

## 13. Programme's information strategy

### Purpose and target groups

Communication must support the implementation of the 2007-2013 rural development programme by highlighting the programme, along with its opportunities and results to both potential beneficiaries and the general public. This will allow communication to help establish rural development activities on a broad basis and gain support for them, as well as help the rural development programme achieve its objectives.

The overall objectives for the communication initiative are to:

- Increase awareness of the rural development programme and its opportunities
- Generate commitment to the task of implementing the new rural development programme through central, regional and local actors
- Strengthen development in rural areas by collecting, publicising and therefore spreading the word about good examples of specific activities promoting development in rural areas
- Establish a good framework for sharing knowledge so that the benefit of experience can be enjoyed across the whole spectrum by those involved centrally, regionally and locally
- Generate a high profile for the programme and the EU's contribution to development in rural areas, while also showing that investments in rural areas can create viable, self-sustaining rural areas
- Show the connection between the programme's overall objectives: creating new local jobs, developing the food industry and forestry, the countryside and environment, as well providing good living conditions
- Place the rural development programme at the heart of the debate on the rural areas of the future
- Guarantee the understanding, acceptance and involvement of the relevant organisations

Communication is aimed at target groups at several levels and with different interests in rural development. These groups include:

- Inhabitants of rural areas
- Farmers
- Enterprises
- Industry and sector organisations
- Interest groups, including rural area councils, environmental organisations, outdoor activity organisations and ordinary people with an interest in the environment
- Leisure, sport, youth and cultural associations, as well as the tourist sector

- Employee organisations
- Consumers, the retail sector and their organisations
- Authorities, including municipalities and regions
- The general public, including the press and politicians

### **Strategy**

Communication will focus on different areas during the course of the programme period and follow the development of the programme. Communication in general is divided into three phases which are implemented in succession. The communication effort will thus undergo development during the rural development programme period.

Phase 1 has been implemented and characterised by the fact that a great deal of information about the implementation of the programme had to be forwarded from the Directorate and Ministry to the other stakeholders in the rural areas and to the general public. There was also a focus on setting up key means of communication, such as the website, information materials, press releases, cooperation with other actors, etc.

Phases 2 and 3 focus on the opportunities in the revised rural development programme which take effect from 2010, and on expanding the visibility and knowledge of the programme among the general public. In addition, there are to a large extent more actors than just the Directorate and Ministry in place to promote communication in rural areas. The actors concerned are, for example, rural development coordinators and local action groups.

#### *Phase 1: “Launching and start of the programme and establishment of communication partnerships”*

Phase 1 ran until the end of 2007.

In the first phase, the purpose of communication was to increase awareness of the programme’s content and opportunities among relevant associations, organisations, individuals, etc., in order to initiate a number of good projects which could promote the programme’s objectives. One basic task as part of this was also to interact with the key organisations in rural areas in order to strengthen the impact of this communication. It was also important to inform and establish cooperation with local action groups and rural area coordinators with regard to the programme’s opportunities. Finally, the basic communication framework had to be put in place with branding, website, and other tools etc. .

#### *Phase 2: Communication associated with launching of revised programme and “increased awareness among target groups and the general public”*

During the second phase, communication focuses on the general public, who must be informed about the new opportunities available in the revised programme and the first results from the actions taken as part of the rural development policy. The communication effort will also build on the action from the first phase in order to inform target groups who are not already sufficiently aware of the programme. This starts off with evaluations indicating awareness about the communication effort made so far among the relevant target groups. Similarly, annual progress reports and evaluations of the programme’s progress must both be highlighted and used when organising the next phase of communication. Phase 2 runs from 2008 until the rural development programme’s mid-term evaluation.

### *Phase 3: “The rural areas of the future – preparation of the next programme”*

During the third phase, communication must be adapted to the rural development programme’s mid-term evaluation, including the assessment of effects and achieving objectives. The Danish Food Industry Agency must find out from the stakeholders how rural areas can be developed further. The third phase will also involve experiences from other countries in Denmark’s rural development activities, while Denmark must also be guaranteed a position in relation to the European rural development policy. Phase 3 runs from the rural development programme’s mid-term evaluation until the end of the programme in 2013 and must lead right into the next rural development programme.

#### **Messages**

The overall message from the communication effort is that rural development must promote a wide geographical distribution of the population and economic activity. All areas must be attractive to work and live in, and Danes must have good, equal living conditions, no matter where they live in the country.

The specific messages about the rural development programme are targeted at different levels.

- Messages about the programme, its objectives, etc., which must be primarily targeted at the professional stakeholders
- Messages about the specific opportunities, structure of the programme and ongoing changes, which must be primarily aimed at local forces which must generate specific initiatives
- Messages about rural areas, both about the conditions today and the objectives for the future, with a special focus on the impact of the programme’s efforts and their objectives, which must be targeted at the general public.

Each message must be supported with good examples and best practice within the four overall programme objectives in order to clearly show the potential and opportunities in the rural development programme.

#### **13.1 Initiatives for informing potential beneficiaries**

The target group of potential beneficiaries is large and ranges far and wide, from commercial and employee organisations interested in creating new jobs and developing existing occupations in rural areas, as well as environmental and nature organisations to resident and leisure organisations, which are mainly interested in creating good living conditions in the countryside.

The communication effort must draw attention to the opportunities offered by the rural development programme to these target groups. It must ensure that the most relevant projects possible are set up within the rural development programme’s four objectives.

Communication activities can include the following:

- Increased interaction with selected rural development organisations in order to reinforce the impact among the target groups, which the Danish Food Industry

Agency itself does not have any contact with, but which the relevant communications partner is in close touch with via, for instance, their news media and direct mailings.

- Analyses of the target groups' awareness of the rural development programme's specific support opportunities. The results must provide, on the one hand, a platform for press activities and on the other, important input for further communication activities aimed at potential beneficiaries.
- Providing specific examples from the programme's four overall action areas. This will allow target groups to see how others have handled projects, the efforts' impact, the opportunities for support, potential partners, etc., - and in that way to be inspired to initiate new rural development projects.
- Further development of the website [www.landdistriktsprogram.dk](http://www.landdistriktsprogram.dk), which is a central hub for communication about rural development. The website disseminates messages about the rural development programme and the rural areas of the future, present's new information, shares and stores knowledge, provides an overview and creates scope for debate and exchanging experiences both at local and national level. It is therefore important that the website is updated and dynamic.
- Newsletters with information about the new rural development programme sent to local associations, organisations, enterprises, etc.
- Proactive press activities, with special emphasis on local and regional media, which are important in terms of reaching potential beneficiaries.

### **13.2 Initiatives for informing beneficiaries about the Community's contribution**

Communication about rural areas must highlight the fact that the EU and Danish government are contributing to the financing of the rural development programme. The following have been developed:

- Logo for the rural development programme which carries forward the existing logo together with the logo of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries and the EU logo.
- Main texts such as headers and footers in letters, on the Internet, etc.
- Design manual with guidelines on how to use the logos in practice on letterheads, e-mails, leaflets and publications, the Internet, advertisements, posters, slides, at events, etc.
- Guidelines on how beneficiaries should use the logos at events, on signage, etc.

The correct and consistent use of these initiatives should be pursued.

### **13.3 Initiatives for informing the public about the Community's contribution and results**

The communication effort focuses on the general public throughout the whole period, particularly with regard to launching the programmes, as well as during the second phase from 2008, and in connection with the rural development programme's mid-term evaluation.

Communication activities can include the following:

- Proactive press activities for the daily press, regional and local media and trade media. Press activities may, for instance, focus on the opportunities offered in the programme, the impact and results of the programme on the basis of case studies and good examples from the rural development programme's four objectives.
- Further development of the website [www.landdistrikter.dk](http://www.landdistrikter.dk), which is a central hub for communication about rural development, as mentioned above. .

#### **Communication plan**

This communication strategy will be implemented in a communication plan which outlines the specific communication activities under the rural development programme. The communication plan is dynamic and will be continuously updated.

The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries has overall responsibility for communication.

#### **Budget**

A budget will be drawn up in connection with the implementation of the communication plan, as there will be for each phase of the communication strategy.

#### **Organisation**

Communication about the rural development programme is carried out by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries' Joint Communication Unit and the Network Centre for the Rural Development and Fisheries Programme, which is a central platform for dialogue, coordination and information within the rural development area.

#### **Follow-up on communication**

Communication will be evaluated continuously throughout the programme with a view to adjusting the communication effort further. Communication will also be included as part of the mandatory mid-term evaluation of the whole rural development programme.