



European Network for
Rural Development

ENRD 2019

ACTIVITY PLAN

- as supported by the ENRD Contact Point -

*Draft prepared for Members of the
Rural Networks' Assembly*

Brussels, 11 December 2018

Introduction

The European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) is one of the two networks operating under the EU rural development policy, the other being the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI). Details on the [Strategic framework](#) including objectives, operational principles and governance structure of both networks can be found on the [ENRD website](#)¹.

A defining characteristic of the ENRD is that it is **multi-faceted**, involving all rural stakeholders and covering a wide range of topics relevant to rural areas. This provides both challenges and great opportunities for adding value and improving the implementation of EU rural development policy.

The ENRD comprises two distinct strands of activities: one, of wide scope, covering all aspects of RDP implementation – is supported by the [Contact Point](#) and the other; relating to evaluation issues for rural development – is supported by the [Evaluation Helpdesk](#). This document summarises the main activities and key outputs of the ENRD which will be supported by the Contact Point during 2019.

As background, in 2015 the first meeting of the Rural Networks' (RNs') Assembly and Steering Group identified ten priorities for the Rural Networks.

Simplification	Advisory services- knowledge transfer- innovation
Pillar1- Pillar 2 linkages	Local food- short supply chains- urban-rural- small farms
Multifund approaches	Demographic change and social inclusion
Starting up [and strengthening] NRNs	Green economy, jobs and growth
Evaluating network activities	Climate change

Broadly, five of these priorities refer to improving the capacity of different rural development stakeholders (the “how” of rural development) while five concern priority challenges or topics (the “what”).

EU rural development policy thinking has continued to evolve since then. Milestone events have included the Cork 2.0 European Conference on Rural Development in 2016 and the associated [‘Cork 2 Declaration’](#), the [2017 ‘Agri Innovation Summit’](#) in Lisbon (co-hosted by the ENRD) and the 2018 [11thOECD Rural Development Conference on Enhancing Rural Innovation held in Edinburgh](#), and for which the ENRD organised the opening day.

Most importantly, the European Commission launched in November 2017 the [Communication on ‘The Future of Food and Farming’](#), followed in May 2018 by the Commission’s proposal for the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) and then on 1 June 2018 by the [legislative proposals for the CAP for the 2021-2027 programming period](#). These are all key stages in the process of designing the Common

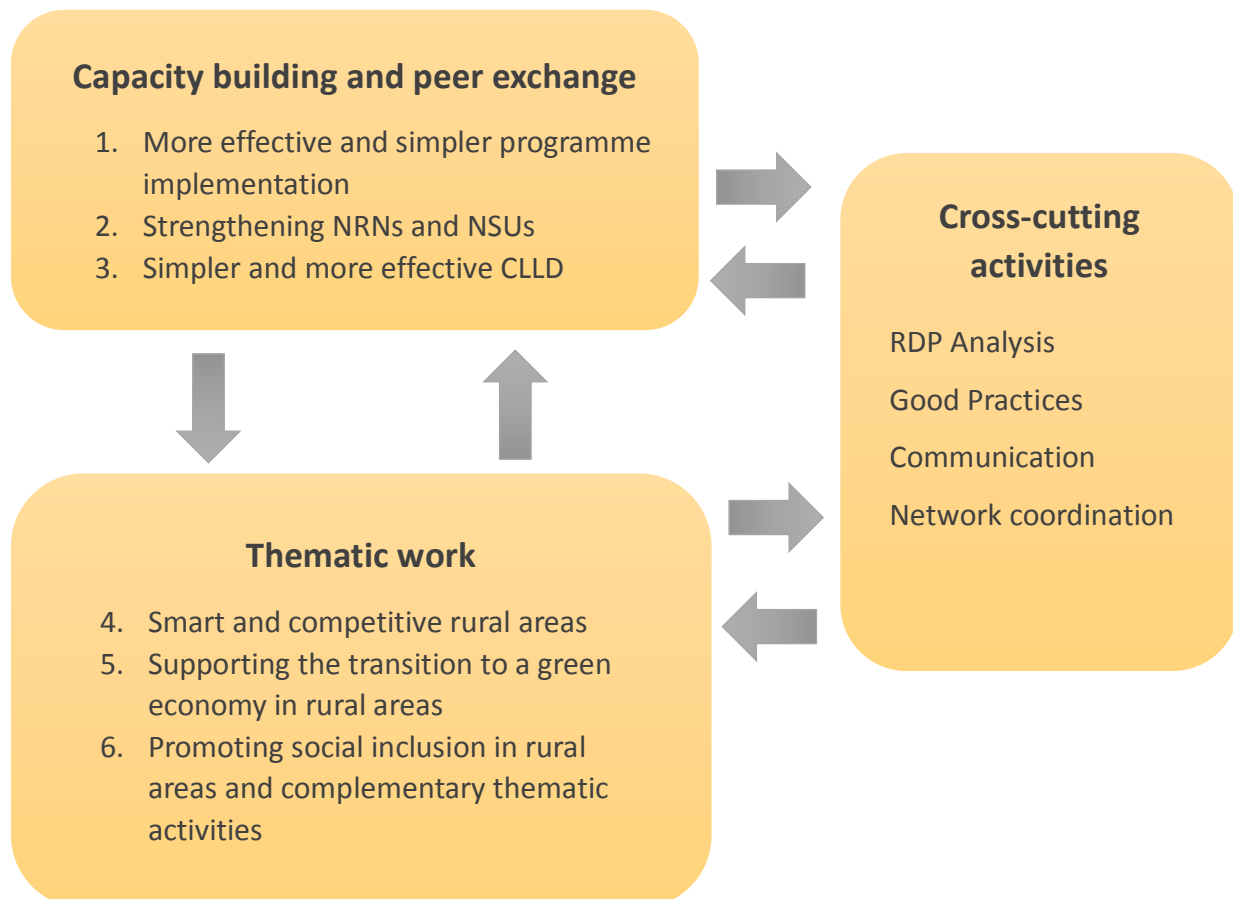
¹ Specifically, the Document ‘EU rural networks strategic framework and governance bodies’ and the reports on the meetings to-date of the Rural Networks’ Assembly and Steering Group.

Agricultural Policy post 2020. Since then at various events – some organised by the ENRD – the EC’s vision and legal proposals for the post 2020 CAP have been further explained and discussed.

These evolving dimensions of the policy have not, to-date, necessitated a revision of the Assembly’s priorities. Rather, they are being taken into account in the detailed parameters of this 2019 Activity Plan including workshops to support the preparation of the new CAP Strategic Plans and introduction of the new performance-based delivery model, and thematic work on smart villages, the bioeconomy and generational renewal.

2019 Activity Plan by priority

The operational objectives of the Rural Networks are implemented through the use of a wide range of tools and activity types². The ENRD CP organises its work – and the use of these tools - through a series of capacity building and thematic priorities supported by cross cutting activities. Together they tackle all of the priorities³ identified by the Assembly.



² Thematic groups; Analysis of RDPs; Good practices; Guidance/training; Website/social media; Publications; Events; Networking (NRNs, LAGs); Transnational cooperation.

³ Specifically relevant to the ENRD CP.

These broad priorities are multi-annual, with each year's activity plan being tailored to focus on important current and emerging topics where networking can add value. This 2019 Activity Plan is a 'living document' which will be updated periodically in order to reflect further emerging priorities as they are identified. Specifically, *in the second half of 2019, new Thematic and/or Capacity building priorities may be initiated and are not mentioned in the table below.* The outputs listed below are therefore indicative and may be subject to additions and changes.

Main priorities	Key outputs
<p>P1. Support to more effective and simpler programme implementation</p> <p><i>This priority is targeted mainly at programme managers (National and Regional MAs, Paying Agencies). The proposed events will draw on current experiences to provide support for preparations in MS for the post-2020 period, in particular for the CAP Strategic plans and new delivery model.</i></p> <p><i>The activities will also aim to create a platform for MS and the EC for exchanges on MS' preparatory actions for the future.</i></p>	<p><u>Events (in the frame of the New delivery framework)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 'Risk management', Jan/Feb 2019 (TBC) <input type="checkbox"/> 'Improving farm performance', April/May 2019 (TBC) <input type="checkbox"/> Possible 2nd event on CAP Strategic plans (TBC) <p><u>Products</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Event highlights, factsheets, case studies (TBC) <input type="checkbox"/> Methodological good practices and programming examples (TBC)
<p>P2. Strengthening NRNs and NSUs</p> <p><i>At this stage in the programming cycle this priority is targeted mainly at extending exchanges between NRNs and increasing the engagement with other stakeholders with the aim of strengthening NRNs ability to fulfil their key objectives.</i></p> <p><i>A major focus for the first semester of 2019, both in the context of strengthening NRNs and NSUs and more broadly will be the 'networX' event. This will be the first such large scale (up to 450 participants for 2 days) event organised by the CP in this programming period. The event will demonstrate the achievements of rural development networking over the last decade and provide evidence based inputs for preparation of the future CAP Networks at EU and MS level.</i></p>	<p><u>Rural Networks Event</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 'networX' organised by the ENRD, 11-12 April 2019 <p><u>NRN Meetings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 13th meeting, Ireland, 21 Feb 2019 <input type="checkbox"/> 14th meeting, Romania, June 2019 <input type="checkbox"/> 15th meeting, (location TBC) Sept-Oct 2019 <p><u>Workshops</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop, topic to be defined, June 2019 (TBC) <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop, topic to be defined, Oct/Nov 2019 (TBC) <p><u>EU Rural Review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Significant contribution to issue 27 'Networking', by April 2019 <p><u>Other outputs from activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Approximately 75 MS missions conducted <input type="checkbox"/> NRN website section updated, January and July 2019 <input type="checkbox"/> Common network statistics updated, by July 2019
<p>P3. Support to simpler and more effective rolling out of CLLD and LEADER</p> <p><i>This priority is targeted at strengthening implementation capacity and extending active participation in networking.</i></p> <p><i>Specifically:</i></p> <p><i>(i) to engage LEADER actors more actively and to build trust;</i></p> <p><i>(ii) to support improvements that enable implementation systems and procedures to</i></p>	<p><u>LEADER / CLLD Sub-group meetings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 6th sub-group meeting, 31 January 2019 <p><u>Workshops</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 'LEADER: Simplification and simplified cost options', May 2019 (TBC) <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop, topic to be defined, Oct/Nov 2019 (TBC) <p><u>Other outputs from activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Results of 2017 LAG survey at MS level, by Jan 2019 <input type="checkbox"/> LEADER/CLLD website section updated, January and July 2019

deliver and demonstrate more fully the added value of the LEADER method;
(iii) to continue to promote the “renewal” of LEADER ensuring it responds and adapts to new rural challenges.

- Further functionality improvements to LAG database and associated cooperation partner search web-tools, by July 2019; updated content (ongoing)
- Recommendations from the Practitioner-led working group on Simplification, by July 2019 (TBC)

Main priorities

Key outputs

Thematic priorities

P4. Smart and competitive rural areas: Smart Villages (to July 2019)

Centred around the second year of operation of an ENRD Thematic Group, work will bring together and build on both the economic and service aspects of smart villages to: produce tools with practical orientations on how existing policy and funding instruments can be used in a more integrated way; develop more integrated approaches towards digital innovation in rural areas; produce practical orientations for policy implementers about how to develop Smart Villages strategies.

Thematic Group: ‘Smart Villages’

- 2 further meetings, Feb-May 2019
- Final outcomes, by July 2019

Products

- Dedicated web-portal, meeting highlights, case studies, and briefing documents

P5. Supporting the transition to a green economy in rural areas: Mainstreaming the bioeconomy (to July 2019)

Centred around an ENRD Thematic Group launched in July 2018, activities will focus on three sub themes: (i) synergies between RDPs and other policy instruments; (ii) developing territorial and local approaches and attracting new investments; (iii) better communication and engagement of different stakeholders.

In response to stakeholder organisations requests’ a dedicated event on biodiversity will also be organised.

***N.B.** The TG may be continued or re-oriented from July 2019. Outputs associated with this phase of the work, if confirmed, are not yet specified.*

Thematic Group: ‘Mainstreaming the bioeconomy’

- 2 further meetings, Jan-April 2019
- Final outcomes, by July 2018

Workshop

- ‘Bio-diversity and the CAP: working together to reach conservation goals’, 29 Jan 2019

EU Rural Review

- Significant contribution to issue 28 on Bioeconomy, by July 2019 (TBC)

EAFRD Projects Brochure

- EAFRD Projects brochure on ‘Bioeconomy’ by July 2019 (TBC)

ENRD Seminar

- ‘Mainstreaming the bioeconomy’, June 2019 (TBC)

Products

Dedicated web-portal, meeting highlights, case studies, factsheets and video (TBC)

P6. Social inclusion in rural areas and other complementary thematic work: Generational Renewal and enhancing the attractiveness of rural areas for young people (to July 2019)

Workshops

- ‘Generational Renewal’, Ireland, 22 February 2019
- ‘Combatting rural depopulation’, May 2019 (TBC)

This work will include analysis of practices within a number of MS to increase land mobility and facilitate new entrants to farming.

In the wider context of social inclusion, initiatives to combat rural depopulation, with a focus on making rural areas more attractive for young people will be examined.

EAFRD Projects Brochure

- EAFRD Projects brochure ‘Youth and generational renewal’ by April 2019

Products

- Event highlights, Dedicated web-content; case studies and factsheets (TBC)

Main priorities

Key outputs

RDP analysis and good practices

The analysis of EAFRD programming, principally the RDPs, and the monitoring of implementation are key for the ENRD, underpinning many other activities and of direct usefulness to a range of stakeholders.

Good practice examples feed into and out of thematic work and are also directly useful to a wide range of stakeholders. Many practices are identified in coordination with NRNs.

RDP analysis

- Summary factsheets on Monitoring Indicators, by July 2019 (TBC)
- Thematic RDP Screening on NRNs (overview plus in-depth for selected RDPs), interim outputs by April 2019, final outputs by July 2019 (TBC)

Good practices examples

- 100, by Dec 2019

EAFRD Projects Brochure

- Primary information source for all editions of the EAFRD Projects brochure

Cross-cutting

Communications

The ENRD’s communication activities enable a wide range of stakeholders to keep up-to-date with the network’s activities and EU Rural Policy developments. They also help network participants to ‘intra-connect’ and be sign-posted to other relevant information sources.

The ENRD website is the single most important communication channel for the ENRD. Enhanced use of social media channels will continue to be given a high priority.

Horizontal ENRD publications – online and paper based, include regular news updates and the more in-depth ENRD ‘magazine’⁴.

ENRD Website

- Fully up to date ENRD Website content (ongoing)
- Enhanced website functionalities as required and feasible within the overall EC IT environment (ongoing)

Social media

- Enhanced outreach through Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube channels (ongoing)

Monthly ENRD newsletter (in three languages: EN, DE, FR)

- 12 editions, Jan to Dec 2019

ENRD Magazine ‘Rural Connections’ (in six languages: EN, DE, ES, FR, IT, PL)

- Spring/summer 2019 Issue, by June 2019
- Autumn/winter 2019 Issue, by December 2019

Network Coordination

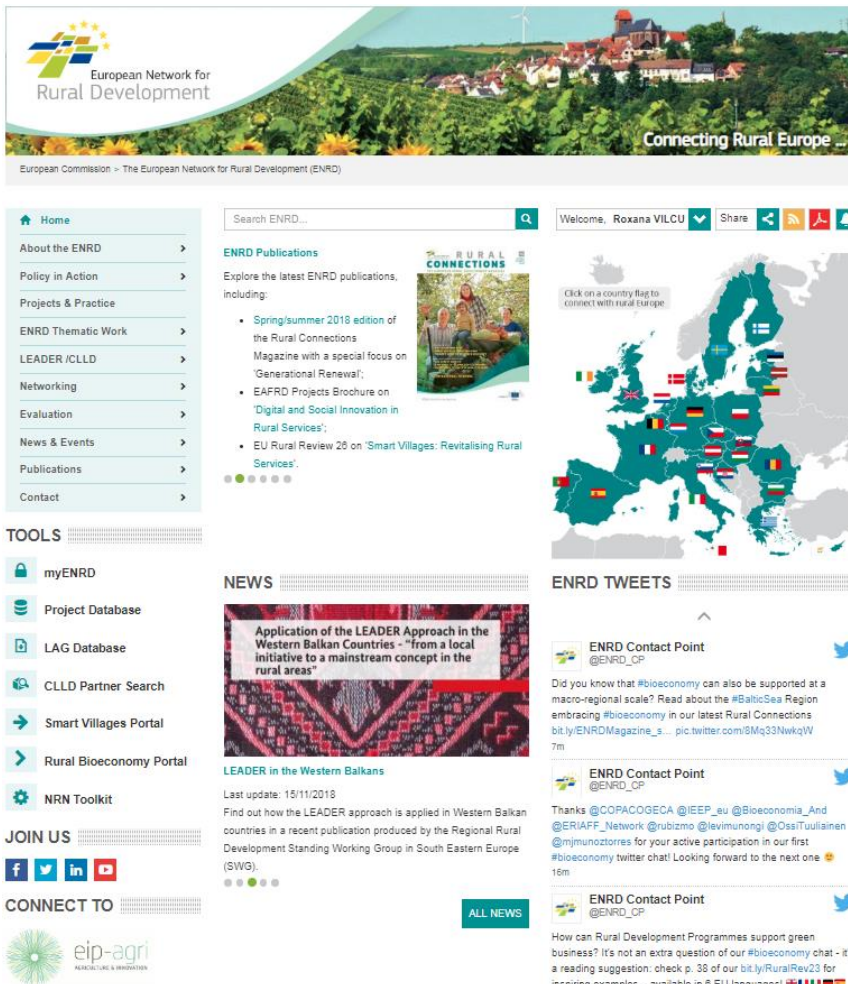
Support to RNs’ governance, coordination with other networks and self-assessment.

Support to Rural Networks’ Governance meetings

- 11th Steering Group, May 2019 (TBC)
- 12th Steering Group, Oct 2019 (TBC)
- 6th Assembly, Dec 2019 (TBC)

⁴ Publications which specifically relate to an individual ENRD CP priority are presented above in the appropriate thematic priority section.

ENRD online



The screenshot shows the ENRD online portal interface. At the top, there is a banner with the ENRD logo and the text 'Connecting Rural Europe...'. Below the banner is a navigation menu with categories like 'Home', 'About the ENRD', 'Policy in Action', 'Projects & Practice', 'ENRD Thematic Work', 'LEADER / CLLD', 'Networking', 'Evaluation', 'News & Events', 'Publications', and 'Contact'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'ENRD Publications' with a search bar and a list of publications; 'NEWS' featuring an article titled 'Application of the LEADER Approach in the Western Balkan Countries'; 'ENRD TWEETS' displaying a list of tweets from the ENRD Contact Point; and 'TOOLS' including 'myENRD', 'Project Database', 'LAG Database', 'CLLD Partner Search', 'Smart Villages Portal', 'Rural Bioeconomy Portal', and 'NRN Toolkit'. There are also social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.



<https://www.facebook.com/ENRDCP/>



https://twitter.com/ENRD_CP



<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8230969>



<https://www.youtube.com/user/EURural>

<https://enrd.ec.europa.eu>

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