

„Facilitating bottom-up CLLD in practice” 14 October 2020, 14.30 – 16.00

This participatory lab was organised by the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) together with the FARNET (Fisheries Areas’ Network) Support Unit. The event was attended by about 45 participants (out of 67 registrations): managing authorities and intermediate bodies, experts and practitioners, as well as representatives of the European Commission. In the poll asked at the start of the session, a vast majority of participants declared that their MS is planning to implement community-led local development (CLLD) in the next programming period.

The workshop focused on **improving the delivery systems for CLLD under different EU Funds**. Efficient delivery systems, avoiding complexity and administrative burden, are a key factor enabling local stakeholders to tap the full potential of CLLD while remaining flexible to address unforeseen crisis situations. Presentations and contributions from the audience shared key lessons learnt based on the experience of implementing CLLD at the EU and MA level.

[Urszula Budzich-Tabor](#) (FARNET Support Unit), on the basis of a short role-play scene illustrating some of the issues that can occur with CLLD implementation on the ground, discussed the difference between a “well-functioning” and a “dysfunctional” delivery system. She stressed that CLLD delivery should be designed to reach out to small-scale local actors, to encourage innovation and cooperation, and to react quickly to needs and opportunities.

Urszula described some **delivery tools** developed in the course of FARNET work with EMFF managing authorities¹, which can also be useful for MAs of other funds, such as:

- simplified cost options (for running costs and for projects, including draft budgets),
 - umbrella projects
 - delegating additional tasks to LAGs (and making them IBs where relevant),
 - facilitating access to finance (packaging EU with national funding, advance payments),
 - reduced controls for administrators with good track record (“green administrators”),
 - efficient and user-friendly IT systems,
 - national networks for building the capacity and trust between different delivery actors,
- She also encouraged MAs to carry out regular “health check” of the CLLD delivery system.

[Karolina Jasińska-Mühleck](#) (DG AGRI) presented the experience collected from several periods of implementing LEADER. She reminded participants that delivery systems must be consistent with LEADER principles and enable the achievement of its objectives, and stressed the importance of simplification, limiting red tape and stimulating local innovative solutions. She also encouraged MAs to give a strong mandate to Local Action Groups (LAGs), which play a key role in building local capacity and animating projects.

Karolina also presented the advantages and enabling conditions of **multi-funding** (combining several EU funds within a single local strategy), and she outlined the Commission’s proposal for 2021-2027 funding period. Managing Authorities applying multi-funding will be able to select one fund (the “Lead Fund”), whose rules and procedures will apply to all the projects funded by the strategy, irrespective of the origin of the funding.

[Christian Stampfer](#) (Intermediate Body from Tyrol, Austria) explained how the different CLLD funds (EAFRD, ERDF and AT-IT cross-border ERDF) are used in his region. Tyrol is mountainous and most operators are small-scale, so LEADER and CLLD are particularly

¹ See FARNET Guide „[Delivering CLLD effectively: a guide for EMFF Managing Authorities](#)”

suitable tools for its development. Local strategies are using all funds, but individual projects can only be financed from one. Eligibility rules have been harmonised between the funds to a large extent. As a result, LAGs can play the role of a “one-stop shop” for all types of beneficiaries, thus creating synergies between different funding sources and avoiding duplication of tasks. There is also good cooperation between delivery actors at all levels, and innovative local-level projects can be upscaled and disseminated.

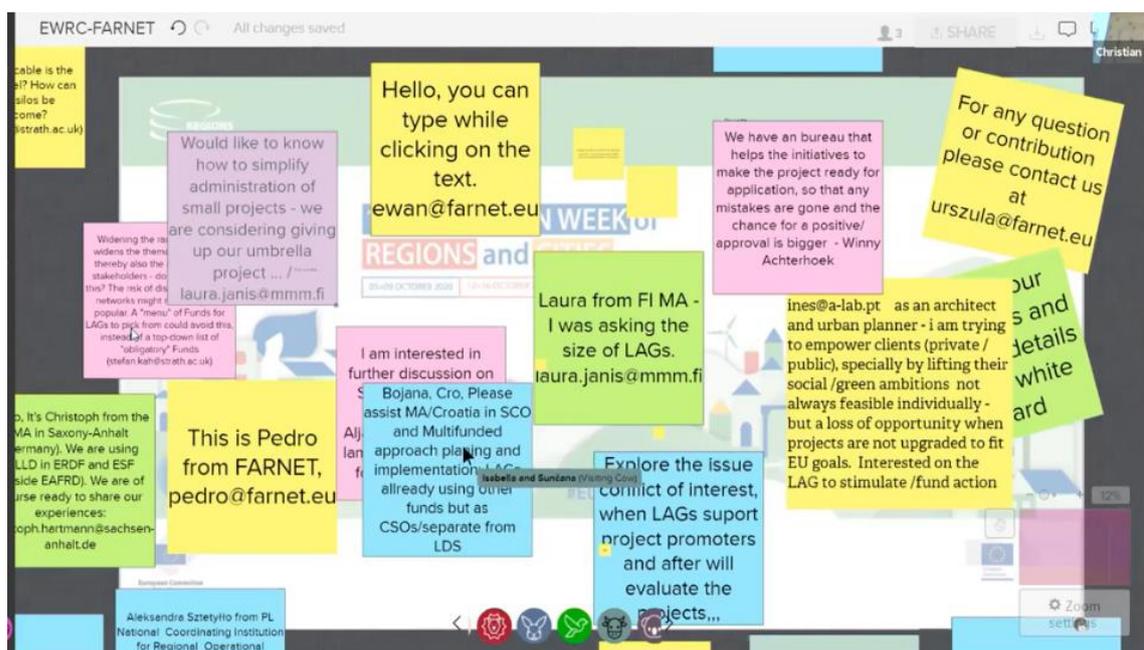
In the **next period** the region of Tyrol is planning to further integrate EAFRD and ERDF, as well as to continue cross-border cooperation LAGs with Italy. Dedicated calls for LAGs under ESF and the national Climate and Energy Fund are also considered. Audit, monitoring and reporting will follow the rules of the Lead Fund (EAFRD). The MA is also planning to use lump sums for LAG running costs under LEADER and draft budgets for smaller projects in a similar way as in Interreg.

In a Zoom poll, participants were asked to indicate the delivery tools they were most interested to explore further; it turned out that the greatest interest was in simplified cost options, Lead Fund and umbrella projects, there were also many participants interested in delegation of additional tasks and National Networks. A number of participants said in the chat they would also like to explore the “green administrator” as an interesting solution.

Some participants were willing to share their national experience with the audience:

- **Beata Rodak** from the Polish LEADER MA said multi-funded CLLD seems to be working well in two Polish regions. Innovative delivery tools used under LEADER include SCOs for running and animation costs as well as lumpsums for business start-up and umbrella projects. These tools are going to be continued in the next period, umbrella projects with some modifications;
- **Laura Jänis** from the Finnish LEADER MA exchanged with other MAs in the chat on the size of LAGs, to find inspiration for the current debate in Finland. The MA is already using umbrella projects but they seem quite complicated for small beneficiaries, so Laura wanted to find out more about very small projects based on lumpsum – such projects they are being applied in Austria so an exchange of experience will be possible.

Further ideas of tools and topics participants would like to share were recorded during the discussion on a virtual whiteboard.



The moderators concluded the discussion by pointing out that there are already quite a lot of tools and solutions that seem to be working well, they just need to be adapted to the specific national or regional context. They encouraged the participants to use the existing resources, e.g. the [ENRD](#) and [FARNET](#) websites, and to stay in touch and continue to exchange on this theme.