

ENRD Workshop on ‘The role of LEADER/ CLLD and networking in supporting social inclusion in rural areas’

Introduction of participants

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Who is in the room?

- Local Action Groups (LAGs)
- EAFRD Managing Authorities
- ESF Managing Authorities
- National Rural Networks/ Support Units
- Paying Agency (?)/ Advisory services
- Stakeholder organisations
- European Commission
- Other EU institutions
- ENRD CP, Evaluation HD, EIP-SP
- **Others?**



Supporting social inclusion through integrated territorial approaches/ LEADER-CLLD

What can National Rural Networks do to support social inclusion?

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Policy networks play an increasingly important role in rural areas. They can help to identify and address issues of interest and facilitate exchanges of activities, networks can help to improve the quality of their contribution to the improvement of public services.

INTRODUCTION

During the 2014-2020 programming period, rural networks have been strengthened at national level. One of the common challenges in the implementation of rural development policy is to increase the involvement of rural stakeholders in the implementation of rural development policy. This involves working with those stakeholder groups (such as LEADER Local Action Groups, NGOs, etc.) which are most active in rural areas. However, a number of challenges exist. For instance, social inequalities are increasing in rural areas. The Swedish LAGs are also an important part of the rural development policy. Directly engaged marginalised groups can improve their situation. Building partnerships and addressing social inequalities is a key element of the integrated approach.

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The majority of Roma people in EU are in unemployment, lack of access to infrastructure, interlinked with stereotypes and social prejudice.

INTRODUCTION

Even though it is not possible to give accurate figures, there are around ten million Roma in Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia). This makes Roma a minority in Europe. A high number of Roma live in rural areas. Roma communities are often represented in the local level and as a time, public authorities encourage their involvement to see them as public authorities. Local action groups can help to improve their situation. Building partnerships and addressing social inequalities is a key element of the integrated approach.

The challenges of social inclusion in rural areas

The biggest risk is that economic migrants can provoke a backlash from the local population. Economic migrants can be a source of tension in rural areas. The first challenge is to build trust. This is essential for the success of any project. A second challenge is to build partnerships and addressing social inequalities. Finally, developing a sustainable approach is essential for the success of any project.

Support through the Rural Development Programme

One of the six priorities of the Rural Development Programme is to support social inclusion. This is implemented through a series of measures including the provision of training, support for business development, services and village renewal, cooperation and advice.

Education

- 50% of Roma children attend school nursery
- Only 15% of Roma adults complete upper-secondary general or vocational education

Early school leaving

- Early school leaving was 12.4% in rural areas as opposed to 10% in cities in 2014
- In 2014, youth unemployment (15-24 years) was 25% in rural areas (PR) as opposed to 21% in predominantly urban areas.

43% of Roma had secondary qualifications in 2014

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What can LEADER/CLLD and other bottom-up initiatives do?

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Bottom-up territorial approaches such as LEADER and other forms of Community Led Local Development (CLLD) can play an important role in dealing with problems of poverty and social inclusion in rural areas. In particular, LEADER can help to identify specific problems at the local level, address these through tailor-made measures, and link together the various actors required to provide more effective solutions.

INTRODUCTION

Social inclusion was often not an inherent objective of LEADER strategies and/or projects, although they achieved social inclusion effects. This stems from the fact that the original focus of LEADER was territorial rather than human development, with the LEADER strategy focusing on the development of deprived areas rather than the inclusion of deprived people. LAGs often concentrated on working with the most active people in their areas to create jobs and improve the overall quality of life rather than trying to help the most marginalised groups. The latter was a positive, albeit usually not principal, consequence of LEADER.

In the 2014-2020 policy framework, a new approach to local development has been introduced through CLLD, which opens up new, direct opportunities to deal with social inclusion. In particular, the European Social Fund will now be supporting CLLD in certain Member States.

To seize these opportunities a number of considerations need to be taken into account:

- Excluded groups need to be represented on the partnerships and be fully involved in developing the strategy.
- Project selection criteria and procedures need to be developed to ensure disadvantaged groups have fair access.
- There must be targeted investment in capacity building and animation.
- The LAG should use its own activities to create linkages with other support agencies and help build integrated support itineraries.
- LAG goals and targets need to be set in a way that reflect the real needs and capacities of vulnerable groups.

The social inclusion challenges of rural areas

Poverty, exclusion, poor education, weak labour markets, remoteness and low population density are the main causes of poverty and social exclusion in rural areas. The interaction of these determinants can produce a vicious circle in which poverty and social exclusion become entrenched.

Social indicators in the EU

Poor education Only 18.4% of the population had tertiary education qualifications in rural areas, compared to 33.2% in cities and 23.2% in towns and suburbs.	Weak labour market The unemployment rate in thinly-populated areas (EU-27) over the period 2008 to 2012 increased from 7% to almost 11%.
Demographic change 61 million people aged 15-64 years lived in predominantly rural areas, down from 68 million in 2008. People over 65 increased by 28% since 2005. The arrival of economic migrants and asylum seekers.	Remoteness and low density 12.2% of the total population faced high difficulty in accessing public transport in rural areas, as opposed to 5.7% in towns and suburbs and 2.3% in cities. Low population density makes services more expensive.

Source: Eurostat



LEADER/ CLLD: Discussion around the tables...

- Involving excluding groups in strategy planning & implementation
- Selection criteria (LAG/ project)
- Capacity-building/ animation (project promoters/ LAGs)
- Local coaches and coordinators
- Studies & needs analysis
- Coordination between LAGs & stakeholder organisations, NGOs, networks, schools, etc.
- Coordination of Funds (ESF, EAFRD)
- Setting targets/ measuring success
- Other?