

Annex 3

Organise cooperation ideas into a hierarchy

A cooperation project must clearly answer the following local questions:

- What are the development problems faced with locally? Can cooperation contribute to solve these problems? What sort of project should be built (exchange of experiences, research, construction of a solution jointly...?)
- What are the development opportunities for the area?
- What should the added value of the cooperation project be?
- What are the ultimate goals and objectives of the project?
- What are the targeted results of the project?
- Who are the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project, and to what extent will they take advantage of the expected results?
- Who are the local partners involved and what can they contribute to the project?

Human resources, time and financial means being inevitably limited, it is important to set priorities and concentrate efforts on a limited number of truly strategic actions.

At this point it is useful to have a fairly clear idea of the resources (financial and human) that may be allocated for cooperation before going ahead and looking for partners. Furthermore, it is important that the transnational dimension not weigh too heavy in the entire action carried out locally. Too big an investment from certain project holders in this direction, for example, could result in other objectives being neglected. In the same way, identifying certain financial opportunities linked to the transnational dimension can overshadow the fundamental interests of the area that is to be developed. To define these priorities and to then maintain the momentum, an active involvement of the local actors will be necessary. Transnational cooperation cannot come about solely by the efforts of a small group of fore runners. Communication actions will then have to be carried out, including at this initial stage. An overall picture begins to emerge from this entire action at the end of this first stage: the theme or themes on which the cooperation will concentrate are specified, the objectives for the area are clearly identified, the partners to be mobilised have begun to be informed of the situation, and those involved have a fairly good idea of the resources that may be mobilised and of the timetable for implementation.

Using general and transversal criteria for a first classification of the project ideas

A general appreciation of the pre-defined cooperation ideas can be made according to 4 basic criteria: relevance, efficiency, efficacy and participative approach. For each cooperation idea, each one of these 4 criteria can be given a grade, from 1 (low) to 5 (high). The sum of the 4 grades can enable a classification of the cooperation ideas.

Relevance

- Does the project address a concrete problem?
- Is the time appropriate to launch such a project?

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- If launched now, can the project be completed on time?
- Are there complementarities between the project and the other dynamic forces in the regions?
- What added value is brought to the area?

Efficiency

- Are the expected objectives and results accessible?
- Are the available resources sufficient to reach the objectives?
- Is the time allowed for developing the project adapted to the targeted objectives?

Efficacy (cost-benefit ratio)

- Is there a reasonable balance between the foreseen financial resources and the results?
- Is it comparable with other cooperation projects?

Participative approach

- To what extent could the project rely on an active and balanced participation and commitment of the different local partners?

Answering more precise questions to make a final hierarchy

- Are we more in a strategic approach than a utilitarian one concerning this cooperation idea?
- Is the project idea relevant in the local context?
- Could the cooperation idea contribute to solving problems / bring added value?
- Is it possible for the cooperation project to be viable?
- Can financing be secured for such a project idea?
- Are there any local possible clashes of interest around the cooperation idea?

If the answer to any of these questions is **NO**, the cooperation idea should probably be put last on the list!