

Guidance note B – Evaluation guidelines

This guidance note presents the guidelines for ongoing evaluation of rural development programmes 2007 – 2013 including the common evaluation questions.

The purpose of the guidelines is:

- To provide a synthetic operational tool to setting up an evaluation system and to carry out evaluation of rural development programmes
- To give an overview of the general principles of evaluation
- To explain the concept of ongoing evaluation
- To clarify the role of evaluation for rural development programmes
- To explain the requirements for and the specific tasks of ongoing evaluation including mid-term and ex-post evaluation

GUIDELINES FOR ONGOING EVALUATION
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES 2007 – 2013

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1. INTRODUCTION

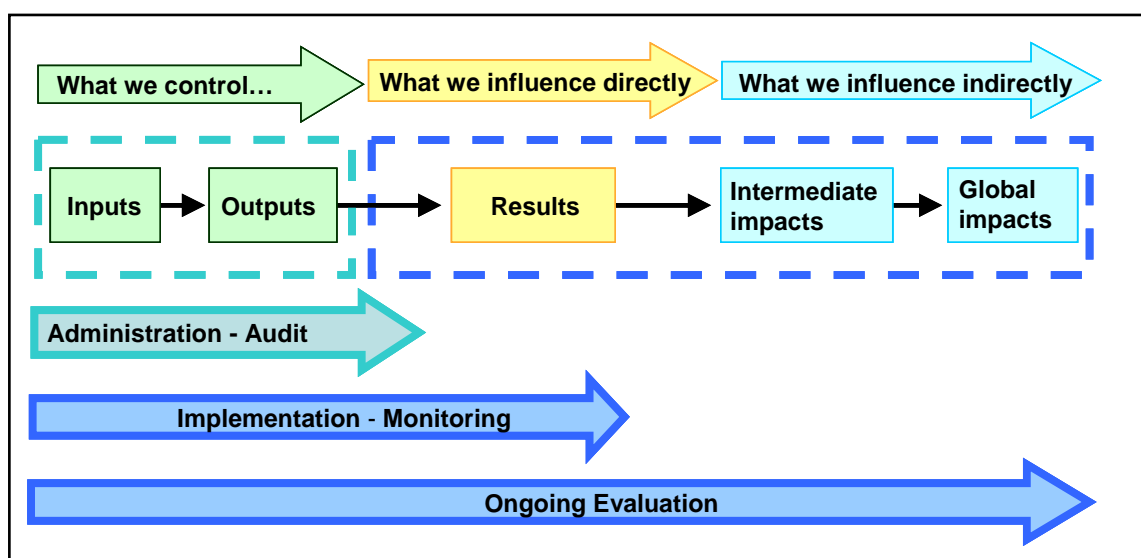
Council Reg. (EC) 1698/2005 on Support for Rural Development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development – EAFRD, states in Art. 86 that Member States have to establish a system of ongoing evaluation for each Rural Development programme.

The purpose of these guidelines is to support Member States in setting up an evaluation system and in carrying out evaluation including mid-term and ex-post evaluations of the Rural Development programmes. These guidelines form part of the “Handbook of the Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework”.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION

Evaluation is a process of judgement of interventions according to their results, impacts and the needs they aim to satisfy. Evaluation looks at the effectiveness (the extent to which objectives are achieved), the efficiency (best relationship between resources employed and results achieved), and at the relevance of an intervention (the extent to which an intervention’s objectives are pertinent to needs, problems and issues).

Rural development evaluation must provide information on the implementation and impact of the co-financed programmes. The aims are, on the one hand, to increase the accountability and transparency with regard to the legal and budget authorities and the public and, on the other hand, to improve the implementation of the programmes by contributing to informed planning and decisions concerning needs, delivery mechanisms and resource allocation.



2.1. Monitoring and Evaluation

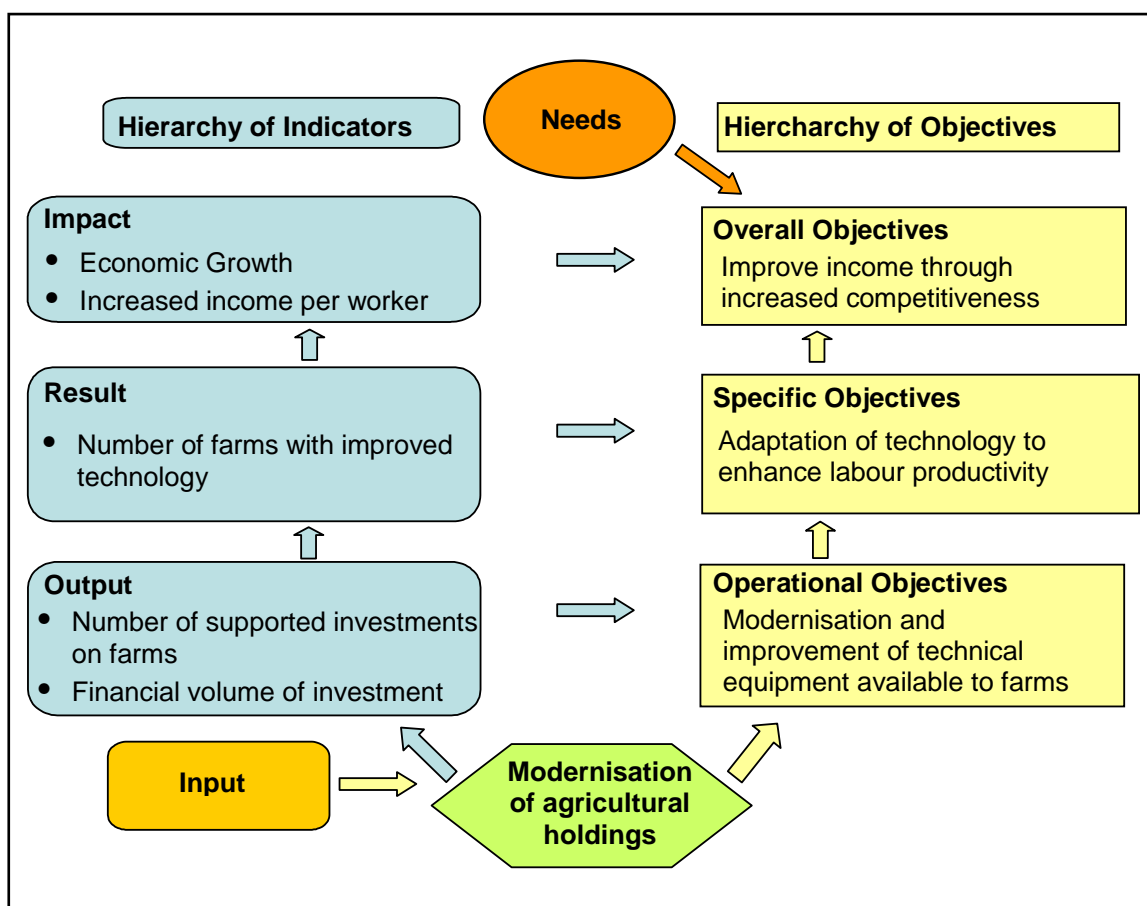
Understanding evaluation requires clarity concerning the distinction of the common elements of audit, monitoring, and evaluation as these are complementary albeit different exercises.

The focus of audits is the correct administrative and financial management of measures. Monitoring is a continuous and systematic stocktaking of budgetary inputs, activities financed under measures and data on first results at the level of projects. Monitoring generates quantitative data. It gives a feedback on the proper implementation of measures, facilitating corrections of deviations from operational objectives. Monitoring contributes to making public spending accountable and it provides valuable information for the evaluation of measures.

Evaluation looks at the results and impacts of programmes - by assessing their effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of measures – provides an input into the formulation and re-orientation of policies. In doing this, evaluation heavily relies on data and information collected by monitoring which suggests an early interaction between both activities.

2.2. Intervention logic and indicators

A key-tool of evaluation is the so-called “intervention logic” which establishes the causal chain from the budgetary input, via the output and the results of measures, to their impact. Thus, the intervention logic guides the consecutive assessment of a measure’s contribution to achieving its objectives.



The intervention logic starts from the needs, which describe the socio-economic or environmental requirements to which the programme and/ or measure should respond.

The policy response is developed through a “hierarchy of objectives”, representing the break down from the overall objective, via more specific objectives, to operational objectives. For the purpose of evaluation, the “hierarchy of objectives” is matched by a “hierarchy of indicators” which reflect the different elements of the intervention logic of a measure.

Following the causal chain of the “intervention logic”, the “hierarchy of indicators” starts from the inputs, i.e. the financial and/or administrative resources which will generate the outputs of programme activities pursuing operational or measures-related objectives. The subsequent results are the immediate effects of interventions, which should contribute to the achievement of the specific objectives. Impacts should contribute to reaching the overall objectives of the programme which, in a well designed programme, must correspond to the previously identified needs.

The indicators are used as tools to assess at each level (output, result, impact) how far the expected objectives have been achieved by measures or whole programmes. Indicators have to be specific, measurable, available/achievable in a cost effective way, relevant for the programme, and timely available. Indicators can not always be filled with quantitative statistical data; in some cases, indicators might also include qualitative assessments or logical assumptions.

For the purpose of evaluating rural development programmes, we distinguish the following types of indicators:

- Input indicators: These refer to the budget or other resources allocated at each level of the assistance. *Example*: expenditure per measure declared to the Commission
- Output indicators: These measure activities directly realised within programmes. The activities are the first step towards realising the operational objectives of the intervention and are measured in physical or monetary units. *Example*: number of training sessions organised, number of farms receiving investment support, total volume of investment.
- Result indicators: These measure the direct and immediate effects of the intervention. They provide information on changes in, for example, the behaviour, capacity or performance of direct beneficiaries and are measured in physical or monetary terms. *Example*: investments undertaken, number of farmers participating successfully in training courses.
- Impact indicators: These refer to the benefits of the programme both at the level of the intervention but also more generally in the programme area. They are linked to the wider objectives of the programme. *Example*: increase in employment in rural areas, increased productivity of agricultural sector, increased production of renewable energy.

As evaluation looks at change over time, the establishment of the counterfactual is a central issue for all evaluations. In this context the “base-line indicators”, established by the SWOT analysis and ex-ante evaluation at the time of programming, need to be mentioned. The base-line indicators are an important reference point for the evaluation of impacts of single measures and programmes as a whole.

3. THE LEGAL REQUIREMENT FOR EVALUATING RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Evaluating rural development programmes is a legal requirement. Article 84 (2) of Council Regulation 1698/2005 stipulates that,

“Evaluations shall aim to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of rural development programmes. They shall assess the impact of the programmes as regards the strategic guidelines of the Community provided for in Art. 9 and the rural development problems specific to the Member States and regions concerned, taking into account sustainable development requirements and environmental impact, meeting the requirements of relevant Community legislation.”

Article 86 of Council Regulation 1698/2005 specifies the management and the functions of evaluation as follows:

1. *Member States shall establish a system of ongoing evaluation for each rural development programme.*
2. *The Managing Authority for the programme and the Monitoring Committee shall use ongoing evaluation to:*
 - (a) *examine the progress of the programme in relation to its goals by means of result and, where appropriate, impact indicators;*
 - (b) *improve the quality of programmes and their implementation;*
 - (c) *examine proposals for substantive changes to programmes;*
 - (d) *prepare for mid-term and ex post evaluation.*
3. *From 2008, the Managing Authority shall report each year on the ongoing evaluation activities to the Monitoring Committee. A summary of the activities shall be included in the annual progress report provided for in Article 82.*
4. *In 2010, ongoing evaluation shall take the form of a separate mid-term evaluation report. That mid-term evaluation shall propose measures to improve the quality of programmes and their implementation. A summary of the mid-term evaluation reports shall be undertaken on the initiative of the Commission.*
5. *In 2015, ongoing evaluation shall take the form of a separate ex post evaluation report.*
6. *The mid-term and ex post evaluations shall examine the degree of utilisation of resources, the effectiveness and efficiency of the programming of the EAFRD, its socioeconomic impact and its impact on the Community priorities. They shall cover the goals of the programme and aim to draw lessons concerning rural development policy. They shall identify the factors which contributed to the success or failure of the programmes' implementation, including as regards sustainability, and identify best practice.*
7. *Ongoing evaluation shall be organised on the initiative of the Managing Authorities in cooperation with the Commission. {...}*

8. *The Commission shall organise measures on its initiative to provide training, exchanges of best practice and information for ongoing evaluators, experts in the Member States and Monitoring Committee members, as well as thematic and summary evaluations.*

Moreover, following Article 84(4) of Council Regulation 1698/2005, *evaluations shall be carried out by independent evaluators.*

4. THE CONCEPT OF ONGOING EVALUATION

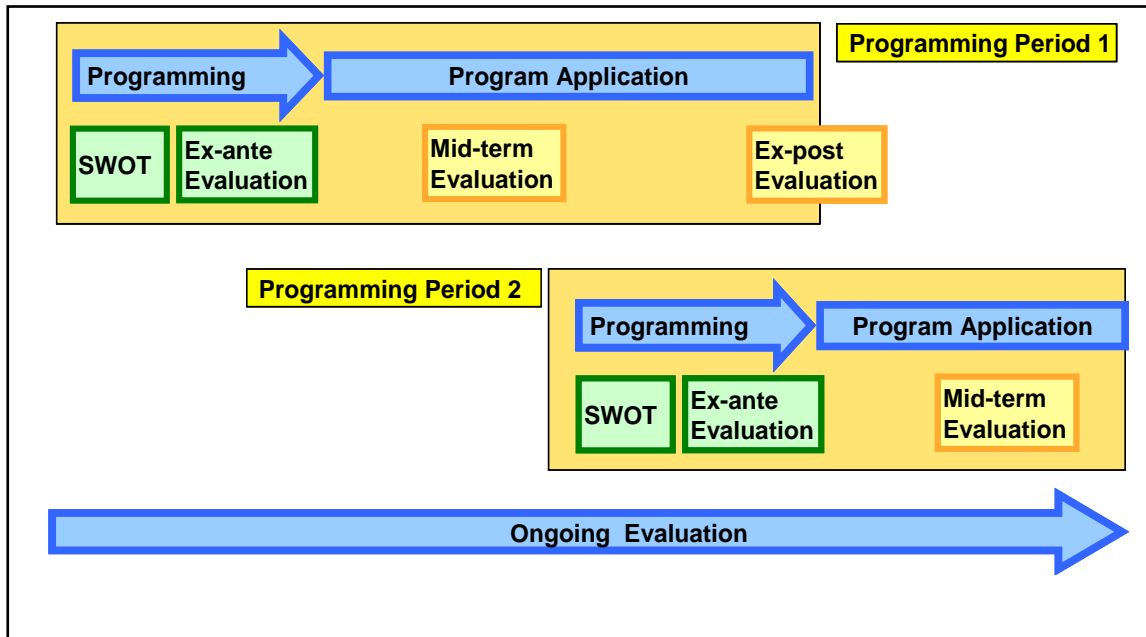
Ongoing evaluation includes all the evaluation activities to be carried out during the whole programming period, comprising ex-ante, mid-term, and ex-post evaluation as well as any other evaluation-related activity the programme authority may find useful for improving their programme management. This includes the interaction between evaluation activities, the compilation and refinement of indicators, and data collection.

Evaluation activities at programme level will be supplemented by accompanying thematic studies as well as by the activities of the European evaluation network for rural development serving as a platform for exchange and capacity building for evaluation in the Member States. Finally synthesis evaluation will be established at Community level.

Ex-ante evaluation sets the basis for setting up a system of evaluation by identifying objectives, target levels, and baselines for the programme. On this basis, a system of ongoing evaluation has to be developed which ensures capacity building early on and continuity of evaluation-related activities during the whole programming period. This implies that ongoing evaluation has to be established at the very beginning of the programming period.

Ongoing evaluation consists of three main elements, which are closely interlinked and form an integrated approach to optimizing evaluation to help improving programme implementation:

- a) continuous activities for programme evaluation at programme level with annual reporting on those activities; in 2010 and 2015 these reports take the form of mid-term and ex-post evaluations; mid-term and ex-post evaluations are summarised at Community level.
- b) a system of accompanying thematic studies to be carried out at the initiative of the Commission, examining in closer detail certain measures, axes, geographic zones, or specific aspects of rural development policy wherever and whenever the need for such examination arises;
- c) an evaluation network and support infrastructure for the Member States and/or regions to be animated by the Commission; this institution will provide a help-desk function (for the interpretation of the Guidelines), offer seminars, will help with capacity-building and will provide a platform for methodological exchange.



As shown in the above figure, the outputs of ongoing evaluation have also an important role for the preparation of legal proposals and draft programmes, which naturally take place in the last phase of a respective actual programming period. And it is already during this period that the work on ex-ante evaluations and the evaluation guidelines for the new programming period have to be prepared. This underlines once more the need for organising evaluation as an “ongoing” activity with continuous capacity building and an interaction between evaluation, monitoring, programming, the definition of indicator and data collection at Community level and at Member State/ regional level.

5. SPECIFIC TASKS FOR ONGOING EVALUATION AT PROGRAMME LEVEL

5.1. Setting-up the evaluation system

5.1.1. Administrative matters

As stipulated by Art. 84 5) and 86 1) of Council Regulation 1698/2005, Member States are responsible for setting up a system of ongoing evaluation and for providing the human and financial resources necessary to carry out evaluations.

Evaluations must be carried out by independent evaluators from bodies without direct involvement in the implementation, management and financing of the programmes. The evaluator should be competent regarding up to date evaluation practice. Public institutions are not excluded, provided they fulfil the criteria of independence and competence. The same evaluator may deal with the evaluation at all stages of the programming cycle. Such an arrangement may in some cases improve continuity and reduce the costs of evaluation.

In order to ensure a high quality of the evaluation, a regular consultation of stakeholders should be ensured. The setting up of a steering group which accompanies the evaluation process and which involves representatives of different departments is advisable. The steering group should contribute to the preparation of the terms of reference. The members of the steering group can provide access to additional information; they shall support and monitor the work of the evaluator.

5.1.2. Establishing the Terms of Reference

The terms of reference serve the purpose of establishing the framework for evaluation activities during the different phases of ongoing evaluation (ex-ante evaluation, mid-term evaluation, ex-post evaluation). In addition, they form the basis for calls for tenders or the establishment of service requests within framework contracts.

The terms of reference must reflect the legal requirements for evaluation, the principles of evaluation as outlined in the guidance document as well as the arrangements for evaluation, set out in individual rural development programming documents. In order to allow a target-oriented preparation of the terms of reference in the steering group, it is advisable to establish an evaluation mandate, giving an overview on context, scope, timing, and objectives of the evaluation in question.

The key part of the terms of reference for evaluation projects is the list of common and programme-specific evaluation questions which set out the evaluation themes and which refer to the indicators established.

The evaluation tasks to be carried out by the evaluator need to be specified with respect to the four different phases of evaluation:

- Structuring
- Observing
- Analysing
- Judging

As the outputs of each of these evaluation steps need to be discussed by the steering group and/or the commissioning body, the reporting format for each of the different tasks needs to be specified. Moreover, the terms of reference must clarify how the output of the different tasks feed eventually into the final evaluation report.

The main lines concerning the methodology applied, the work plan, and the interaction with the commissioning body and, where established, the steering group need to be addressed.

5.1.3. Preparation of evaluation questions and indicators

For setting-up the evaluation system, it is inevitable for the managing authority to review the common and programme-specific evaluation questions and the related indicators in order to assess what needs to be done in terms of information gathering and analysis in order to answer these questions in a meaningful and appropriate manner.

Whereas the common evaluation questions and indicators are defined in a manner that makes them applicable across a large number of programmes, more precise target levels reflected by indicators and more precise questions may need to be established by the programming authority.

5.2. Evaluation tasks

5.2.1. Structuring

The structuring phase serves the purpose of establishing a clear understanding of the evaluation tasks and preparing the information and data set as well as the analytical tools needed to answer the evaluation questions. In this respect the evaluators have to:

- Establish detailed intervention logics for the different measures to be evaluated.
- Define the key terms of the evaluation questions, elaborate judgement criteria allowing to answer each evaluation question and, where appropriate, the identify target levels.
- Establish a methodology on how to answer the evaluation questions (common evaluation questions including horizontal questions and programme specific questions).
- Identify indicators (common and programme specific indicators) as well as related information and data requirements allowing to assess effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of measure and/or the programme.

As ongoing evaluation shall be supported by a continuous process of capacity building and establishment of good evaluation practices, the latter need to be well reflected in the approach established in the structuring phase.

5.2.2. Observing

The observing phase must identify the available and relevant information. Moreover, it must specify the validity and use of the quantitative and qualitative data used.

With respect to observing the evaluators have to:

- Create the tools needed for the quantitative and qualitative analysis: interview guides, questionnaires, queries for extractions from databases, requests for maps, guidelines for case studies, and any other data collection instrument that the contractor deems appropriate
- Collect data and qualitative information needed for answering each evaluation question: databases, studies, people to be interviewed, appropriate case study areas etc.
- Description of the process of programme implementation, composition of programmes, priorities and target levels, budget

5.2.3. Analysing

This phase is devoted to analysing all information available in view of assessing the effects and impacts of measures and programmes in relation to the programme's objectives and target levels. In order to assess progress made, the link to the baselines, provided in the context of ex-ante evaluations, has to be established. Impacts will be identified as net-contributions of each single measure to achieving a programme's objectives.

In this respect evaluators have to:

- Establish appropriate typologies of measures and/or beneficiaries in view of reducing the complexity for dealing with the empirical analysis.
- Process and synthesise available data and information, and - where necessary - handle data gaps by modelling or other extrapolations. Apply a measurement against the counterfactual as well as target levels.

5.2.4. *Judging*

In the judgement phase, the evaluator answers all evaluation questions and draws conclusions from the analysis regarding the judgement criteria defined in the structuring phase. The conclusions and recommendations relate to the effects of single measures as well as the programme as a whole. The conclusions and recommendations should be strictly based on evidence of the quantitative and qualitative assessment. The limitations of the validity of the findings and the resulting judgement should be critically reflected.

The answer to each evaluation question must reflect the common and programme specific indicators. Where appropriate, other relevant information about the impacts of the actions in question need to be taken into account. In all cases, the answers to evaluation questions must be accompanied by a critical discussion of the evidence of findings. Moreover, evaluation needs to consider the context within which measures are applied. If a certain measure or a part of the programme has not delivered the expected results and impacts, an analysis of the reasons for this unexpected effect is necessary.

In this respect evaluators have to:

- Answer all evaluation questions (common and programme specific questions)
- Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme
- Assess measures with respect to their balance within the programme
- Judge on the degree to which the programme contributes to achieving the objectives set out in the national and Community strategy
- Identify the factors which contributed to the success or failure of the programme
- Draft conclusions and recommendations based on the findings
- Identify possible adjustments necessary for improving the programme

5.3. Reporting

As stipulated by Article 86 3) 4) and 5) of Council Regulation 1698/2005, programme authorities have to establish a report on their activities related to ongoing evaluation from 2008 onwards. A summary of this report must be taken up in the annual progress report, in accordance with Article 82 2) d) of Council Regulation 1698/2005.

The first report in 2008 will describe the provisions for the establishment of the evaluation system in the national/regional context (indicators, administrative arrangements, data collection provisions). In 2009 and from 2011 to 2014, the reports

will describe the evaluation activities undertaken, among others capacity building and methodological work, data collection, and references to difficulties encountered.

Where applicable, the annual reports should express needs with respect to the adaptation of programme-specific indicators and data sets. Equally important, they should help the Commission to identify needs for accompanying/thematic horizontal evaluations in relation to specific measures/ axes/ challenges.

A full evaluation of measures and programmes has to take place in 2010 (mid-term evaluation) and in 2015 (ex-post evaluation). Both the mid-term evaluation report and the ex-post evaluation report will provide answers to all common and programme-specific evaluation questions, derived from an assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of measures and programmes. The reports will also include a judgement on the degree to which measures and programmes as a whole meet their targets and contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the national strategies as well as the Community strategy. On the basis of evaluation findings, the mid-term evaluation report has also to identify the need of change of programmes, where applicable.

6. INDICATIVE OUTLINE OF AN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON ONGOING EVALUATION

1. Introduction
2. The system established for ensuring ongoing evaluation
3. The evaluation activities undertaken (ongoing and finished)
4. Data collection
5. Networking activities of the people involved in evaluation
6. Difficulties encountered and need for additional work

7. INDICATIVE OUTLINE OF AN EVALUATION REPORT

1 Executive summary

- Main findings of the evaluation
- Conclusions and recommendations

2 Introduction

- Purpose of the report
- Structure of the report

3 The Evaluation Context

- Brief contextual information about the programme: related national policies, social and economic needs motivating assistance, identification of beneficiaries or other target groups
- Description of the evaluation process: recapitulation of the terms of reference, purpose and scope of the evaluation
- Brief outline of previous evaluations related to the programme

4 Methodological Approach

- Explanation of the evaluation design and the methods used
- Description of key terms of programme-specific and the common evaluation questions, judgement criteria, target levels.
- Sources of data, techniques for data collection (questionnaires, interviews; size and selection criteria for samples ...); information about how the indicators are calculated in order to assess the quality and reliability of the data and identify possible biases.
- Techniques for replying to the evaluation questions and arriving at conclusions.
- Problems or limitations of the methodological approach.

5 Description of Programme, Measures, and Budget

- Programme implementation: actors involved, institutional context
- Composition of the programme; description of priorities and measures

- Intervention logic of single measure
- Budget foreseen for the entire programming period
- Uptake and budget actually spent

6 Answers to Evaluation Questions

- Analysis and discussion of indicator(s) with respect to judgement criteria and target levels referred to by evaluation questions.
- Analysis and discussion of quantitative and qualitative information from public statistics, specific surveys/enquiries, or other sources.
- Answers to the evaluation question

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

- Coherence between the measures applied and the objectives pursued; balance between the different measures within a programme.
- Degree of achieving programme-specific objectives as well as objectives set out in the national strategy and the Community Strategy.
- Recommendations based on evaluation findings, including possible proposals for the adaptation of programmes.

8. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

AXIS I: To improve the competitiveness of the agriculture and forestry sector by means of support for restructuring, development and innovation

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| Measure | Vocational training and information actions, including diffusion of scientific knowledge and innovative practises for persons engaged in the agricultural, food and forestry sectors (Article 20 (a) (i) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 111 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have the actions related to training, information and diffusion of knowledge and innovative practises improved the labour productivity and/or other elements related to competitiveness in the agricultural, food and forestry sector?</p> <p>To what extent have training activities contributed to improving sustainable land management, including sustainable management of natural resources?</p> <p>To what extent are the assisted training courses in accordance with needs and coherent with other measures of the programme?</p> |
| Measure | Setting up of young farmers (Article 20 (a) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 112 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the aid facilitated the enduring setting-up of young farmers of either sex?</p> <p>To what extent has the aid facilitated the structural adjustment of the holdings after the initial establishment of young farmers?</p> <p>To what extent has the aid contributed to improving the human potential in the agricultural sector?</p> <p>To what extent has the aid contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector?</p> |
| Measure | Early retirement of farmers and farm workers (Article 20 (a) (iii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 113 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the aid for early retirement contributed to a structural change of the holdings, in particular through synergies with other measures?</p> <p>To what extent has the aid contributed to improving the human potential in the agricultural sector?</p> <p>To what extent has the aid contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector?</p> |

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| Measure | Use of advisory services by farmers and forest holders (Article 20 (a) (iv) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
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Measure Code 114

Evaluation questions To what extent has the scheme improved the management and the economic performance of agricultural and forestry holdings? Detail with respect to:

- production techniques
- quality standards
- occupational safety conditions
- management of natural resources

To what extent has the scheme contributed to improving the human potential in the agricultural sector?

To what extent has the scheme contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector?

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| Measure | Setting up of farm management, farm relief and farm advisory services, as well as of forestry advisory services (Article 20 (a) (v) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
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Measure Code 115

Evaluation questions To what extent has the scheme addressed the relevant elements for improving the farm management?

To what extent has the scheme improved the management and the economic performance of agricultural and forestry holdings? Detail with respect to:

- production techniques
- quality standards
- occupational safety conditions
- management of natural resources

To what extent has the scheme contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector?

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| Measure | Modernisation of agricultural holdings (Article 20 (b) (i) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
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Measure Code 121

Evaluation questions To what extent have supported investments contributed to a better use of production factors on agricultural holdings? In particular, to what extent have supported investments facilitated the introduction of new technologies and innovation?

To what extent have supported investments enhanced market access and market share of agricultural holdings?

To what extent have supported investments contributed to an enduring and sustainable activity of agricultural holdings?

To what extent have supported investments contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector?

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| Measure | Improving the economic value of forests (Article 20 (b) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 122 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to increasing the diversification of production of forest holdings?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to enhancing market access and market share of forest holdings, in sectors such as the sector of renewable energy?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed maintaining or enhancing the sustainable management of forests?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to increasing competitiveness of forest holdings?</p> |

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| Measure | Adding value to agricultural and forestry products (Article 20 (b) (iii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 123 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to introducing new technologies and innovation?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to improving the quality of agricultural and forestry products?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to improving the efficiency in the processing and marketing of agricultural and forestry products?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to enhancing market access and market share of agricultural and forest holdings, including sectors such as the sector of renewable energy?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector?</p> |

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| Measure | Cooperation for development of new products, processes and technologies in the agriculture and food sector and in the forestry sector (Article 20 (b) (iv) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 124 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the support enhanced market access and market share for agriculture and forestry primary products through the development of new products, processes and technologies by means of cooperation of product line actors?</p> <p>To what extent has the support contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural, forestry and food sector?</p> |

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| Measure | Improving and developing infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry (Article 20 (b) (v) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 125 |
| Evaluation questions | To what extent has the scheme contributed to restructuring and developing physical potential through the improvement of infrastructures? To what extent has the scheme promoted the competitiveness of agricultural and forestry holdings through the improvement of infrastructures? |
| Measure | Restoring agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters and introducing appropriate prevention actions (Article 20 (b) (vi) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 126 |
| Evaluation questions | To what extent have supported investments contributed to maintain the economic performance of agricultural holdings through the restoration and/or preservation of the agricultural production potential? To what extent have supported investments contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector? |
| Measure | Helping farmers to adapt to demanding standards based on Community legislation (Article 20 (c) (i) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 131 |
| Evaluation questions | To what extent has the support helped farmers to implement rapidly and to respect demanding standards based on Community legislation? To what extent has the support contributed to improving the competitiveness of the supported holdings? |
| Measure | Supporting farmers who participate in food quality schemes (Article 20 (c) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 132 |
| Evaluation questions | To what extent has the support contributed to improve the quality and the transparency of the production process for consumers? To what extent has the support enhanced market access and market share and/or an added value of products for assisted farmers? To what extent has the support contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector? |

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| Measure | Supporting producer groups for information and promotion activities for products under food quality schemes (Article 20 (c) (iii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 133 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the support contributed to increasing the market share of high quality products?</p> <p>To what extent has the support contributed to raising consumers' awareness about high quality products?</p> <p>To what extent has the support contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector?</p> |

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| Measure | Supporting semi-subsistence agricultural holdings undergoing restructuring (Article 20 (d) (i) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 141 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the support promoted enduring structural adjustment of semi-subsistence farms in new Member States?</p> <p>To what extent has the support facilitated the move into the market for semi-subsistence farms in new Member States?</p> <p>To what extent has the support reduced the structural disparity between the agricultural sector in new Member States and the agricultural sector in EU-15 Member States?</p> <p>To what extent has the support contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector in the new Member States?</p> |

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| Measure | Supporting setting up of producer groups (Article 20 (d) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 142 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the support enhanced the adaptation of productions to market requirements in the new Member States?</p> <p>To what extent has the support reduced the structural disparity between the agricultural sector in the new Member States and the agricultural sector in EU-15 Member States?</p> <p>To what extent has the support contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector in the new Member States?</p> |

AXIS II: To improve the environment and the countryside by means of support for land management

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| Measure | Natural handicap payments to farmers in mountain areas (Article 36 (a) (i) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 211 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have compensatory allowances contributed to ensuring continued agricultural land use in mountain areas?</p> <p>To what extent have compensatory allowances contributed to the maintenance of a viable rural community in mountain areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the scheme contributed to maintaining or promoting sustainable farming systems?</p> <p>To what extent has the scheme contributed to maintaining the countryside and improving the environment?</p> |
| Measure | Payments to farmers in areas with handicaps, other than mountain areas (Article 36 (a) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 212 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have compensatory allowances helped in ensuring continued agricultural land use in areas with handicaps, other than mountain areas?</p> <p>To what extent have compensatory allowances contributed to the maintenance of a viable rural community in areas with handicaps, other than mountain areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the scheme contributed to maintaining or promoting sustainable farming systems?</p> <p>To what extent has the scheme contributed to maintaining the countryside and improving the environment?</p> |
| Measure | Natura 2000 payments and payments linked to Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD) (Article 36 (a) (iii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 213 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have compensatory allowances contributed to sustainable land management of Natura 2000 sites?</p> <p>To what extent have compensatory allowances contributed to effective land management in river basin areas affected by the WFD?</p> <p>To what extent have compensatory allowances contributed to safeguarding farming in these areas?</p> <p>To what extent have compensatory allowances contributed to maintaining the countryside and improving the environment?</p> |

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| Measure* | Agri-environment payments (Article 36 (a) (iv) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
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Measure Code 214

Evaluation questions

To what extent have agri-environmental measures contributed to maintaining or promoting sustainable farming systems?

To what extent have agri-environmental measures contributed to maintaining or improving habitats and biodiversity?

To what extent have agri-environmental measures contributed to maintaining or improving water quality?

To what extent have agri-environmental measures contributed to maintaining or improving soil quality?

To what extent have agri-environmental measures contributed to mitigating climate change?

To what extent have agri-environmental measures contributed to maintaining and improving landscapes and its features?

To what extent have agri-environmental measures contributed to improving the environment? Distinguish between the contribution of agri-environmental measures implemented as demanding, site-specific measures and less demanding measures which are widely applied.

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| Measure* | Animal welfare payments (Article 36 (a) (v) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
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Measure Code 215

Evaluation questions

To what extent have the payments contributed to encouraging farmers to adopt high standards of animal husbandry which go beyond the relevant mandatory standards?

To what extent have the payments contributed to increasing welfare compatible animal husbandry?

To what extent have the payments contributed to maintaining or promoting sustainable farming systems?

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| Measure* | Support for non-productive investments (Article 36 (a) (vi) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
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Measure Code 216

Evaluation questions

To what extent have supported investments contributed to the achievement of agri-environmental objectives?

To what extent have supported investments contributed to enhancing the public amenity value of Natura 2000 areas and/or other areas of high natural value?

To what extent have supported investments contributed to maintaining the countryside and improving the environment?

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| Measure | First afforestation of agricultural land (Article 36 (b) (i) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 221 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to create significantly forestry areas in line with the protection of the environment?</p> <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to creating sustainable managed forestry areas which contribute to maintaining the ecological functions of forests and the prevention of natural hazards and fires?</p> <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to maintaining the countryside and improving the environment?</p> |
| Measure* | First establishment of agroforestry systems on agricultural land (Article 36(b) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 222 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have agroforestry systems contributed to increase the production of forestry products of high quality/ value?</p> <p>To what extent have agroforestry systems contributed to creating sustainable managed areas which ameliorate the ecological systems of the areas affected?</p> <p>To what extent have agroforestry systems contributed to maintaining the countryside and improving the environment?</p> |
| Measure* | First afforestation of non-agricultural land (Article 36 (b) (iii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 223 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to create significantly forestry areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to creating sustainable managed forestry areas which contribute to maintaining the ecological functions of forests and the prevention of natural hazards and fires?</p> <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to maintaining the countryside and improving the environment?</p> |
| Measure* | Natura 2000 payments (Article 36 (b) (iv) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 224 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the scheme helped in ensuring continued forestry management in Natura 2000 areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the scheme contributed to maintaining or promoting sustainable management of forestry land?</p> <p>To what extent has the scheme contributed to maintaining the countryside and improving the environment?</p> |

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| Measure | Forest-environment payments (Article 36 (b) (v) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 225 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have high value forest eco-systems been maintained or enhanced by forest-environment payments?</p> <p>To what extent have forest-environment payments contributed to maintaining or improving biodiversity?</p> <p>To what extent have forest-environment payments contributed to maintaining or improving water quality?</p> <p>To what extent have forest-environment payments contributed to preventing soil erosion?</p> <p>To what extent have forest-environment payments contributed to combating climate change?</p> <p>To what extent have forest-environment payments contributed to maintaining and improving landscape and its features?</p> <p>To what extent have forest-environment payments contributed to improving the environment?</p> |
| Measure* | Restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions (Article 36 (b) (vi) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 226 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have the supported actions contributed to restore forestry potential in damaged forests?</p> <p>To what extent have the preventive actions introduced contributed to the maintenance of forests?</p> <p>To what extent have the supported actions contributed to increase the sustainable management of forestry land?</p> <p>To what extent have the supported actions contributed to improving the environment?</p> |
| Measure* | Support for non-productive investments (Article 36 (b) (vii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 227 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to maintaining or promoting sustainable forestry systems?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to enhancing the public amenity value of forest areas?</p> <p>To what extent have the supported actions contributed to improving the environment and maintaining the countryside?</p> |

AXIS III: to improve quality of life in rural areas and encourage the diversification of economic activities

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| Measure | Diversification into non-agricultural activities (Article 52 (a) (i) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 311 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have supported investments promoted the diversification of farm households' activities towards non agricultural activities? Focus the analysis on the most important activities in this respect.</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments promoted additional employment opportunities for farm households outside the agricultural sector?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to improving the diversification and development of the rural economy?</p> <p>To what extent have supported investments contributed to improving the quality of life in rural areas?</p> |
| Measure* | Support for business creation and development (Article 52 (a) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 312 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the support contributed to promote diversification and entrepreneurship? Focus the analysis on the most important activities.</p> <p>To what extent has the support promoted additional employment opportunities in rural areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the support contributed to improving the diversification and development of the rural economy?</p> <p>To what extent has the support contributed to improving the quality of life in rural areas?</p> |
| Measure* | Encouragement of tourism activities (Article 52 (a) (iii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 313 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to increasing tourism activities? Distinguish between activities taking place on agricultural holdings and other activities.</p> <p>To what extent has the measure promoted additional employment opportunities in rural areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to improving the diversification and development of the rural economy?</p> <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to improving the quality of life in rural areas?</p> |

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| Measure* | Basic services for the economy and rural population (Article 52 (b) (i) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 321 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have the services provided contributed to improve the quality of life in rural areas? Distinguish between the different sectors concerned (such as commerce, health services, transport, IT ...).</p> <p>To what extent have the services provided increased the attractiveness of the areas affected? Distinguish between the different sectors concerned (such as commerce, health services, transport, IT ...).</p> <p>To what extent have the services contributed to reversing economic and social decline and depopulation of the countryside?</p> |
| Measure | Village renewal and development (Article 52 (b) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 322 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to improve the quality of life in rural areas? Distinguish between the different sectors concerned (such as commerce, health services, transport, IT, environment ...).</p> <p>To what extent has the measure improved the attractiveness of rural areas? Distinguish between the different sectors concerned (such as commerce, health services, transport, IT, environment ...).</p> <p>To what extent have the measure contributed to reversing economic and social decline and depopulation of the countryside?</p> |
| Measure* | Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage (Article 52 (b) (iii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 323 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the measure maintained the attractiveness of rural areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to the sustainable management and development of Natura 2000 sites or other places of high nature value and to environmental awareness of rural population?</p> <p>To what extent has the measure contributed to improve the quality of life in rural areas?</p> |

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| Measure* | A training and information measure for economic actors operating in the fields covered by axis 3 (Article 52 (c) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
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| Measure Code | 331 |
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| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have supported training and information activities improved the human potential of rural population to diversify their activities towards non agricultural activities? Focus the analysis on the most important activities.</p> <p>To what extent has the knowledge gained from supported training and information activities been used in the area affected?</p> <p>To what extent have supported training and information activities contributed to improve the quality of life in rural areas?</p> |
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| Measure* | A skills-acquisition and animation measure with a view to preparing and implementing a local development strategy (Article 52 (d) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
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| Measure Code | 341 |
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| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent have supported activities increased the capacities of rural actors for preparing, developing and implementing local development strategies and measures in the field of rural development?</p> <p>To what extent have supported activities contributed to reinforcing territorial coherence and synergies between the measures intended for the broader rural economy and population?</p> <p>To what extent have supported activities contributed to improve the quality of life in rural areas?</p> |
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AXIS IV: LEADER

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| Measure | Implementing local development strategies as referred to in Article 62(1)(a) with a view to achieving the objectives of one or more of the three other axes defined in sections 1, 2 and 3 (Article 63 (a) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 41 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the LEADER approach contributed to improving governance in rural areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the LEADER approach contributed to mobilising the endogenous development potential of rural areas?</p> <p>To what extent has the LEADER approach contributed to introduce multi-sectoral approaches and to promote cooperation for the implementation of rural development programmes?</p> <p>To what extent has the LEADER approach contributed to the priorities of axis 1, 2 and 3?</p> |
| Measure* | Implementing cooperation projects involving the objective selected under point (a) (Article 63 (b) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 421 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the support contributed to promoting cooperation and to encouraging transfer of best practices?</p> <p>To what extent have cooperation projects and/or transfer of best practices based on the LEADER approach contributed to a better achievement of the objectives of one or more of the three other axes?</p> |
| Measure* | Running the local action group, acquiring skills and animating the territory as referred to in article 59 (Article 63 (c) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) |
| Measure Code | 431 |
| Evaluation questions | <p>To what extent has the support increased the capacities of Local Action Groups and other partners involved for implementing local development strategies?</p> <p>To what extent has the support contributed to increasing the capacity for the implementation of LEADER?</p> |

Horizontal Objectives and Community Priorities

**Horizontal
Evaluation
questions**

To what extent has the programme contributed to the realisation of Community priorities in relation to the renewed Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs with respect to:

- the creation of employment opportunities?
- ameliorating the conditions for growth?

To what extent has the programme contributed to promoting sustainable development in rural areas? In particular, to what extent has the programme contributed to the three priority areas for protecting and enhancing natural resources and landscapes in rural areas:

- biodiversity and the preservation and development of high nature value farming and forestry systems and traditional agricultural landscapes?
- water?
- climate change?

To what extent has the programme integrated environmental objectives and contributed to the realisation of Community priorities in relation to

- the Göteborg commitment to reverse biodiversity decline?
- the objectives laid down in Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy?
- the Kyoto protocol targets for climate change mitigation?

To what extent has the programme contributed to achieving economic and social cohesion policy objectives with respect to:

- reducing the disparities among EU citizens?
- reducing territorial imbalances?

To what extent has the programme successfully targeted the particularity of the agricultural activities in the programming area with respect to:

- the social structure of the programming area?
- structural and natural conditions of the programming area?

To what extent has the programme successfully targeted the particular situation of the programme area e.g. depopulation or pressure from urban centres?

To what extent has the programme contributed to restructuring and modernisation of the agricultural sector?

To what extent has the programme contributed to further develop high quality and value added products?

To what extent has the programme contributed to promoting a strong and dynamic European agrifood sector?

To what extent has the programme contributed to promoting innovation in the European agrifood sector?

To what extent has the programme strengthened arrangements for partnerships between the regional, national and European level?

To what extent has the programme contributed to the promotion of equality between women and men?

To what extent has the programme ensured complementarity and coherence between the programme measures and actions financed by the Cohesion Fund, the European Social Fund, the European Fisheries Fund and the EAFRD?

To what extent has the programme maximised synergies between the axes?

To what extent has the programme contributed to an integrated approach to rural development?

To what extent has the technical support increased the capacities of the managing authorities and other partners involved for implementing, managing, controlling and evaluating rural development programmes?

To what extent has the European Network for Rural Development contributed to establish good rural development practice?

To what extent has the programme design been successful in avoiding deadweight and/or displacement?

To what extent has the programme design been successful in encouraging multiplier effects?
