



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
Directorate L. Economic analysis, perspectives and evaluations  
**L.4. Evaluation of measures applicable to agriculture; studies**

## **WORKING OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **WORKING OBJECTIVES OF THE SYSTEM FOR POST-2013**

- 1. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of RD policy interventions in coherence with other EU funds.** It should demonstrate the contribution of rural development policy and programmes to overall EU objectives. The system should be a tool to show how taxpayers' money is spent and what is achieved by rural development policy, provide evidence of the results and the impact that rural development policy interventions have on the ground. The output of the system is not only important for accountability, but also for information and communication at EU and Member State level.
- 2. Contribute to better targeted support to Rural Development.** The system should allow the progress and results and impacts of rural development policy interventions to be assessed against their predefined objectives (at EU, MS and RDP level). The system should provide guidance of how the RDPs, and the policy framework, can then be adjusted to increase effectiveness throughout the programming cycle. The system should be used as a tool for governance and management, assessing the diversity of needs of rural areas improving the targeting and allocation of financial resources, and allowing comparison of performance of the policy and taking into account the specificities of the Member States and regions. The evaluation results should be taken into account when deciding on changes in the allocation of financial resources.
- 3. Establish common learning processes throughout RD programmes.** The system should provide common guidance on monitoring and evaluation for the Member States, developing shared understanding. It should serve as an array of common reference points for managers and evaluation stakeholders throughout Europe, and

enabling exchange and learning across programmes and countries and across other funds. Monitoring and evaluation system should not be used as control tool.

## **PRINCIPLES**

The process of establishing a new rural development monitoring and evaluation framework for post-2013 is guided by the following shared principles:

- **Generation of results which are credible and used.** The resources required to establish and implement the RD monitoring and evaluation system are only justified if the output is credible, relevant, timely and used effectively. . Effective follow up of monitoring information and evaluation results must be ensured, and reflected through appropriate adjustments to RD policy framework, design and implementation at national or programme level. All elements of the system must be useful and have a clear purpose. Results should be communicated widely to increase visibility and understanding of the rural development policy interventions and impacts.
- **Shared commitment to the system.** All stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation system should feel responsible for it, and be motivated to contribute to reliable and credible outputs. The system must be designed with the active participation of the relevant stakeholders (e.g. Member States, evaluators, Commission staff, social and economic partners, research institute, statistical institutes etc.).
- **Simplification of the system..** The revised system should seek to streamline processes with the aim of reducing the administrative burden for the Member States, programme authorities, beneficiaries and the Commission. Simplification should be based on a careful assessment of what information is accessible and needed by whom at all levels, for what purpose and at what time, taking into account former evaluation results and research, the requirements of the overall policy framework and the most appropriate level for action and for data collection.
- **Continuity of the Common Monitoring and Evaluation System.** We must learn the lessons emerging from implementation of the current CMEF, we should learn from the previous systems, building on what has worked, and making use of the monitoring and evaluation capacity already developed. This implies a critical assessment of all elements of the system and its optimization with the aim of keeping the good or

improving the weak elements, while ensuring a system adapted to the new policy framework. It should permit both ongoing monitoring of the progress of policy implementation and assessment of policy impact over the longer term .

- **Clarity and stability of legal obligations and system.** All elements of the new system must be established and translated in good time prior to implementation. The monitoring requirements, evaluation concepts and methodologies need to be appropriate and unambiguous and allow for consistent interpretation. While the system itself needs to be as stable as possible during the implementing period, there must be scope for improvement where problems are identified or where external conditions change significantly.
- **Ensuring comparability of results and taking account of programme specificities.** The comparison and aggregation at EU level of monitoring information and evaluation results is one of the missions of the system, closely linked to its objectives, and must be ensured. However, to make it more useful as a management tool to guide programme implementation, the system should encourage and provide managing authorities to complement the common framework in order to take account of the specificities of each programme. This will increase the relevance of the system for individual RDPs and support its ownership by the stakeholders. The provision of common information must not be so great as to limit scope for providing specific programme information.
- **Proportionality of monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements.** For the development of the common core of the system, the utility of the information to be generated should be balanced against the resources required to provide it taking account also of the long term perspectives. Resources available for implementing RDPs should also be taken into account.