



# Challenges and bottlenecks for beneficiaries at local level

4<sup>th</sup> DIALOGUE WITH CPR PARTNERS 2021-2027

Stefan APPEL  
Head of Unit REGIO.E.1

*15 June 2023*

# Policy context

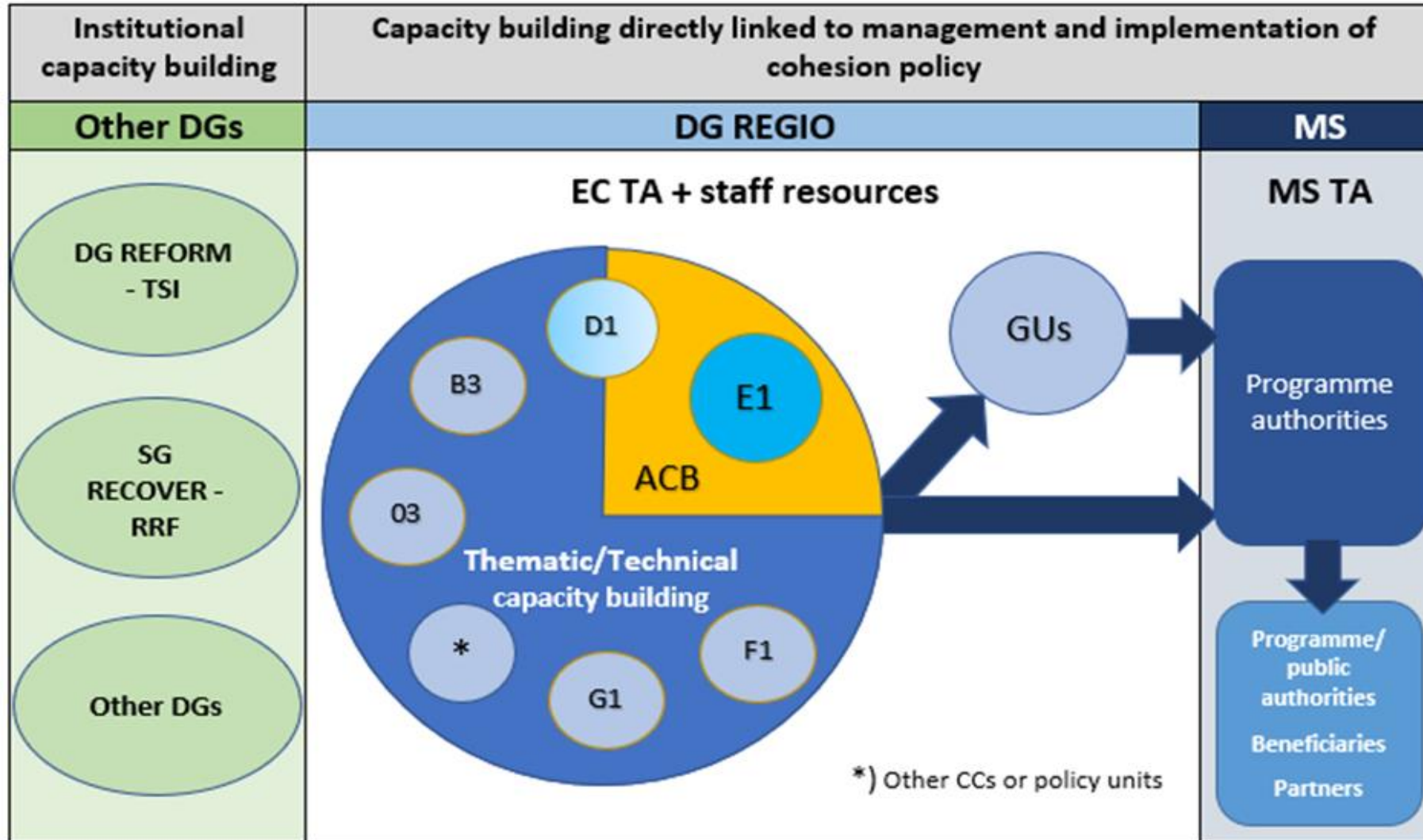
Under shared management Member States are responsible for implementation within agreed framework (legal framework, partnership agreement, programmes).

DG REGIO supports Member States in their efforts to strengthen their administrative capacity to manage investment funds.

This is accomplished through a diverse set of tools and concrete actions.

Unit E1 (CC for ACB) works to foster good governance of EU Regional Policy by supporting programme authorities reinforce the administrative and investment capacities for EU funds.

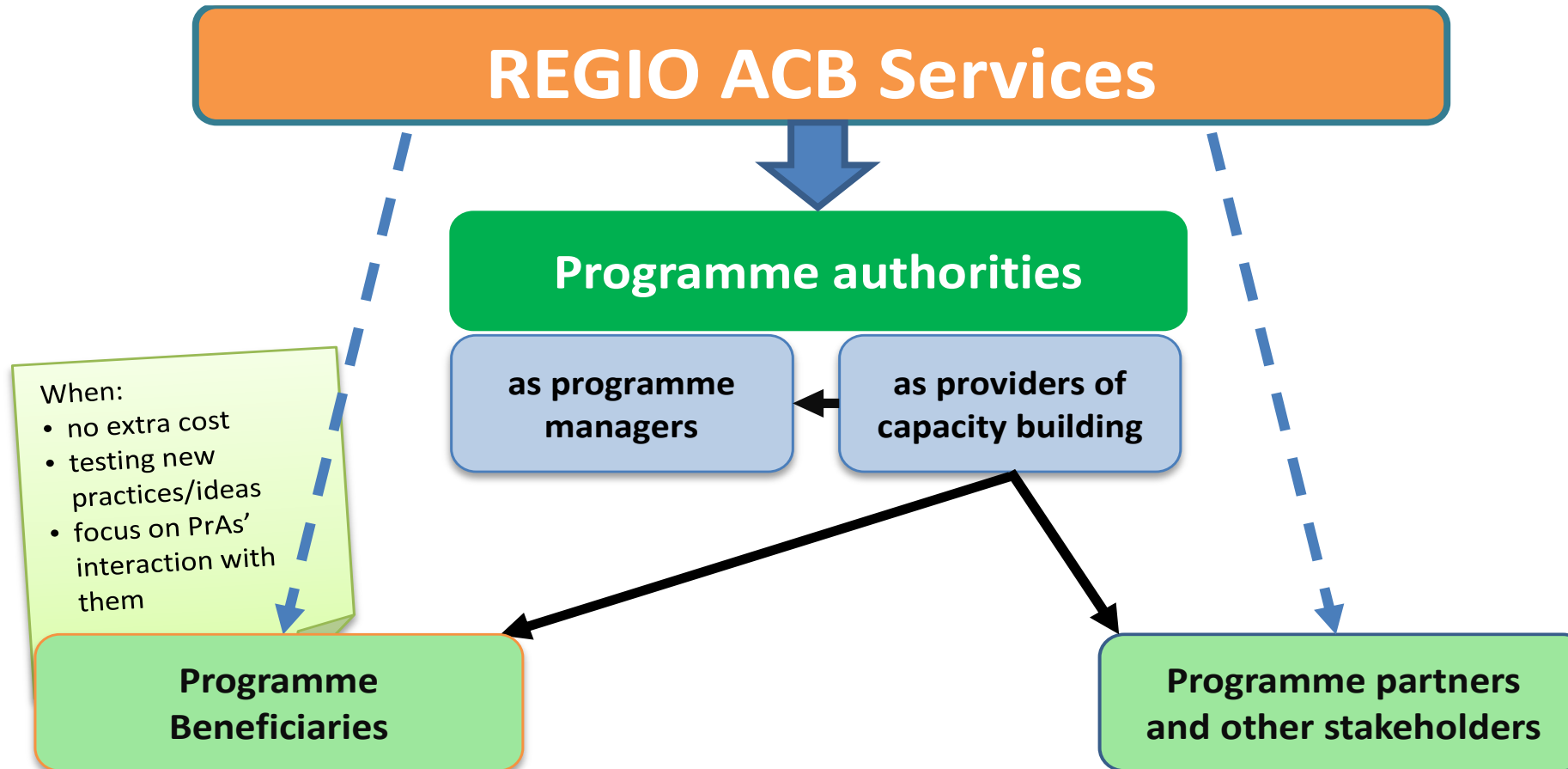
# Architecture of capacity building



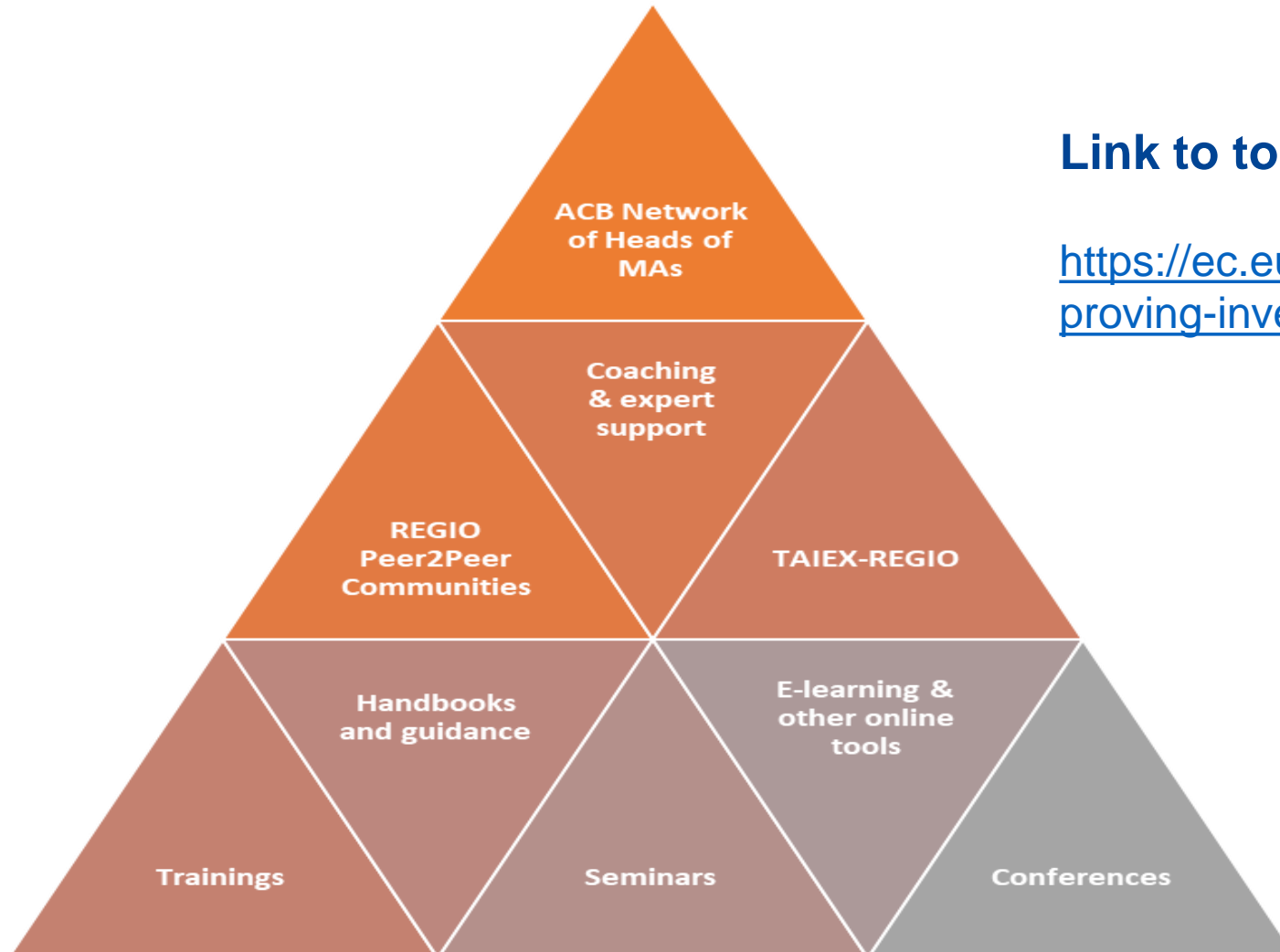
# Need for administrative capacity building (ACB)

- The best possible use of Cohesion Policy funding requires a **high performing eco-system for fund management and implementation**.
- National and regional **MAs, and IBs** are pivotal actors in this eco-system, particularly for the effective administration of EU investment funds, and for ensuring their smooth, timely and effective use.
- Well-informed and capable **beneficiaries** are essential to ensuring effective investment of development funds in such a way that countries, regions and citizens experience tangible benefits from EU investment and membership. Yet, beneficiaries – especially smaller ones and/or those with limited resources – are frequently the weakest link in the chain.

# Target groups of ACB services



# ACB tools and actions



**Link to tools and actions supporting ACB**

[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/policy/how/improving-investment\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/how/improving-investment_en)

# ACB and beneficiaries

- Beneficiaries play a crucial role in the implementation of the programmes. However, under shared management, the **responsibility for their capacity building lays with the managing authorities**. In view of this, the CC will work to **strengthen MAs in their role as providers of capacity building** for beneficiaries.
- Member States have at their disposal **technical assistance funds**. Capacity building activities linked to different programmes and specific objectives can also be funded under ERDF specific objectives, as well as the Cohesion Fund.
- In some cases, project costs can include funding necessary for beneficiaries to prepare and implement their projects.

# Rationale for REGIO action

- The importance of well capacitated beneficiaries, and a strong, positive relationship between MAs/IBs and beneficiaries was a main finding in both phases of the OECD's work with DG REGIO in its pilot project
- Support should focus on those activities that are difficult for Member States to carry out on their own, and where there is value added in information and guidance provided by DG REGIO.
- This could take the form, for example, of identifying and elaborating good practices for wide dissemination, supporting knowledge sharing and experience exchange among relevant authorities in Member States, providing EU-wide trainings and seminars, and by tapping into external expertise.



# Key findings from the pilot project

- Key finding: positive impact that collaborative working and a stronger partnership approach with beneficiaries and other stakeholders could have on administrative capacity, within the MAs certainly, but also in beneficiary organisations.
- Three dimensions surfaced with respect to this
  - Beneficiaries can face structural challenges that fall beyond the use of EU funds, but which affect EU fund project design and implementation.
  - Beneficiaries can offer a wealth of insight
  - Beneficiary support needs to be targeted given the diversity of beneficiary types.

# Call for expression of interest

- DG REGIO opened a Call for expression of interest to participate in a pilot action on capacity building of beneficiaries.
- We **invite managing authorities and intermediate bodies** for programmes supported by the ERDF, Cohesion Fund and Just Transition Fund to express their interest.
- More info: [Inforegio - Publication of Calls for expressions of interest \(europa.eu\)](#)
- Deadline: Monday 7 August 2023 (cob)

Thank you!