LEADER as an object of scientific inquiry: overview on the research on LEADER and CLLD

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“Local” is a concept that has achieved political legitimacy in new national and international programme. Based on the principle of local partnerships between businesspeople, elected officials and voluntary-sector workers to design and implement development strategies, the LEADER approach is intended to exemplify cooperation and subsidiarity among stakeholders and thus contribute to strengthening local democracy.
Most researchers agree that it is innovative (Osti, 2000) has the potential to be transferred to each Member State, since it offers them relative freedom of application and stimulates the INNOVATIVENESS of local stakeholders.

However, any attempt to interpret it – and the whole European rural development policy behind it – in a uniform manner involves a CONCEPTUAL ERROR, given the diversity of local forms and national contexts in which it operates.
The analytical framework of POLICY TRANSFER STUDIES that we have chosen to mobilize, allows us to describe this transfer process by breaking it down into three sequences which constitute the thread of our research approach.
The unfolding of LEADER as a policy

A
Transfer mechanism and institutionalization trajectories of the public action model

B
The LEADER programme as model of institutional transfer: learning from its local implementation in France, Spain and Hungary

C
LEADER-learning by doing
Transfer mechanism and institutionalization trajectories of the public action model
The implementation of the 2014-2021 rural development program has occurred at various speeds in the various countries.

Although a common timetable was proposed by the European Commission, in practice each Member State has considerable latitude in the stages and timing of the design and selection of local development strategies.
Management modalities revealing institutional trajectories?

1/2

Disseminate information
- Central State Services
- Regions
- Local communities

Manages the budget of the program
- State
- Regions
- Local authorities

Develops strategic framework documents
- State
- Regions
- Local authorities

Select the LAGs
- State
- Regions
- Local authorities

For each country, we have identified which actor:

Centralized management
Partially decentralized management
Decentralized management
Delimitation of the LEADER regions and institutional repositioning 2

More than 1800 LEADER regions cover
- almost 40% of the total area of European rural areas
- more than 60% of the rural population.

New Member States have larger LAGs
- Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania have on average 200% larger LAGs than other EU States

Germany and France have the largest number of LAGs; but
- relatively small in size
- they affect only about 60% of the total rural population.

Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom do not cover their overall territory with LAGs
Example of Hungary

• With the exception of Germany, Sweden or Finland, the grid of LEADER regions seems to be subject to the tropism effect exerted by the institutional structures and/or the delimitation of pre-existing intervention.
Adding complexity to the norm: the process of institutionalization

Group 1
- Institutional strengthening

Group 2
- Institutional repositioning with regional centralization

Group 3/4
- Deinstitutionalization in the context of centralized/decentralized management forms
The LEADER programme as model of institutional transfer: learning from its local implementation in France, Spain and Hungary
Actor representation

- The organization of stakeholders within the LAGs originates from a set of provisions aimed at providing this structure with a capacity for action.

| Official and unofficial representation of the three sectors on the Board of the Gévaudan-Lozère LAG (number of members) |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                                   | Public Sector   | Association Sector | Private Sector |
| Official Representation                           | 8               | 8                | 8               |
| Unofficial Representation                         | 13              | 4                | 7               |

Source: Field surveys PHC Gilibert DTAL 2013

| Official and unofficial representation of the three sectors on the Board Zengo Duna Lag (number of members) |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                                   | Public Sector   | Association Sector | Private Sector |
| Official Representation                           | 60              | 76               | 77              |
| Unofficial Representation                         | 91              | 65               | 59              |

Source: Field surveys PHC Gilibert DTAL 2014

| Table 3: Official and unofficial representation of the three sectors on the Board of Pays Cœur d’Hérault LAG (number of members) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Official Representation                                                                                                          | Public Sector   | Association Sector | Private Sector |
|                                                                                                                                  | 12              | 5                | 3               |
| Unofficial Representation                                                                                                       | 12              | 6                | 2               |

Source: Field surveys PHC Gilibert DTAL 2013
In the cases we present LEADER programme is manifested through: “municipalization” of the LEADER programme or Appropriation by local civil society

But doesn’t this compromise the prospect of a genuinely participative democracy? There perhaps lies one of the limits to the transfer of the local development model to rural populations.

Structures built according to rules that are ready to use remain to some extent virtual, and the presence of certain stakeholders or certain municipalities in these structures is over-represented.
Actor network 1/2

A network dominated by the local political elites

Spatial projection of the centrality regarding the Gévaudan-Lozère and Zengo-Duna LAG

Sources: 2013-2014 surveys, DIAL program, Gilibert, Campus France. ©2013-2014, ART-Dev/P. Chevalier/Lala Razafimahela

GAL Zeng-Duna (Hondric)
© J-C. Raymond, B. Chevalier, M-C. Manot, D. Bel, ARTDev/CMR/DEFI/CMIG-11/08/11 - 10/03 - 2012
Sources: Données tirées du cadastre et de la carte de situation APEMI
Actor network 2/2

An integrated network

A network dominated by the economic sector

Spatial projection of the centrality regarding the Pays Cœur d’Hérault and “Pays de Valencia” LAG
C

LEADER- learning by doing
Local development projects as indicators of the mode of local public action mode

- Gévaudan-Lozère and Zengo-Duna LAGS: resource mobilization by a “political leadership”
Local development projects as indicators of the mode of local public action mode

**Agricultural entrepreneurs, LEADER programme’s big winners**

**Tourism associations, LEADER programme’s big “winners”**
Learnings from LEADER implementation

The importance of national level

The local context: the LEADER instrument “resonates” with an area, a local society with its specific social ties, elites and resources.
Conclusion

The importance of participation and expertise in the approach to local development

The success of LEADER partnership depends on the geographical organisation and redistribution of the Resources of the LAG territory
Social capital (people, history, culture, heritage...)
Experience in decentralized and participative governance

The capacity to learn and inspire people to work together and capacity of the LAG actors
Thank you for your attention