

QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Title of the evaluation:

EX-POST EVALUATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES 2000-2006
Contract number: 30-CE-0387013/00-01

DG/Unit: DG AGRI, Unit L4

- Official(s) managing the evaluation: Zélie Peppiette

Evaluator/contractor: Kantor Management Consultants S.A., Greece, in association with IfLS (Institut für Ländliche Strukturforschung), Germany.

Assessment carried out by:

- Steering group with the active participation of AGRI units E1, E2, E3, E4, F1, F3, G1, G3, H1, L2, L4, DG MARE E3 and DG REGIO C4 .

Date of the Quality Assessment: July 2012

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the evaluation respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The evaluation adequately covers the eight themes and the evaluation questions as defined in the terms of reference.

The synthesis provides a good overview of the distribution of resources within the programmes in question and the effectiveness and efficiency of the assistance and its impact in relation to the evaluation themes. The evaluation delivers conclusions and recommendations per theme.

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the design of the evaluation adequate for obtaining the results needed to answer the evaluation questions?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The approach of the evaluation was in line with the Terms of Reference.

The methodology developed for the evaluation of the RDPs combined different analytical approaches:

- a) Desk research covering the synthesis of ex-post evaluation reports for the EAGGF Guarantee funded RDPs, and the TRDI¹s, and the preparation of case studies. Other information sources such as the Annual Implementation Reports and available Closure Reports were also used.
- b) A survey of all Managing Authorities and representatives of Monitoring Committees.
- c) Case studies in 14 programme areas including interviews with rural development stakeholders and focus groups addressing beneficiaries using an innovative method for impact assessment (MAPP²).
- d) Use of an Input-Output model for quantification of impacts on output, income and employment.

The combination of these methodological approaches, including triangulation between the results of different methods, allowed the evaluation questions to be addressed adequately.

¹ Transitional Rural Development Instrument

² Method for impact Assessment for Programmes and Projects

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING		X			

Arguments for scoring:

The evaluation relied on a range of data sources. The contractor had access to data provided by the Commission services (in particular ex-post evaluation reports for the EAGGF Guarantee funded RDPs and the TRDIs, annual implementation reports, closure reports and financial reporting).

The monitoring data provided from CAP-IDIM (DG AGRI's in-house monitoring database for 2000-2006 rural development programmes) proved to be incomplete and to contain inconsistencies. It was therefore decided that this data could not be used as a reliable and robust basis for further analysis. This together with the fact that the quantitative information included in the majority of the ex-post evaluation reports was less than optimal, was the greatest limitation for the contractor's work, and increased the importance of the fieldwork.

The information provided by the Commission was completed by quantitative and qualitative information collected during the 14 case studies, which represented a valuable source of further information, particularly in relation to the impacts of the programmes.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS

Are data systematically analysed to answer evaluation questions and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The analysis was carried out in a systematic way, in line with the proposed methodology. The use of an innovative evaluation instrument, the MAPP approach, proved useful in complementing the limited quantitative information available. The limitations of each of the analytical approaches and tools are clearly presented and taken into account in the interpretation of the results. The evaluators used triangulation and other techniques to validate, compare and combine the results of the different approaches, and the perspectives of different target groups, in order to produce an overall assessment of the programmes and the policy.

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
		X			

Arguments for scoring:

The findings of the evaluation are clearly formulated and are supported by the evidence provided through the analysis. Due to lack of comprehensive monitoring data, the findings could not be as far-reaching as had been hoped.

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The conclusions are substantiated by evaluation findings, which were drawn from sound analysis, and address the evaluation questions. Given the data constraints, they are balanced and prudent.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The recommendations are impartial and based on the evaluation findings. They identify a number of policy issues which are relevant for the development of future rural development policy.

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The report is well structured and balanced. The written style and the presentation are clear and adapted to different target readers. The inclusion of clearly identified good practice examples is helpful.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Overall, the quality of the report is assessed to be **Good**.

It fulfils all the contractual conditions.

The findings are considered reliable, and the limitations are identified.

The information, findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented clearly, and constitute a useful input for the design of future rural development policy.