

**ENRD Seminar on
Stakeholder Involvement**

Brussels, 26 March 2015

**Virtual Think Tank -
Telephone conferences as a tool for
dialogue on Rural Development
policies**

Nils Lagerroth, Swedish National Support Unit



The practice in 3 lines!

- Virtual Think tank - Telephone conferences according to a special method, creates opportunities for a dialogue **on equal terms** between the national and local/regional level.

Main purpose - *Why?*

- Managing Authority / Ministry/NRN wants to have a dialogue with organizations / LAGs/ authorities at local and regional level on Rural development policies.
Collect experience and new ideas
Creating bridges between stakeholders and better understanding of different perspectives
Shorten the "take-off time" – making the stakeholders more familiar with a new program
- In a big country it is difficult to have physical meetings.
- Important that stakeholders could have their voices heard
- Gives quick summarized feedback.
- Topics discussed on telephone conferences can be followed up at network meetings, seminars, workshops etc.

Examples of topics for SE virtual think tanks - telephone conferences

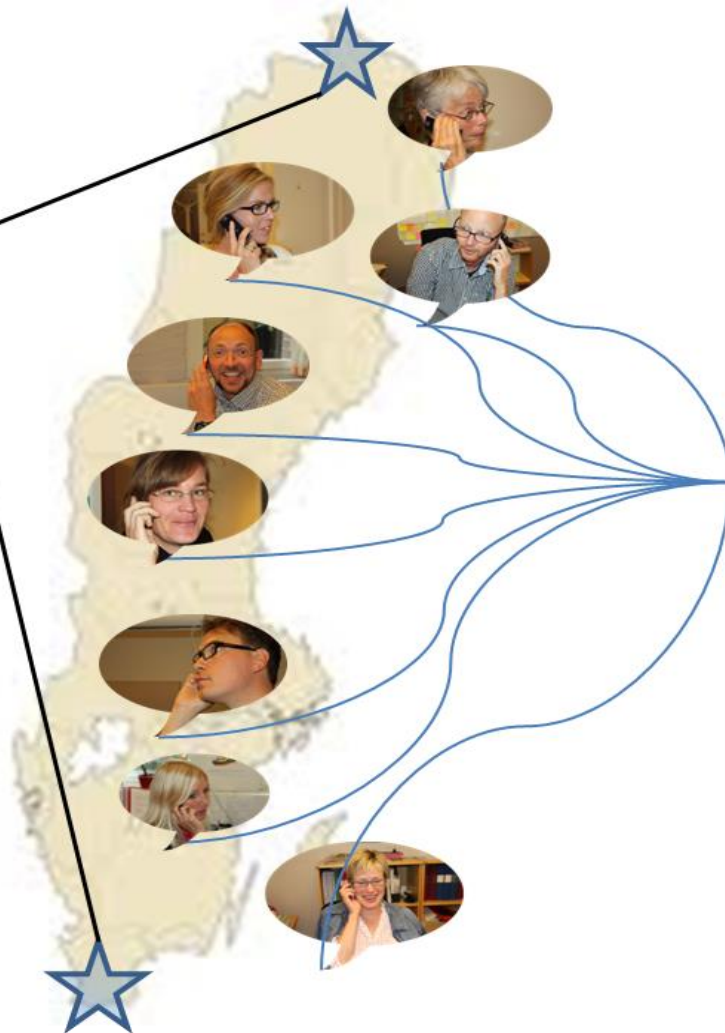
- Joint analysis of the RDP outcomes so far (2009)
- Suggestions and ideas about CAP rural policy, post 2013? (2009)
- The outcome of the RDP - what has happened and why? (2010)
- Experiences from the current programming period of, local and regional financing, and how can local financing be handled in the coming programs? (2013)

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The same distance as between Copenhagen and Rome



- Web based registration
- Predefined chairman and secretary
- Maximum eight participants in each telephone meeting
- Structured time schedule, reserved time for all participants
- Normally one hour meeting time
- Immediate distribution of minutes
- Participants feedback within 48 hours

Stakeholders concerned - *Who & how?*

In one Think Tank (2nd Think tank 2009) a total of 56 people attended in 11 different groups. Participating organizations:

- Managing authority (10),
- Fed. of Swedish Farmers (8),
- LAGs (7),
- County administrative Boards (6)
- Network Support Unit (4),
- Village action Movement (3),
- Rural and agricultural advisory association (2),
- Ministry of Rural Affairs (2)
- Others (14)

30 women, 26 men, Geography: From South to North

Lessons

- ❖ Not just another meeting or discussing technique
 - ❖ Bringing network members, living at a distance, together
 - ❖ Saving lots of travel hours and CO₂ emission
 - ❖ Network activities even between meetings
 - ❖ Gathering ideas from the whole network
 - ❖ Getting quick notes and feedbacks
 - ❖ Forming a joint report within a week
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- No discussion on a deeper level with time for analysis
 - Sometimes few people participating in the meetings

Achievements/Results

The NSU has organized around 12 think tanks in the period 2007 – 2014

The Think Tanks gave:

- Dialogue with local stakeholders on policy issues
- Feedback to ministry and monitoring committee about the program implementation and suggestions for changes
- Examples from the field
- Ideas for how the different funds can be used within CLLD
- Ideas to NRN on how to prioritize resources for activities