

Bringing EU to the kitchen tables

Carl Strömberg

Luxembourg

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Context of evaluation

- 48 LAGs in Sweden
- 10 previous evaluations (summative, process, outcome, impacts)
 - No success in quantifying impacts
- Ex post evaluation of Leader 2014-2020
 - Contribution to policy objectives
 - Delivery mechanism
 - Added value
 - External actor (WSP) through public procurement

Assessing added value

Social capital

- Has Leader contributed to strengthening cooperation, communication and cohesion in the LAG areas?
 - If so, has this contributed to increasing the power of local development work?

Multi-level governance

- How has Leader and its implementation affected the collaboration between the local area on the one hand, and the authorities at local, regional and national level on the other?

Enhanced results

- Has Leader produced different types of results than could have been produced through other programs and interventions?

Evaluation approach

- Theory driven evaluation using mixed methods
 - Document reviews
 - Survey
 - Case studies
 - Interviews
- Case studies with semi-structured interview from 8 LAG areas
 - Geographic location in Sweden
 - LAG geographic size
 - Proximity to urban centers
 - Amount of support granted
- LAG were instructed to invite additional stakeholders to represent their perspectives
 - County council
 - Non-profits
 - Private sector
 - Additional LAG members

Evaluation approach

Improved social capital

- Leader strengthens cooperation, communication and cohesion in the areas working with the leader method
 - Cooperation and cohesion in developing LDS
 - Delivery mechanism
 - Results

Improved multi-level governance

- Strengthened cooperation, communication and cohesion contribute to increasing the power of local development work
 - Networks and cooperation

Improved results

- Leader creates different types of results than other programs and efforts
 - A different form of implementation of the EAFRD

Social capital

- a) How has trust and confidence been affected?
- b) How has cooperation and cohesion been affected?
- c) What significance has the work with a joint strategy had for trust and cohesion?
- d) The creation of the strategy - have you experienced that you were tightly controlled from above (from the MA)? How much freedom have you had in the design?
- e) What has been most important to you in your development of social capital?
- f) Is the effect on the development of social capital the same for the entire leader area or does it vary within the area?
 - a) Have the project owners/groups mainly been those who already have strong cohesion, or have they also reached the parts of the countryside where such a community did not already exist?
- g) Has there been many new project owners?
 - a) Are there many Lag-owned projects?
- h) Do you perceive that the understanding of EU has increased? Say, in terms of bringing EU to the kitchen tables?

Multi-level governance

- a) How has the long-term cooperation between stakeholders at different levels (horizontal and vertical) been affected? (non-profit, public and private actors).
- b) What does multi-level governance mean for local development?
- c) Within the leader area? Between other leader areas?
- d) Experience of cohesion?

Enhanced results

- a) Has the implementation of Leader during this period led to results that would not have been possible had it not been for Leader? ie, compared to if it had been carried out using some other method/by someone else?
- b) And collaboration - bringing actors together - would it have worked without a leader?
- c) Are you given more time than a calendar year to complete?
- d) Does the initiative survive after the end of the project? Does the collaboration survive after the end of the project?

Key findings

- Leader's main added value is the strengthened local social capital.
 - The strengthened local social capital takes place throughout the implementation, from the development of the local strategies to the concrete results that the projects create.
- The development of the LDS is important for local cooperation
 - Important factor in strengthening local trust and social capital.
- A different form of implementation of the EAFRD creates other (better) results.
 - Due to orientation of the work, small scale and collaboration
 - Leader can create a different form of innovativeness than other efforts, i.e. social innovations or social entrepreneurship