

EUROPEAN  
EVALUATION  
HELPDESK  
FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



# REPORT

## TARGETED DATA MANAGEMENT FOR EVIDENCE BASED EVALUATION OF RDPs 2014- 2020

GOOD PRACTICE WORKSHOP,  
BORDEAUX 5- 6 DECEMBER 2016

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The Evaluation Helpdesk is responsible for the evaluation function within the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) by providing guidance on the evaluation of RDPs and policies falling under the remit and guidance of DG AGRI's Unit C.4 'Evaluation and Monitoring' of the European Commission (EC). In order to improve the evaluation of EU rural development policy the Evaluation Helpdesk supports all evaluation stakeholders, in particular DG AGRI, national authorities, RDP managing authorities and evaluators, through the development and dissemination of appropriate methodologies and tools; the collection and exchange of good practices; capacity building, and communicating with network members on evaluation related topics.

Additional information about the activities of European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development is available on the Internet through the Europa server (<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>).

# REPORT

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## SUMMARY

The Good Practice Workshop (GPW) “Targeted data management for evidence based evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020”, which took place on 5 - 6 December 2016 in Bordeaux, France, aimed at providing a forum for the discussion and exchange of practices used in different RDPs in 2014-2020. The workshop was hosted by the Region Nouvelle Aquitaine and was well attended by more than 60 participants.

This Good Practice Workshop provided a forum for Managing Authorities, Paying Agencies, LAG-representatives, data providers and evaluators, to:

- **discuss the approaches** for data management in RDPs 2014-2020;
- **exchange on the availability and quality** of the data to be used for the AIR to be submitted in 2017 and beyond;
- **reflect about potential data gaps** and bottlenecks in data management in order to find solutions to overcome them.

For this purpose, case studies from France, Finland, Italy, Austria and Denmark were presented.

The participants highlighted that **good data availability and data quality** is essential for evidence-based assessment of the programme effects. Adequate data should be collected in order to **apply robust evaluation methods** capable of sufficiently evaluating RDPs’ interventions and identifying their net effects.

Developing an **own strategy**, which further implements the minimum legal requirements, could enable the **efficiency and cost-effectiveness** of RDP’s data management.

To this extent, monitoring systems should **capitalise on past experiences** and be **integrated with other databases** in order to be responsive for evaluation purposes in a timely fashion. At the same time **cooperation** between data providers (i.e. Paying Agencies, statistical offices, etc.) and data users (Managing Authorities, LAGs and evaluators) needs to be ensured.

## 1. SETTING THE FRAME

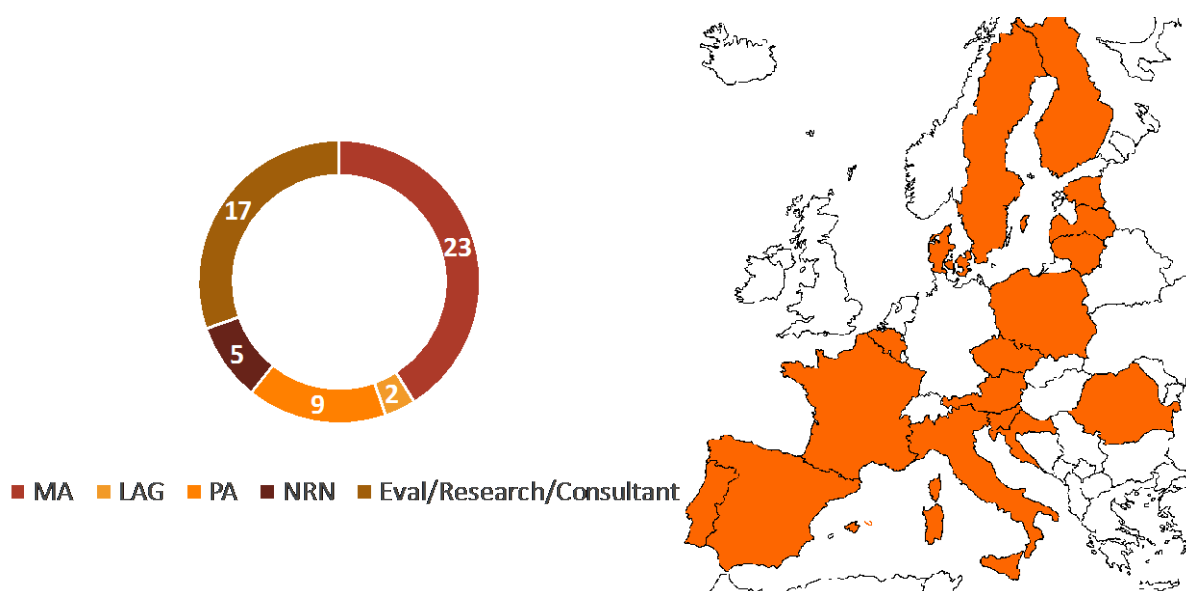
### 1.1 Introduction

The Good Practice Workshop “Targeted data management for evidence based evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020”, organised under the lead of the Evaluation Helpdesk in collaboration with local organisers and the hosts Nouvelle Region Aquitaine, was opened by Hannes Wimmer (*Team Leader of the Evaluation Helpdesk*) who welcomed the participants and thanked the host and explained the relevance of this Good Practice Workshop on data management in view of reporting in 2017.

Hannes presented the structure of the [European Network for Rural Development](#) within DG Agriculture and Rural Development, highlighting the objectives and activities of the Evaluation Helpdesk according to art. 54.2 d of Reg. 1305/2013. Hannes stressed the importance of guidance documents, good practice workshops, and training events.

An overview of the workshop participants is shown in the figure below:

**Figure 1.** Participants of the Good Practice Workshop in Bordeaux by country and role



Hannes went on to explain the [agenda](#) of the two day GPW and introduced the moderators, Mathilde Vukovic Geographic expert for France and Andreas Resch Evaluation Advisor and Geographic expert for Austria.

### 1.2 Warm up for participants: the priority sort exercise

Andreas introduced the first exercise “**What is most important in data management for evaluation?**”. Participants were grouped around tables and asked to rank 9 issues which may be important for data management for evaluation (by using the ‘diamond nine’ template, see Annex):

- Ensuring sufficient financial and staff resources
- Setting up agreements with data providers
- Ensuring the quality of collected data
- Improving data flows to evaluators



- Finding solutions to establish control groups
- Managing peaks and workload
- Developing a data management plan for evaluation
- Providing training to relevant actors
- Developing cost-efficient IT solutions

*The moderators asked the audience for comments on the exercise (e.g. was it difficult to find consensus in the group? Are the issues relevant and was it possible to bring them into a logical order?). Participants agreed that the exercise was conducted in fair agreement and consensus.*

The outcomes of this exercise showed that “**Ensuring the quality of collected data**” was deemed to be the most relevant issue for data management. “**Developing a data management plan**”, “**Ensuring sufficient financial and staff resources**” and “**Developing cost efficient IT solutions**” were also considered important factors for the effective functioning of a data management system<sup>1</sup>.



### 1.3 Data management for evidence based of RDPs 2014-2020: new requirements and use of data collected at EU level

*Vincenzo Angrisani (Good Practice Manager of the Evaluation Helpdesk) presented, on behalf of the DG Agri – Unit E.4, a brief introduction on “Data management for evidence based evaluation of 2014-2020 RDPs: new requirements and use of data collected at EU level”.*

As for the EU legal requirements the presenter emphasised the importance given by the Regulation and its implementing acts to the **operations database**, the **evaluation plan** and the **beneficiaries**, highlighting both the novelties and what was confirmed since the last programming period.

Regarding the first, it was noted that the **Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework** (and its impact indicators) is now **covering both Pillars of the CAP**. The obligatoriness of an evaluation plan for

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<sup>1</sup> For detailed outcomes see [Annex 1](#)

RDPs and the **introduction of the enhanced AIRs in 2017 and 2019** in place of the Mid-term evaluation.

The legal framework still foresees a Common Monitoring and Evaluation System for the RDPs with common indicators, guidance services provided by the Evaluation Helpdesk and an ex post evaluation for all programmes. After this introduction, the presenter briefly announced the SFC and the tables to be filled by June 2017 for showing evidence of results.

DG Agri also illustrated its expectations on the use of data, underlining, on the one hand, the **importance of indicators as a critical tool for adapting the implementation of the programme** and, on the other, that of the **evaluation as an important source of information regarding the success of the EU's 2020 strategy**<sup>2</sup>.

Finally, the presentation provided food for thought for the participants: they should reflect during the the GPW on challenges they faced in data management, the best use of existing groups (e.g. PANTA RHEI) and possible modification/simplifications of the SFC reporting template.

*After the presentation, the following comments/clarifications were raised.*

#### **Enhanced AIR submitted in 2017**

Although transitional arrangements could be taken into account for assessing the RDP so far, providing robust results in the enhanced AIR submitted in 2017 appears to be challenging due to the low uptake of RDPs and, therefore, also expensive since, according to art. 54 of Reg. 1303/2013 it must be performed by an independent evaluator. Moreover, regarding the collection of data, the role of the NRN in data management (e.g. on LEADER; HNV) needs to be further investigated.

#### **Data access**

Comments were made by participants regarding the possibility of making SFC data available and accessible. Some representatives of MAs underlined that in their respective Member State, practices of public access to data are already in place (e.g. France).

>>>Link to the [PPT](#)

## **1.4 Overview about data management in RDPs 2014-2020: provisions and activities in the Member States**

*Presenting "Data management in RDPs 2014-2020: provisions and activities in the Member States – lessons from EP and 2016 AIR screening", Andreas Resch illustrated the link between Evaluation Plans and Annual Implementation Reports as that between provisions and implemented activities on data management.*

The screening of the provisions contained in EPs showed that in 95% of the 115 screened documents, **no specific explanation** was provided **regarding the data management system** to be put in place. Moreover, as far as data sources are concerned, most RDPs were pointing to existing agri environmental and socio economic data sets. Regarding data gaps overcome, solutions, quality assurance approaches and use of data for counterfactual were reported only a few times. Some progress could be noted in relation **to e-governance process** (e.g. use of indicator fiches, agreement on collaboratons, etc.).

As for the screening of section 2 of the 2016 AIRs (that related to data management activities) 73% of documents did not report any activity, while those reporting mostly concentrated on the **preparation and running of the operations database**.

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<sup>2</sup> in 2018 the EC will submit to the EU Parliament and the Council a report on the implementation of the CAP.





All in all, it can be concluded that although the **introduction of obligatoriness of an Evaluation Plan** has been a good starting point to develop data management strategies, the implementation of provisions still differs significantly between RDPs. **A general lack of information regarding the financial resources** employed on the data management system must be noted.

>>>Link to the [PPT](#)

*After this round the moderator introduced the case study presentations session for the first day.*

## 2. SHARING EXPERIENCES: FIRST DAY

### 2.1 ODR a resource center for policy assessment

*Eric Cahuzac, from the Observatoire du Developpement Rural (ODR), presented the monitoring platform used in France for the gathering of data on payments for Pillar II of the CAP, the combining of cartographic, social and economic data in view of the assessment of RDPs.* The platform is funded by EAFRD as part of the National Rural Network Programme and is based on an agreement between the French Ministry of Agriculture and the Paying Agency valid until 2020 (joined by 8 other partners).

The platform works as a **main database for payments** of all RDPs' measures, integrating additional databases (as MSA and LPIS) and providing a collection of data maps (e.g. less favoured areas, natural parks, employment zones, etc.). The platform also aims at preparing and facilitating data use by evaluators in the context of short timescales to conduct evaluations.

The database is built on **free and open source** software consisting of a database management system, a web 2.0 technology and IT developments to manage the data. The platform is **structured around 5 principles**:

1. The wide use of metadata;
2. The traceability chain along the process;
3. The management of the data warehousing;
4. The compliance with the legal framework;
5. The coordination of suppliers' feedbacks.

Moreover, the data are processed in a way that ensures their quality through the support of tools, such as, charts and guidelines.

In particular, the presenter highlighted the role of the platform in providing info on the coverage rates of agri-environment-climate measures in Natura 2000 areas in the AIR 2016: it proposes a **common methodology** for all RDPs for guaranteeing the **calculation of the related indicator** and comparable and consistent results and trends.

Finally, the ODR platform complies with data protection rules based on an anonymisation of personal information collected directly from beneficiaries.

#### **An interface with the managing authorities of regions**



Such a system helps to avoid scattered data and methods for producing robust outcomes and assessing results in a coherent and consistent way across the different RDPs

#### **Combine data at relevant territorial levels**

The combination of data guarantees the construction of relevant indicators such as on land use, peri



urban agricultural patterns or sustainable agriculture for targeting related measures

After the presentation, the following comments/clarifications were raised:

### Quality of data

To ensure the quality of data coming from farms, no defined process is ongoing. All data are treated and “cleaned” just after their collection. It should be noted that the Observatoire du Développement Rural (ODR) relies on the national Paying Agency to collect data on payments and operations supported by RDPs. In that respect, the ODR is not directly involved in the creation of operations related data.

### Indicators

Additional indicators can be defined by the French Ministry of Agriculture, by the MAs and/or the evaluator/s (e.g. area based indicators). This collaborative process (with research institutes) was put in place for establishing impact indicators and related methodologies

### Coordination

Although France is experiencing for the first time regional RDPs, and therefore some problems may occur (e.g. consistency of data), however, MAs can still access and extract data. To this purpose, ODR has signed an agreement financed under the TA measure with the Ministry of Agriculture until 2020. Moreover, Region Aquitaine is coordinating at the national level a Technical Group on M&E (GTSE) in charge of tackling specific issues related to data management and analysis.

>>>Link to the [PPT](#)

## 2.2 Gathering and presenting evaluation data in Finland

*Sari Honkola and Tuija Riukulehto, from the Finnish Agency for Rural Affairs (MAVI), introduced the participants to Hyrrä, an e-service for management of payments of Pillar II, and Vipu, an e-service dedicated to applications for farmer support.*

The presenters stressed the importance of the data exchange layer in their database put in place in November 2015 for facilitating the **creation and collection of coherent information** in a secure and standardised environment. It is crucial to this extent that there is cooperation between authorities.

The Finnish case also showed how data are gathered for the purposes of evaluation: in particular, data are assessed once a year according to the given set of indicators in order not only to gauge effects, but also to **adjust the Programme**.

This case study suggested that the whole process must be based on good quality data. Identification of data from farmers and other beneficiaries may for instance be critical to avoid double counts. Apart from affecting variables such as human errors, when it comes to collection and management of good quality data, a major challenge was encountered in the establishment of common definitions.

A special introduction on the data collected at the level of LEADER was also given. Presenters explained that different indicators at different levels are used (underlining the importance of **tailored indicators for LAGs**) together with self assessment activities and peer review, in order to evaluate LAGs’ activities and eventually the allocation of resources.



### Common definitions

Defining a common vocabulary is crucial for ensuring good quality data and avoiding (mis)interpretations of figures and unclear or uneven results



### Importance of cooperation among institutional actors

Guaranteeing the involvement and commitment of all relevant institutional actors in the process can minimise the gaps and enhance the quality of the data collected

*After the presentation, the following comments/clarifications were raised:*

#### **Data collection**

Most data are collected from the beneficiaries (e.g. Ministry of Social Affairs). Altogether 80% of the information used for the evaluation of the RDP comes from the MAVI system. Those data are made available to all interested actors (including LAGs) through free access on the extranet.

>>>Link to the [PPT](#)

### **2.3 Big Data Monitoring for European Funds: Tuscany Case Study (IT)**

*Stefania Bove, from ARTEA illustrated the system in place in the Tuscany RDP.* Starting from the experience of the 2007-2013 programming period and its lessons learned, some adjustments were made to the actual system. In particular, the 2007-2013 system was driven by a strategy based on the use through web services, the involvement of stakeholders in its setting, an internal service agreement and trained and skilled staff.

An assessment of the database, conducted via a survey and interviews, highlighted that major improvements were needed to structure data in a more coherent way (which could be **available on time in an immediate way for a broader scope** than those relating only to financial and conformity matters) and a system - based on a business balanced scorecard representing also users, internal processes and learning/growth perspectives - that could be provided through automatic tools.

These needs were challenged by the fact that **big data cannot be processed and stored in a traditional way**: it requires a process of breaking down in order to collect mappable information, for instance, time series, events, networks.

Therefore, the new system - developed according to a 7 step process roadmap during which the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, all costs, risks and technical opportunities were taken into consideration – has been, finally, designed to create automatic reports, which include references to key performance indicators (KPIs).

### Involvement of stakeholders



Given the legal requirements set in art. 70 and 71 of Reg. 1305/2013, it is important that stakeholders participate in developing the system so as to raise their awareness and ownership, and the efficiency of the data management

### Use of new technologies

New technology products can enable gathering and processing more precise data

*After the presentation, the following comments/clarifications were raised:*

#### **Linking data to SFC**

Although the process of defining the system is still ongoing, currently **to link the data collected at the RDP level to the SFC system is very demanding**. This relation must be considered case by case



according to the different measures and the requirements changes across different programming periods. This effort should be reduced with the new system, using ETL procedures and Data Dictionaries.

>>>Link to [PPT](#)

## 2.4 Data management for evaluation of ÖPUL 2015

*Johannes Kneissl, from Agramarkt (AMA), presented the data management system established for the ÖPUL Programme. The ÖPUL Programme represents 40% of the Austrian RDP's budget and covers 85% of its area. This programme further covers those measures foreseen by Art. 28, 29, 30 and 34 of EU Reg. 1305/2013 (agri-envi-climate, organic farming, Natura 2000 and animal welfare).*

The system is run through the **collaboration of different actors at different territorial levels** (Paying agency, delegated bodies as livestock breeding associations, agricultural chambers) and takes advantage of IACS and other data sources, which are then included in an oracle database. Although centralised, it is based on an **integrated administration** grounded on a digital application process, which enables the use of service and information platforms.

In order to make information more useful, data analysis stemming from databases are **complemented by on spot checks and additional information**. This information is later translated into alpha-numeric evidence and GIS representations. The latter are processed by skilled staff.

Finally, given the **integration with other databases**, the system enables a lot more possibilities, which helps to solve data access problems for the purpose of evaluation.

### **Skilled staff**



The continuous training of staff involved in the data management process represents a key issue for ensuring a smooth and efficient practice

### **Big data**

Evaluating RDP measures requires a large amount of data. Adequate and up to date systems can enable the storage, transfer and computing of this data in a proficient manner

*After the presentation, the following comments/clarifications were raised:*

### **Data quality**

Agreement with delegated bodies (providing input on the quality and relevance of info) is crucial in order to confirm data in the system. Data must be consistent with the requirements set in the system info. Overall administrative checks are conducted to ensure quality. Moreover, in order to ensure the quality of information collected, the Paying Agency checks 5% of farmers on the spot. Beyond the contract signed with delegated bodies, who provide inputs to the system, a data privacy policy has been defined and has to be respected by all involved bodies



## Improvements

The system has improved since last programming period, taking advantage of the outcomes of an assessment performed. Such an improvement not only guarantees the better calculation of payments, but also free access and insertion of additional specific data, needed for evaluation (e.g. on biodiversity)

>>>Link to the [PPT](#)

## 3. DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS

### 3.1 Reflection round on the case studies

*After the presentations, the moderators introduced the working group exercise. Participants were asked to split into groups according to the following topics:*

1. *Managing big data and developing e-government systems*
2. *Development of data hubs and data exchange systems between different information systems*
3. *Collecting quality monitoring data during the project cycle*
4. *Developing operational evaluation concepts in conjunction with data needs*
5. *Matching of data sources to create reliable control groups for counterfactual evaluation*
6. *Collecting data for CLLD/LEADER/LAG evaluations*

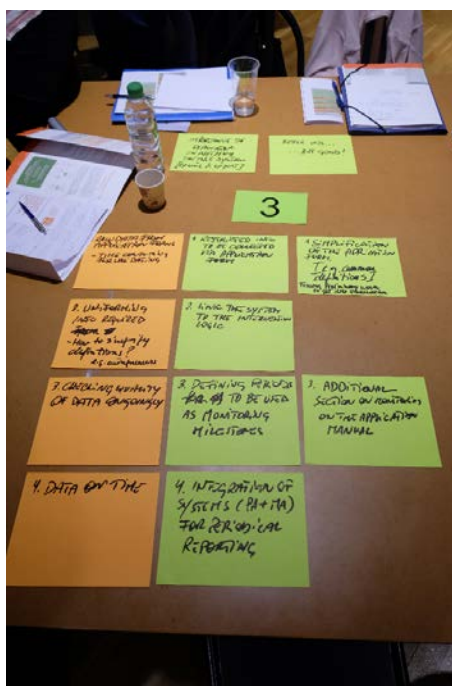
The outcomes of the exercise were presented by each group on the second day.



## 4. INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND DAY

### 4.1 Outcomes of day 1 working group

Andreas Resch and Mathilde Vukovic introduced the second day of the workshop by welcoming the participants. Later rapporteurs from each group described challenges and solutions found for each given topic<sup>3</sup>.



## 5. SHARING EXPERIENCES: SECOND DAY

After having listened to the outcomes of the exercise from day 1, the moderators passed the floor to the speakers of the second day who continued to present further experiences about data management for evaluation in RDPs 2014-2020.

### 5.1 Data management for the evaluation of a local development strategy

Günther Salchner, from LAG Ausserfern, explained the Tyrolean system for assessing the CLLD approach, which consists of EAFRD and EFRD (IWB). Since 2004, the LAG has been running a **freeware own system** that collects information regarding, inter alia, payments, *de minimis*, and results and generates reporting tailored on specific needs, guaranteeing a digital process that connects information from the project level (LEADER-CLLD) to the Programme (national level) and ensures its completeness through checklists.

As far as the evaluation of CLLD strategy is concerned, the presenter clarified that this system allows for the **comparison between projects based on output indicators** in a tailored, consistent, simple and efficient manner.

<sup>3</sup> To see the detailed outcomes of the exercise § [Annex 2](#)



This allows not only for a cross-project, but also a **cross-programme assessment** of the effects of the CLLD approach in Tyro

#### **An integrated development approach**



Such an integrated approach must be mirrored at the programme management level. This is pivotal for properly monitoring and assessing the Local Development Strategy and its contributions to the RDP

#### **Methodological approach**

Given the burden of having different rules for the different ESI Funds, the methodological approach of a CLLD data management system must be discussed and agreed among all parties

*After the presentation, the following comments/clarifications were raised:*

#### **Use of output indicators**

Collecting info for different LAGs and ensuring the transmission from the local to the national level, this system is mainly based on cross cutting output indicators (e.g. number of jobs created). When data are collected through application forms, their quality is guaranteed by the request of accompanying documents (e.g. a social insurance certificate).

#### **Impact assessment**

An impact model for further assessing local strategies has been developed. This consists of a light version of an intervention logic. Nevertheless, its use has never been compulsory since the approach chosen tends to be conservative (focusing on operations) rather than providing forecasts (based on expected effects).

>>>Link to the [PPT](#)

## **5.2 PROMIS - data management designed for LEADER**

*Lea T. Kvistgaard, from KVEA presented PROMIS – the Project Result Oriented Management Information System (PROMIS) applied in Denmark as an integrated solution to manage the application and selection process of LEADER-supported projects, and carry out the monitoring and evaluation of LEADER at two levels: RDP and CLLD Strategy. The operations database is equipped with a web-based central server sharing data in real time among three main actors:*

- 1. Project applicants/beneficiaries** have access to PROMIS only for filling the required data into the project application form, and to interchange with the LAGs and Managing Authority about the project selection results;
- 2. LAGs** have open access to all data and information related to the applied and approved projects by the CLLD Strategy, as well as to their outputs and results;
- 3. The RDP Managing Authority** has open access to data and information related to the LAG's projects, as well as to the outputs and results of all CLLD Strategies.

The development of this operations database started in June 2014, under the support of the Danish Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Development (now Ministry of Business and Growth), and in joint collaboration with several experts (LAG managers, evaluators, and IT systems engineers). In 2015, PROMIS was delivered to all 26 LAGs selected in Denmark, and via the provision of specific training and demonstration sessions. At the current stage (winter 2016), the operations database is widely used by the Danish LAGs mainly as a **tool for applying, selecting, and monitoring the LEADER-supported**



**projects**, in terms of e.g. financial commitments and expected output and results. As the module containing the beneficiaries' end reports and payment claims has not yet been launched by the MA, realised effects have not yet been registered and its evaluation features and functions are therefore not yet fully implemented.

The presenter highlighted that PROMIS was created to embrace the bottom-up characteristics of LEADER and **assist all stakeholders involved**, from the project application phase to the final evaluation of LEADER. This assistance helps in relation to the individual local development strategies, as well as for self-standing measures of the rural development programme. Listed below are the main functions of PROMIS:

1. Data collection through the project application and end reports / payment claims.
2. Support to decision-making process of project selection.
3. Transfer of selection results among stakeholders.
4. Guidance for reporting the project results.
5. Assessment of the LEADER effects at RDP and LAG level.
6. Reporting monitoring and evaluation results.

#### **Tailored made approach**



Although compliant with the legal requirements, an ad hoc approach is the most suitable for picturing the reality of a LAG and its operations' effects. This system also additionally provides data useful at the programme level

>>>Link to the [PPT](#) Developing solutions

### **5.3 Reflection round on the case studies**

*After the presentation of the case studies, Andreas Resch and Mathilde Vukovic invited the participants to brainstorm about steps and actions to undertake and/or to avoid, when setting up a data management system for evaluation.*

Participants highlighted the importance of **pooling data and overcoming legal restrictions on data access**, possibly achieved through **agreements among all relevant stakeholders**.

In particular, **Paying Agencies** seem to play a special role when it comes to **guaranteeing the collaboration with other actors** (e.g. evaluators, other data providers) and the **quality of data collected**.

Setting up **integrated working groups** (including research institutes) for the definition of **additional indicators** appears also to be crucial in order to set up an **efficient and reliable data management system** and better target RDP's needs.





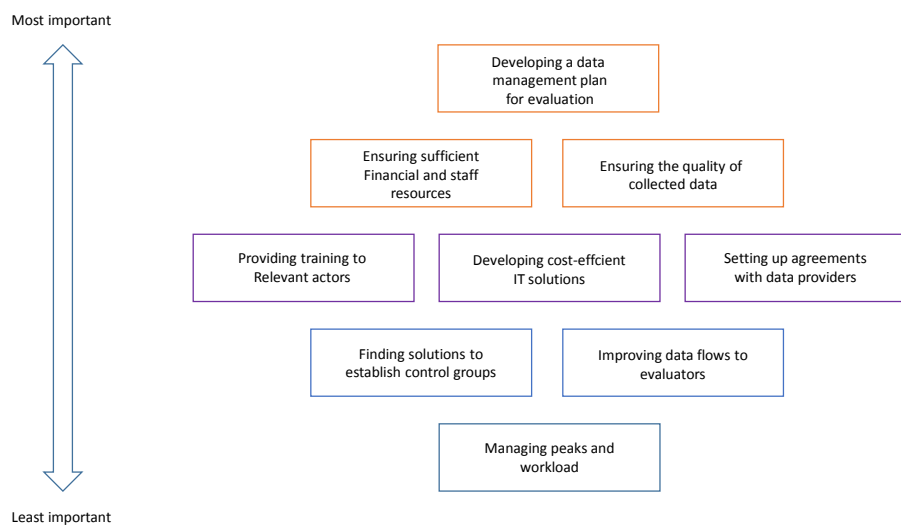
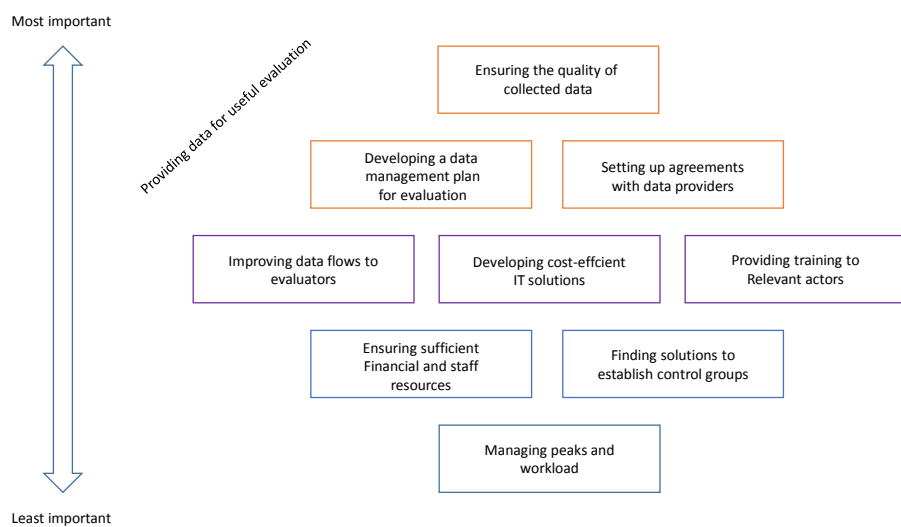
## 6. LESSONS LEARNT

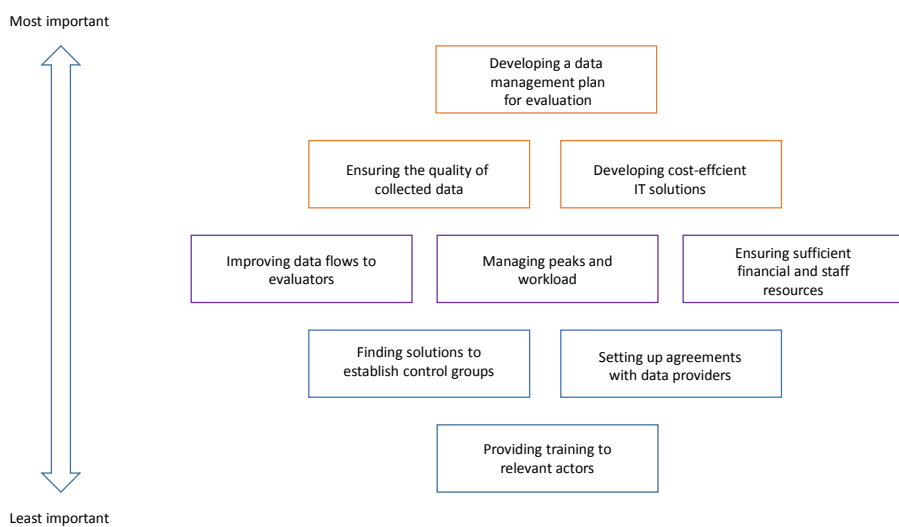
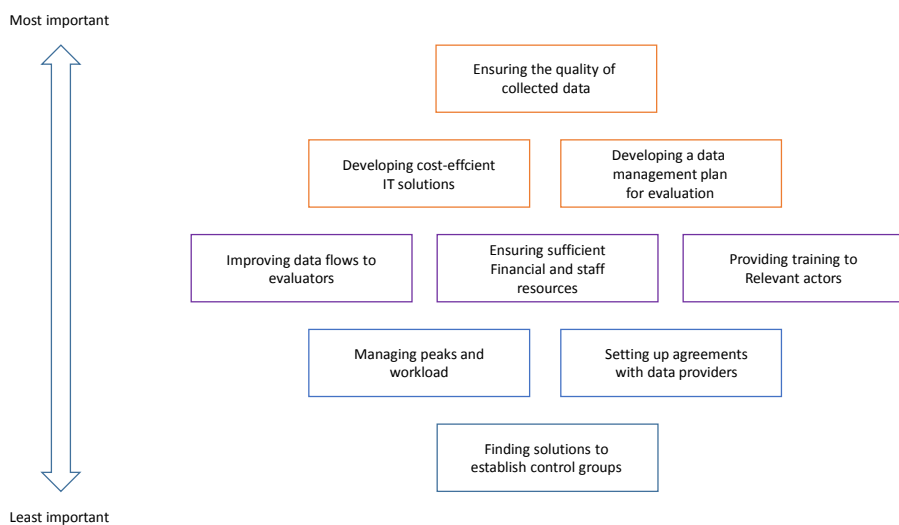
The overall lessons learnt from the two day workshop can be summarised as follows:

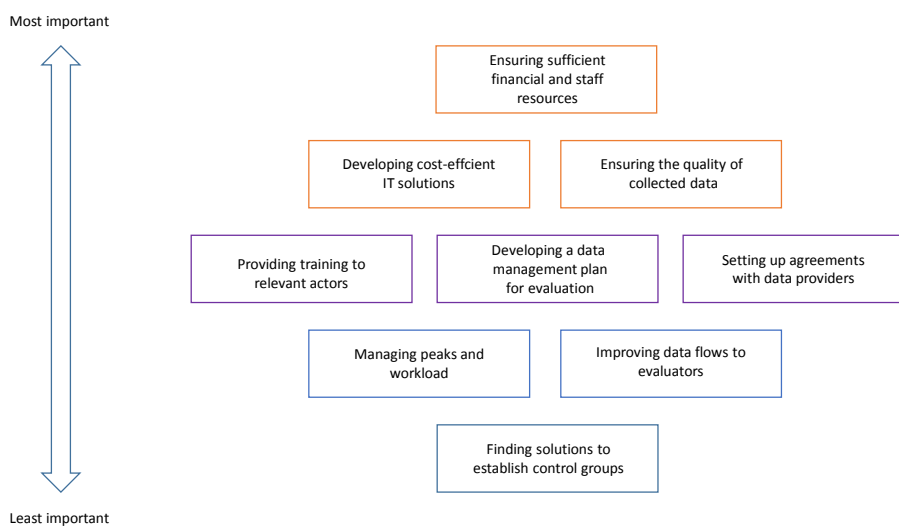
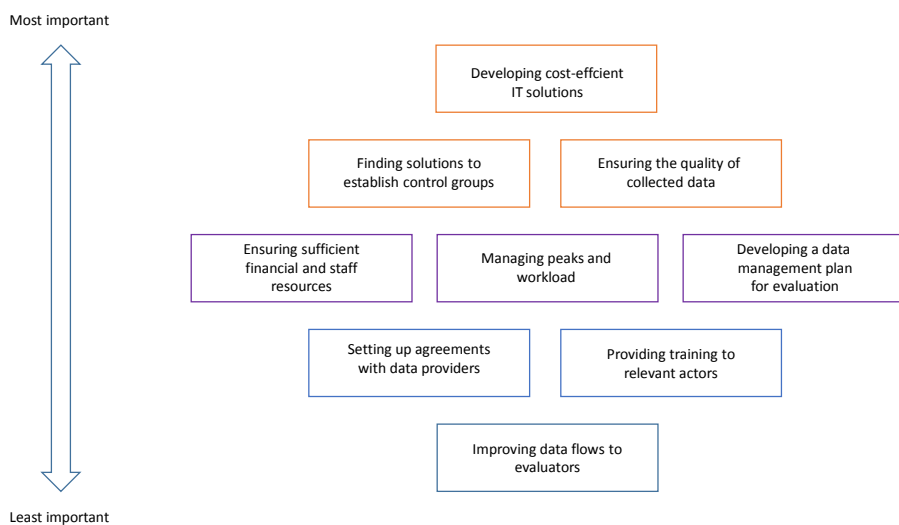
1. The Evaluation Plan is a good starting point to **develop data management strategies**, though their implementation is sometimes at stake, due to **financial and human resource constraints**. Capitalising from past experiences, hence, and **involving all relevant stakeholders** (including the evaluator) appears to be a crucial step in developing cost effective IT solutions (e.g. e-gov);
2. **Agreement and cooperation** among the actors involved in data management is a key factor for sharing a common understanding on definitions, ensuring the commitment of providers and collecting data of high quality from beneficiaries. In this sense, the use of **non monetary benefits** could empower the awareness and commitment of the latter, enhancing the **construction of reliable control groups for a robust counterfactual**;
3. Although data management systems must be **compliant with the legal requirements**, it is important to define a **tailored made approach**, which supports the proper assessment of the RDP. Designing an own system, with own indicators, appears particularly fundamental for the **evaluation of LEADER/CLLD and its contribution to the Programme**;
4. Data management systems dealing with **big data** require **skilled staff**. Staff needed for running **high tech softwares/tools** require continuous training. To this extent, planning in due time allows for the **detection of HR gaps** and, eventually, finding cost effective solutions;
5. Finally, in order to ensure an evidence based evaluation of the RDP, the **integration** of all databases available and guaranteeing their **public access** through means of **open source, freeware, and new technologies** will facilitate the timely delivery of satisfactory evaluations. The suggested integration of different databases may require the adoption by all relevant bodies (MAs, data providers, evaluators, research institutes, etc.) of data privacy rules or technical solutions.

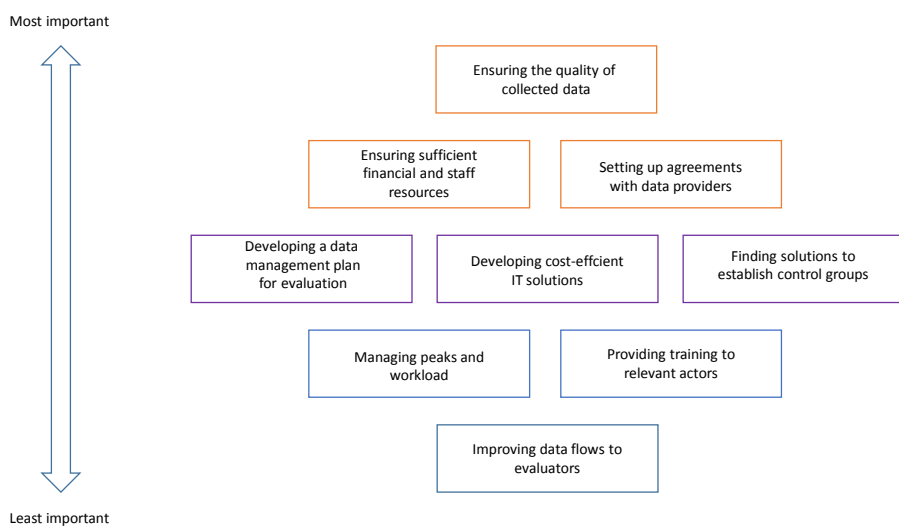
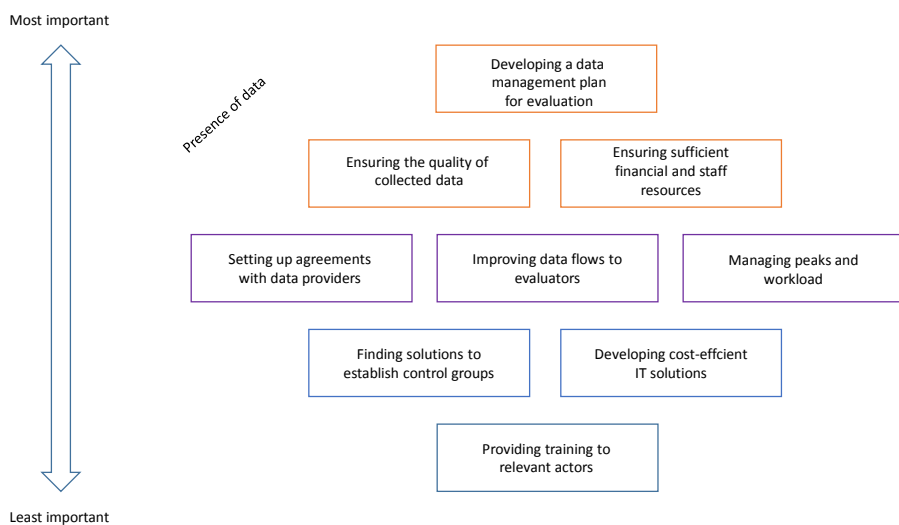
## 7. ANNEXES

### 7.1 Annex 1: Outcomes of the “priority sort” exercise









## 7.2 Annex 2: Outcomes of the working group exercise on Day 1

The following table reports in the orange column the challenges and in the green one the solutions identified by the participants per group.

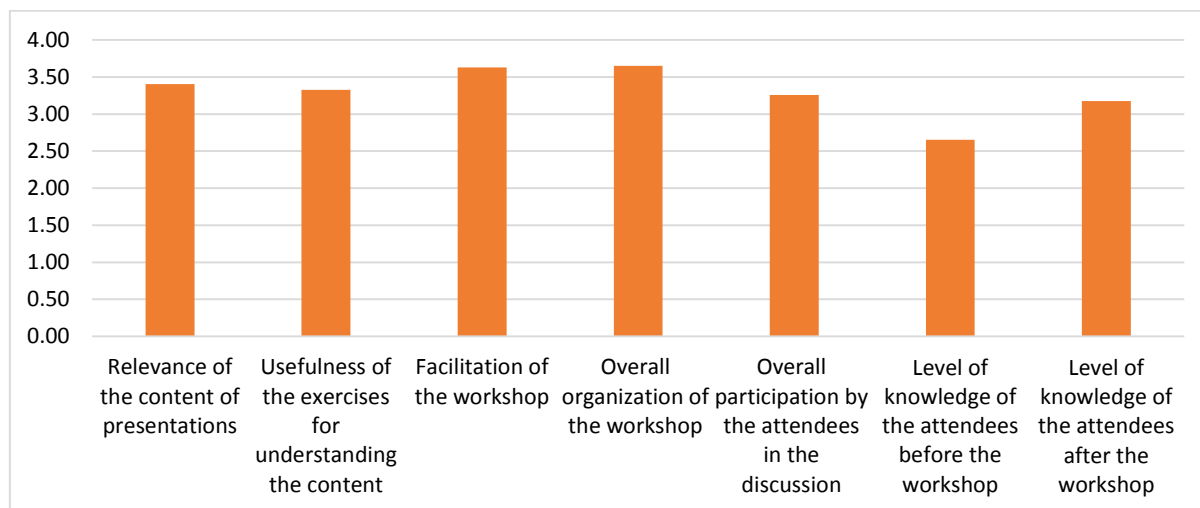
<b>Managing big data and developing e-government systems</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Administrative burden for beneficiaries</li> <li>• Centralize the relevant data into one database</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data dictionary</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid starting from zero: add &amp; build on the system to meet data needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer all necessary data in a new database</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining data sources when the beneficiary has not been asked key information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with other data providers (agreements with other organisations; web service)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to extract data collected through application forms &amp; administrative control (for evaluation purposes; to fit into the indicators)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a new database as flexible as possible</li> </ul>
<b>Development of data hubs and data exchange system between different information systems</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now the problem is no longer technical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is more: financial (+ HR); political (agreements of reciprocity sharing of files); good identification of needs; anticipated calendar (development of IT solutions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freshness of information (not for administrative info)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross referencing of databases, surveys</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences of identification number for the same farm or enterprise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common ID or other solution</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing and access of micro data for individuals or confidential data (including postal addresses or emails)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special agreement with identification of the user, use and dissemination of information of results</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used by whom? For what?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An administrator or the information system in charge of access management and dissemination</li> <li>• A commitment from the user</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meta data for administrative information (not for social economic statistics)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fact sheets: dictionary; how to use, to save, to manage the info</li> <li>• Normalization</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compatibility between units of measure and definitions of indicators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common technological information sheets</li> </ul>
<b>Collecting quality monitoring data during the project cycle</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of evaluator in assessing the M/E system (ex ante and ex post)</li> <li>• The less the better</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw data from application forms (time consuming for validating data)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted info to be collected via application forms</li> <li>• Simplification of the application form (e.g. common definitions)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing uniformity to the info required (how to simplify definitions?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link the system to the intervention logic</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checking the quality of data in an ongoing process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining periods to be used as monitoring milestones</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional section on monitoring on the application manual</li> <li>Integration of systems (PA + MA) for periodical reporting</li> </ul>
<p><b>Developing operational evaluation concepts in conjunction with data needs</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical departments are committed</li> <li>Evaluators were contracted</li> <li>MA pursues it strongly</li> <li>Time is available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operational evaluation concept is internal; covers all submeasures, evaluation questions and indicators; takes account of secondary contributions, is based on primary and secondary databases, useful for counterfactual</li> </ul>
<p><b>Matching of data sources to create reliable control groups for counterfactual evaluation</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand expectations of DG AGRI in terms of assessment of net impacts</li> <li>In all cases is it recommendable to do a counterfactual (e.g. in case of CLLD)?</li> <li>How do we build a control group that includes a diverse group of beneficiaries?</li> <li>How to deal with many different types of beneficiaries when constructing control groups?</li> <li>When to construct the control group (at programme start or ex post)?</li> <li>Timeline challenge when applying counterfactual evaluation (e.g. young farmers application are restricted in time by definition)</li> <li>Access to beneficiary data between PA and delegated bodies</li> <li>Is the counterfactual assessment the only way to calculate the net impact?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involvement of the PA: request specific data when the last payment request (control sample)</li> <li>Paying non beneficiaries to provide information for control groups (non monetary benefits)</li> <li>Connecting FADN and PA data</li> <li>Compare beneficiaries and non beneficiaries at a small scale (e.g. for environment; Axis 3)</li> <li>Using macro-models for assessing net impact of socio economic interventions</li> <li>Concentrate on specific and main measures</li> <li>Increase FADN sample for creating a control group</li> <li>Using FADN for assessing modernisation and young farmers (e.g. Poland ex post evaluation)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collecting data for CLLD/LEADER/LAG evaluation</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difference between RDP level evaluation and LAG level evaluation</li> <li>Added value of LEADER: which data?</li> <li>Not possible to capture the value of 1 project</li> <li>How to capture non economic effects?</li> <li>Capture intangible effects</li> <li>Design one stop shop for data collection in case of multifunding</li> <li>What data should be collected at LAG level (indicators defined at LAG or national level)?</li> <li>What data can be aggregated?</li> <li>Administrative burden at the LAG level</li> <li>How to isolate LEADER from external influences</li> <li>How to assess the LEADER method</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring LAGs together and define the indicators with evaluators</li> <li>Bring knowledge together from guidelines, evaluators</li> <li>More qualitative information/indicators</li> <li>Define common indicators (economic indicator, culture, social, etc.)</li> <li>LEADER does not create jobs: help to create the conditions (define indicator for that)</li> <li>Find strategic themes</li> <li>Rescue basic principles instruments from past versions of LEADER</li> </ul>

### 7.3 Participant's Feedback – Summary

This section provides a **brief note of the 43 filled feedback forms** related to the Good Practice Workshop “*Targeted data management for evidence based evaluation of Rural Development Programmes 2014-2020*” that took place on 5-6 December, 2016.

#### Overall assessment



#### Strengths

<b>Approach and methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity of presentations and points of view, solutions, approaches</li> <li>• Challenges and solutions in different topics related to data management for evaluation presented by participants</li> <li>• Very good idea to let participants work in small groups</li> <li>• Working table Comparison of the different models of evaluation</li> <li>• Discussions</li> <li>• Topics of the reflection round</li> <li>• Reflection round in order to share the experiences of Member States</li> <li>• Time to react after presentations</li> <li>• Useful brainstorming to build solutions for common problems</li> <li>• Full scale approach to data sets</li> </ul>
<b>Presentations and case studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations on case studies were very useful</li> <li>• Good and interesting case studies (specifically on LEADER)</li> <li>• Very good presentations from different countries and aspects</li> <li>• Very actual and timely topic</li> <li>• Dissemination of cases studies</li> <li>• Insight in how other countries organise their data management</li> <li>• Ideas for an own management system</li> </ul>





<b>Trainers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experts as facilitators of discussion</li> <li>• Facilitation of the good practice workshop</li> </ul>
<b>Composition of evaluation stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed profiles participants</li> <li>• Variety of participants</li> <li>• Good practice of all participants (PA, MA, ministry, LAG, other) Different experiences</li> <li>• Many different point of view from many countries</li> </ul>
<b>Networking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact with participants</li> <li>• Sharing experiences</li> <li>• To know other experiences and discuss about solutions</li> <li>• Best practice exchange</li> <li>• Possibility to exchange experiences with all actors involved in the evaluation system with different point of view</li> <li>• Chance for networking</li> <li>• Possibility to confront with other participants</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation and atmosphere</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule (beginning and end of workshop allows same day travel) Good and well prepared organisation</li> </ul>

### Weaknesses

<b>Preparatory material</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Material and presentations should have been sent before. That would help following and preparing questions</li> </ul>
<b>Approach and methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not a good distribution between tables</li> <li>• Presentations should not exceed 15 minutes and leave time for discussions Lack of time to discuss the experience of the participants</li> <li>• More time for discussion of group works</li> <li>• Break up group in the middle of presentation</li> <li>• Tasks for working groups should be more based on examples from real, everyday life than theory</li> <li>• One issue, which is difficult to fit into one-day is the contribution of data and evaluation forms. The "big picture" is important, but obviously that requires more time</li> </ul>
<b>Presentations and case studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of presentations (some)</li> <li>• Some presentations on case studies were not fully linked to evaluation, while rather to monitoring</li> <li>• The content of some presentations should have been much more focused and targeted to the main theme of the workshop</li> <li>• Mostly about monitoring, output and input data. But not about evaluation data. However, this is what we need for AIR submitted in 2017</li> <li>• Some presentations were too complex</li> <li>• Lack of detail in the Evaluation Helpdesk presentations. For example, it could have been interesting to learn about what were in the AIR 2016 of others Managing Authorities instead of having just figures</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too focused in data management systems oriented to monitoring. The linkage to the evaluation needs was rather poor</li> <li>• Lack of good practices to address some key issues for example control groups, quality check, projects results)</li> <li>• Figures about how much cost the information system (in € and human resources): development, implementation and useful</li> </ul>
<b>Trainers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitation of the workshop could be better</li> </ul>
<b>Composition of evaluation stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less participant of NRN</li> <li>• Local actors and particularly LAGs</li> <li>• Absence of some Member States</li> </ul>
<b>Representation of the Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Commission representatives</li> </ul>
<b>Networking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was not the possibility to talk with everyone, but I hope to participate in the next meeting</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation and venue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The time was not respected</li> <li>• Some speakers were not clear</li> <li>• Not stable WIFI</li> <li>• Coffee break food (no sandwiches, only sweets)</li> </ul>
<b>Timing of the event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bad time, better not to organize in December, difficult to come from everyday work</li> </ul>

**Other comments**

<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanks you for everything! Great job!</li> </ul>
<b>Approach and content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This kind of workshop could go deeper in qualitative expectations of DG AGRI or taking examples of AIR of Evaluation Plan otherwise we never get the information</li> <li>• Some context, general introduction/objectives of presentations would have helped us to enter the world of data management</li> <li>• Have some breaks in the sessions</li> <li>• More group work on: webs, information systems, apps, forms and data solutions</li> <li>• Monitoring the rural areas should be a priority, more than monitoring of the RDP</li> <li>• How to find good practices (in order to share and disseminate it on request of DG AGRI or ENRD) in the big data system</li> </ul>
<b>Composition of evaluation stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other actors involved in the rural development could take part in the future meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation and venue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use recyclable paper for printouts</li> <li>• Tap water and non disposables</li> <li>• Next meeting should be in a rural area</li> </ul>

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