



# **EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

## **THIRD ANNUAL WORK PLAN**

**2010-2011**

*16 July 2010*

## STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

### ***EN RD - Engaging stakeholders in an effective and efficient delivery of RD policy***

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

**TWGs**

- Thematic working groups

**Focus groups**

- Leader Focus Groups

**RDPs and MIs**

- "screenings" of Rural Development Programmes
- Analysis of Monitoring Indicators and "snapshots" of RDPs progress

**Good practices**

- Database of "Good practices" / relevant examples of rural development

**The CAP after 2013**

- Contribution of the EN RD to the debates on the CAP after 2013

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

**Website**

- Development of the website

**Publications**

- EN RD publications

**Events**

- Seminars and workshops

**Representation**

- Infoline, participation in fairs...

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

**Overall coordination**

- Coordination of the EN RD activities

**NRNs' interacting**

- NRN mapping
- NRN joint activities
- Joint EN RD / NRN approaches

**LAGs cooperation**

- Support to cooperation between LAGs

**Linking rural networks**

- Facilitating links between various rural networks

### Annex:

- 1) Indicative planning of main meetings and events
- 2) Cross-check of thematic coverage in Year 3

# **Third Annual Work Plan of the European Network for Rural Development (EN RD)**

**[July 2010 - June 2011]**

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

After two years of activity, the third year will focus on the **following specific objectives**:

- ⇒ To further develop knowledge on the implementation of rural development policy, building on the information collected on programming aspects;
- ⇒ To further boost information exchange, using existing information from various sources and ensuring timely and targeted dissemination of new knowledge;
- ⇒ To further develop a strategic approach to networking activities, increasing synergies at EU level and ensuring visibility of the value-added of rural networks.

**In the period from July 2010-June 2011**, the CAP and rural development policy as one of its components will be discussed at large in the context of the preparation of the CAP after 2013. The EN RD will have an important role to play in informing these debates, relying on structured knowledge and specific expertise on rural development.

**This document is an outline of the work plan for the third year of activity of the EN RD in terms of:**

- ↳ **KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT : providing deeper insights in RD policy / identifying what works well and less well**
- ↳ **KNOWLEDGE SHARING : ensuring access to and dissemination of useful information**
- ↳ **EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION : facilitating exchanges and cooperation between rural networks and actors at EU level**

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

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

### Specific objectives and priorities 2010-2011:

- ⇒ Highlighting lessons learnt from the current programming period [2007-2013] which can usefully inform development of the policy.
- ⇒ Investigating new relevant issues, and policy implementation aspects, in small operational groups.
- ⇒ Broadening the sources of knowledge (research projects, etc.) and integrating analysis and view points of a wider range of stakeholders.
- ⇒ Developing synergies with the European Evaluation Network to ensure an appropriate contribution to the ongoing evaluation of rural development programmes.

### Activities:

#### 1. Thematic Working Groups (TWG)

Context: The TWGs are formal Commission's expert groups of maximum 15 members. They work on specific topics, following a mandate proposed by the Coordination committee of the EN RD. They are chaired by the Commission, and can benefit from the support of expert work (analysis, studies, literature review etc). These groups have a key role to play in identifying what works well – and what does not work well – in the current RD policy, and thus in identifying possible improvements, solutions or guidance for the present and for the future. Their work plan is of maximum 2 years.

#### Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<p><b>Dissemination of the work of the 3 first TWGs</b>, respectively on:  <i>TWG1: Targeting territorial specificities and needs in RD programmes;</i>  <i>TWG2: Links between agriculture and the broader rural economy;</i>  <i>TWG3: Public goods and public interventions.</i></p>	<p>The 3 first TWGs will be coming to the last phase of their work plan. Emphasis should be put on communication and consultation on their results, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- specific paper or e-documents for target groups (Managing Authorities of RDPs, project holders...);</li> <li>- contributions to the database of relevant practices / case studies or to the analysis of RDPs;</li> <li>- targeted inputs to policy debates;</li> <li>- possible seminars / workshops.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ongoing work of TWG4</b> on "<i>Delivery mechanisms of EU rural development policy</i>".</p>	<p>The activity will consist in the implementation of the work plan of TWG 4, which was launched in February 2010. This includes the collection and analysis of delivery systems in different countries, for different types of measures.</p> <p>If appropriate, a specific workshop could be foreseen for the Spring 2011 (see section II).</p>
<p><b>NEW Launch of new TWGs</b>, e.g.:  <i>- sub-regional development / integrated rural development;</i></p>	<p>2 new TWGs could be launched in consultation with the Coordination committee, to go deeper into topics identified in the first TWGs and Leader Focus Groups, or to follow-up</p>

- <i>Information and Communication Technologies in rural areas.</i>	events. The groups would look at ways to support integrated rural development approaches, including local food economies and how to integrate rural areas into the knowledge society.
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## 2. Leader focus groups

Context: The Leader subcommittee of the EN RD launched 3 focus groups at the beginning of 2010 to examine key aspects of the implementation of LEADER in the programming period 2007-2013, the first results of which were reviewed at the subcommittee meeting in May 2010. The focus groups are voluntary and are composed of representatives of National Rural Networks, Local Action Groups, Managing Authorities, NGOs, under the co-chairmanship of different NRNs or organisations.

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<p><b>Conclusion of first works of the 3 focus groups</b>, respectively on:</p> <p><i>FG1 – Implementation of bottom-up approach</i>  <i>FG2 - Preserving the innovative character of Leader</i>  <i>FG3 – Transnational Cooperation</i></p>	<p>The 3 focus groups initiated by the LSC of November 2009 are expected to deliver their final reports and recommendations at the Leader subcommittee planned for the Autumn 2010.</p>
<p><b>NEW Follow-up, communication and dissemination of results</b></p>	<p>The LSC will have to examine the need for a follow-up of the Focus Groups. The 3rd year activity will also concentrate on communication and dissemination of results and reaching target audiences.</p>

## 3. Analysis of Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) and of monitoring indicators.

Context: In order to better support the implementation of the RDPs, the EN RD has a role to play in providing information on them, and in supporting their monitoring. In the first half of 2010, information was developed on the RDPs themselves: summaries of what they contain per country (and per region when appropriate), as well as specific analysis on how they address climate change and how they address mountain farming, were published on the website.

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<b>NEW Information on RDPs actual implementation</b>	Using monitoring indicators, progress reports and financial data, structured information should be developed on the actual implementation of the RDPs. This would be completed with examples of projects (see point 4. below).
<b>NEW New analytical work as regards RDPs</b>	Possibly, results of complementary analysis on RDPs could be made available, e.g. on organic farming
<b>NEW Support for monitoring of RDPs, in coordination with the EEN</b>	<p>This could comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- production of synthetic information 2008 and 2009 (charts, commented graphs...) based on analytical work of the databases of monitoring indicators</li> <li>- identification of difficulties and "good practices" in the collection and</li> </ul>

collation of monitoring indicators (OPTIONAL),  
 - specific guidance as regards the monitoring of Leader and the assessment of "quality of life", in coordination with the EEN.

#### 4. Identification of relevant experiences / interesting cases studies and projects

Context: This activity is one of the core tasks of the EN RD: 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. These examples are collected following a specific thematic focus (e.g. in Year 2, the pilot collection of projects was focused on *renewable energies* and on *agro-food investment measures*).

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<p><b>To develop the database</b> of relevant experiences / examples of projects implemented under the rural development policy for the period 2007-2013.</p>	<p><b>NEW:</b> 3 main developments are envisaged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>extended topics/measures:</b> new topics could be considered for the collection of examples of projects jointly with the National Rural Networks (NRNs) [e.g. projects supporting women, agri-environmental measures, Leader innovative projects...];</li> <li>- <b>integration of projects which have been collected for other purposes</b> (TWG, seminar, publications...), in order to make them accessible through the database;</li> <li>- <b>collection from other sources</b>, e.g. research.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Projects "show case"</b></p>	<p>From the examples of projects, a few could be selected to provide illustrations of the implementation of the policy. Videos could be envisaged as a support.</p>

#### 5. Contribution of the EN RD to the debates on the CAP after 2013

Context: In 2010, the Commission is preparing a Communication on the CAP after 2013 and in 2011, legislative proposals will be drafted. In the preparatory phase, and all along the process, the debates on the CAP after 2013 will have to rely on relevant analysis of the current period. The EN RD should make available such knowledge in the field of rural development.

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<p><b>Inputs to the conference on 19-20 July</b> summing-up the outcomes of public debates through-out Europe</p>	<p>The contributions of the National Rural Networks and EU organisations to the public debate on the CAP after 2013 will feed-into the preparatory work for this conference, notably as regards rural development. They will be invited to participate in the conference.</p>
<p><b>Ongoing contributions</b>, notably using results of EN RD activities, and feed-back from NRNs.</p>	<p><b>NEW:</b> The Coordination committee should contribute to inform the preparation of the CAP after 2013, highlighting lessons learnt from the current programming period.</p>

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

### Specific objectives and priorities 2010-2011:

- ⇒ To develop communication and to boost exchange at EU level, using both existing and new sources of knowledge.
- ⇒ To ensure that the work carried out through the EN RD is transposed into deliverables directly usable at administrative/implementation levels.
- ⇒ To reach a broader range of stakeholders at various levels, notably by offering a wider language coverage whenever possible.
- ⇒ To increase the speed in the publishing of information, both electronically and on paper.

### Activities:

#### 1. Development of the website of the EN RD at <http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>

Context: The website is the core tool of the EN RD. 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 "inter-active" parts restricted to specific groups (TWGs, NRNs...).

#### Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<b>Public website</b>	<p><b>NEW</b> New developments should include notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a <b>database of examples of projects</b> financed through the EAFRD (as a start, based on a few key topics – see point I-4 above);</li> <li>- further information on the <b>implementation of the RDPs</b> (monitoring indicators, expenditure information etc.);</li> <li>- information on Leader transnational <b>cooperation projects</b>;</li> <li>- more <b>links</b> towards useful sources of information (research projects, NGO initiatives etc.);</li> <li>- regular <b>news</b> / interviews;</li> <li>- <b>media supports</b> available to all;</li> <li>- improvements of access to information and development of the dynamic functionalities (maps, search tools...).</li> </ul>
<b>Extranet</b>	<p><b>NEW</b> The extranet should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offer <b>exchange facilities for new groups</b> (focus groups, subgroups of NRNs, new TWGs etc.) with a view to prepare concrete outputs;</li> <li>- possibly, propose <b>ad-hoc discussion lists</b> on a given topic.</li> </ul>

## 2. Publications

Context: The EN RD disseminates electronic newsletters and rural reviews with a thematic focus.

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<b>Newsletters</b>	Shorter and more frequent editions, with updated information on the rural development policy.
<b>Rural Reviews</b>	Publication of Rural Review Nr 5 on Competitiveness and Rural Review Nr 6 on Employment and social inclusion.  The thematic focus of the foreseen 4 new issues could cover:  - Forestry (2011 is the Year of Forestry);      - public goods; - the preparation of the CAP after 2013;      - rural entrepreneurship; - Transnational Cooperation for Leader;      - organic farming; - rural women;      - ICT ...
<b>NEW Ad-hoc publications / booklets / etc.</b>	Possibly, information booklets could be produced on: - the concept of "public goods" in policy design; - the changes in RDPs following the Health check and Recovery Package; - ...

## 3. Thematic events

Context: The EN RD offers places and occasions for direct exchanges between stakeholders at EU level. EN RD events are focused on key topics, and bring together relevant experts and rural actors. As much as possible, these events rely on targeted documentation and thematic material developed in the process of preparation.

Proposed plan 2010-2011: (see Indicative planning of meetings and events in Annex)

<b>13-15 October 2010: postponed seminar on semi-subsistence farming in Sibiu (Romania).</b>	The seminar will discuss the current situation and future prospects for semi-subsistence farming in Europe. A background paper on semi-subsistence farming has been prepared.
<b>NEW 10 December 2010: Seminar on Public Goods and public intervention</b>	On the basis of the results of the TWG 3 (see Point I-1 above), a seminar would offer opportunities for discussion and broader dissemination.
<b>NEW January 2010: Workshop for new LAGs</b>	New LAGs could benefit from a session specifically dedicated to their challenges, their main activities and the development of cooperation projects.
<b>NEW February 2011: Seminar on ICT in rural areas</b>	This seminar on Information and Communication Technology would examine how rural areas can participate in the knowledge society.
<b>NEW April 2011 (tbc): Baltic Sea Strategy rural event</b>	The EN RD could contribute to a rural event organised within the framework of the Baltic Sea Strategy, associating the NRNs of the Baltic Sea Region, as well as other NRNs interested in macro-regional rural cooperation.



#### 4. Information line and reception of visitors in Brussels

Context: The Contact Point ensures a permanent secretariat of the EN RD, to answer to questions, and to provide information related to RD policy or the EN RD.

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<b>Info-line / answers to questions from stakeholders</b>	To mobilise the multilingual team of the Contact Point to answer to questions at: +32.2.235.20.20. or at <a href="mailto:info@enrd.eu">info@enrd.eu</a> , while securing the Commission services contributions when needed.  To ensure the identification of Frequently Asked Questions, and to address them in the most comprehensive way on the website.
<b>Reception of visitors</b>	Possibility to receive individual visitors, or small groups in the offices of the CP. Informative material to be developed, using for example the projects presented in fairs.

#### 5- Representation of the EN RD

Context: DG AGRI, and Contact Point have to respond to direct information needs on the EN RD and on the RD policy in general. Thus AGRI representatives – or CP team members – are participating and contributing to various events related to rural development, including agricultural fairs.

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<b>Participation of the Contact Point in fairs and events</b>	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.
<b>Contribution to seminars / conferences</b>	When needed, the Contact point of the EN RD 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 2010-2011:

- ⇒ To ensure the overall coordination of the EN RD through the Coordination committee and the Leader subcommittee.
- ⇒ To support NRNs in giving real impetus to rural networking, and to help develop synergies between them through structured exchanges.
- ⇒ To further involve the relevant Commission services in the various activities of the EN RD.
- ⇒ To provide appropriate support to transnational cooperation of Leader groups.

#### Activities:

##### 1. Coordination of the EN RD

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 EN RD and in reporting on the implementation of rural development policy.

##### Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<p><b>Meetings of the Coordination committee</b> (twice: December 2010 / June 2011) – Brussels.</p>	<p>Its work should allow reporting on the implementation of rural development policy, identify proposals for - and ensure contributions to - the thematic and analytical activities of the EN RD (notably the Thematic Working Groups), and reinforce the exchanges between the different rural networks.</p> <p>When appropriate, the Coordination committee should also contribute to inform policy debates as regards rural development.</p>
<p><b>Meetings of the Leader subcommittee</b> (twice: November 2010/May 2011) – Brussels.</p>	<p>The agendas should be designed in a way to allow reporting on the implementation of Leader (notably through the Focus groups), and monitoring of Transnational Cooperation Projects.</p> <p>The Leader subcommittee may extend or create new Focus Groups, investigating specific issues related to the implementation of Leader. Some meetings could be envisaged as extended ones, by inviting LAGs.</p>
<p><b>NEW Information management</b></p>	<p>Both committees should benefit from an extranet facility on the EN RD website to support their work, including meeting documents and file sharing.</p>

## 2. Networking and synergies between the National Rural Networks (NRN)

Context: The National Rural Networks develop their own annual Action Plan, based on their own priorities. The EN RD 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 2010-2011:

<b>NRN mapping</b>	<p>Beyond the links to each NRN website, updated information on each NRN structure, activities, events etc. will be developed on the EN RD public website, first in English language.</p> <p>NRNs may also use an extranet facility to share more specific information on their respective activities, in a way to better "get to know each other" and exchange practices.</p>
<p><b>NRNs joint activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular meetings</li> <li>- NRNs thematic/ geographical clusters</li> <li>- Monitoring of NRNs activities</li> </ul>	<p>NRNs will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to exchange their experiences and to develop joint activities.</p> <p>NRNs should be encouraged to pursue and develop their thematic initiatives, working jointly in small groups on common issues. In 2009-2010, topics were Forestry, Social Farming and Rural Entrepreneurship. Grouping could also be encouraged at geographical/macro-regional level.</p> <p><b>NEW</b> Guidance on monitoring of networking activities should also be developed jointly with NRNs. A 'Self-Assessment Tool-Kit' could be produced, in consultation with the European Evaluation Network.</p>
<b><b>NEW</b> Joint EN RD / NRN approaches</b>	<p>Beyond the joint activities of NRNs, common networking approaches could be developed in a way to increase synergies between NRNs, as part of the EN RD strategy for the longer term.</p>

## 3. Specific support to LAGs and Transnational Cooperation (TNC)

Context: The EN RD has to bring specific support to the LEADER method, in addition to facilitating the transnational cooperation projects between Local Action Groups, and the broader dissemination of innovative experiences. The Leader subcommittee (see above) contributes to the coordination of this support.

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<b>Website support</b>	<p>The development will consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further development of the LAGs database, with direct inputs from LAGs;</li> <li>- Transnational Cooperation: finalisation of the guide, description of country fiches on rules and procedures, ongoing updates of cooperation offers, opening of a database of approved projects, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Contribution to cooperation events</b>	<p>As far as possible, the EN RD 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>

<b>NEW</b> Workshop for new LAGs	See part II.3
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#### 4. Exchanges beyond NRNs and LAGs

Context: The EN RD should facilitate contacts between groups of beneficiaries of the RD policy and other actors, including administrations and advisory services, etc.

Proposed plan 2010-2011:

<b>Development of the "links" section on the public website</b>	This "links" section could give further access to: - research projects and studies on rural development; - examples of cooperation initiatives beyond Leader; - international organisations; - rural projects databases...
<b>Ad-hoc creation of online exchange facilities</b>	Depending on resource availability to moderate them, ad-hoc discussion lists could be created in My EN RD to facilitate exchanges between groups on targeted topics.
<b>Reinforcement of links with relevant EU expert groups / advisory groups</b>	Notably with the Advisory group on Rural Development, the expert group on CAP and Climate change, the advisory group on Women in rural areas...

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## Annex I

### EN RD planning of main meetings mid2010 – mid2011

#### INDICATIVE

(this does not include Thematic Working Groups meetings, nor Focus Groups').

<b>(Year 3) Date</b>	<b>Committee / seminars / NRNs meetings</b>
<b>23-24 September</b>	<b>NRNs meeting in Scotland / rural cooperation fair hosted by the Scottish NRN</b>
<b>13-15 October</b>	<b>Seminar on "Semi-subsistence farming in the EU", Sibiu, Romania</b>
<b>12 November (tbc)</b>	<b>Enlarged Leader subcommittee, Brussels</b>
<b>18-19 November</b>	<b>(Optional) participation of NRNs in the Wallonian and Dutch combined event on environmental public goods and on tools for rural entrepreneurship (Namur – Turnhout, Belgium)</b>
<b>9 December</b>	<b>Coordination committee, Brussels</b>
<b>10 December</b>	<b>Seminar on public goods / TWG 2-3 meeting, Brussels</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>NRNs meeting – to be confirmed</b>
<b>18 January (tbc)</b>	<b>Leader event for new LAGs</b>
<b>10 February 2011 (tbc)</b>	<b>ICT seminar, Brussels</b>
<b>March 2011</b>	<b>NRNs meeting</b>
<b>April 2011</b>	<b>Seminar on Baltic Sea Strategy, Helsinki</b>
<b>May 2011</b>	<b>Leader subcommittee, Brussels</b>
<b>June 2011</b>	<b>Coordination committee , Brussels</b>
<b>June 2011</b>	<b>NRNs meeting</b>

## Annex II

### Cross-check of topics covered in Year 3

Topics	Activity
Targeting territorial specificities and needs in RD programmes	TWG1
Links between agriculture and the broader rural economy	TWG2
Public goods and public interventions.	TWG3 + seminar (+ possibly, booklet and Rural Review)
Delivery mechanisms of EU rural development policy	TWG4
Leader: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Implementation of bottom-up approach</li> <li>- Preserving the innovative character of Leader</li> <li>– Transnational Cooperation</li> </ul>	Focus Groups (+ Leader subcommittee / workshop for new LAGs / online tools for cooperation...)
Information and Communication Technologies in rural areas.	Seminar (+ possible new TWG and Rural Review)
Sub-regional development / integrated rural development	Possible new TWG
Women in rural areas	Publication / examples of projects
Competitiveness	Rural Review Nr 5
Employment and social inclusion.	Rural Review Nr 6
Social farming	Joint work of a group of NRNs
Forestry (2011 is the Year of Forestry)	Joint work of a group of NRNs (+ possibly Rural Review)
Rural Entrepreneurship	Joint work of a group of NRNs (and possibly Rural Review)
Semi-subsistence farming	Seminar
The preparation of the CAP after 2013	coordination committee's work and contributions / Regular information