

Better LEADER practices for Local Development Strategies across the EU

This infosheet is part of a series of relevant practice examples that Managing Authorities and Local Action Groups have used while implementing the LEADER approach in the 2007-2013 period. The series aims to extend the reach of rural development policy by highlighting what works well in the design and delivery phase of Local Development Strategies (LDS).

Integrating LDS into wider territorial planning

N.10



Country, Region: Spain, Andalusia

Organisations: Managing Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment

AT A GLANCE



Objectives

The Andalusian Managing Authority put in place a practice of wider territorial planning, in order to ensure policy coherence and to improve the mechanism of designing and monitoring comprehensive multi-sectoral Local Development Strategies (LDS) implemented through different funds.



Key elements of the approach

Besides benefiting from the EAFRD, Local Action Groups (LAGs) may also benefit from funding from other European, national, regional or local level initiatives. Under the Andalusian approach, the LDS plays an integral part in facilitating wider territorial planning, while meeting the need to incorporate harmonised as well as territory-specific monitoring indicators in the planning process.



Lessons learnt

The planning mechanism for the 2007-2013 period includes compulsory and voluntary indicators for LDS monitoring and evaluation and it has integrated different programmes and funds. There are a number of similarities with the indications contained in the draft LEADER regulation of the Common Strategic Framework for the 2014-2020 period.



Objectives and background

Many rural development groups in Andalusia - including LAGs – not only have access to EAFRD support (Axis 4 LEADER), they also benefit from other EU funds and participate in other European programmes (Ruraland, Integrarbim, Fishery Local Action Groups etc.) and partake in national, regional or local level initiatives.

The objective is to deliver wider territorial planning in which the LDS plays an integral part and to incorporate harmonised as well as territory-specific monitoring indicators in the planning process.



Key elements of the approach

The **Management Center**, which is the division responsible for the coordination and supervision of the LEADER method in Andalusia, requested a **comprehensive multi-sector analysis** (MSA) of each LEADER territory using a common methodology from the University of Cordoba. The analysis covers various aspects, such as territory and environment, population and society, infrastructure and transport, economy, administrative organisation and setting as well as a mandatory priority, horizontal gender and youth issues. The multi-sector analysis is a basis for a wider umbrella strategy for the area and it identifies the resources (financial, administrative, etc.) that will contribute to the achievement of the territory's objectives. This wider strategy makes it possible to fully reflect the needs of the area, instead of having separate parallel strategies implemented by partnerships which are not integrated.

Based on the contents of this analysis, the Management Center elaborated a **Global Action Plan** (GAP) which summed up all

the possible interventions that could be subsidised through LEADER and prepared a **technical manual** that described all existing possibilities in terms of operations, beneficiaries, eligible costs and aid rates for each intervention group.

Based on the MSA and the GAP, the LAGs prepared their **Local Development Strategies (LDS)**.

There were two mechanisms for LDS monitoring and evaluation:

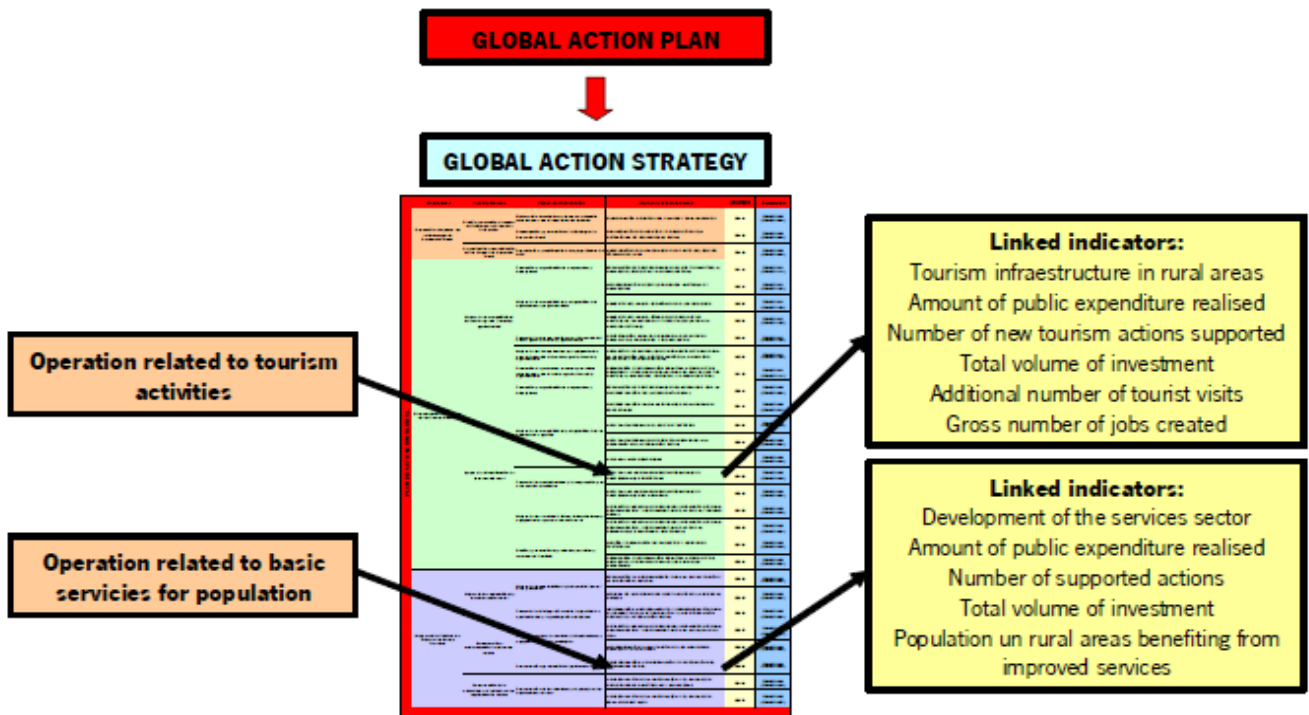
- compulsory indicators; and
- voluntary indicators.

The compulsory mechanism was defined by the Management Center and consisted of disaggregation and classification of applicable performance and outcome indicators (established by the European Commission in the Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF) 2007-2013) by different intervention groups noted in the GAP.

This harmonisation facilitates comparison between different programmes and funds.

The following example provides further illustration of this point:

In addition to the compulsory mechanism, LAGs were requested to design their own voluntary LDS monitoring and evaluation



mechanisms, in accordance with the uniqueness of each territory. These customised mechanisms had to be presented in the LDS.

Communication aspects

The Management Center designed the technical manual for LDS planning, which describes all possibilities regarding the existing aid rates, types of eligible operations and costs and beneficiaries. It

proved to be of great help in strategy design and implementation, together with the methodology and insight provided by Cordoba University and which was provided to the LAGs.



Lessons learnt

Benefits

This territorial planning mechanism for the 2007-2013 period has a number of similarities with the draft proposal made by the European Commission in October 2011 about the funding of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) in urban, rural and fisheries areas post-2013.

The main advantages of the approach are:

- Its ability to manage multi-fund strategies and thus benefit from the implementation of a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach capable of making a real impact on local rural development.
- The implementation of a common strategic planning system for all Andalusian LAGs facilitates joint coordination, monitoring and evaluation, and it aids the continuous improvement of strategies.
- The procedure used for the design of compulsory and voluntary LDS monitoring and evaluating mechanisms allows comparison between different programmes. It could be used to compare LDS implementation in different Member States.

Barriers

The planning and monitoring approaches developed for Andalusia have not created incremental burdens.

Lessons learnt

A common European strategic planning system would facilitate synergies, knowledge sharing and the development of shared mechanisms for coordination, control and monitoring of the LEADER method.

Experience of the current European monitoring mechanisms highlights a number of issues that should be improved in the 2014-2020 period:

- Some indicators included in the Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 2007-2013 are difficult to measure at LAG level;
- Specific gender indicators are absent;
- There is a lack of tools to assess LEADER features.

The information included in this Infosheet is primarily coming from case studies carried out within the ENRD Focus Group 4 on Better Local Development Strategies. It has been compiled by the Contact Point on the basis of the information collected in the EU Member States and regions and takes into account views expressed by the Focus Group. This notwithstanding, the content does not necessarily reflect the official position of the EU institutions and national authorities.