceive evaluation in the same manner: some of them understand it rather as an obligation and an administrative burden. A change of mind-set should allow them to understand the evaluation as an important work instrument.
- Most important objectives for LDS evaluation: need of information about the results of LDS implementation; evaluation of the partnerships and respective functioning, LEADER approach effectiveness, efficiency and impact; effectiveness of decentralized politics, contribution to RDP evaluation.

This steering function will facilitate re-adjustments in the LDS to better suit the strategy and to plan the future more accurately. By these means the LDS will be more credible and accountable.



- Governance and coordination arrangements: seen with considerable uncertainty (the conceptual and practical aspects of the evaluation and the responsibility and roles of the bodies is yet to be defined in the Portuguese context).



About the conceptual and practical aspects of evaluation, the participants believe that the evaluation and monitoring processes and reporting should be harmonized (e.g. standardize reports and tables).

Concerning the involvement of actors, the participants had a clear idea on how they can contribute to LDS evaluation, given the known creation of the Rural Development Technical Evaluation Group.

MA "Strategic role"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on LAGs monitoring and evaluation task well in advance; • Foresee the simplification of the administrative processes; • Support LAGs in the implementation of M&E activities; • Responsible for the quality control of the monitoring and evaluation reports.
NRN "Supportive role"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop common approaches for LDS monitoring and evaluation. • Support capacity building of LAGs to better fulfil their role (this task assumes a close and regular contact with the Evaluation Helpdesk). • Develop and support a harmonized approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the ERDF and ESF component; • Articulation with the Regional Operational Programmes (MA should be included in this task).
LAGs "Operative role"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a M&E system based on a LDS Evaluation Plan in line with the overall approach; • Coordinate ongoing evaluation and reporting activities; • Include an interlocutor who "speaks" the evaluators' language in the respective technical team.
Beneficiaries "Contributing role"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information providers.
External independent consultants "Evaluation role"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDS evaluation.



Session 2 - Evaluation topics and activities of the evaluation plan and the arrangements for data collection and tools within the given timeline

- **Evaluation topics and activities.** Evaluate contribution to the objectives . Assessment of result and impact indicators. Assessment of net effects, thematic/cross-cutting issues. Support for evaluation at LAG level. Work needed to fill gaps. Define evaluation methodologies.
- **Data and information.** Maintain, manage and report statistical information on LDS implementation. Provision of monitoring data for evaluation. Data sources and gaps.
- **Reporting and timing of evaluation activities.** Outline of timing needed to ensure that results are available at the appropriate time. Build up a schedule for all M&E activities taking into account the major reporting milestones (2017, 2019, 2024).

- **Definition of evaluation topics and activities:** this matter was still rather unclear. The participants consider that the MA should define (i) the **model** – theme based topics according to the major support area (considering that innovation goal is very difficult to assess); and (ii) the **methods** – mix of quantitative and qualitative methods.

The participants showed interest in splitting the evaluation topics according to their complexity:

- LAG take over the evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of LDS implementation.
- RDP (or other Programme) evaluators focus on the efficiency and impact of LDS implementation.

It was concluded that hiring external resources for evaluation would probably be the most recurrent strategy among the LAG.

- **Arrangements for timely data collection and reporting.** The data collection and its quality/validation was seen as one of the major challenges, particularly for ensuring the application of quantitative methods.

Questions arose about the type of indicators to be included in the application forms, the data availability at the level of the territories (the impact evaluation its impracticable), the starting time to achieve and evaluate results for 2017.

Session 3 - Communication activities and the resource planning to implement the evaluation and communication activities

- **Resources.** Administrative capacity and competences for M&E. Financial resources to implement LDS M&E. IT needs.
- **Communication of evaluation findings.** Dissemination of findings and follow-up on the use of evaluation results. Target groups

- **Capacity building.** Most LAGs are rather unexperienced in monitoring and evaluation. LAGs are counting on the NRN and the Evaluation Helpdesk, and their Federation (Minha Terra) to ensure the necessary competences to conduct monitoring and evaluation processes. The participants consider that the NRN should play an important role in the LAGs work routine and that this system should be quickly enabled.

Suggestions were made, for example, that training for evaluation in ERDF and ESF, communication (how a press release should be done, how to make information more appealing ...). Additional training for the partnerships to create, in concrete, and Evaluation Plan, was also mentioned.

- **Resources to guarantee the monitoring and evaluation.** Regarding the past experience, LAGs referred the inability to allocate human and financial resources for the evaluation. Although LAGs consider that there has to be a budgetary autonomy for M&E, there are concerns about the necessary budget to the monitoring and



evaluation because there is a high degree of uncertainty about the responsibilities of the actors involved (e.g. are the Regional OPs contributing to M&E?). The participants suggested the takeover of this process by NRN, but there is a high risk of overburdening the NRN with additional tasks and responsibilities.

- **Communication activities about evaluation findings.** Currently this is a weak point and needs specific resources and external support from NRN to help to define “in-house” and “out-house” communication, suiting the language to the target groups.
- **Use of the evaluation findings.** The type of adjustments that can be done to the LDS, in face of the evaluation results, have to be clearer. MAs and other actors involved have the central role of giving importance to this level of evaluation.



Overall conclusions / training understanding

At the time of the training the LAGs had not yet started to draft their evaluation arrangements, so the training was a good opportunity to (i) achieve a common understanding among the participants on the EU concept of Monitoring and Evaluation for rural development policy 2014-2020 (ii) make the future LAGs aware and reflect on the importance of evaluation; (iii) contribute to build their capacity for the planning and implementation of the LDS Evaluation Plan; (iv) reflect about their needs to properly prepare for the evaluation exigency; and (v) initiate the drafting process.

For the other actors involved in the training, especially MAs and NRN, it was useful to acknowledge and understand the LAGs main difficulties and constraints to design and implement an evaluation.

The main message from the LAGs is the evidence of their need of continuing the work in this theme, namely through the construction and adoption of common methodologies and information systems (common working matrix) that meet the needs of all stakeholders in the implementation of the programmes (strengthen the evidence-basis to demonstrate achievements). In general, the evaluation planning is now perceived as a useful tool to improve the LDS implementation and results, but must be valued to have meaning and it has to be meaningful to have value.



8 PARTICIPANT'S FEEDBACK - SUMMARY

A Satisfaction Questionnaire, which was filled by 55 participants, contained open and closed questions on the following issues:

- Overall quality of training (organization, training methods and assessment of helpdesk facilitators).
- Adequateness of training content (i.e. the extent to which contents provided did meet the expectations).
- Training objectives: the extent to which attendants, after attending the training sessions, were able to (1) understand the importance of evaluation for policy makers; (2) understand & use the EU's elements of evaluation and the evaluation itself; (3) develop an Evaluation Plan.

Open questions explored the most useful training element for daily-life according to respondents, as well as the most relevant messages obtained, possible caveats or issues that were not been properly addressed, and other additional comments or queries.

The results:

1. Globally speaking, the training action was positively assessed by the participants. Overall quality of the training action achieved 3.7 (out of 5). Around 75% of respondents answered "good" or "very good" and around 91% "good", "very good" or "excellent".
2. With respect to the overall quality of the training, "the Helpdesk facilitators' effort" was specially appreciated (3.9 out of 5), especially in terms of know-how and experience acquired.
3. The "training method" and the "organization of training" were positively evaluated (3.5). Notwithstanding this, for future training actions more attention should be placed upon the exercises that were used as accompanying material and upon the length of training .
4. Training contents and objectives were positively assessed; the conceptual/contextual aspects of evaluation were (almost) totally fulfilled. By contrast, the evidence indicates that even more efforts should be placed future practical empowerment, especially in the case of "capacity to build Evaluation Plans" . In this sense, more and better practical accompanying material (i.e, case-studies or exercises) would be welcome in future training actions.
5. The training action has risen the awareness on the need and importance of evaluation amongst participants. It is widely recognized that, for evaluation to be successful, some principles must be followed, such as: consistency, relevance, accuracy in preparation, monitoring & implementation, or a fully and coherent engagement and coordination of stakeholders involved.
6. From a forward-looking perspective, there is a need to explain things more carefully and in-detail (which would demand a change in the course's length, see above), as well as to deepen into more practical issues, especially those related to building Evaluation Plans.