EU Rural Development
The Implementation Structure

DG AGRI, October 2005
Implementation structure

→ The structures needed to deliver, control and monitor EU rural development support effectively on the ground.

Main components:

▪ Partnership
▪ Management, control and information
▪ Monitoring, evaluation and reporting
▪ Technical assistance and networks
Partnership (1)

- EU RD support to be implemented in partnership (close consultation)

- Who are the partners?
  - Commission
  - Member State
  - competent regional, local authorities & other public authorities;
  - economic and social partners;
  - any other appropriate body representing civil society, NGO’s including environmental organisations, and bodies promoting equal opportunities
Partnership (2)

- MS designates the most representative partners and create conditions for a broad and effective involvement of all partners.
- Partnership shall be involved in:-
  - the preparation and monitoring of the National Strategy Plan;
  - the preparation, implementation, monitoring & evaluation of the RD programmes
Management, control and information

- Management and control: 3 bodies
  - Managing Authority
  - Accredited Paying Agency
  - Certifying Body

- Information and publicity
Financial management and control

Based on principles:

*Similar to the Structural Funds:*
- Differentiated appropriations, automatic decommitment (n+2)
- Managing Authority and Monitoring Committee
*Using Guarantee bodies and procedures:*
- A Paying agency and a certifying body
- Annual financial clearance of accounts and conformity clearance decisions
Management and Control Authorities (1)

- **Guiding principle**: clear allocation and separation of functions

- **Managing authority** responsible for:
  - ensuring project selection is in accordance with criteria set out in programme
  - leading monitoring committee and evaluations
  - collecting and submitting monitoring information
  - preparation of annual progress report
Management and Control Authorities (2)

- **Paying agency** responsible for:
  - paying and declaring EU contribution
  - controls (internal and on the spot)
  - annual accounts, pursue and recover sums in case of irregularities and statement of assurance

- **Certifying body** responsible for certifying the completeness and accuracy of the paying agency’s accounts
Delegation of tasks

- The Managing Authority can delegate tasks to other bodies (e.g. project selection), but retains full responsibility for their correct management and implementation.
Information and Publicity

- **General:** Member States required to provide information/publicise their National Strategy Plans, RD programmes and the EU financial contribution.

- **Programme level:** The Managing Authority
  - informs potential beneficiaries of possibilities to get support under the RD programme; the eligibility rules which apply; and the EU contribution;
  - informs general public about the EU role in the programme & its results.
Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

- Programme Monitoring Committee
- Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF)
- Reporting requirements
Monitoring Committee

- Required for each RD programme
- Chaired by the MS or Managing Authority
- Membership → Partnership-based
  Must include:
  - competent regional, local and other public authorities;
  - economic & social partners;
  - other appropriate bodies representing civil society (NGO’s including environmental organisations, equal opportunity groups etc)
- Commission may be represented, but in an advisory role
Role of Monitoring Committee

To ensure effective implementation of the programme:

- Consulted on project selection criteria
- Periodical reviews of progress towards programme targets
- Considers and approves annual implementation reports before sent to COM
- May propose to the Managing Authority changes/reviews of the programme
- Considers and approves proposals to amend the programme which require COM Decision
Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF)

Key changes:

- More strategic monitoring: The new RD regulation foresees strategic monitoring of the Community and national strategies, link to EU priorities.
- Aggregation of outputs, results and impacts at the EU level and help assess progress in achieving Community priorities.
- Need to better define baseline and indicators at the start of the programming period to assess starting situation and form basis for monitoring progress in delivering strategy.
- All requirements brought together in a single common monitoring and evaluation framework (CMEF) to be agreed with MS.
CMEF: Indicators

- Limited number of common indicators agreed at EU level (measure/Axis level)
- Indicators related to baseline situation; financial execution; outputs; results and impacts of programmes
- Limited number of additional programme specific indicators
CMEF: Evaluation

- Focus on ‘on-going evaluation’
- Key components: ex-ante; ongoing (annual progress report); mid-term and ex-post evaluations
- Use of independent evaluators
- Role of ex-ante:
  - to help in identifying needs and preparing/verifying SWOT analysis
  - to verify draft programme (goals, results expected, quantified targets, quality of implementation structures, allocation of budgetary resources....)
  → an essential component of the draft programme to be submitted to COM for approval
CMEF: Assistance to MS

- Detailed requirements will be specified in the implementing rules, supplemented by a guidance document to be agreed with MS.
- This document will contain clear guidance to MS on definition of indicators, target setting, organisation of evaluations, reporting etc.
- Electronic system (CAP IDIM 2) will be used as a basis for management and reporting on indicators to the COM.
- Increased scope to use technical assistance funds to support monitoring and evaluation activities.
Reporting Requirements

Based on common monitoring and evaluation framework:

- Annual progress reports at programme level
- Ongoing evaluation:
  - ex-ante (programme)
  - ongoing (annual progress report)
  - mid-term (2010)
  - ex-post (2014)
Overview

STRATEGY

• Community Strategic Guidelines
• National Strategy Plan
• Rural Development Programme

REPORTING

• Commission summary report
• National summary report
• Annual progress report

Quantified objectives/targets
Baseline indicators

In/output indicators
Result indicators
Impact indicators

CMEF

Implementation structure
Technical Assistance and Networks

To support the implementation of MS strategies and programmes:

- Technical assistance
- Networks
Technical Assistance

- At programme level, for preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and control activities (up to 4% of programme funding)
Networks

- **A national rural network** supporting and bringing together the organisations and administrations active in rural development (financed from the technical assistance at programme level)

  **Roles include:** identifying and sharing good practice; organising exchanges of experience and know-how; preparation of training programmes for Leader groups and assisting them with co-operation activities

- **A European Network for Rural Development** to interface with the national networks and administrations (financed from the technical assistance at Commission initiative, 0.25% of RD funding)

  **Roles include:** collecting, analysing and diffusing information on RD measures, on good practice, on developments in rural areas, organising seminars, facilitating expert networks & exchange of expertise, supporting national networks
Making implementation work: Some issues to consider (1)

- It’s not just more Sapard! Don’t under estimate the scale of change (no. of measures, level of financial support, potential no. of beneficiaries etc)
- Role of central versus regional bodies in implementation systems
- Need for clearly defined roles and close co-ordination between the various implementing bodies
- Importance of a wide and active partnership at all stages of the programming process
Making implementation work: Some issues to consider (2)

- Importance of clear information to potential beneficiaries and user-friendly and transparent systems (application forms; project examination and selection procedures etc)

- Need for appropriate (national) support structures to be in place to ensure applicants can access support: advisory services, credit providers....

- Need to have monitoring and evaluation systems in place from outset

- Importance of early launching of procedures to set up national RD Network to get maximum benefit from networking (EU & national)