



The ex ante evaluation of SWOT
and needs assessment –
prerequisite for a sound RDP
intervention logic?”



SWOT analysis, needs assessment
and priorities of rural development
under the umbrella (?) of
Europe 2020, CSF and CAP
some German lessons learnt

Introduction:

1. Which case study ?

Some general lessons learnt by preparing and carrying out joint socioeconomic and SWOT analysis as well as needs assessments as a prerequisite to programme CSF funds

**in federal states of Germany,
period: January 2012 to March 2013**

2. Who are we ? and What is our role ?

- **BonnEval (Bonn) together with entera (Hanover):**
- **a team of ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post evaluators,**
- **implementing ongoing evaluation (2008 - 2015) in several federal states of Germany,**
- **carrying out socioeconomic analysis and impact assessments and strategic environment assessments**

Content of the Presentation:

- 1. The policy framework for SWOT analysis and needs assessment: Strategies and targets of the European economic, social and agricultural policy 2014 – 2020**
 - a coherent policy framework?
- 2. Do we need a common or joint analysis under the CSF umbrella in order to guarantee synergies between the various CSF funds ?**
- 3. The process, follow-up and ex-ante evaluation of SWOT analysis and needs assessment**
- 4. Lessons learnt and perspectives**

Strategy and Policy Framework

- **Europe 2020 strategy: 3 priorities, related to growth**
- **Headline targets determined by indicators**
strategy to be underpinned by national / regional targets.
- **7 flagship initiatives**
- **10 guidelines for the economic and employment policies of the Member States addressing**
- **1st Conclusion: The new strategic orientation or vision of the European policy defined by the strategy 2020 has no relevant and no strategic link to the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).**

Strategy and Policy Framework

The Common Agricultural Policy:

- **3 Policy Objectives of the CAP towards 2020:**
1. Viable food production, 2. Sustainable management of natural resources and climate action 3. Balanced territorial development
- **CAP formally assigned to the strategy 2020 by the new logical policy framework architecture**
- **CAP an integrated part of the strategy ?**
- **2nd Conclusion: The policy objectives and intended impacts of the CAP are not fully respected by the objectives system of the strategy 2020. The CAP contribution to the strategy 2020 is being marginalised.**

Strategy and Policy Framework

- **Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF 2014-2020) of EU**
- **to operationalise EU policy strategies and thematic programmes.**
- **More than one third of the MFR budget expenditures have been allocated to implement the CAP.**

- **3rd Conclusion: Agricultural policy und the development of rural areas is obviously one of the most important European policy areas (in terms of funding).**

Identifying Priorities of Funding

- **How far does a joint SWOT analysis and needs assessment under the CSF umbrella contribute to integrate EAFRD more effectively into the CSF and Europe 2020 strategy in order to identify common areas of intervention and to optimise synergies?**
- **The 10 (11) thematic objectives of the CSF are focussing mainly on the priorities and objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, its initiatives and guidelines.**
- **The Position Paper of the Commission Services on the development of the Partnership Agreement and Programmes in Germany for the period 2014-2020, Nov. 2012**
- **The 6 Union priorities for rural development (and their "sub priorities") are up to a certain extent integrated into the new overall intervention logic framework and are aligned to the thematic CSF objectives...**

Identifying Priorities of Funding

- **however**: The EAFRD development priorities are to translate (operationalise) the **objectives of the CAP**.
- Identifying needs and development potentials of agriculture and rural areas, deriving key areas of EAFRD intervention has to address CAP objectives at first.
- Also a joint socioeconomic and SWOT analysis is forced to consider / respect the specific provisions of budget allocation conditionalities for the CSR funds and diverging orientation of the various funds.
- **Finally**: Joint SWOT is serving as a certain general framework, but
more fund-specific, particular SWOT analysis and needs assessment had to be / were carried out.

The Process of identifying Priorities of Funding

Drafting of SWOT analysis and needs assessment:

- in most of the federal states: SWOT and needs assessment were prepared separately for each individual CSF fund programme
- harmonisation: started beginning of 2013 a task of the ex-ante evaluation process
- a few federal states performed "joint SWOTs" and needs assessments which are complemented (and revised) by fund specific SWOTs and needs assessments
- in general:
 - inter-ministerial working groups, headed by MAs, are coordinating all activities / steps of CSF programmes preparation (on basis of regular meetings)
 - stakeholder consultations are conducted regularly
 - Ex-ante evaluation, SWOT, needs assessment is seen as an interactive, accompanying, advisory process

The Process of identifying Priorities of Funding

➤ Indicators:

- - mainly context indicators (EU) plus
- - economic, social and environment indicators available at federal statistical offices and
- - data from studies and other assessments
- partly diverging results of statistical analysis between regional (aggregated) and rural (community) level

➤ Follow-up:

- Ex-ante evaluations, at present in process for each particular CSF fund programme, are complementing and revising SWOTs, needs assessments and priorities of funding together with MAs and stakeholders.
- Needs are prioritised at programme specific levels and translated into programme specific budget allocation priorities.

Conclusions from the Process

- **Limitations of joint SWOT analysis and needs assessments:**
 - diverging (partly contradictory) interpretation of what are prior needs,
 - diverging appreciation of development priorities and needs,
 - due to reduced public financial resources particular areas of intervention are being shifted to other funds.

- **Benefits:**
 - Thematic, sectoral and regional lacks of funding and other areas of conflict are being identified early.
 - Particular key areas of intervention with a high potential for creating synergies could be identified and translated into recommendations for programming.

General Conclusions

- **A joint socioeconomic and SWOT analysis and needs assessment does not automatically lead to improve synergy between CSF funds and has only a low impact on strengthening coordination of programming between MAs of the various funds --- but is seen as a first step to strengthen coordination.**
- **An important outcome is an early discussion and recognition on the still continuing lack of coherence and further existing fragmentation of programme implementation.**
- **Based on the joint analysis and assessment exercise and the joint follow-on discussions on existing deficiencies, conclusions for further steps of a long-term ongoing reform of CSF fund structures, visions and principles could be initiated.**

General Conclusions

- **Keys areas of intervention which are born to be cross-linked in a synergetic manner, such as CLLD and Urban development strategies seem to be permanently underfunded, but have now a higher recognition at the policy level.**
- **To ensure strong alignment of CSF funds with policy priorities of the Europe 2020 agenda is not a question of improved assessment methods, sophisticated indicator systems or ex-ante evaluation and programming guidelines but a question of a sound, consistent, coherent and logic policy design.**
- **CSF based analysis and programming could be seen as an eye-opener to aspire above-mentioned logical policy framework.**



**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
ATTENTION !**

**BonnEval, Dietmar Welz, Berghovener Str. 16, D 53227 Bonn, Germany
mail to: welz@bonneval.de, Webb: www.bonneval.de, Phone: +49-228-1841424**