



EVALUATION OF LEADER APPROACH IN FINLAND (PRINCIPLES & GOVERNANCE)

Sari Rannanpää

GPW5 Assessing the added value of Leader
Luxemburg 23-24 November 2023

EVALUATION OF LEADER APPROACH (PRINCIPLES & GOVERNANCE)

- Mainland Finland RDP 2014 – 2020
- October 2018 – December 2019
- External evaluation by MDI Public and Ruralia Institute / University of Helsinki
- Main focus: **balance and interplay between the Leader principles and the governance model** ('Leader chain'), **activities and results of LAGs**
- Evaluation approach: qualitative
- Data collection principle: 360 degrees
- Data collection methods:
 - Desk analysis (documents and indicators)
 - Observation
 - 38 semi-structured interviews
 - 1 focus groups (16 participants)
 - 6 surveys (LAG managers, LAG governing body members, regionalised MA, regional stakeholders, municipal leaders and decision-makers)

LEADER PRINCIPLES

Principle	Definition	Evaluation criteria
Area-based approach	The LAG operates on a certain area and the activities are based on the LDS	Importance of the strategic approach for the Leader chain and stakeholders and in the project selection
Bottom-up approach	The decision-making related to drafting and implementing the LDS belongs to the LAG	LAG decision-making power as perceived by the Leader chain and stakeholders
Local partnership	The LDS includes private and public sector actors. The governance body is tripartite.	LAG membership is diverse Governing body composition is tripartite Perceived importance and realisation of tripartism
Integrated and multi-sectoral strategy	The local development strategy integrates development actions covering several sectors	Several strategic spearheads & goals Funded projects by sector and type Perceived importance of multi-sectorality
Networking	The LAG cooperates and learns from experiences with different actors, sectors, projects, and areas	LAGs' new & old cooperation partners Perceived importance and realisation of networking
Innovation	The LDS and the funded projects aim at renewing / creating something new in the area	Innovativeness in the LDS, activation and project selection Perceived importance and realisation of innovativeness
Cooperation	The LDS is implemented in cooperation with other areas/regions and countries	Cooperation in the LAG projects (participation, role in the project) Perceived importance of interregional and transnational cooperation

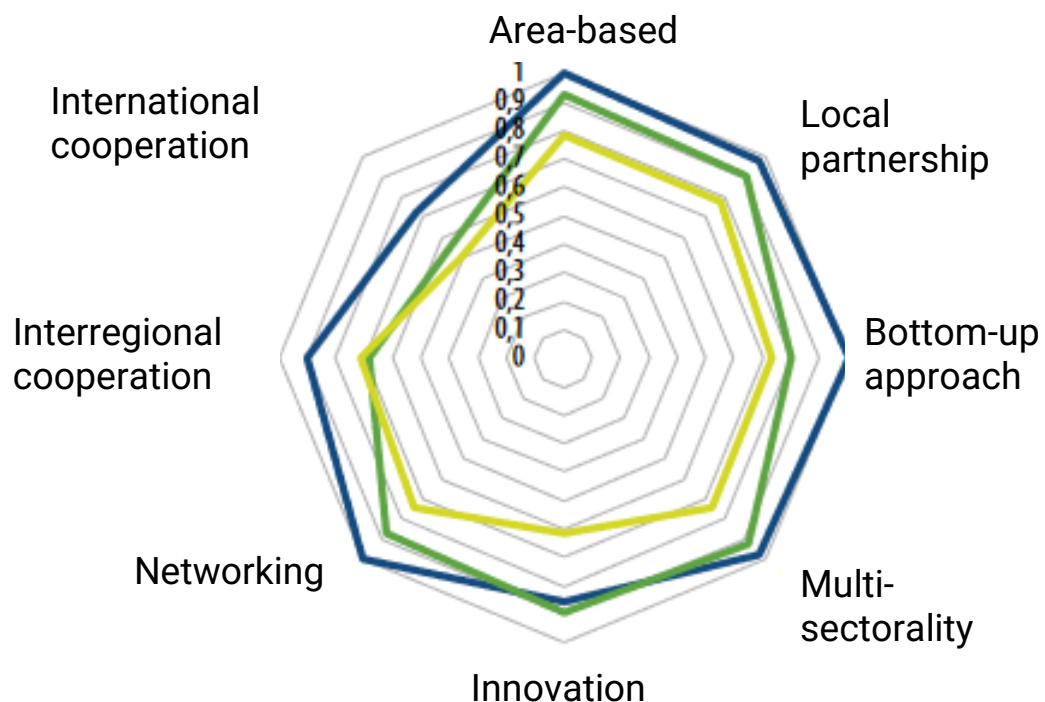
EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Evaluation questions	Evaluation criteria	Data source
<p>What is the added value of the Leader principles on local development?</p>	<p>The Leader principles contribute to the results of the LDS and create additional benefits (in comparison to grant-funding not administered locally and strategically)</p>	<p>LAG annual reports Surveys Interviews Focus group</p>
<p>To what extent does the Leader governance model support the realisation of Leader principles and the added value of Leader?</p>	<p>Governance model: how the LAG operations and LAG-funded projects are organised (roles & tasks). Do they support the realisation of Leader principles?</p> <p>Division of labour is clear Competences of organisations are the same in theory and practise Cooperation perceived positive</p>	<p>Regulations, RDP, LDS, quality manuals LAG and intermediate body annual reports Surveys Interviews Focus group</p>

LEADER PRINCIPLES

How essential are the LEADER principles?

% of respondents with responses 'fully agree' and 'agree'



- LAG managers (N=41)
- LAG governing body members (N=144)
- Regionalised MA (N=73)

Differing nature of the LEADER principles

STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES

GOAL-ORIENTED PRINCIPLES



- Networking adds value through multiplier and long-term effects. Internal and external networking also reinforce the innovative character of Leader activities.
- Added value can be enhanced by reinforcing the implementation of the dynamic principles (networking, innovation and cooperation).

FINDINGS & LESSONS LEARNED

- The Leader governance mechanism supports many of the Leader principles
 - Especially networking and cooperation
 - Some principles have a legal base (e.g. tripartism)
- There is a tension between some of the Leader principles and the governance mechanism
 - Area-based development, multi-sectorality and innovation
- The added value of Leader could be enhanced by reinforcing the principles of **innovation, networking** and **cooperation**

“The Leader approach will survive under the current governance mechanism but will not flourish or create added value with its full potential.”



THANK YOU!

Publication:

Maaseutuohjelma 2014-2020 – Leader-toimintatavan arviointi

[Evaluation of the Leader principles and administrative model in the Mainland Finland RDP 2014-2020]

Rannanpää, Sari; Pyykkönen Sinikukka; Koivisto, Aleks; Ranta, Tommi; Pylkkänen, Päivi, and Hyyryläinen, Torsti
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (2020)

[HTTP://URN.FI/URN:ISBN:978-952-366-020-5](http://urn.fi/urn:isbn:978-952-366-020-5)

NORDEVAL

sari.rannanpaa@nordeval.eu