



European Commission

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

FOURTH ANNUAL WORK PLAN

2011-2012

July 2011

Structure and scope of the activities

ENRD - To engage stakeholders in an efficient and effective delivery of EU rural development policy

As for previous years, the 4th Year would be organised around three main poles of activities, ensuring capitalisation of past activities while addressing evolving needs in a new policy context.

I- KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT – To provide deeper insights into RD policy

Working groups

- on thematic issues
- on Leader implementation

RDPs insights

- Analysis of Monitoring Indicators and "snapshots" of RDPs progress

Relevant experiences

- Development of the database of examples of EAFRD projects

The CAP after 2013

- Getting prepared for the new generation of RDPs

II- KNOWLEDGE SHARING – To ensure access to and dissemination of useful information

Website

- Development of the website (both Intranet, public website, more languages, and possibly using social media)

Publications

- ENRD publications (Rural review, e-newsletter, thematic booklets...)

Events

- Seminars and workshops

Information/promotion

- Infoline, participation in fairs, preparation of videos,...

III- EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION – To facilitate exchange and cooperation between rural networks and actors at EU level

Overall coordination

- Coordination of the ENRD activities

NRNs' interacting

- NRN profiles in EU-27, quarterly NRN meetings
- NRN joint activities, including thematic initiatives
- Joint ENRD / NRN approaches, including partnerships for NRN events and joint approach to assessment of networking

LAGs cooperation

- Support to cooperation between LAGs

Linking rural networks

- Coordination with the European Evaluation Network, facilitating links between rural networks, EU organisations, research, ...

Fourth Annual Work Plan of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)

[July 2011 - July 2012]

The European Network for Rural Development aims at engaging stakeholders in an effective and efficient delivery of RD policy.

In the period from July 2011-July 2012, the implementation of Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) will be at full speed. More results of projects and more lessons learnt will become available. This period will also be the time of submission of proposals for the future CAP and for discussions among EU institutions on these proposals. The ENRD will thus have to give further impetus in the collection of experiences, highlighting lessons learnt, and in their dissemination in a way to inform both the current policy implementation and the preparation of the future legislation.

The ENRD fourth year will thus focus on the **following objectives**:

- **KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT : providing deeper insights in RD policy / identifying what works well and less well**
 - ⇒ Year 4 specific: to consolidate the knowledge developed so far to help improve the implementation of RDP in this period, and to inform future developments of the policy;
- **KNOWLEDGE SHARING : ensuring access to and dissemination of useful information**
 - ⇒ Year 4 specific: To further adapt and develop communication tools to make most efficient sharing of knowledge;
- **EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION : facilitating exchanges and cooperation between rural networks and actors at EU level**
 - ⇒ Year 4 specific: To increase synergies with National Rural Networks while extending links outside the formal ENRD groups.

The activities described are supported by **the Contact Point** which provides technical assistance to the European Commission (Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development).

I- KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT: providing deeper insights in RD policy / identifying what works well and less well

Specific objectives and priorities 2011-2012:

- ⇒ Consolidating and building on thematic work done so far, targeted dissemination of outcomes
- ⇒ Further covering of the aspects of competitiveness, sustainability and territorial challenges for RD policy using more flexible and participative ways of working with stakeholders
- ⇒ Exploiting results for maximum delivery of current RDPs
- ⇒ Preparing the ground for the new generation of RDPs.

Activities:

1. Working groups

Context: working groups gathering various experts from different backgrounds and countries are powerful to help highlight common challenges, identify shared difficulties, and find "EU level" solutions. The ENRD can set up "Thematic Working Groups", which are formal subgroups of its coordination committee, or use a more flexible format like "Focus groups". So far 4 TWGs on horizontal thematic issues and 4 Focus groups specialised on Leader issues had been set up. For Year 4 it is proposed to work mainly through Focus Groups, both on horizontal issues and specifically on Leader.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

Dissemination of the work of TWG4 on " <i>Delivery mechanisms of EU rural development policy</i> ".	TWG 4 should finish its work by July 2011. In the Autumn 2011, the results of its work should be broadly disseminated. Among other activities, a seminar should be organised in December 2011, to see how these results can be used for the current RDPs and for the future (see part III).
Ongoing work of a Leader Focus Group on " <i>Better local development strategies</i> "	This group was launched in May 2011 by the Leader subcommittee. Its work plan should be ready at the beginning of Year 4 (July 2011). It will report regularly to the Leader subcommittee.
NEW Launch of new Focus Group(s)	New group(s) could be launched in consultation with the Coordination committee, to go deeper into topics with a potential for improvement of policy delivery. Possible topics: - <i>Innovation in agriculture / knowledge transfer;</i> - <i>Improving the delivery of environmental services.</i>

2. RDPs insights.

Context: In order to better support the implementation of the RDPs, the ENRD has a role to play in providing information on them, and in supporting their monitoring. In the first years, information was made available on the RDPs themselves: summaries of what they contain, specific analysis on how they address climate change and mountain farming, changes related to the CAP Health Check etc. From Year 4, the priority will be to provide information on RDP actual implementation, using monitoring indicators and financial data.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

Dissemination of monitoring fiches per RDP and per (group of) measures

This will consist in the dissemination of synthetic fiches with charts based on analytical work of the databases of monitoring indicators and financial data. Fiches will be available by RDP and by measure or by group of measures.

The fiches shall be updated in the second half of Year 4, using the 2010 RDP progress reports.

Possible review/update of RDPs summary fiches

The RDP fiches should be kept up-to-date, taking into account the different modifications.

3. Identification of relevant experiences / interesting cases studies and projects

Context: This activity is one of the core tasks of the ENRD: to identify examples of delivery mechanisms, of projects, of practices developed under the RD policy which can illustrate interesting lessons to be learned by administrators or by project holders, or which can contribute to a better understanding of the Rural Development policy for the broader public. When the RDPs were just in their starting years, the collection of such examples remained limited. Year 4 should see an important increase in the collection of examples of projects and in their dissemination.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

<p>Continued collection of projects implemented under the rural development policy for the period 2007-2013, to develop the database</p>	<p>The collection should mainly continue through the NRNs but could be extended to LAGs, or other appropriate sources. Some calls per topic could be made, and a monitoring per country will be ensured in order to achieve a balanced development of the database.</p> <p>NEW More audio-visual material could be used to illustrate the projects in the database.</p>
<p>Brochure of examples of EAFRD projects (see also Part III)</p>	<p>The series of brochures showing examples of projects under certain topics or issues, as initiated in Year 3, will continue to be published regularly (4 editions envisaged – topics to be confirmed).</p>

4. The CAP after 2013

Context: From the Autumn 2011, the Commission legislative proposals for the CAP after 2013 will be discussed by the EU institutions. Implementing and delegated Acts will have

to be prepared on this basis. Lessons learnt from the current policy framework should be consolidated and disseminated to support this policy development process. They should also be taken into account for the preparation of the next generation of RDPs.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

<p>NEW Workshops in 2012 for future RDPs (tbc)</p>	<p>These would be organised to support the preparation of the next generation of RDPs</p>
<p>Other information and communications support to the policy development process (tbc)</p>	<p>These may include preparation of information and targeted communications products on preparation of networking, new delivery systems, new monitoring and evaluation system, and others.</p>

II- KNOWLEDGE SHARING - ensuring access to and dissemination of useful information

Specific objectives and priorities 2011-2012:

- ⇒ To strengthen links with current ENRD stakeholders, notably by enhancing online collaborative community tools.
- ⇒ To reach a broader range of stakeholders at various levels, notably by offering a wider language coverage whenever possible.
- ⇒ To give a focus on practical achievements at local levels and to use more accessible and audiovisual communication products.
- ⇒ To gauge the impact of products and tools amongst the target audience, and to pilot new products or tools, such as the use of social media.

Activities:

1. Website of the ENRD (<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>)

Context: The website is the core tool of the ENRD. It offers information accessible to all on rural development policy, on the national rural networks' activities, on the ENRD thematic work etc... It also offers different databases (notably to support Leader cooperation projects), and collaborative parts for the use of specific groups (TWGs, NRNs...).

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

Public website	<p>NEW New developments envisaged (to be confirmed/adjusted in view notably of the results of surveys):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expansion of languages - more links towards useful sources of information (research projects, NGO initiatives etc., local projects and "stories"); - development of audiovisual supports (for examples of projects, reports of events etc.); - improvements of access to information and development of the dynamic functionalities (maps, gateways, search tools...); - possibly, use of social media. - constant improvement of existing tools and products, making them more user-friendly
MyENRD (extranet)	<p>This extranet facility should be used in a more frequent way. Answers to surveys will be taken into account to improve and facilitate its functioning.</p> <p>NEW A function of "instant messaging" will be investigated.</p>

2. Publications

Context: The ENRD disseminates electronic newsletters and printed rural reviews with a thematic focus. Ad-hoc publications are also being produced to address particular information needs. In May 2011, a survey was launched to get more feed-back from readers and help adapt the format and target group of different publication series.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

E-Newsletters	Possibly to be adapted depending on survey results. A new ENRD Magazine could be considered as means of promoting greater linkages between rural networks.
Rural Reviews	Possibly to be adapted depending on survey results. Two topics are already envisaged in the current format: - Forestry (2011 is the Year of Forestry); - rural entrepreneurship;
Brochure of examples of EAFRD projects	(see also Part I) The series of brochures showing examples of projects under certain topics or issues, as initiated in Year 3, will continue to be published regularly (4 editions envisaged – topics to be confirmed).
Ad-hoc publications	Depending on needs, ad-hoc publication, information sheets, booklets could be produced.

3. Events

Context: The ENRD offers places and occasions for direct exchanges between stakeholders at EU level. ENRD events are focused on key topics, and bring together relevant experts and rural actors.

Proposed plan 2011-2012: (see Indicative planning of meetings and events in Annex)

NEW 9 December 2011: Seminar on "current and future delivery mechanisms of EU rural policy"	On the basis of the results of the TWG 4 (see Point I above), this seminar will offer opportunities for discussion on rural policy delivery mechanisms, at a time when the draft legislative proposals for the rural development policy post-2013 will have been published.
NEW February 2012: workshop for LAGs	Following the successful workshop for new LAGs organised in January 2011, another event for LAGs is foreseen for the beginning of 2012 (specific topic and targeted LAGs to be agreed).
NEW April 2012: Seminar on "rural-urban linkages"	This seminar on "Rural-urban linkages" would review successful experiences in the development of links between cities and their surrounding rural areas. This would include the issue of local food supply chains.
NEW June 2012: seminar/workshop – topic to be confirmed	Provision for an additional seminar of the ENRD should be made for June 2012. This seminar should help value thematic work undertaken through the ENRD (e.g. Focus Groups results) while supporting the preparation of the future generation of RDPs.

4. Information and promotion

Context: DG AGRI, and the Contact Point, have to respond to direct information needs on the ENRD and on the RD policy in general. Several services are provided by the Contact Point to facilitate this information flow beyond the website, and contributions to various events are ensured.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

Info-line / answers to questions from stakeholders	The multilingual team of the Contact Point will answer to questions at: +32.2.235.20.20. or at info@enrd.eu , while securing the Commission services contributions when needed.
Reception of visitors	Individual visitors, or small groups, can be received in the offices of the CP. Informative material are provided.
Participation of the Contact Point in fairs and events	As much as possible, this should be done on the occasion of major fairs, or jointly with the NRNs, and/or the organisations members of the Coordination committee.
Contribution to seminars / conferences	When needed, the Contact point of the ENRD can offer support in providing information on Rural Development policy and networking in seminars or conferences.

III- EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION - facilitating exchanges and cooperation between rural networks and actors at EU level

Specific objectives and priorities 2011-2012:

- ⇒ To help integrate an EU dimension in exchanges and cooperation between rural actors.
- ⇒ To support NRNs in giving real impetus to rural networking, and to help develop synergies between them through structured exchanges, including on thematic basis.
- ⇒ To help boost transnational cooperation of Leader groups.
- ⇒ To involve stakeholders outside the formal ENRD groups in exchanges and cooperation at EU level.

Activities:

1. Overall coordination

Context: The Coordination committee and the Leader subcommittee, which include representatives of the National Rural Networks, of the National Authorities and of European organisations active in the field of rural development, play a key role in the overall coordination of the ENRD. They also constitute key platforms for exchanges at EU level on common rural challenges, and can play a significant role in relaying debates.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

Meetings of the Coordination committee	(twice: December 2010 / June 2011) – Brussels.
Meetings of the Leader subcommittee	(twice: November 2010/May 2011) – Brussels.

2. National Rural Networks (NRN) interacting

Context: The National Rural Networks develop their own annual Action Plan, based on their own priorities. The ENRD has a key role to play in facilitating exchanges between them, and in promoting synergies and joint work in a way to support an effective and efficient delivery of European RD policy.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

Updating of NRN profiles online	Beyond the links to each NRN website, updated information on each NRN structure, activities, events etc. will continue to be updated on the ENRD public website.
NRNs joint activities	<p>Regular meetings: NRNs will continue to meet live and/or virtual on a quarterly basis to exchange their experiences and to develop joint activities.</p> <p>NRNs thematic/ geographical initiatives: NRNs should be encouraged to pursue and develop their thematic initiatives, working jointly in small groups on common issues. In Year 4:</p>

	<p>- the <i>'Rural Entrepreneurship'</i> initiative should continue, with subgroups such as on <i>local food, social aspects, local financial engineering</i>. Links with past activities could be further elaborated (e.g. on Forestry). The results will be disseminated through a specific Rural Entrepreneurship Gateway.</p> <p>- exchanges on <i>'RDP communication strategies and products'</i> will be supported.</p>
Joint ENRD / NRN approaches	<p>Partnership for NRN events: The ENRD will help provide an EU dimension to some NRN events or events relevant for NRNs. Some of these events are already identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribution to a Joint seminar of the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Rural Development Programmes, Helsinki – Finland; - Contribution to a Leader event in Poland (Polish Presidency); - Contribution to the event "Communicating rural development to citizens" with the Italian NRN (see Annex I). <p>Joint approach to assessment of networking activities should continue to be developed jointly with NRNs, using a special NRN Self-Assessment Toolkit, in collaboration with the European Evaluation Network. In this context, contribution to the event in Finland (provisionally May 2012) on "Added value of networking in rural development policy" will be envisaged.</p>

3. Support to Transnational Cooperation between LAGs

Context: The ENRD has to bring specific support to the transnational cooperation projects between Local Action Groups. This support should be enhanced in Year 4, at a time when LAGs are more advanced in their strategy and ready to cooperate.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

Website support	<p>A Leader gateway should help guide LAGs to the relevant support information, including the upgraded LAG and Cooperation offer database, map of LAGs .</p> <p>Exchanges between LAGs will be promoted (possibly through various communications' channels)</p>
Contribution to cooperation events	<p>As far as possible, the ENRD should facilitate and contribute to cooperation events (notably those organised by NRNs), by providing information on the spot, advertising the events in newsletters, organising a meeting on the same occasion to optimise participation, etc.</p>
Promotion of cooperation projects	<p>Information on cooperation projects for the period (2007-2013) should be widely disseminated, notably through RDP projects database and events etc.</p>

4. Linking rural networks

Context: The ENRD should facilitate contacts between the stakeholders of the RD policy beyond the formal ENRD groups, including administrations, advisory services, the European Evaluation network. It should also facilitate links with relevant research work.

Proposed plan 2011-2012:

Mapping of EU organisations	<p>Enhanced links with EU organisations should be built, including the provision of information on their activities and their involvement in events.</p>
------------------------------------	--

Enhanced links with research	Structured and targeted information on relevant research projects should be made available to stakeholders. Involvement of researchers in ENRD thematic activities should be encouraged.
-------------------------------------	--

Annex I

ENRD planning of main meetings mid2010 – mid2011

INDICATIVE

(this does not include Working Groups / Focus Groups meetings).

(Year 4) Date	Committee / seminars / NRNs meetings
September 2011	NRNs meeting, Brussels (tbc) (rural entrepreneurship)
28-29 September 2011	Contribution to the Joint seminar of the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Rural Development Programmes, Helsinki - Finland (macro-regional level of cooperation)
October 2011	Contribution to a Leader event in Poland (Polish Presidency)
11 November 2011	Contribution to the event "Communicating rural development to citizens" with the Italian NRN (presentation of good practices, possibly followed by a roadshow / other MS events)
23 November 2011 (tbc)	Leader subcommittee, Brussels (enlarged - tbc)
8 December 2011 (tbc)	Coordination committee , Brussels
9 December 2011 (tbc)	Seminar on "Current and future delivery mechanisms of RDPs" (using TWG 4 results)
January 2012	NRNs meeting (tbc)
February 2012	Workshop for LAGs (with thematic focus to be determined)
April 2012	Seminar on "Rural-urban linkages", including local food supply
May 2012	Leader subcommittee, Brussels
June 2012	Coordination committee , Brussels
June 2012	Seminar – topic to be confirmed
July 2012	NRNs meeting

Annex II

Cross-check of topics covered in Year 4

Proposed main topics for Year 4 (July 2011 – July 2012)	Proposed activity type
Innovation in agriculture / knowledge transfer	Possible working group
Improving delivery of environmental services	Possible working group
Leader: – Better local development strategies / local development meeting EU challenges – cooperation between LAGs	- New working Group - workshop for LAGs + online tools + booklet of examples of projects
Rural-urban linkages	Seminar
Rural entrepreneurship (started Year3): sub-themes to be developed, such as local food, social aspects, local financial engineering...	Joint work of groups of NRNs (exchanges of practices, joint analysis, overview papers...)
The preparation of the CAP after 2013: - Current and future delivery mechanisms of RDPs; - Getting prepared for new RDP generation, including preparation for e-government	- Seminar (using TWG 4 results); - Series of 2 or 3 workshops in 2012
Assessment (and self-assessment) of rural networks	On-line toolkit + NRN quarterly meetings
Information and communication on the 2 nd pillar of the CAP	NRN quarterly meeting + exchange of practices between NRN / Managing Authorities + support to a communication event
Macro-regional cooperation for rural development	Support to Baltic Sea Strategy rural event
Snapshots of RDP implementation by country and measure	E-booklets on website
Review of electronic and other publications	Possible new 'ENRD magazine'