



GUIDELINES EVALUATION OF LEADER/CLLD

PART IV – ANNEX (FINAL DRAFT – FEBRUARY 2017)

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The Evaluation Helpdesk is responsible for the evaluation function within the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) by providing guidance on the evaluation of RDPs and policies falling under the remit and guidance of DG AGRI's Unit E.4 'Evaluation and studies' of the European Commission (EC). In order to improve the evaluation of EU rural development policy the Evaluation Helpdesk supports all evaluation stakeholders, in particular DG AGRI, national authorities, RDP managing authorities and evaluators, through the development and dissemination of appropriate methodologies and tools; the collection and exchange of good practices; capacity building, and communicating with network members on evaluation related topics.

Additional information about the activities of European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development is available on the Internet through the Europa server (<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>).

GUIDELINES

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4 ANNEX

4.1 Annex 1 - Glossary

Accountability

Responsibility to demonstrate that the intervention financed with public money has been conducted in compliance with its agreed rules and has produced benefits for its beneficiaries and general public in line with its objectives.

Added value of LEADER/CLLD

The added value of LEADER/CLLD are benefits obtained through the proper implementation of CLLD method above benefits which can be achieved with the same types of intervention but without applying the method. Added value is usually generated as increased social capital, improved governance and enhanced results and impacts of the intervention.

Beneficiary

A beneficiary is a person or organization directly benefitting from the intervention whether intended or unintended. Some people may be beneficiaries without necessarily belonging to the group targeted by the intervention. Similarly, the entire eligible group does not necessarily consist of beneficiaries.

Common Indicators

Indicators defined in the common monitoring and evaluation system for rural development, which are binding for all Member States, to measure achievements and changes at both RDP and European level. Using Common Indicators also allow to compare evaluation findings of MS at the EU level.

Common Monitoring and Evaluation System

A system for collecting information at regular intervals to facilitate the reporting, analysis and evaluation of programme performance with evaluation methods. The system covers all monitoring and evaluation activities, including the governance of the system itself. The monitoring and evaluation system is coordinated by the Managing Authority and is the basis for communicating evaluation findings internally and externally. In the Rural

Development Regulations, the term specifically describes a common system, developed by the Commission and Member States, which aims to demonstrate progress and achievements, assess the impact, effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of rural development policy interventions. It contains a limited number of common indicators relating to the context, outputs, results, and impacts of the programmes.

Community-led local development (CLLD)

EU policy instrument focused on specific sub-regional areas, implemented by local actions groups, carried out through integrated and multi-sectoral area-based local development strategies, which take into account local needs and potential, and include innovative features in the local context, networking and, where appropriate, cooperation. CLLD shall be supported by the EAFRD, which shall be designated as LEADER local development and may be supported by the ERDF, ESF or EMFF.

CLLD method

Specific method to implement rural development interventions in the sub.-regional areas rooted in the LEADER approach, built up on the principles of a bottom up approach towards rural development, public-private partnership, area based and multisector local development strategy, innovation, networking and cooperation.

CLLD strategy

Strategy supporting the community-led local development, prepared and implemented by local action group at the sub-regional level in accordance with CLLD method to ensure the proper implementation of ESI funds in addressing the needs of population and territory designated by local action groups, and the same time contribute to regional/national/EU policy objectives. The CLLD strategy was previously known as local development strategy financed only through the LEADER approach.

Delivery mechanism

The way in which a policy is implemented, more specifically the set of administrative arrangements and procedures which ensure that policy objectives become concrete actions on the ground. Delivery mechanisms vary amongst Member States (and sometimes also between regions and across measures) due to differences in the legal and administrative arrangements related to the policy implementation.

Effectiveness

This is the extent to which objectives pursued by an intervention are achieved. An effectiveness indicator is calculated by relating an output, result or impact indicator to a quantified objective.

Efficiency

Best relationship between resources employed and results achieved in pursuing a given objective through an intervention. Efficiency addresses the question whether the more effects could have been obtained with the same budget or whether the same effects could have been obtained at a lower cost. An indicator of efficiency is calculated by dividing the budgetary inputs mobilized by the quantity of effects obtained.

European Cohesion Policy

According to Article 3(2) of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Union shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and solidarity among Member States. In view of the programming period 2014 - 2020, the instruments for European Cohesion Policy (the funds EFRD, ESF, Cohesion Fund, EMFF and EAFRD) are brought together under the Common Strategic Framework, regulated by the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR). Cohesion policy is a dynamic investment policy of the Union aiming at promoting long – term sustainable growth in European regions through removing barriers to growth and facilitating structural adjustment.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a process of judgement on interventions according to their results, impacts and the needs they aim to satisfy. Evaluation looks at the effectiveness, the efficiency and at

the relevance of an intervention. Rural development evaluation must provide information on the implementation and impact of the co-financed programmes. The aims are, on the one hand, to increase the accountability and transparency with regard to the legal and budget authorities and the public and, on the other hand, to improve the implementation of the programmes by contributing to informed planning and decisions concerning needs, delivery mechanisms and resource allocation.

Evaluation Capacity

Skills, knowledge, competencies and resources at individual, stakeholder and institutional level, as well as the management arrangements and structures at organizational level to undertake a successful evaluation.

Evaluation Capacity Building

Activities and resources dedicated for enhancing evaluation capacity at individual, stakeholder and organization level.

Evaluation Plan

It sets out the evaluation activities including the institutional arrangements (evaluation governance) and management provisions (evaluation management) for a whole programme implementation period. For the programming period 2014-2020, Managing Authorities of programmes under the five funds covered by the Common Strategic Framework shall draw up an Evaluation Plan. For rural development, the Evaluation Plan will be included in each RDP and must conform to the minimum requirements established in the implementing act.

Evaluation question

Question that needs to be answered by evaluators. These are usually posed by those commissioning an evaluation. Evaluation questions normally feature in the terms of reference of evaluation projects. In the case of the evaluation of Rural Development Programmes, the common evaluation questions form part of the common evaluation and monitoring system. Stakeholders in Member States can develop programme specific evaluation questions. Evaluation questions have three dimensions: descriptive (what happened?), causal (to what extent is what has happened really an effect of the

intervention?) and normative (is the effect satisfactory?).

Formative evaluation

Evaluation intended to understand the factors affecting the performance of the intervention, and to improve it. Most often, it is conducted during the implementation phase of the intervention.

Governance

It can be understood as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authorities to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. In contrast to older (narrower) definitions the term does not only indicate what a government does, but also includes structures set up and actions undertaken in partnership with the civil society and the private sector.

Hierarchy of Objectives

Shows how interventions contribute to global, intermediate and operational objectives. It brings objectives at different levels (objectives, sub-objectives) in a hierarchy or tree, and shows the logical links between the objectives and their sub-objectives.

Impacts

Effects of an intervention lasting in medium or long term. Some impacts appear indirectly, (e.g. turnover generated for the suppliers of assisted firms). Others can be observed at the macroeconomic or macro-social level (e.g. improvement of the image of the assisted area); these are overall impacts. Impacts may be positive or negative, expected or unexpected.

Independent evaluators

Evaluators that are not directly involved in the design, implementation, and financing of the programmes/strategies.

Indicator

Tool to measure the achievement of: an objective; a resource mobilised; an output accomplished; an effect obtained; or a context variable (economic, social or environmental). The information provided by an indicator is a

datum used to measure facts or opinions. An indicator must, among other things, produce simple information which is communicable and easily understood by both the provider and the user of the information. It must help the managers of public interventions to communicate, negotiate and decide. For that purpose, it should preferably be linked to a criterion on the success of the intervention. It should reflect as precisely as possible whatever it is meant to measure (validity of construction). The indicator and its measurement unit must be sensitive, that is to say, the quantity measured must vary significantly when a change occurs in the variable to be measured

Internal coherence

Correspondence between the different objectives and expected effects of the same intervention. Internal coherence implies that there is a hierarchy of objectives, with those at the bottom logically contributing towards those above and that the lower level outputs generate higher level results and impacts and contribute to the same level of objectives.

Intervention

Action which should consciously address the needs and lead to expected changes expressed in the form of objectives. In the EU rural policy, the intervention is targeted towards EU policy objectives and implemented with the help of European Structural and Investment Funds.

Intervention logic

It represents a methodological instrument which establishes the logical link between the programme area needs, programme objectives, the envisaged operational actions and expected effects. It shows the conceptual link from an intervention's input to its output and, subsequently, to its results and impacts. Thus an intervention logic allows an assessment of a measure's contribution to achieving its objectives.

Focus area

The sub-field of policy at which the intervention is targeted. The six Union priorities for rural development are broken into 18 operational focus areas in order to better structure the attribution of measures and planned interventions.

Full - Time Equivalent Employment (FTE)

Full - time equivalent units are used to improve the comparability of measures of employment. Figures for the number of persons working less than the standard working time of a full - year full - time worker should be converted into full time equivalents, with regard to the working time of a full - time full - year employee in the unit. Included in this category are people working less than a standard working day, less than the standard number of working days in the week, or less than the standard number of weeks/months in the year. The conversion should be carried out on the basis of the number of hours, days, weeks or months worked.

Judgment Criteria

Characteristic linked to specific evaluation question on which the success of intervention is judged. One evaluation question could be accompanied with several judgment criteria in accordance to scope of success to be achieved with the intervention

LEADER

LEADER is the EU rural policy instrument which supports the rural development at the sub-regional level via using a specific delivery method. It stands for '*Links between actions for the development of the rural economy*'.

Leverage effect

Propensity for public intervention to induce private spending among direct beneficiaries. In cases where public intervention subsidizes private investments, leverage effects are proportional to the amount of private spending induced by the subsidy. Leverage effects must not be confused with additional effects (see net effect).

Monitoring

An exhaustive and regular examination of the resources, outputs and results of public interventions. Monitoring is based on a system of coherent information including reports, reviews, balance sheets, indicators, etc. Monitoring system information is obtained primarily from beneficiaries and is used essentially for steering public interventions. When monitoring includes a judgement, this judgement refers to the achievement of

operational objectives. Monitoring is also intended to produce feedback and direct learning. It is generally the responsibility of the actors charged with implementation of an intervention.

Multiplier effect

Secondary effect resulting from increased income and consumption generated by the public intervention. Multiplier effects are cumulative and take into account the fact that part of the income generated is spent again and generates other income, and so on in several successive cycles. In each cycle, the multiplier effect diminishes due to purchases outside the territory. The effect decreases much faster when the territory is small and when its economy is open.

Objective

Clear, explicit and initial statement on the effects to be achieved by a public intervention in given time. A quantitative objective is stated in the form of indicators and a qualitative objective in the form of descriptors, e.g.: 30% of all outputs must be accomplished by the end of the third year; the public intervention must first benefit the long-term unemployed. Specific objectives concern the results whereas overall objectives concern the impacts of an intervention on direct beneficiaries. A global objective corresponds to the aim of the intervention. The aim of an intervention is to produce an impact expressed in global and long terms, e.g. reducing regional disparities in development levels. Medium term objectives which are linked to specific areas/priorities to be targeted under the global objectives are called specific objectives. Objectives may also be intermediate. Objectives which specify outputs to be produced are called operational objectives. If the objectives of a public intervention have not been clearly defined beforehand, the evaluation can try to clarify them afterwards. In that case, it is preferable to refer to implicit objectives. Objectives may incorporate targets.

Net effect

Effect imputable to the public intervention and to it alone, as opposed to apparent changes or gross effects. To evaluate net effects, based on gross effects, it is necessary to subtract the changes which would have occurred in the

absence of the public intervention, and which are therefore not imputable to it since they are produced by confounding factors (counterfactual situation). For example, the number of employees in assisted firms appears to be stable (change or gross effect equal to zero). However, it is estimated that without support there would have been 400 redundancies (counterfactual situation). Thus, 400 jobs were maintained (net effect).

Participatory evaluation methods

Participatory evaluation methods are those that involve the stakeholders of RDPs/measures in the evaluation. This involvement can occur at any stage of the evaluation cycle, from the evaluation design to the data collection and analysis and reporting.

Partnership Agreement

A document prepared together by the European Commission and the Member State with the involvement of partners in line with the multi-level governance approach, which sets out the Member State's strategy, priorities and arrangements for using the CSF Funds in an effective and efficient way to pursue the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The Partnership Agreement is approved by the Commission following assessment.

Performance Framework

For each programme under the common strategic framework, a performance framework shall be defined with a view to monitoring progress towards the objectives and targets set for each programme over the course of the programming period. In 2019, the Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, shall undertake a review of the performance of the programmes with reference to the performance framework. On the basis of the performance review, a performance reserve shall be allocated in 2019 to programmes and priorities which have achieved the milestones set in the performance framework.

Primary contributions

Direct contributions of operations implemented under LEADER/CLLD to the objective linked to focus area 6B (local development in rural areas) under which LEADER/CLLD is programmed.

Programme-specific indicators

Is specific quantitative or qualitative indicator developed in Member States. A programme specific indicator is developed when common indicators cannot capture programme specific effects and achievements of programme specific objectives, answer the programme specific questions and assess programme specific evaluation topics.

Qualitative indicator

A description, in the form of a concise, clear and stable statement, of an objective to achieve, or an impact obtained. The organisation of descriptors in the form of a structured grid may constitute the first step in the construction of an indicator. If several descriptors have been established beforehand, they can be used to construct an observation grid. By means of this grid a phenomenon or change can be observed and described in a qualitative and structured way. Evaluation cannot afford to exclude from its scope of analysis an important objective or impact simply because it is difficult to measure quantitatively when in fact it is considered to be important.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance encompasses any activity that is concerned with assessing and improving the merit or the worth of a development intervention or its compliance with given standards.

Quantitative indicator

Relevant, accepted, credible, easy and robust tool to measure the achievement of: an objective; a resource mobilised; an output accomplished; an effect obtained; or a context variable (economic, social or environmental) in the quantitative way using the data. Accessible high quality and timely data are necessary to use a quantitative indicator

Recommendations

Proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of the programme/strategy; at redesigning the objectives and measures; and/or at the reallocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to conclusions.

Relevance

The extent to which an intervention's objectives are pertinent to needs, problems and issues. Questions of relevance are particularly important in ex ante evaluation because the focus is on the strategy chosen or its justification. Within the framework of mid-term evaluation, it is advisable to check whether the socio-economic context has evolved as expected and whether this evolution calls into question the relevance of a particular initial objective.

Reliability

Quality of the collection of evaluation data when the protocol used makes it possible to produce similar information during repeated observations in identical conditions. Reliability depends on compliance with the rules of sampling and tools used for the collection and recording of quantitative and qualitative information.

Result

Advantage (or disadvantage) which direct beneficiaries obtain at the end of their participation in a public intervention or as soon as a public facility has been completed. Results can be observed when a beneficiary completes an action and accounts for the way in which allocated funds were spent and managed. At this point s/he may show, for example, that accessibility has been improved due to the construction of a road, or that the firms which have received advice claim to be satisfied. The operators may regularly monitor results. They have to adapt the implementation of the intervention according to the results obtained.

Rigour

In the context of these guidelines, a "rigorous" method is understood as a reliable and valid method introduced, applied and further developed in referred scientific journals. A more rigorous method is more widely applied and accepted in the scientific community or community of evaluators and it will be described in methodological textbooks.

Robustness

The term robustness is defined in different ways in the evaluation literature. In econometrics robustness is used in various contexts (e.g.

biased and unbiased estimators, model and variable selection) and has therefore context-specific meanings. In the context of this guidelines, robustness is considered to be high if results are stable and resilient to small but deliberate changes (e.g. an additional year of observations, an additional explanatory variable, another stakeholder, another evaluator). In some methods, the robustness can be checked by sensitivity analyses.

Secondary contributions

Contributions of operations implemented under LEADER/CLLD to other focus areas than 6B, under which LEADER/CLLD is programmed and contributes primarily. Secondary contribution could be predominant and additional. Predominant secondary contributions to the FA to which the operation contributes significantly. Additional secondary contributions to the FA to which the operation contributes but not significantly.

Self-assessment

Self-assessment is an ongoing reflective process that is designed and conducted by those who implement an intervention or are part of it (e.g. programme managers, beneficiaries, network members). It generates an inside view on the activities and focuses on the overall performance. Involved actors analyse the way in which they do things and ask themselves how they contribute to the achievement of the agreed objectives and goals. The participatory nature of self-assessment induces learning effects among all those who are part of it.

Synergy

The fact that several public interventions (or several components of an intervention) together produce an impact which is greater than the sum of the impacts they would produce alone (e.g. an intervention which finances the extension of an airport which, in turn, helps to fill tourist facilities, also financed by the intervention). Synergy generally refers to positive impacts. However, phenomena which reinforce negative effects, negative synergy or anti-synergy may also be referred to (e.g. an intervention subsidises the diversification of enterprises while a regional policy helps to strengthen the dominant activity).

Social Capital

Social capital is a multidimensional concept which includes: “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit”. Social capital draws on processes which are crucial in community development and the functioning of a cohesive and inclusive society.

Stakeholders

Agencies, organizations, groups or individuals who have a positive or negative, direct or indirect interest in the intervention or its evaluation

Stakeholder map

It is the comprehensive assessment and analysis of stakeholders relevant for a certain domain or issue (e.g. rural development, renewable energies, land use, etc.). The analysis concerns the stakeholders’ distinct interests, their relative weight (in respect to various criteria such as power, networking capacity, etc.) and the quality (intensity, harmony) characterising their mutual relationships. From a pragmatic point of view, stakeholder mapping should not refer to a too large domain (as the complexity grows with the number of stakeholders and relationships). Stakeholder mapping is particularly revealing in facilitated dialogue settings (bringing together various stakeholders and their individual perspectives), and by using visualization methods.

Summative evaluation

Evaluation conducted at the end of an intervention to determine the extent to which expected outcomes were produced (effectiveness) and at which cost (efficiency). Summative evaluation is intended to provide information about the worth and impact of the program.

Support for evaluation

Support for evaluation at Local Action Group (LAG) level involves various types of activities and resources dedicated to enhancing evaluation capacities of LAGs and other stakeholders involved in the evaluation at local level. Support should enable the assessment of effectiveness, efficiency, results and impacts of

CLLD strategies, the proper application of the CLLD method, and the added value generated by LEADER/CLLD.

Target group

The specific individuals or organizations for whose benefit the development intervention is undertaken.

Target Indicator

Indicator equipped with a target value. For each focus area chosen among the six RD priorities, quantifiable target indicators are defined at Community level. Target indicators should be linked, as directly as possible, to RDP interventions, minimizing the effect of external factors. They should be indicators which can be simply and regularly monitored, minimizing the data requirements for beneficiaries and administrations, as the values of these indicators will be monitored regularly throughout the lifetime of each RDP. Wherever possible, established indicators and methods should be used. For the most part, target indicators will be at the result level, with the exception of Priority 1, which is horizontal and whose results are captured through the outcomes of other priorities. For the focus areas under this priority, the target indicators will be established at output level.

Validity

Criterion of an evaluation linked to the optimal data situation. The evaluation findings are valid if the method used is based on high quality and timely data.

4.2 Annex 2 - Example of the SCF template for AIR submitted in 2017, chapter 7 for common evaluation question number 17¹

COMMON EVALUATION QUESTION NO 17

COMMON EVALUATION QUESTION No 17: “To what extent have RDP interventions supported local development in rural areas?”		
1. List of measures contributing to the FA 6B Primarily programmed measures/sub-measures: Measures/sub-measures programmed under the other FAs which show secondary contributions to FA 6B ² : <i>[A maximum of 1,000 characters = approx. ¼ page – Mandatory]</i>		
2. Link between judgment criteria, common and additional³ result indicators used to answer the CEQ <i>[Mandatory]</i>		
Judgment criteria⁴ <i>[Max. 255 characters]</i>	Common result indicators⁵ <i>[Max. 255 characters]</i>	Additional result indicators and information⁶ <i>[Max. 255 characters]</i>
Employment opportunities have been created via local development strategies	R24/T23: Jobs created in supported projects (Leader)	
Rural territory and population covered by LAGs has increased	R22/T21: Percentage of rural population covered by local development strategies	
		Percentage of RDP expenditure in Leader measures with respect to total RDP expenditure

¹ Also see the guidelines Assessment of RDP results: how to prepare for reporting on evaluation in 2017 and its Annex 11 Fiches for answering the CEQ for RDP 2014.- 2020, http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/evaluation/publications/evaluation-helpdesks-publications-guidance-documents_en

² This also covers those measures /sub-measures which have shown secondary effects during the evaluation not only those who have been planned to contribute additionally to focus areas other than those programmed during the programme design.

³ Additional indicators are used if the common indicators are not sufficient to answer the CEQ, and if the success is specified with judgment criteria which are not measured with the common indicators.

⁴ List judgment criteria used to specify the success of the intervention within the FA. The judgment criteria proposed by the WD: "Common Evaluation Questions for rural development programmes 2014-2020" are pre-filled in the table. Stakeholders in MS can propose their own judgment criteria to specify success in line with the specific intervention logic of the FA. In the system for answering the CEQ 1 – 21 one judgment criterion is linked to one result indicator (common or additional).

⁵ List common result indicators used in answering the CEQ. Ensure that the indicators are listed in a consistent way with the judgment criteria and placed in the same line.

⁶ List additional indicators used in answering the CEQ. Ensure that the judgment criteria are listed in a consistent way with the additional indicators and placed in the same line. Additional indicators filled in this column are those proposed in the WD: Common Evaluation Questions for rural Development Programmes 2014-2020 as "additional information". MS can use their own additional indicators and information if they consider the pre-filled ones as not relevant for the specific RDP.

		Number of projects/initiatives supported by the Local Development Strategy
Access to services and local infrastructure has increased in rural areas Services and local infrastructure in rural areas has improved	R23/T22: Percentage of rural population benefiting from improved services/ infrastructures	
Rural people have participated in local actions Rural people have benefited from local actions		
3. Methods applied⁷ Quantitative methods⁸ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Reasons for using the method ii. Description of methods to calculate ratios, gross or net (if applicable) values of common and additional result indicators, or other indicators used (output, common context indicators)⁹ iii. Challenges in the application of described methods and solutions encountered Qualitative methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Reasons for using the method¹⁰ ii. Description of methods used¹¹ iii. Challenges in the application of described methods and solutions encountered <i>[A maximum of 7,000 characters = approx. 2 pages – Mandatory]</i>		
4. Quantitative values of indicators¹² and data sources <i>[Mandatory]</i>		

⁷ In case the same method was used in answering several evaluation questions, the description does not need to be repeated in all respective tables. It is sufficient just to provide the reference to the respective table of the SFC template, point 7, where the method is described in detail.

⁸ Quantitative methods are applicable for the assessment of all complementary result indicators and all other indicators including additional ones, apart from those which are measured in absolute values and as a ratio and which can be deducted directly from the monitoring system.

⁹ In case the same method was used for several indicators, the list of these indicators should be provided.

¹⁰ Explain the reasons why qualitative methods have been used to assess the RDP results linked to FA 6B - introductory qualitative analysis, triangulation of quantitative findings, no data available (e.g. no RDP uptake under the FA 6B), etc.

¹¹ In case the same method was used for several indicators, the list of these indicators should be provided.

¹² Values are based on the quantitative methods described above.

Indicator		Absolute value ¹³	Ratio value ¹⁴	Calculated gross value ¹⁵	Calculated net value ¹⁶	Data and information sources ¹⁷
Common output indicators ¹⁸						
Common result indicators	R24/T23 - Jobs created in supported projects (Leader)					
	R22/T21 - percentage of rural population covered by local development strategies					
	R23/T22 - percentage of rural population benefiting from improved services/ infrastructures					
Additional result indicators ¹⁹						
Common Context						

¹³ Value is aggregated from Pillar II operations database for output indicators, and/or from statistics databases for additional and common context indicators or additional indicators, if they are used to answer the common evaluation questions.

¹⁴ This column is filled for the common result/target indicator R22/T21, R23/T22, and additional indicators if they are expressed in ratio values.

¹⁵ The gross value of the common result/target indicator R24/T23 is inserted here. The gross value of used additional indicators and common context indicators is inserted here as well, if they are not expressed in ratio values. Gross value is the value of indicator observed within the group of RDP beneficiaries. The gross value of indicator is inserted also in case the net value has been inserted in the table.

¹⁶ The net value of the common result/target indicator R24/T23 (in case it was possible to calculate it) is inserted here. The net value of used additional indicators and common context indicators is inserted here as well, if they are not expressed in ratio values. Net value is the value of indicator attributed to the RDP intervention. See the guidelines Assessment of RDP results, chapter 7.2.

¹⁷ All data and information sources used for calculation of indicators should be listed here, e.g. Pillar II operations database, EU/national/regional statistics, GIS, etc.

¹⁸ The common output indicators can be also used, especially if the value of output indicator is necessary to calculate the result indicator or in case it provides important information for answering the evaluation question, e.g. all LEADER related output indicators, number of actions/operation supported (O3), number of beneficiaries/holdings (O4), population benefiting from improved services (O15), etc. The selection of output indicators for answering the evaluation question is done in MS.

¹⁹ Additional indicators are optional and developed in MS to answer common evaluation questions in case the common indicators are considered insufficient for this purpose.

indicators 20						
5. Problems encountered influencing the validity and reliability of evaluation findings²¹ <i>[A maximum of 1,750 characters = approx. ½ page – Non-mandatory]</i>						
6. Answer to evaluation question²² <i>[A maximum of 10,500 characters = approx. 3 pages – Mandatory]</i>						
7. Conclusions and recommendations²³						
Conclusion <i>[Approx. 1,000 characters- Mandatory]</i>				Recommendation <i>[Approx. 1,000 characters – Non-mandatory]</i>		
C.1				R.1		
C.2				R.2		
C.3				R.3		

²⁰ The common context indicators can be also used to answer common evaluation questions if relevant (e. g. CCI 1, CCI 2, CCI 3, CCI 8, CCI 10, CCI 12).

²¹ Explain problems faced by the evaluator during the assessment, e.g. data and information availability, timing and coordination issues, etc. which might have threatened the reliability and validity of evaluation findings.

²² On the basis of the evidence resulting from the analysis presented under points 3 and 4.

²³ On the basis of the information collected under points 3 and 4 and the answer given under point 6.

4.3 Annex 3 – Methodological approach to assess the delivery of CLLD method

The method to assess the CLLD method delivery can be applied at both sites of CLLD delivery mechanism - the RDP and the LAG levels. The following steps are suggested:

Step 1 - Define the evaluation question linked to the CLLD principles: E.g. *“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system encouraged the development of partnership compared to a benchmarked situation”?*

Step 2 – Specify the major stages of LEADER/CLLD delivery mechanism as established at the RDP level and at the local level in two separate matrices (see the matrix 1 for RDP level and matrix 2 for local level). Define the delivery steps for each of major stages.

Step 3 – Link the stages and steps of the LEADER/CLLD delivery mechanism with the CLLD principles and related evaluation questions and clarify, which stages/steps are affecting which principle.

Step 4 – Define judgement criteria based on each principle’s ideal application (benchmark) for each of the identified steps e.g. the successful application of the partnership principle could be formulated in the judgement criteria *“The partnership shows a balanced representation of the LAG territory from a sectorial, institutional, geographic, social and gender point of view”*, etc.). These **judgment criteria** are linked in the matrix to evaluation questions

Step 5 – Develop indicators to measure the success as specified with the judgment criteria. Proposed indicators are the means to collect baseline information, e.g. through the situation description of the LAG area.

All above steps are conducted with the help of the matrices below, provided separately for RDP and local level.

Note: Stages and steps of the delivery mechanism, judgment criteria and indicators mentioned in matrices are only examples. Stakeholders in MS shall fill the matrices in accordance with their own circumstance in the delivery of LEADER/CLLD and in line with their evaluation interest.

Example of Matrix 1 for assessment of the CLLD method delivery at RDP level

LEADER/CLLD method (principle)	Evaluation questions	Major LEADER/CLLD delivery stages at RDP level								
		Preparing			Implementing			Assessing		
		LEADER/CLLD measure design in the RDP	Ensuring the capacity building for LAGs to develop strategy	Call for proposals for LAGs, selection and contracting	Ensuring capacity for LAGs to deliver LEADER/CLLD	Assessing and selecting project proposals	Contracting paying and finalising projects	Ensuring monitoring and evaluation capacity for LAGs	Monitoring projects	Evaluation
Bottom up approach	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system encouraged the application of bottom up approach compared to a benchmarked situation²⁴?”</i>	JC ²⁵ : LEADER/CLLD measure allows a broad spectrum of eligible beneficiaries under CLLD strategies I ²⁶ : Number and type of eligible beneficiaries under CLLD strategies		JC: Only strategies which have been developed and approved in a bottom up way are eligible for support from LEADER/CLLD I: Share of strategies approved in a bottom up way on the total number of strategies applied	JC: Budget for animation has allowed sufficient animation of the LAG territory I: Sufficient budget for animation (maximum legally possible)					
Public–private partnership	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system encouraged the development of partnerships compared to a benchmarked situation?”</i> support under LEADER/CLLD	JC: Description of eligible partnership in the LEADER/CLLD measure goes beyond of the sector balance (compulsory criteria) and	JC: Capacity building activities for partnership development have been introduced for LAGs	JC: Only balanced partnerships from the sector, geographic, social, institutional and gender point of view are eligible for support	JC: Running costs allow to equip LAG and its management with the sufficient capacities in terms of personnel,	JC: Training for assessing and selecting of projects has been provided for LAGs I: Number and type of	JC: Smooth collaboration between LAG and paying agency for contracting, paying and finalizing of projects has been ensured	JC: Training for monitoring and evaluation/self-assessment has been ensured for LAGs I: Number and type of training	JC: Smooth collaboration between LAG and paying agency in monitoring of projects and data collection through operation	

²⁴ Situation is benchmarked with the judgment criteria and measured with proposed indicators²⁵ JC – judgment criteria²⁶ I – indicator

		includes other criteria – geographic, social, gender balance etc. I: Eligibility criteria for composition of partnership broader than just sector composition (compulsory criteria)	I: Number and type of capacity building activities for partnership development	under LEADER/CLLD I: Share of strategies approved with balanced partnership from geographic, social, gender point of view on the total number of strategies applied	technique and budget to implement the strategy I: Sufficient budget for running costs (maximum legally possible)	training for assessing and selecting projects for LAGs	I: Number of communications between LAG managers and paying agency regarding contracting and finalizing the projects	for monitoring and evaluation/self-assessment for LAGs	database has been ensured I: Number of communications between LAG managers and paying agency regarding monitoring of projects	
Area-based approach	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system enabled to ensure the area based strategies compared to a benchmarked situation”?</i>	JC: LEADER/CLLD measure allows to implement a broad spectrum of eligible measures under the CLLD strategies I: Number of eligible measures to be implemented under the CLLD strategy	JC: capacity building activities for strategy development have been introduced for LAGs I: Number and type of capacity building activities for strategy development	JC: Only strategies which address the area needs are eligible for support under LEADER/CLLD I: Share of strategies approved which have addressed most important needs on the total number of strategies applied						JC: Whenever possible the MA has facilitated the evaluation of CLLD strategies (as part of RDP evaluation, via NRN, etc.) I: Number of strategies which have been evaluated through the RDP evaluation or NRN activities and their share on the total number of strategies
Multi-sectorial	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system enabled multi-sector actions through CLLD strategies compared to a benchmarked situation”?</i>	JC: LEADER/CLLD measure promotes the inclusion of multi-sector actions in the CLLD strategies		JC: Only strategies which support also the multi-sector actions among others are eligible for support under LEADER/CLLD						

		as eligible activity I: Eligibility criteria for strategies contain the necessity to integrate the multi-sector actions		I: Share of strategies approved with multi-sector actions on the total number of strategies applied						
Innovation	<i>“To what extent has the innovation in the LAG been encouraged due to the LEADER/CLLD delivery system compared to a benchmarked situation”?</i>	JC: LEADER/CLLD measure promotes the inclusion of innovative solutions in the CLLD strategies (e.g. as compulsory ranking criteria for projects' selection) I: Innovation is the envisioned as project selection criteria in the strategies	JC: Capacity building activities for innovation have been introduced for LAGs I: Number and type of capacity building activities on innovation introduced for LAGs	JC: Only strategies which support the innovation are eligible for support under LEADER/CLLD I: Share of strategies approved with innovative features on the total number of strategies applied	JC: Transfer of knowledge and innovative approaches has been ensured for LAGs I: Number and type of activities for transfer of knowledge and innovative approaches					
Networking and cooperation	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system supported the networking and cooperation compared to a benchmarked situation”?</i>	JC: LEADER/CLLD measure provides sufficient budget and scope of actions for the cooperation I: Budget and scope of eligible activities for cooperation projects		JC: Strategies which include the planning of cooperation projects receive better ranking than others I: Share of strategies with the cooperation projects on the total number of approved strategies	JC1: Capacity building activities for cooperation have been introduced for LAGs JC2: Capacity building activities for LAGs have promoted networking among them	JC: Conditions for transnational cooperation projects assessment and selection are harmonized across countries and regions I1: Deadlines for submission of	JC: Smooth collaboration between LAGs and paying agencies in various MS for contracting, paying and finalizing of cooperation projects has been ensured I: Number of communicatio	JC: NRN has prepared and implemented the exchange of experiences and networking among LAGs in monitoring and evaluation I: Number and type of activities on exchange of experiences among LAGs on M&E	JC: Transparent monitoring of cooperation projects have been ensured by the MA I: Monitoring tables for cooperation projects publically available	JC: Evaluation of cooperation projects' contributions to RD objectives has been ensured by the MA JC: NRN have assisted in dissemination of the evaluation findings on LEADER/CLLD

					<p>I1: Number and types of capacity building activities on cooperation for LAGs</p> <p>I2: Number of LAGs networked</p> <p>I3: number of LAG networks</p>	<p>cooperation projects</p> <p>I2: Eligible activities for cooperation projects across countries</p>	<p>ns between LAG managers and paying agency regarding contracting and finalizing the cooperation projects</p>			<p>I1: Number and type of evaluations of cooperation projects</p> <p>I2: Number and type of NRN activities with dissemination of LEADER/CLLD evaluation findings</p>
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Example of Matrix 2 for assessment of the CLLD method delivery at LAG level

		Major LEADER/CLLD delivery stages at LAG level								
LEADER/C LLD method (principle)	Evaluation questions	Preparing			Implementing				Assessing	
		Development of partnership	Ensuring the capacity building for LAGs and	Preparing and approval of the CLLD strategy	Calls for project proposal	Advising and technical support for project applicants	Collecting, assessing and selecting project proposals	Implementi ng the projects	Monitoring projects and outputs	Evaluation or self- assessment
Bottom up approach	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system encouraged the application of bottom up approach compared to a benchmarked situation”?</i>	JC Partnership has encouraged the entrance of new local actors ²⁷ I: Number of new local actors entering the partnership	JC: Partnership has promoted participatory approach in capacity building activities I: Share of local actors participating in capacity building activities	JC: Partnership has ensured the bottom up development and approval of the strategy I: Share of local actors participating in the design of strategy on the total number of local actors	JC: LAG has ensured the use of local resources in project application I: Share of calls of which local resources was encouraged by ranking criteria on the total number of calls	JC: Consultancy services provided by the LAG was proudly used by potential applicants I: Share applicants using consultancies on total number of applicants	JC: using local resources played important role in project selection I: Share of selected projects using local resources on the total number of selected projects	JC: LAG has ensured the participation ²⁸ of local actors in project implementation I: Share of local actors participating in implemented projects		JC: LAG has ensured the participation of local actors in self-assessment I: Share of local actors participating in self-assessment
Public-private partnership	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system encouraged the development of partnerships compared to a benchmarked situation”?</i>	JC: Partnership shows a balanced representation of the LAG territory from a sectorial, institutional, geographic, social and gender point of view	JC: Partnership has the ability to conduct the needs assessment and decide on the strategy I: Needs assessment is based on solid	JC: Partnership has prepared and approved high quality strategy which was accepted by the MA I: Number of selected strategies by the MA		JC: Partnership has ensured sufficient consultancy capacity for projects applicants I: Number of highly qualified	JC: Partnership has ensured sufficient capacity for collecting, assessing and selecting projects		JC: Partnership has ensured sufficient capacity for monitoring of projects I: Number of LAG members able with the capacity to monitor the projects	JC: Partnership has ensured sufficient capacity for managing evaluation and/or conducting the self-assessment I: Number of LAG members

²⁷ Local actor is understood as local municipality, community, NGO, business entity, school or other local public body, voluntary group and individual who is important for local development (teacher, doctor, priest, single local facilitator/animator etc.)

²⁸ Participation of local actors in project implementation is understood as the ability of projects to include local actors in the implementation (not preparatory stage). With another words, projects which allow participation of many actors should be promoted as CLLD project

		I: Representation of sectors, social groups, institutions, gender in partnership	information about the LAG territory and is reflected with the selection of respective interventions (objectives, focus areas, measures)			internal/external consultants which collaborate with the LAG and provide consultancy services for potential applicants	I: Number of LAG members/external collaborators with the knowledge covering the broad variety of projects			involved in self-assessment I: LAG manager with the evaluation knowledge
Area-based approach	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system enabled to ensure the area based strategies compared to a benchmarked situation”?</i>			JC: Strategy has addressed most important needs of the LAG territory I: Measures and budgets linked to individual needs	JC: Call for proposals offer the range of eligible actions and eligible beneficiaries which reflect the needs of the LAG territory I: Number and types of eligible actions/beneficiaries		JC: Addressing the needs of LAG area of the strategy played important role in project selection I: Number any type of projects per need			JC: LAG has ensured that the area-based approach is the subject of evaluation/self-assessment I: See indicators in previous steps in the same line
Multi-sectorial	<i>“To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system enabled multi-sector actions through CLLD strategies compared to a benchmarked situation”?</i>			JC: Strategy support multi-sector actions I: Number and type of multi-sector actions in the strategy	JC: Call for project proposals has promoted multi-sector projects I: Number and type of measures which support multi-sector actions and multi-sector beneficiaries		JC: Multi-sector approach played important role in project selection I: Share of multi-sector projects on the total number of projects			JC: LAG has ensured that the multi-sector approach is the subject of evaluation/self-assessment I: See indicators in previous steps in the same line
Innovation	<i>“To what extent has the innovation in the LAG been encouraged due to the LEADER/CLLD delivery system</i>			JC: Strategy has shown the innovative features I: Number measures of the	JC: Call for project proposals has promoted innovative projects		JC: Innovation played important role in project selection			JC: LAG has ensured that the innovation is the subject of evaluation/self-assessment

	<i>compared to a benchmarked situation"?</i>			strategy which support innovation actions	I: Number and type of measures which support innovative actions		I: Share of innovative projects on the total number of projects			I: See indicators in previous steps in the same line
Networking and cooperation	<i>"To what extent has the LEADER/CLLD delivery system supported the networking and cooperation compared to a benchmarked situation"?</i>			JC: CLLD strategy has contained also proposal for cooperation projects and networking with others LAGs I1: Number of cooperation projects envisioned in the strategy I2: Number of partners to be contacted in cooperation projects planned in the strategy				JC1: LAG has implemented cooperation projects JC2: LAG: has invited various partners in cooperation projects and promoted networking I1: Number of cooperation projects implemented I2: Number partners involved in cooperation projects (no double counting)	JC: Partnership has ensured sufficient capacity for monitoring of projects I: Number of LAG members able with the capacity to monitor the projects	JC: LAG has ensured that the cooperation and networking is the subject of self-assessment I: See indicators in previous steps in the same line

Step 6 – Decide on methods used to collect evidence. After finalising matrices, it is useful to apply various qualitative methods to collect evidence for proposed indicators. Desk research of all relevant documents, such as the RDP, LEADER/CLLD guidelines, operational manuals of the paying agency will be the starting point. Furthermore, the interviews and focus groups with all relevant stakeholders designed along the proposed indicators in matrices is another important method to be considered for collection of evidence (see Annex 7 on assessment methods). The monitoring data are also important input for further analysis (several indicators proposed in matrices relate to monitoring data) Use the combination of methods to triangulate findings is highly recommended.

Step 7 – Analyse collected evidence and interpret findings, discuss findings with stakeholders, and draw up answers to evaluation questions and out conclusions and recommendation about the extent to which LEADER/CLLD method has been applied.

Reflections:

1. The method offers a framework to assess the LEADER/CLLD delivery system through the lenses of the CLLD principles;
2. The method allow flexibility (the choice of judgment, criteria, data collection tools, and indicators can range from simple to sophisticated according the particular conditions), and can be tailored to each specific LEADER/CLLD delivery system;
3. The primary goal of the method is to test hypothesis compared to benchmarked situations (judgment criteria), rather than exploring hindering or successful factors affecting the effectiveness, efficiency, or impact of LEADER/CLLD delivery system;
4. The method can be used as baseline or source of information to answer other follow-up evaluation questions, such as: *“To what extent has the delivery of LEADER/CLLD method affected the effectiveness or efficiency of the LEADER/CLLD”?*
5. The method can be used to compare the delivery of LEADER/CLLD method between two or more different delivery systems (between countries, regions, LAGs).

4.4 Annex 4 – Relevance of working steps for evaluation/self-assessment at LAG level

Step	Evaluation			Self-assessment		
	CLLD strategy	Delivery of CLLD method	CLLD added value	CLLD strategy	Delivery of CLLD method	CLLD added value
Planning – description of monitoring and evaluation arrangements in the CLLD strategy (e.g. in the form of evaluation plan)						
Decide on the specific arrangements for the evaluation at local level	x	x	x	x	x	x
Describe the purpose and objectives of the evaluation/self-assessment	x	x	x	x	x	x
Agree on the organisation and coordination of evaluation/self-assessment activities	x	x	x	x	x	x
Plan the evaluation/self-assessment topics and activities	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ensure data and information for evaluation/self-assessment	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ensure necessary capacities for evaluation/self-assessment	x	x	x	x	x	x
Decide on timing of evaluation/self-assessment	x	x	x	x	x	x
Plan the communication and follow up of evaluation /self-assessment findings	x	x	x	x	x	x
Plan the communication and follow up of evaluation /self-assessment findings	x	x	x	x	x	x
Preparing the evaluation/self-assessment at the LAG level						
Check the consistency of the intervention logic of the CLLD strategy	x			x		
Link the intervention logic to the evaluation elements of the CLLD strategy	x			x		

Develop the evaluation elements for the assessment of the CLLD method and the added value		x	x		x	x
Prepare an optional external evaluation	x	x	x			
Structuring and conducting the evaluation at the LAG level						
Decide on the evaluation/self-assessment approach	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ensure that data and information fit the needs of the evaluation/self-assessment	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ensure the collection of data and information	x	x	x	x	x	x
Analyse the data and information collected using evaluation methods	x	x	x	x	x	x
Interpret the evaluation findings, answer the evaluation questions and provide conclusions and recommendations	x	x	x	x	x	x
Reporting, disseminating and following-up the evaluation at LAG level						
Report on monitoring data to the Managing Authority/Paying Agency	x			x		
Reporting on evaluation/self-assessment findings	x	x	x	x	x	x
Communicate and disseminate of evaluation/self-assessment findings	x	x	x	x	x	x
Follow up evaluation/self-assessment findings	x	x	x	x	x	x

4.5 Annex 5 – FACTSHEET: The LAG operation database shown on the example of the PROMIS-database (Project Result Oriented Management Information System) (Case study Denmark)

Background

According to the EU legislative framework on support for rural development²⁹, beneficiaries of RDP measures including Local Action Groups (LAGs) shall provide key information on the implementation of the programme to carry out its monitoring and evaluation. LAG operations database is one of key components for undertaking an evidence-based monitoring and evaluation of LEADER/CLLD. This fact sheet illustrates an electronic operation database developed in Denmark for the LAGs implementing LEADER/CLLD and, based on this case-study, it provides further recommendations on how to build a good LAG operations database for the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD.

What is PROMIS?

PROMIS – the *Project Result Oriented Management Information System* (PROMIS) – is an integrated solution to: 1.) manage the application and selection process of LEADER/CLLD supported projects/operations, and 2.) carry out the monitoring and evaluation of LEADER/CLLD at two levels: RDP and CLLD Strategy. The operation database is equipped with a web-based central server sharing data in real time among three main actors:

1. **Project applicants/beneficiaries**, which have access to PROMIS only for filling the required data into the project application form, and dialogue with the LAGs and managing authority about the project selection results;
2. **LAGs**, which have open access to all data and information related to the applied and approved projects by the CLLD Strategy, as well as to their output and results;
3. **RDP Managing authority**, which has open access to data and information related to the single LAG's projects, as well as to the outputs and results of all CLLD strategies.

The development of this operation database started in June 2014, under the support of the Danish Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Development, and in joint collaboration with several experts (LAG managers, evaluators, and IT system engineers). In 2015, PROMIS was delivered to all 26 LAGs and 10 FLAGs³⁰ selected in Denmark, and via the provision of specific training and demonstration sessions. At the current stage (winter 2016), the operation database is widely used by the Danish LAGs mainly as a tool for applying, selecting, and monitoring the LEADER/CLLD-supported projects, and its evaluation features and functions are not yet fully implemented.

How does PROMIS work?

PROMIS was created to assist the stakeholders involved in all the delivery of LEADER/CLLD, from the project application phase to the final evaluation of LEADER/CLLD as strategy, as well as a self-standing measure of the rural development programme. Listed below there are the main functions explicated by PROMIS, such as:

1. **Data collection during the project application.** Data collection is structured following a list of selection criteria, with each criterion broke-down into several sub-criteria (see box 1). Given the diversity of projects, data is collected through a flexible and adaptive application form, whose data entries change according to specific project objectives and features.
2. **Support to decision-making process of project selection.** When the call for proposal is closed, LAG can use PROMIS as tool to give scores on the quality of the projects. The scoring is applied for each project selection criteria and sub-criteria using a scale ranging from 0 to 5.

²⁹ Article 70 and 71 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

³⁰ Fishery Local Action Groups

LAG-specific criteria may be eventually added to the common list applied for every Danish LAG. Examples of this kind can be related to young involvement or gender equality.

3. **Transfer of selection results among stakeholders.** For the projects that receive the highest total scores, PROMIS offers a platform for transferring and communicating the selection results among the beneficiaries, the LAG, and the managing authority.
4. **Guidance for reporting the project results.** The operation database provides a common end-report template for guiding the beneficiaries in reporting the project results to their stakeholders. End-reports are submitted in two stages: at the end of each project and two years after its closure. The end-report filled at the end of the project include baseline data, expected target results, and achieved results. Differently, the end-report filled 2 years later collects the achieved results which do not appear from the first day after the project realization. Moreover, the end-report templates provide space for LAGs to explain the narratives and qualitative information, such as those describing why or why not the project has achieved well or bad results compared to its expected targets.
5. **Assessment of the LEADER/CLLD effects at RDP and LAG level.** Based on the aggregation of data collected from each project end-report, PROMIS is used by LAGs and managing authority to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of LEADER/CLLD at level of results achieved. The following result indicators are used:

Table 1. Results Indicators collected by PROMIS

EU Common Result Indicators for Rural Development Programmes	Rural Development additional and programme-specific result indicators	CLLD strategy-specific result indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of jobs created in supported projects (expressed in FTE) – Indicator code R21/T20; Percentage of rural population covered by local development strategies (expressed in % using the number of inhabitants) – Indicator code R22/T21. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Additional:</u> Number of jobs maintained through supported projects (expressed in FTE); <u>Programme-specific:</u> Economic development (expressed as change in turnover and gross value added); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results indicators specific to the projects, and collected through the LAG's selection criteria listed in box 1.

Results indicators collected at strategy level can be aggregated at RDP level, and related to the budget spent. The aggregation of data allows managing authority to measure the financial efficiency and effectiveness of LEADER/CLLD as self-standing RDP measure. For these two assessments, PROMIS is equipped with data analysis and visualization tools (see Box 2), which are accessible by both the LAGs and the managing authority.

1. **Reporting monitoring and evaluation results.** For reporting the monitoring and evaluation results, PROMIS can help LAGs to generate two kinds of report. The first report is based on a standard and common template, and it is used similarly by all LAGs to communicate results to the managing authority. The second is a LAG-specific evaluation report, sent by the LAG manager to the members of the board and other stakeholders (citizen, researchers, other LAGs) containing more qualitative and formative findings (e.g. based on photographs, results of surveys, interviews, focus-group, etc.).

What does make a good LAG operation database?

There are several aspects underpinning the quality of a good LAG operations database for supporting the LEADER/CLLD evaluation. Listed below, some key quality aspects are displayed, as well as some important recommendations to accomplish them.

Quality Aspects of LAG operation database	Recommendations
<p>Balance between standardization and flexibility of the data collection for evaluation. Smart application forms at beneficiary level allow to collect standard data among all LAGs for the Managing Authority's evaluation requirements, but also specific data for the LAG's evaluation needs.</p>	<p>Be focused on the final utilization of data collected. For each data collected, think about how it will be finally used. Ask yourself questions alike: "how do we want to use this additional data? Who should use it? When? For which purpose(s)? Try also to include data for answering possible LAG-specific evaluation questions or needs</p> <p>Coordinate carefully the data flow among different governance levels. Keep in mind which kind of data needs to be aggregated and compared at RDP level. Ask yourself questions alike: which kind of LAG-specific data really needs to be transferred to the managing authority? Which ones can be kept at local level?</p>
<p>Data collection is based on clear intervention logic, which links each project to the specific objectives of the CLLD strategy and the RDP Focus Areas addressed by LEADER/CLLD.</p>	<p>Create a list of multiple choices during the project application to link the primary and the secondary contributions of each project to their appropriate RDP Focus Areas. By flagging the focus areas targeted by each project, applicants and/or LAG manager can prepare RDP evaluators to assess the primary and secondary contributions of LEADER/CLLD to the RDP objectives</p>
<p>Integration of centralised with decentralized data management – integrated operation database which are accessible simultaneously by all the LAGs and the managing authority can help to improve the overall transparency of the information system, the efficiency of data collection, transfer, and ownership, and the overall quality of the evaluation system (e.g. the same indicators are collected among LAGs).</p>	<p>Integrate the needs and perspectives of multiple evaluation stakeholders when developing and implementing the operation database (e.g. LAG managers, Paying Agency, Managing Authority, NRN, project applicants, citizen).</p> <p>Define carefully the role and responsibility of each evaluation stakeholder involved in the IT solution.</p>
<p>Smart application of the LAG operation database to multiple use and multiple fund – LAG operation database is smart because it can be used not only for monitoring and evaluation of LEADER, but also to manage its delivery procedures. Moreover, in the case of multi-funded CLLD strategies, LAG operation database can be extended to other ESI funds, and not only to LEADER.</p>	<p>For LAGs implementing multi-fund approach to CLLD, try to design and use a single operation database for the delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of CLLD strategies.</p>

Box 1. – Data collected through PROMIS for monitoring and evaluation of LEADER

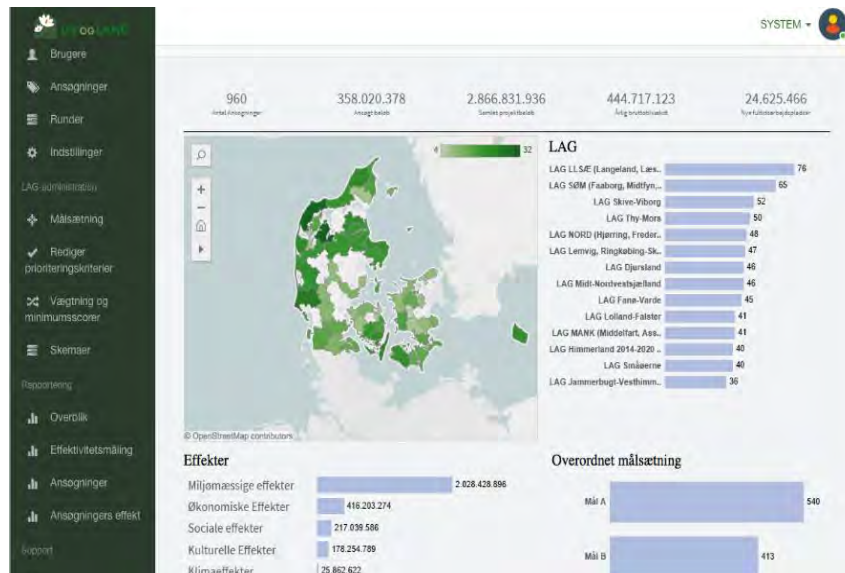
The same data collected through PROMIS during the application procedures are used for two purposes: 1.) project selection, and the 2.) LEADER/CLLD monitoring and evaluation. Quantitative and qualitative data is collected according to the following project selection criteria:

1. **Economic effects:** e.g. number of FTE jobs created immediately after the termination of project; number of tourists per year attracted by the project; estimated annual sales two years after the project;
2. **Social effects:** e.g. expected results of the project which contribute to a greater social cohesion in the local area (improved quality of life, human relationships, trust, equal rights);
3. **Climate effects:** e.g. expected results of the project which have an impact on the climate (CO₂ emissions, energy consumption, emissions reduction, improved access to locally produced foods);
4. **Cultural effects:** e.g. expected results of the project for increasing cultural identity in the local area;
5. **Relevance:** e.g. to what extent (in %) does the project contribute to the objectives of the LEADER/CLLD strategy;
6. **Cooperation:** e.g. number of partners involved in the project; number of new networks developed via the project;
7. **Area-based:** e.g. local resources and experiences used in the project;
8. **Innovation:** e.g. to what extent is the project innovative (a Linkert scale is used)? Description of its innovativeness;
9. **Sustainability:** e.g. how does the project will continue to have an impact after its completion?

Box 2. – Data analysis and visualization

PROMIS is equipped with several tools for data analysis and placement, among which:

1. Output and result indicators can be related to inputs, and both expected and achieved target result indicators;
2. Monitoring results of CLLD strategy are accessible to other LAGs, thus they can be observed and compared not only by the managing authority, but also by other LAGs;
3. Double-entry graphs, charts, and data maps provide rapid, user-friendly, and visual solutions to elaborate, display, and interpret big data.

Screen shot of PROMIS

4.6 Annex 6 – FACTSHEET: How to provide support to the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD at LAG level via training. (Case study Portugal)

Background

The EU legislative framework for rural development 2014-2020 requires that managing authorities implementing Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) describe in every evaluation plan³¹ a section about how to support the evaluation of LEADER/CLLD at Local Action Group (LAG) level.

Support for evaluation at LAG level involves various types of activities and resources dedicated to enhancing evaluation capacities of LAGs and other stakeholders involved in the evaluation at local level. Support should enable the assessment of effectiveness, efficiency, results and impacts of CLLD strategies, the proper application of the CLLD method, and the added value generated by LEADER/CLLD.

Based on the experience of the NRN in Portugal, this factsheet illustrates how to design, implement, and assess (the effects of) a training as one possible form of support for LAGs to evaluate LEADER/CLLD strategies.

What should be considered when developing support for LEADER/CLLD evaluation?

In line with its legal responsibility³², in May 2015, the Portuguese National Rural Network organized two-days training for the Local Action Groups in Portugal, entitled: “**Building capacity for planning the evaluation of Local Development Strategies**”. The training was organized in collaboration with the managing authorities of three Portuguese RDPs, the paying agency, the department of planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the Gabinete de Planeamento, Políticas e Administração Geral (GPP) , and with the support of the European Commission - DG AGRI (Unit E.4), and Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development. Listed below, a description of its delivery process is illustrated.

Phase 1: Setting up the training objectives and curricula

In order to ground the support on the specific needs and situation of the Portuguese LAGs, three-months before its conduction, the Portuguese NRN started to work jointly with the Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development to analyse and decide about the most important needs and topics to address within a two-days training event. The preparation of the training event was based on desk-based observations (e.g. review of legislative documents), as well as on the direct engagement with different stakeholders (e.g. LAGs, managing authority, Federação Minha terra) through skype and phone call, informal meetings, and email. After several preparatory meetings and analysis, the two organizers agreed to achieve the following objectives with the training:

- Build awareness of LAGs for evaluation as useful instrument to improve CLLD strategy and LAG activities;
- Ensure the understanding of EU requirements for evaluation at LAG level and the European Common Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES) among LAGs;
- Enhance capacities of LAGs to use the common indicators and develop the LAG specific ones, and
- Build the skills of LAGs to plan the monitoring and evaluation arrangements at LAG level for the period 2014-2020.

Given the launching phase of LEADER/CLLD in Portugal in spring 2015, specific skills and capacities were considered necessary to be built for each LAG in order to develop CLLD strategy indicators and draft evaluation activities. Organizers agreed that the support should be targeted to 60-70 beneficiaries: one representative for each Portuguese LAG, RDP implementing authorities (managing authority, evaluation coordination group) and a LAGs-network (Federação Minha terra).

³¹ Annex I, Part 1, point 9(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 808/2014

³² Article 54, point 3(iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

Phase 2: Design and conduct the training by matching the appropriate method with its specific objectives

To accomplish the above specific objectives, the training was organized in form of a workshop, by using different activities and resources, such as: presentations, group work exercises, facilitated interactive discussions, and ice-breakers (e.g. asking participants what they think about the importance of evaluation and reasons to evaluate the CLLD strategy). The training material provided to the participants consisted of Power Point presentations, handouts, and other informative documents (e.g. newsletter, LEADER/CLLD evaluation-related regulations and guidelines), and were translated from English to Portuguese languages.

The presentations were focused on 1.) the general role of evaluation as part of a policy cycle, 2.) the EU concept of monitoring and evaluation for rural development, and 3.) the status of monitoring and evaluation for rural development in Portugal.

The practical exercises helped participants to learn how to use the common indicators in the assessment of the results of specific CLLD strategy and how to develop the LAG specific indicators linked to the concrete pre-defined example of CLLD strategy's intervention logic.

Specific attention was given to the development of monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the CLLD strategy in the form of potential LAG's evaluation plan. Based on the presentation of an evaluation plan from a Portuguese RDP, three interactive sessions were conducted to develop a similar and complementary planning of evaluation activities at LAG level. Participants worked in 7 different groups (10 participants per group with one facilitator) on different tasks, such as: 1.) drafting the evaluation objective and purpose, and the arrangements for the governance and coordination of evaluation at local level; 2.) evaluation topics and activities linked to the CLLD strategy; 3.) communication activities and resource planning. After each session participants discussed group findings in plenary.

Phase 3: Assessing the effects of the training

In order to build a continuous process of improvement and learning, after the delivery of the training, it was important to assess its effectiveness and efficiency (*have the objectives of the training been accomplished? At what cost?*), the quality of its process (*how did it work or not work?*), and its sustainability (*e.g. can the support be used, transferred or reproduced in the long term?*).

The final effects of the training in Portugal were assessed through a participant's satisfaction questionnaire, with closed-ended and open questions about: 1.) the overall organization of the training; 2.) its relevance and suitability; and 3) the final outcomes achieved. Closed-ended questions were answered with Linkert-scale, and allowed the organizers to assess the extent to which overall and specific aspects of the training were successful or not (e.g. training method, quality of the facilitators, organization of the training, content of material provided). Open questions were analysed to gain a deeper view on the quality of the training process, and to allow organizers to take future improvement actions and corrections.

Key lessons for designing a successful evaluation training

1. Assess accurately existing evaluation capacity and needs in order to identify the specific objectives of the training

How to assess existing evaluation capacity?

There are different ways to assess evaluation capacity and needs. Simple assessment can be implemented through desk-based observations or by directly engaging primary stakeholders through phone call, email, informal or formal meetings, and using different data collection instruments, such as *ad hoc* checklist (Volkov & King, 2007), gap analysis³³, semi-structured questionnaire, open interviews, and focus groups. More rigorous instruments (e.g. online surveys covering a larger sample of population) can be also designed by employing validated theoretical models³⁴.

2. Tailor the training curricula to the specific objectives identified in the need assessment

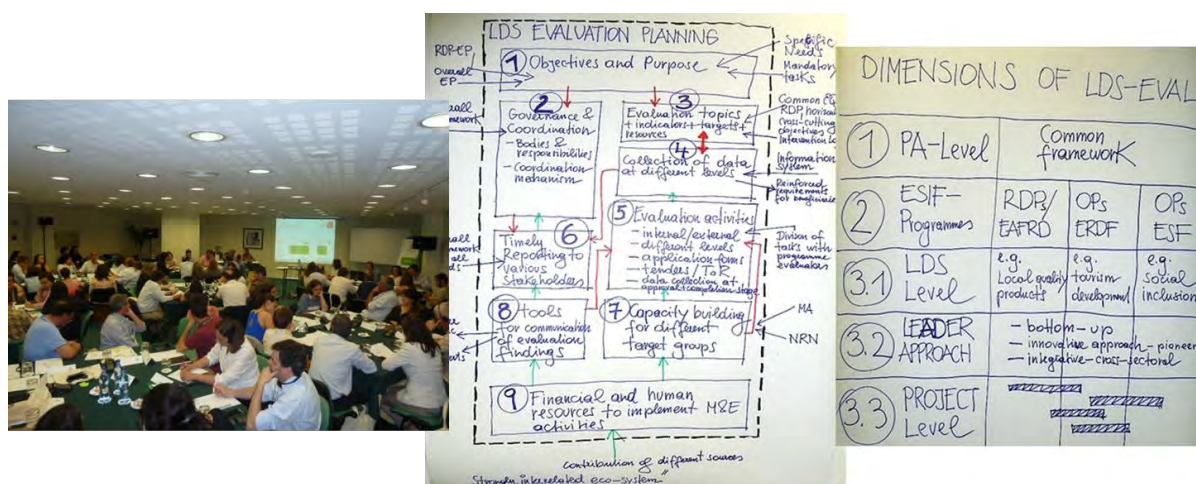
How to address the specific objectives of the training with the curricula?

After having clearly formulated the specific objectives of the support, actors involved in designing the training curricula (e.g. agenda, material, method, schedule) should dedicate appropriate time to select the most important topics and information to address in the training, to create space for the engagement of participants in elaborating, trying, and searching for solutions (e.g. organize individual tasks or collective exercise), as well as to reflect upon the training event itself, and its follow-up activities.

3. Assess the effects of the training by mixing different methods in order to establish a continuous process of learning and capacity building

How to assess the effects of the training?

Several examples of qualitative methods for assessing the effects of a training exist, such as participant's feedback-sheets, collective critical discussion, and peer-assessment among participants. For a longer list of tools to engage beneficiaries into a reflection process after the implementation of the training, see: Gordijn, et al. (2012). Other quantitative methods such as statistical measurement of performance (e.g. calculating the number of beneficiaries able to pass a training tests), and more elaborated models³⁵ for the assessment of effects can be used. In this latter case, it is important to develop standard units and measurable indicators.



³³ For a template of gap analysis, see: <https://archive.ahrq.gov/professionals/systems/hospital/qitoolkit/d5-gapanalysis.pdf>

³⁴ For some examples of assessment of the organizational evaluation capacity, see: Taylor-Ritzler, et al. (2013); and Elliott, et al. (2008).

³⁵ For example, see: Marcano, L., & Ruprah, I. J. (2009). Does Technical Assistance Matter?: An Impact Evaluation Approach to Estimate its Value Added. Inter-American Development Bank.

4.7 Annex 7 – Overview of evaluation / self-assessment methods

Annex 7 is currently under development and will become available as soon as possible.

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