Unfolding of LEADER in the new Member States. Greatest challenges and future perspectives -

**SLOVENIA CASE**

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3. LEADER/CLLD 2014-2020
4. CHALLENGES FOR 2021-2027
1. INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND VILLAGE RENEWAL PROGRAMMES 1991-1996
   • Results: 300 projects implemented
   • Issue to address: solving questions only in a small community or a village and no proper knowledge on project implementation

2. REGIONAL RURAL PROGRAMMES 1996-2003
   • combination of development goals of at least three municipalities
   • formal and effective cooperation and networking
   • knowledge of project preparation, finance planning and implementation
   • Results: 19 projects in 118 municipalities,
     20 projects of Wine roads of Slovenia in 76 municipalities
LEADER 2007-2013

33 LAG - EARDF
1 fishery LAG - EFF
97 % territory of RS
94 % rural inhabitants

EAFRD:
1,400+ projects
Paid 30,7 MIO EUR (98% of available funds)

EFF:
20 projects
Paid 2,7 MIO EUR (96,5% of available funds)
LEADER 2007-2013

• LAGs more or less a closed circle of stakeholders, not very much known to wider number of inhabitants – lack of animation
• Municipalities played a disproportionate role
• Projects implemented more or less as investment projects on rural areas
• Less cooperation among different stakeholders and partnership-based approach to rural development
• Lack of an integrated territorial development – rural development should be a complex process with many actors and with economic, social and cultural dimensions
LEADER/CLLD 2014-2020

CLLD Coordination Committee:

- Representatives of EAFRD MA, ERDF MA, EMFF MA, paying agency, intermediate body
- Headquarters: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
- Enables coordination and data exchange between different bodies
- Approval of Local Development Strategies
- Communication to LAGs – one door in for LAGs
- Coordination of national regulation:
  
  Decree on the implementation of community-led local development in the programming period 2014-2020

- Monitoring the implementation of CLLD on a LAG level
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY - SELECTION AND APPROVAL

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food (CLLD Coordination Committee) published a call for the selection of LAG and LDS in 2015

Joint selection procedure for all three funds

• 37 LDS selected by 30th October 2016 = all 37 LAGs multi-fund areas:
  • 33 LAGs – EAFRD, ERDF
  • 4 LAGs - EAFRD, ERDF, EMFF
LOCAL ACTION GROUPS 2014-2020

37 LAGs – entire territory of Slovenia
**LOCAL ACTION GROUP**

Local partnership – organised as a contractual partnership – tripartite structure – none of any single interest group represents more than 49% of the voting rights.

**Eligibility criteria for LAG:**

- Formed in areas with common local needs and challenges, dealing with special geographical and demographic problems.
- A homogeneous geographic and functional area (the area of an individual municipality must not be divided between several LAGs).
- The area has to include between 10,000 and 150,000 inhabitants.
- LAG prepares LDS for entire programming period.
- LAG has to determine the lead partner.

[Diagram showing the tripartite structure including Social sector (natural persons, non-governmental organizations), Economic sector (enterprises), and Public sector (municipalities, public institutions..)]
**LEADER/CLLD IMPLEMENTATION**

**PREPARATORY SUPPORT**

**Purpose of the support:**
- training local interested parties
- studying the area in question
- activities related to the preparation of an LDS, including the advisory services and activities related to consultations with interested parties
- administrative costs during the preparation of the LDS

**Beneficiaries:** LAGs which prepared LDS

**Flat rate support** (funded proportionate by all included funds)
- 20,000 EUR for the confirmed LDS
- 10,000 EUR for the unconfirmed LDS
**LEADER/CLLD IMPLEMENTATION**

**RUNNING COSTS AND ANIMATION**

Funded by lead fund - unique regulations, SCOs

**Purpose of the support:**
- Co-financing running costs incurred during the management and operation of LAGs
- Animation of the LAG area and aid to potential beneficiaries for the development of ideas and preparation of operations

**Beneficiaries:**
LAG

**Conditions of eligibility:**
- costs of animation comprises at least 25%

**Amount of support:**
- LAG may earmark up to 20% of total budget for running cost and animation

**Support rate:**
- Up to 100% of eligible costs
- LAG may claim lower support rate
**LEADER/CLLD IMPLEMENTATION**

**Submeasure 19.2.: SELECTING OPERATIONS**

- **LAG**
  - call for operations
  - precise selection criteria defined in LDS
  - transparent procedure that prevent conflict of interests

- **LAG**
  - operation selection

- **MA**
  - Check on the LAG selection procedure

  - Selection procedure OK => PA/IB checks applications
  - Selection procedure not OK => LAG repeats the selection

- **Selected operations submitted to the paying agency or intermediate body**

- **Paying agency (EAFRD, EMFF)**
  - Intermediate body (ERDF)

- **Final approval**

SLOVENIJA
**LEADER/CLLD IMPLEMENTATION**

**COOPERATION ACTIVITIES OF THE LOCAL ACTION GROUPS**

**Purpose of the support**
Co-finance the costs of LAGs for the implementation of the cooperation activities between LAGs.

**Beneficiaries:**
LAGs from Slovenia

**Partners:**
LAGs from Slovenia or other EU regions or any other public-private partnership from EU area or third countries.

**Support rate**
85% of operations eligible costs (EAFRD/EMFF)
80% of operations eligible costs (ERDF)

**EMFF/ERDF: cooperation activities included in LDS**
**Leader/CLLD Implementation**

**Cooperation Activities of the Local Action Groups/II**

**Amount of support (EAFRD):** 7 million EUR for the entire programming period (+ 3 mio EUR in 2019)

- Lowest amount for support: 5,000 EUR
- Highest amount of support: 100,000 EUR for individual operation per LAG
- Individual LAG can submit more than one application

**Flowchart:**
1. MA publishes a call for proposal
2. LAG submits a cooperation operation to PA for approval
3. PA approves or rejects the application within four months

**4 mio EUR**
- 4 calls: from December 2016 until October 2018
  - 197 applications
  - 20 operations selected
  - Almost 4 mio EUR approved

**Fifth call in December 2019**
- Tendered 3 mio EUR

**Notes:**
- Fifth call in December 2019
- Tendered 3 mio EUR
- 197 applications
- 20 operations selected
- Almost 4 mio EUR approved
LEADER/CLLD – FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION

LEADER is implemented as a part of joint CLLD approach – combination of different financial resources

Financial resources in LDS are allocated for the implementation four submeasures:

- **19.1: Preparatory support** – covered by all in the LDS included funds
- **19.2: Implementation of operations** under the CLLD strategy
- **19.3: Preparation and implementation of cooperation activities** of the local action group
- **19.4: Running costs and animation** – covered by the lead fund
## LEADER/CLLD IMPLEMENTATION
### STATE OF PLAY (30<sup>th</sup> September 2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>funds allocated</th>
<th>selected public eligible costs of operation (% of funds allocated)</th>
<th>payments (% of funds allocated and % of selected eligible costs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EAFRD</td>
<td>ERDF</td>
<td>EMFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Preparatory support</td>
<td>401.663,00</td>
<td>309.169,44</td>
<td>29.168,05</td>
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<td>19.2 Implementation of operations</td>
<td>31.101.622,00</td>
<td>27.782.027,82</td>
<td>5.612.695,96</td>
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<td>19.3 Cooperation activities</td>
<td>3.884.861,00</td>
<td>554.761,16</td>
<td>178.658,00</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.4 Running costs and animation</td>
<td>11.093.666,00</td>
<td>2.032.213,54</td>
<td>840.794,00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>46.481.812,00</td>
<td>30.678.171,96</td>
<td>6.661.316,01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% of total</strong></td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>87%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. New implementation model => three funds in one LDS
   • Complicated approval of LDS => delay in starting the implementation
     ⇒ simple approval procedure
     ⇒ good definition of a LDS structure at the very beginning
   • Coordination on all levels of implementation
     ⇒ good coordination between MAs, paying agencies, intermediate bodies, DGs, LAGs is essential
     ⇒ a coordination body should be established at the very beginning

2. Administrative procedures
   • Complex and different procedures and methods of implementation per separate funds => long control procedures and late payments => big burden of bureaucracy, less resources
     ⇒ unique rules for CLLD – harmonisation of procedures
     ⇒ national CLLD legislation
     ⇒ „lead fund“
   • Different IT systems for administrative procedures
     ⇒ common IT system for all funds
3. Basic LEADER principles and approach
   • Bottom-up approach ≠ principles of „main“ fund interventions

4. Administrative capacity of LAGs
   • Lack of qualified LAG staff - > proper knowledge of all regulations of EU funds implemented in CLLD
     ⇒ appropriate and qualified LAG staff defined at the beginning of the programming period
     ⇒ role of LAGs in the implementation process should be clear at the beginning of the programming period
     ⇒ capacity building for LAGs (constant trainings and communication)

5. Lack of an integrated territorial development – rural development should be a complex process with many actors and with economic, social and cultural dimensions
   ⇒ all EU funds included in CLLD =>“critical mass“ from each fund needed, otherwise no sense
CLLD 2014-2020 - Lessons learned

1. CLLD - strengthening the cooperation between the EU funds
2. CLLD - strengthening the cooperation between MAs
3. CLLD - strengthening the cooperation between LAGs
4. CLLD - strengthening the vertical cooperation between all stakeholders (MA, PA, LAG)
5. CLLD - a possibility and promotion of an integrated territorial and inter-sectoral development
CHALLENGES FOR 2021-2027

• Integrated territorial development - single fund vs. multi-fund approach
• Fully integrated CLLD approach – including ESF
• Simplification of procedures - additionally to SCO methods there is a need to simplify the procedures on all levels
• Moving CLLD from hierarchy to cooperation
• ???
THANK YOU FOR ATTENTION!

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