

Bridging the funding periods: What FLAGs and the MA need to do

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Pedro Brosei, FARNET Support Unit

Need to re-assess strategies

- a changing local development context
- a new legislative framework
- Changes in the FLAGs themselves

Is the overall strategic direction still appropriate?

Are the criteria and procedures for project selection still relevant?

Is the partnership working well?

Is the approach to working with project promoters and the broader community delivering the desired results?

(Self-) Evaluation activities????

Self-evaluation

- Self-evaluation tools

**FARNET Guide #15: Evaluating CLLD -
Handbook for LAGs and FLAGs**

Assessing FLAG performance

- **FLAG governance:** values, attitudes, membership structure of the governing bodies, internal communication, budgeting, time management, the board's roles and skills, the manager/coordinator's roles and skills, capacity building/training;
- **FLAG staff:** staff members' roles and skills, personnel development and motivation, health and well-being, capacity building/training;
- **Project animation processes:** animation and outreach activities, information and advice to applicants, assistance to project development, support to promoters during project implementation;
- **Administrative and financial processes:** the organisation of calls, project evaluation and decision-making, payments, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, communication with the MA and PA;
- **Partnership and networking:** public, private and third sector partners and their roles; the division of work/roles between the partner organisations; territorial, national, European and international networks and cooperation.

[FARNET Guide #11: Results-oriented CLLD in fisheries areas: Factsheet 5](#)

Example for assessment of performance



The Finnish MA²¹ has defined a number of key indicators of animation activities of LAGs (they also apply to FLAGs). For the 2014-2020 period these include the:

- *number of own animation events organised;*
- *number of participants (men/women) in the own animation events;*
- *number of animation-related presentations in events organised by someone other than the (F)LAG;*
- *number of participants (men/women) in events organised by someone other than the (F)LAG;*
- *number of self-evaluations and external evaluations carried out;*
- *number of press articles on (F)LAG projects and animation;*
- *number of visitors to the (F)LAG web page;*
- *number of followers of the (F)LAGs social media pages;*
- *number/share of new project applicants;*
- *number of applications transferred to other funding providers;*
- *number of new(F)LAG partners;*
- *number of (F)LAG members (men/women/organisations).*

LAGs and FLAGs had to establish targets for these indicators at the beginning of the programming period and they have to report on them periodically to the MA.

All the Finnish LAGs, supported by the National Rural Network, carried out (in 2013-2014) a Quality Management System planning process, which looked at the following four areas:

- *LAG management;*
- *LAG staff;*
- *Animation and internal processes;*
- *Partnership, networks and resources.*

LAG boards discuss progress across these areas at least once a year, identify strengths and weaknesses, and agree activities to improve the LAG performance. FLAGs can also set quantitative targets, for instance on application processing time or communication.

Peer-to-peer evaluation



In Sweden, frustrated by the poor quality of external evaluations, which did not provide concrete tools to further develop their activities, a number of LAGs decided to join forces and carry out a peer-to-peer evaluation using a method called “learning circle of colleagues”.

They started with a first meeting of managers, chairmen and administrators, over two half-days (lunch to lunch), facilitated by a process leader. During this meeting they agreed on the common questions and focus of the analysis.

The next step involved two-day visits, with manager of LAG A visiting LAG B, manager of LAG B going to LAG C, etc. The visits involved meetings with the LAG members, project promoters, public authorities, etc., and a joint reflection on the common questions.

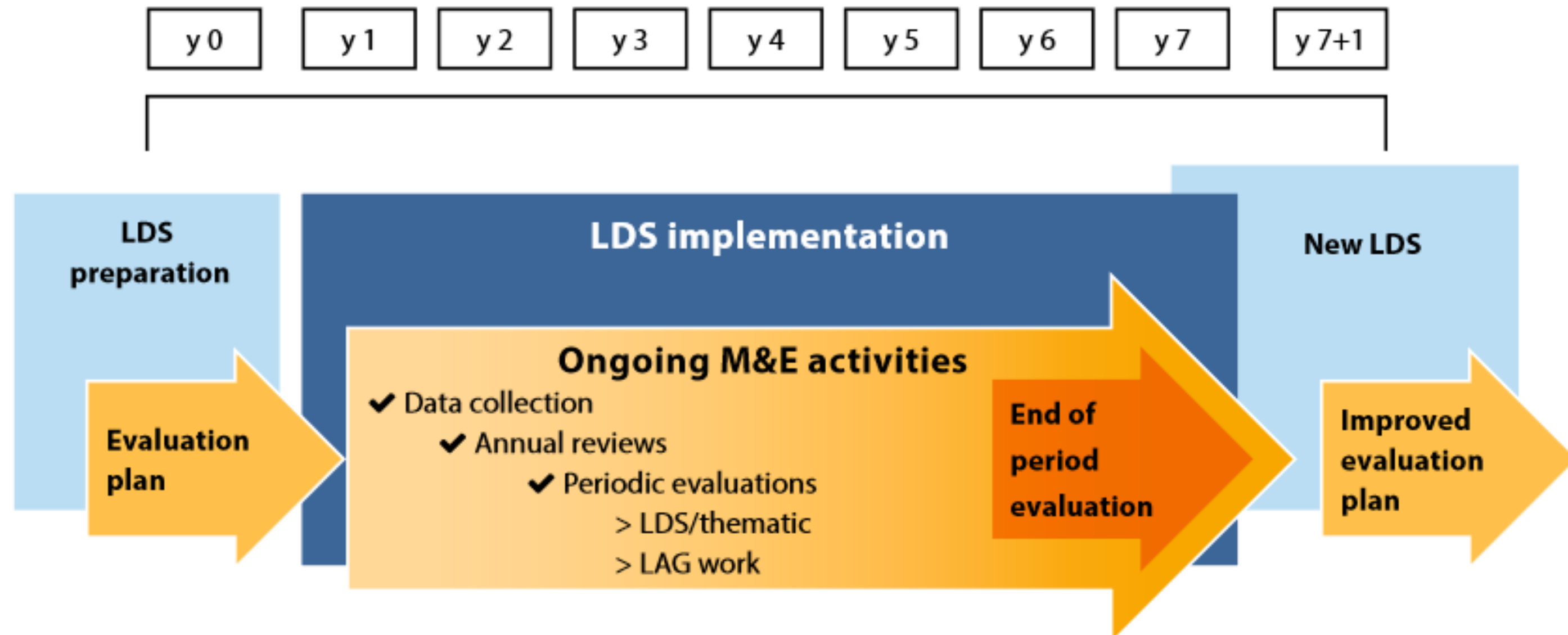
The questions addressed included for instance:

- What are the methods of dialogue with citizens?*
- How do you disseminate information?*
- How do you work to engage young people?*
- How can you link your local strategy to a regional strategy (if it exists)?*
- How do you collect and use local ideas without killing initiative?*
- How do you work with the multifunding approach in CLLD?*

The visiting LAG managers noted the findings in a diary. At the end of the process there was another facilitated meeting to report and reflect on what had been learned. A written report of the process (which takes between three and six months in total) can be the basis for further analysis and reports.

The success of evaluation depends on your preparation!

Proposed timeline for planning and implementing a LAG evaluation



Questions for reflection

- What methods and tools do you use to assess the performance of your FLAG?
- What areas of FLAG activity do they cover? What do you expect to learn?
- Would your FLAG be interested in a peer-to-peer evaluation process with your neighbouring FLAGs?
- If yes, what would you like to discuss with them?

Support by MAs to self-evaluation and positioning of FLAGs

Managing authorities support FLAGs in their evaluation activities

Swedish FLAGs identified evaluation as one of their main needs in preparing for the next period, but most of them had only very limited funding to contract external evaluators, so the Swedish Board of Agriculture (managing authority for both Leader and Axis 4) decided to intervene. A long-term evaluation process was launched in February 2014, when two representatives per FLAG were invited to a workshop on evaluation needs analysis and skills acquisition. This workshop also helped to assess what worked and what did not, and how all the links in the delivery chain can build on this experience in the new period.

Approximately €19 000 from the Technical Assistance budget for the period 2007-2013 was allocated to this evaluation exercise by the Swedish Board of Agriculture. An additional €3 800 was also used to support an evaluation of the FLAG network, which was set up by the FLAGs in 2012 in preparation for a more formal networking process in the next period.

In **Estonia**, the managing authority contracted an external company to carry out an evaluation of FLAG strategies in early 2014. In March, the national FLAG network organised an intensive workshop on the evaluation results and training on how to prepare the new local strategy. Since the autumn of 2014 FLAGs also have the option of requesting assistance from the evaluation company in preparing their strategy. The total cost of the project was around €15 000 as indicated by the network.

In the **Spanish** region of **Galicia**, the regional government also commissioned an evaluation of all the Galician FLAGs. This evaluation took six months and involved a participative process of interviews and working group discussions in each FLAG area. Each FLAG received a report of the evaluation of their area, and the final overall report. The total cost of the evaluation process amounted to around EUR 50 000².

Source:

[FARNET Magazine n° 11: Designing the future \(2007-13\)](#)

Facilitating FLAG positioning in Finland

The Finnish managing authority (MA) has been talking to FLAGs about its plans for the future since 2012, when a meeting was organised by the MA and national network to discuss the overall shape of the future Axis 4, areas it should cover, and issues FLAGs would like to address in their strategies. During this meeting, three working groups were set-up, focusing on: (1) FLAG area definition and the selection procedure; (2) FLAG administration, strategy content and eligibility criteria; and (3) FLAGs' value added to local development. One of the conclusions of this meeting was that FLAG strategies in the future should also focus clearly on the economic development of fisheries.

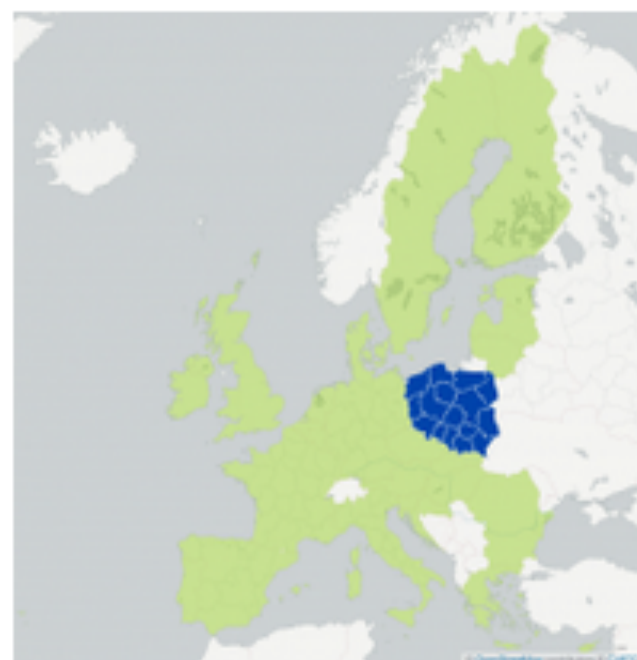
The MA organised another preparatory meeting, to which it invited all eight Finnish FLAGs, as well as two potential FLAGs from fisheries areas not previously covered by Axis 4. The existing FLAGs covered their own cost of participating in this meeting, while the potential FLAG's costs were covered with funding they received from the MA towards preparing their strategies. The MA has also supported the process of strategy preparation by providing FLAGs with feedback and suggestions for improvement on their draft strategies submitted in May 2014. The formal call for strategies is planned for November 2014.

Improving communication and participation

- TOOLS FOR FLAGS TO ENSURE THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The use of preparatory support

- Eligible from 1 January 2021
- Use of a flat-rate (Simplified cost option)



Simplifying preparatory support in Poland

30/11/2015

Poland , Governance

Polish FLAGs can choose from two flexible support options to prepare their local development strategies. Both options have benefited from a simplification and streamlining of the process of activating preparatory support.

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Results-oriented strategies



Results-oriented CLLD in fisheries areas

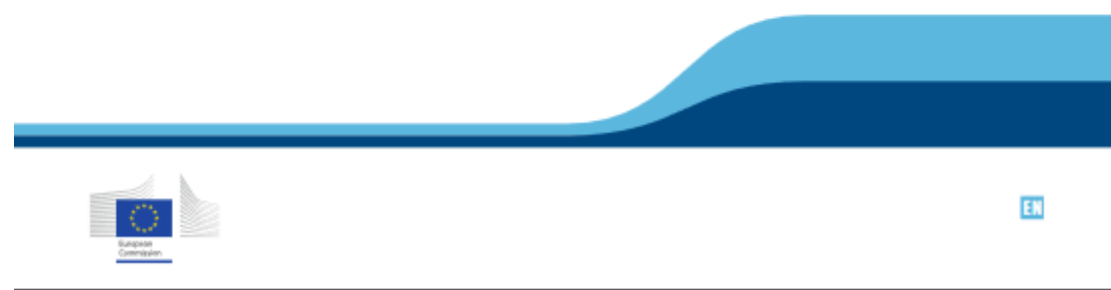


- All actors involved in implementing EU programmes must be mindful of the need to plan, deliver, measure and demonstrate results.
- The “intervention logic” explains the links between the needs of the area, the strategic objectives, the results, indicators, targets, the information that has to be collected and analysed, and activities on the ground.

MA level: Effective delivery system



Delivering CLLD effectively
A guide for EMFF Managing Authorities



- Programming CLLD with a clear vision for an efficient delivery system:
 - Designing the delivery system
 - Selection of FLAGs and strategies
 - Selection and approving operations
 - Implementation and payment
 - Reviewing, evaluating and improving the delivery system

Bridging the gap on MA level

Mentținerea FLAG-urilor în acțiune între

perioadele de programare: helping to safeguard the local dynamic and credibility built up by the FLAGs and ensure funds are quickly available for new projects in the new period.

2015	
April	Call published for FLAG candidates for the 2014-2020 period (2007-2013 FLAGs still operational)
June	8 FLAG candidates submitted
July	7 of the 8 candidates approved and preparatory support foreseen for preparing their strategies
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 local development strategies submitted • National Operational Programme adopted
December	Payment of preparatory support transferred to the 7 FLAGs that developed a strategy
	End of eligibility of FLAG running costs for 2007-2013 period
2016	
January	Approval of the 7 FLAG strategies
February	7 FLAGs contracted and running costs delivered (50% of first year's running cost budget) and management rules and procedures for FLAGs finalised
June	First calls for projects published
July	200 projects received by the 7 FLAGs
September	115 projects selected by the 7 FLAGs
October	First round of projects (99) formally approved by Galicia for implementation
2020	
First half	Preparations for the next period (starting in 2021) expected to start
end December	FLAG running costs and operational will continue to be eligible

Maintaining FLAGs in action between programming periods

- **Main achievements**: Demonstrating recognition of the important work of the Galician FLAGs and supporting them to remain operational and active between funding periods. This has been fundamental for preserving the credibility of the FLAGs and ensuring that they can provide a continuous service to their areas.
- **Financial resources**: €191 000 (approximately €24 000 per FLAG) was paid from Galicia's Technical Assistance budget for preparatory support for strategy development. The eight FLAGs have an average budget of €6.5M each.

National networks – connecting FLAGs and building local capacity in CLLD

- National networks – connecting FLAGs and building local capacity in CLLD

Official Title:

National networks – connecting FLAGs and building local capacity in CLLD

Country: Estonia



- Planning for the activities of a Fisheries National Network

Country: Latvia



Thank you for your attention!
Благодаря за вниманието!

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