



European Network for
Rural Development



Achieving Results the CLLD Way: Putting the Method to Work

7-8 December 2016, Sweden

Factsheet

Local Partnerships and Governance

The 'Achieving results the CLLD way' seminar focused on three main themes related to the implementation of the [LEADER / CLLD](#) method. Each of these themes covered three sub themes, specific aspects of the way the method is put into practice. Workshop discussions informed by expert CLLD practitioner inputs developed and prioritised practical ideas for implementation improvements which would lead to achieving better results.

Under the Local Partnership and Governance theme the three sub themes discussed were:

- Active local partnership development and inclusion;
- Governance; and
- Bottom up participation.

Exemplar Practices

Jenny Nylund: LAG Gästrikebygden LAG (SE) - Active local partnership development and inclusion



Jenny highlighted the need to think carefully about how Local Action Groups (LAGs) are designed in order to strengthen the partnership and deliver the Strategy and Action Plan. She stressed that the process of choosing the LAG members should be transparent, open and inclusive. LAG members must have broad knowledge and the capacity to complement each other, as well as reflect all the stakeholders and citizens of their area. Training helps to ensure that the LAG has the capacity and knowledge to implement all parts of the Strategy/Action Plan according to plan. Don't be afraid to put pressure on the LAG – it is not a social club - it has great responsibilities in allocating public tax money. Do not underestimate the importance of a well-functioning LAG! They can do miracles for the delivery of the Strategy!

Mireille Groot Koerkamp: LAG Salland (NL) – Governance and Theory U

For their new Local Development Strategy Salland LAG thought very hard about governance and ‘how can you make sure everyone is involved?’. They did not just want the ‘LEADER in crowd’ – they wanted to involve those who had never even heard of LEADER. Their chosen method, ‘[Theory U](#)’ recognises that to avoid past you must first let go of your existing ideas and opinions and listen, listen and listen again.

The LAG interviewed 50 people who knew their area, but not LEADER (a policeman, a hairdresser, a priest, young people etc.), they organised big events and everyone was invited. They held workshops where they did not just work with their heads (talking), but also with their hearts and hands. These workshops created a common sense about: What is happening here? What is needed here?

Now, at the “bottom of the U” everyone had to ask themselves: What does this situation ask from me, personally? How can I contribute? and that is when the ideas started to come and develop into prototypes.

More people wanted to meet, network meetings ‘Salland Cafés’ were organised to share ideas, inspiration, good practices, help each other and connect to one another. The results of this continuing U process were:

- A Local Development Strategy written with input and support of hundreds of people
- New ideas and projects were implemented
- So far 12 Salland Cafés have been organised
- The network is growing, 600 people are involved. After every Salland Café they have an extra 20 people.

Once you start the U, you can never stop!

Helle Breindahl Djursland LAG (DK) - Bottom up participation

Djursland LAG initiated this project in response to the decline in local grocery-stores, these stores were a key part of rural infrastructure. The LAG decided to turn the problem upside down, instead of accepting that the store closing was inevitable, they operated on the assumption that if the store is inviting and attractive enough, the customers will shop there. The LAG organised and supported six customer involvement workshops in the six stores participating in the project. This involved working actively with the community and the customers to decide what they wanted from their local grocery store giving them direct involvement and input into what they wanted the stores to be and to mean in their local village. As a result the stores adapted, more local people got involved and the stores sustainability and importance improved.

The project shows that working bottom up, not only creates great results in feelings of ownership etc. but also that it can have a direct financial impact, that otherwise would not have happened.

What did participants think would help improve implementation and achievement?



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Active local partnership development and inclusion:

- Should be open and inclusive to attract people to join.
- Create a communication plan', adapt communication style, language and media used to different target groups – 'brand' LEADER as something positive.
- Set up community workshops where people can apply to be LAG members.
- Encourage businesses to become involved by communicating best practices.
- Find innovative ways to speed up LAG processes to facilitate business involvement.

Governance:

- Great projects need good governance, input and communication at all levels of decision making.
- All levels of stakeholders should learn from each other and through trust create a cycle of information.
- Find a way to match the bottom up with top down and see if there are more democratic ways of doing things.
- LAGs must be open too, consider electing the LAG Chair and Manager and consider open membership vs closed.
- Invite government officials to work at local level and vice versa for a short time (20 days) to build a shared understanding and way of doing things.

Bottom up participation:

- Create a 'climate change' where every voice matters, there is trust, clear and transparent procedures and people are always listening.
- Local strategies may need frequent revision, the group will need to develop the capacity to change to meet emerging local needs.
- Increase the information flow, a communication strategy created by local people for local people and continuously reviewed and adjusted it to keep it 'alive'.

- An 'open-office' two hours a week for local community 'drop in' to speak to the LAG?
- Provide training on project management skills for potential applicants.
- Accept the (potentially) high cost of strengthening bottom up involvement but show its value and prove/promote that bottom up works.

What did participants prioritise overall?

Each of the three workshop groups brought forward a single recommendation for improvements which would do most to improve implementation and results under this theme:

'Moving the CLLD method from a hierarchy to cooperation at all levels'

- *What will this do?* - Greater common understanding to improve the method, motivation and ownership and deliver better results.
- *What needs to happen?*-Change the culture, move from control by sanction to support and training, LAGs become empowered through their greater accountability.
- *Who should do it?* – All the stakeholders but may need brokers to integrate.
- *Who takes responsibility?* –NRNs and EU networks, LEADER/CLLD Networks, ELARD, LAGs.
- *Resources needed?* – Brokers and integrators, training and capacity building, networking.

'Producing a CLLD communication plan'

- *What will this do?* - Strengthen understanding at all levels and demonstrate added value of using the CLLD method e.g. through internships
- *What needs to happen?*-All LAGs and MAs should prepare or revise their plan, ENRD can guide, best practice etc
- *Who should do it?* – Every LAG and MA with support from NRNs and MA, including internships.
- *Who takes responsibility?* – Every LAG and MA for their plan with NRN / MA support and ENRD inspiration.
- *Resources needed?* – Time, training, toolkit/how to guide and budget.

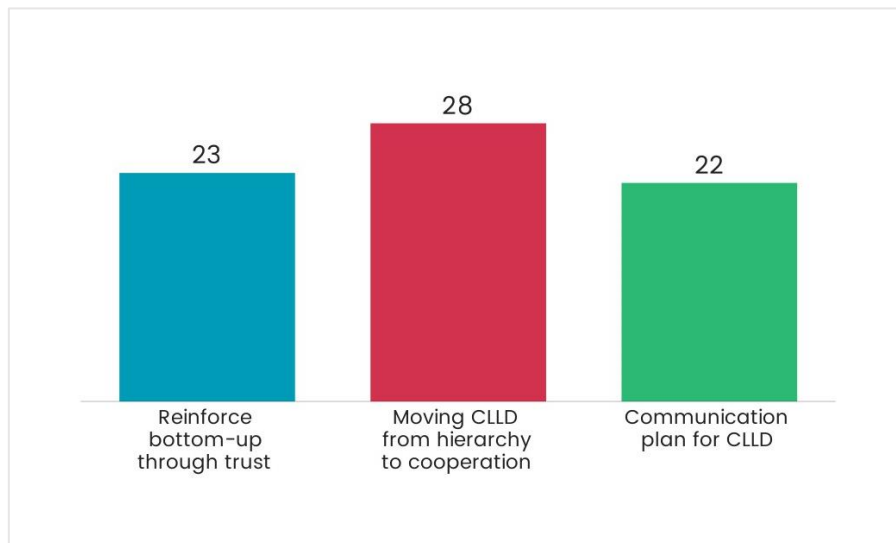
'Reinforcing bottom up by putting trust in local governance'

- *What will this do?* – Strengthen bottom up contribution through greater trust.
- *What needs to happen?*- Identify and implement simple steps to increase trust e.g. regular, participative MA and (F)LAG meetings, with a neutral chair.
- *Who should do it?* – Both MA and LAGs need to commit.
- *Who takes responsibility?* – All levels from EU to local communities.
- *Resources needed?* – Networks, finance and promotion (incentives).

What was top of the list?

Seminar participants were asked to identify the single most important contribution under each theme.

A common strand running throughout the three elements was the importance of improving communication and shared understanding and the contribution this could make to strengthening participation and trust within the chain, in the methods, the administration and the LAGs.



*Participants' votes on main priorities.

“Engaging with a really wide range of people seems to be working – we have 600 members and growing!”

Mireille Groot Koerkamp
LAG De Kracht