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Simplification possibilities of LEADER and multi-funded CLLD post-2020

EWRC "Facilitating bottom-up in practice"
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Preliminary comments

- Why simplify?

⇒To maximise LEADER achievement of its objectives: build capacity, stimulate innovation, support structural changes

- What is needed?

⇒ **Enabling** delivery system supporting LAGs in achieving **objectives**

⇒ **Consistent with** LEADER **principles**

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Enabling factors

- To build capacity:

=> Focus on animation, partnership, participation

- To stimulate innovation:

=> Ensure legal certainty, flexibility of support, linkages with necessary resource and sources of knowledge

- To support structural changes:

=> Agree on a clear mandate for LAGs and ensure synergy with other development agents/policies

Focus on partnership, animation, participation

- Ensure inclusiveness of partnership (LAGs to commit)
- Bolster quality strategies (coaching, iterative selection)
- Promote animation (relevant indicator, adequate resource, coaching)
- Limit red tape (SCO as default option, N.B. draft budget, single set of management rules for all the funds, one fund to cover RC+animation costs, agree on most relevant obligatory indicators and data to collect, ensure EU flexibility on public procurement is not gold plated)
- Design beneficiary friendly scheme (simple and clear rules, in-kind contribution, legal certainty, LAGs support for project design, LAGs own projects, swift grant decision, MA availability for clarifications)

Stimulate innovative solutions

- Simple and clear rules (focus on objectives rather than list of eligible items, prefer negative eligilbilty list, limited to EU rules, realistic obligations, use most flexible State aid scheme)
- Strategies indicate planned contributions to locally chosen indicators from a CAP SP shortlist, targets set in realistic way, scope of LDS by no means limited to projects directly contributing to targets achievement
- Additional indicator capturing innovation
- Separate innovation scheme (?)

Stimulate innovative solutions

- Design control system adapted to the specificity of LEADER (control only what you need to control, focus on ensuring quality partnership: inclusiveness, no conflict of interest, community orientation)
- Use advance payments (no guarantee required)
- Facilitate cooperation (lump sum for preparation of TNC, eligibility linked with strategy only)
- Ensure meaningful networking support

Strong mandate for LAGs

- Ensure resources for quality staff
- Agree on respective roles, avoid duplication of tasks
- Define role of LEADER and LAGs and promote it
- Coordinate LEADER with other policies and development agents (getting participation, building linkages and testing solutions as minimum role)
- Be consistent (do not undermine LAGs credibility)

Advantages of multi-funded CLLD

Apart from increased budget….

- Broader strategy, increased synergies between Funds and policies
- Wider variety of partners to better define and deal with common cross-cutting challenges
- Reinforced rural-urban linkages under a common strategy

Multi-funded CLLD: enabling conditions

- Political backing and strong coordination between administration
- Solid preparation and capacity building of administration and LAGs
- Appropriate division of tasks
- (Joint) use of existing structures and networks; joint structures; one stop shop
- Flexible delimitation between Funds
- Simple delivery: SCOs, one fund for preparatory support, RC&A, use lead Fund option

What do « the rules of the lead fund » cover?

Lead fund

- Decisions, management rules and their verification (incl. eligibility checks, grant and payment decisions, controls, possible corrections/penalties)
- Delivery mechanisms

Contributing fund

- Scope and eligibility rules (incl. contribution rate and aid intensity)
- Monitoring data
- Payments

⇒ Projects follow the lead fund procedures (LF not necessarily the one covering costs of preparation, managment and animation)

⇒ LF authorities handle all matters with beneficiaries except for making payments

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To sum up

- No solution fits all: adapt to your context (institutional, financial, capacity, …)
- Start from overall coordination, set objectives
- Identify bottlenecks
- Brainstorm on solutions with all stakeholders
- Dare thinking out-of-the box
- Check out ENRD/FARNET resources for inspiration
- Multi-funded CLLD is an opportunity but has to be well prepared and simple enough to bring additional value