

Case Studies on Projects of trans-national Cooperation (TNC)

Nr.	Country	Local group and title of project	Responsible evaluator
1	Austria	LAG Ötztal/Tirol "Telework in mountain areas"	Richard Hummelbrunner
2	Germany	LAG Landkreis Oberallgäu/Bayern „Allgäu – Walsen Card“	Manfred Geissendörfer and Otmar Seibert
3	Spain	LAG Condado-Jaén/Andalucía "Area-based Quality Trade Mark"	Javier Esparcia
4	Spain	LAG Asociación Neria "Craftsmanship of Costa da Morte"	Javier Esparcia
5	France	LAG EURADOUR/Aquitaine "Cultural Heritage"	Denis Paillard
6	France	LAG "Chataigneraies et Sucs d'Ardèche"/ Rhône-Alpes "Les paysages de terrasses: des millénaires d'innovation"	Hélène Carrau
7	Greece	LAG KENAKAP/Thessalia "European Wilderness Challenge" *	Sophia Efstratoglou
8	Ireland	LAG Ballyhoura "Sustainable Development Initiative"	Brendan Kearney
9	Italy	LAG Delta 2000/Emilia-Romagna "Methods of integration of environment and tourism potential"	Carlo Ricci
10	Italy	LAG Valle Elvo "Enhancing the value of autochthonous wool"	Carlo Ricci
11	Portugal	LAG APRODER "Paralelo 40"	António Oliveira das Neves
12	Sweden	LAG Inlandslaget/Obj. 6 "Rural Tourism Net – RTN"	Ulla Herlitz
13	United Kingdom	LAG Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh/Highlands & Islands "European Wilderness Challenge" *	Robin McDowell

* Two studies were commissioned on the same project, in order to explore the differences in the perspective of two partners regarding the same project.

Ex-post evaluation of Community Initiative Leader II

II. CASE STUDIES ON TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION (TNC)

II.1 LAG ÖTZTAL/TIROL: “TELEWORK IN MOUNTAIN AREAS” – AUSTRIA

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	Austria
Region	Tirol
Responsible evaluator	Richard Hummelbrunner

Local Action Group

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Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	Telework in the mountain environment		
Name (under Measure C)			
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners	2	Number of languages represented	3
Typology of geographical composition	inside the same European region		
Sector of activity in which the project has been developed	information technology		

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

The **general objective** of the project was:

"the study, the set up, the experimentation and the comparison between the two LAGs of the employment of new informatic technologies aimed at overturning the depopulation trend and the de-qualification of the mountain territories, especially of those more isolated and lacking in good services".

The project **operative objectives** were:

- Implementing a basic informatic training for the weakest sectors of the local job market;
- Implementing a programme of intervention aimed at women, in order to provide them with the new technologies suited for their activities;
- Organizing and experimenting services aimed at high school and University students to allow them through the informatic tools, a better organization of their studies without staying away from their birthplaces for too long;
- Organizing and experimenting solutions aimed at professional people and/or professional offices who, through the employment of suited informatic tools and the creation of diversified services opportunities, can relocate themselves in mountain territories considered today unsuited for the development of their activities;
- A feasibility study of other operative solutions with a wider territorial and occupational impact (i.e. call centre) concerning the different sectors of the local economy (agriculture, handicraft, tourism and industry), and also allowing a better modernization of the Public Administration at the same time;
- Improving the LAGs' know-how on this subject and their ability to promote this kind of initiative on a larger scale and toward new fields of interest;

Expected results for the beneficiaries of the action (LAGs) and for the areas involved:

- A remarkable improving of the two LAGs' action capacity on this matter.
- About 50 people for each LAG are the final beneficiaries in the two years' period.
- The whole territory will benefit from the creation of the job opportunities above-mentioned, from the starting of a process that will have sure developments, and first of all, from the creation of a centre for the accumulation and the divulgence of the experience to a large extent.

Duration of implementing the action:

From October 1998 to July 1999.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

No previous local experience of working with external structures, in general the Ötztal area can be characterised as operating rather closed of from the outside (although it is a major tourist destination!).

The idea for the action was developed by the LAG manager, in search for new topics and target groups for his area. He visited a LEADER Conference on Teleworking in 1998 (Stoneaway, Hebrides, Scotland), where he received valuable information, ideas and practical experiences.

After the Conference, LAG Ötztal contacted the other LAGs in Tirol and they have agreed to collaborate in the field of teleworking and have established "Telearbeit Tirol (TAT)" as a platform for this purpose.

LAG Ötztal also took the initiative to continue co-operation with the Hebrides. In order to make use of their experience, a proposal was made to the Austrian Federal Chancellery (Nat. administrator for LEADER II) to fund a study on teleworking in Tyrol (funding outside the LEADER II budget). Funding for this study was not sought under Measure C due to the bureaucratic procedures, the lengthy decision making-process and the time requirements of the partners.

The study "Review of Teleworking Opportunities and Constraints for Tirol" was carried out by M. Wolff (Ki Net Ltd., Hebrides) and finalised in January 1998. The results of this study were used to implement the "TeleCenter" project in Ötztal.

The basis of the project seems very sound, but very complex requiring acquisition of specific know-how and considerable preparatory work. Whereas the LAG Ötztal appears very credible in this respect (as demonstrated by the manifold activities they have undertaken), the same cannot be said for the Italian partner Valsesia (see below).

No technical assistance was received by the partners within LEADER II, other than those mentioned above (Teleworking Conference organised by the Observatory, financial support by the Nat. administrator for LEADER II for the study).

No particular recommendations for identifying needs can be given.

1.3.2 Finding partners

The partner was identified at the LEADER Conference on Teleworking mentioned above. The mayor of Valsesia (IT) also attended this Conference and was looking for a partner in this field. They met and found to have mutual interest on teleworking in mountain areas and agreed to prepare a co-operation project.

A first meeting of the two LAGs took place on Oct. 10 – 11 in Varello (IT), when the project description was finalised (completion date of form Oct. 15 1998).

Although the project was from the very beginning open for other partners, additional partners were neither involved nor invited to join. Also it was foreseen to continue the activity and to apply for funding under Measure C, in order to re-propose them on a larger scale.

During the course of the action, the project partners did not hear about other sources of information they could have used to find partners, nor did they receive technical assistance.

No particular recommendations for finding partners can be given.

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

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1.3.4 Defining an action plan

It was defined at the initial meeting (see above) and contained essentially:

- Arrangement and exchange of the general documentation concerning the experiences already implemented and of those on schedule; arrangement for the common programme of intervention;
- Organisation of parallel workgroups on the two territories; these groups, one for each operative objective, will manage all the specific work aimed at the beginning of the action; later, the same groups will share the management of the specific interventions and the monitoring of the results;
- Permanent exchange of communications and documentation related to the work plans by the workgroups; definition of the implementation formalities; specification of the standards and tools for the monitoring of the development phases, and so on;
- Mutual professional and technological exchange visits on the spot, in order to estimate the starting conditions and formalities of the expected operative interventions;
- Organisation of a second meeting of intermediate verification of the general state of the project starting;
- Continuation of the parallel work of the operative objectives agreed on
- Organisation of a meeting of final synthesis and drafting of a common conclusive report, to be used to launch a project to be funded under measure C.

LAG Ötztal invested quite heavily in delivering their parts of the workload, they have hired additional staff for approx. 2 months to work out a detailed concept. But after two more visits (and an extension of the project until April 2000) it became obvious that LAG Valsesia was not willing (or able) to provide their part of the work, thus the transnational project was terminated on the initiative of LAG Ötztal.

No particular recommendations can be given for defining an action plan.

1.3.5 Implementing the project

The two partner LAGs have each established a local working group and appointed a project coordinator (in the case of Ötztal this was an external person which was contracted for this purpose).

A second meeting took place in Ötztal June 1999, where various sub-projects were discussed, detailed timetable defined and the mode for communication established (essentially e-mail and chat-line).

A third meeting was held in March 2000 in Valsesia, focused on the TeleCenter activities and possible continuation under Measure C. At this stage the differences became insurmountable. A follow-up visit took place in April 2000, but then the project was terminated.

No particular recommendations can be given in terms of implementing the actions.

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

Since the project was terminated prematurely, there was no dissemination of results nor assessment. However, LAG Ötztal has used the experiences gained in preparing other projects and initiatives pursuing similar objectives (see next point).

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

After the end of the transnational project with Valsesia, LAG Ötztal took the initiative to pursue the ideas behind this projects, but with other partners and on a different scale:

- Within Tirol a network “TeleArbeitTirol – TAT” was established to promote the development of teleworking. Partners in this networks are the other LAGs and Tech Tirol, the technology transfer and regional marketing agency of Tirol.
- A project application “Alpinetwork” was submitted – and meanwhile approved – under the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme, with partners from Austria, Italy (Trentino-Alto Adige) and Switzerland (Lead partner Tech Tirol).
- Co-operation with the Hebrides was continued, but on an an informal basis, without a transnational project. Some costs (travel, transfer) were covered from the budget of the study, which contained a component for implementing findings in Austria.

The experience gained by LAG Ötztal in the framework of the present transnational projects helped in better defining suitable conditions for transnational co-operation. Since the LAG has very limited staff and capacity, it is very important to remain focused. Thus a lot of invitations to participate in transnational projects were turned down, and the LAG has become very sceptical regarding “project tourism” organised in large groups.

An important factor of success is that the co-operation is focused on clearly defined thematic issues and only few, but competent participants take part.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

The LAGs did not benefit from technical assistance within LEADER II (see above).

1.4.2 Project budget

	Total cost (ECU)	Funding applied for from the European Observatory (ECU)
Travel and accommodation costs	4.000	4.000
External technical assistance	3.500	3.500
Interpreting/translation costs	2.500	2.500
Feasibility-Study, documentation and personalization software	10.000	10.000
TOTAL COST	20.000	20.000

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

No effects took place

2.1.2 Employment effects

No direct employment effects from the transnational co-operation project; but the entire transnational initiative led to considerable employment effects:

- Installation of Call Center due to transfer of experience from the Hebrides (creation of approx. 30 new jobs)
- The project "Alpinetwork" submitted under INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space foresees considerable employment creation in the partner areas (but has only started)

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

Not applicable

2.1.4 Income effects

Income creation through new jobs in Call Center (see above)

Generally the level of income was raised through local training programmes provided by the TeleCenter (more than 4.000 participants in training programmes, predominantly women)

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

Women are the primary target group of the LAGs activities which were promote as a result of or in relation to transnational activities (Call Center, TeleCenter)

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

The components of the territorial capital which have been enhanced by the project are Human resources (upgrading through training programmes) and know-how/skills (in new technologies, teleworking).

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

A second Call Center has meanwhile been established in Tirol (Hochfilzen), as the result of a follow-up visit to the Hebrides. This Center functions predominantly with private funding.

A handicapped person has been “upgraded” and qualified to become the technical director of the Call Center. On one hand, this led to widespread recognition of the capabilities of handicapped, and on the other hand to substantial savings in social assistance. By providing suitable employment for this person alone the savings will amount to a total of 10 Mio. ATS (= 730.000,- Euro).

The LAG Ötztal did not get discouraged by their rather negative experience within the LEADER II funded TNC project. They were persistent in finding new partners within and outside Tirol, which were interested, motivated and professionally competent. And they managed to launch successful follow-up projects which have a good change to successfully further the development of the LEADER TNC project’s original idea to promote “teleworking in mountain areas.

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

- A concrete objective has to be agreed jointly at the start
- Mutual balance of input and output/benefit has to be aimed at among the partners

- Minimum requirement for language ability must be requested from partners (mother tongue plus second language), otherwise satisfactory communication will not be achieved

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

- Mutual balance of input and output/benefit for partners must be maintained throughout implementation (be sensitive of imbalances and correct swiftly)
- Will for co-operation and reliability of partners should be tested very early in the implementation process (correct as soon as possible)
- Good chemistry among actors must be achieved (perhaps change persons if sympathy does not materialise early on)
- Communication should be possible without translators (see comment on language ability above) in order to reduce translation costs ; for Conferences only English should be offered (avoids «conference tourism»)

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

- Combination of topics and persons is crucial (involve credible, competent actors in transfer activities)
- Demonstrate the principle of customer care also in exchange visits (will most likely lead to lasting relationships)
- Needs of visitors/guests should be taken up, beware of sumptuous presentations
- Be open during visits, do not hold back «secrets», also speak about mistakes
- Offer hot-line for follow- up advise (without payment)

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good use made of information received at LEADER Teleworking Conference ▪ Rapid application within LAG and Tirol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little additional information sought within LEADER Network ▪ Rapid “satisfaction” with first partner identified

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
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- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Swift transfer of Scottish experience ▪ Successful identification of additional funding sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little persistence within LEADER system (use of Measure C, opportunities for TA) |
|--|--|

Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Premature dissemination of preliminary findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ successful transnational co-operation does not require much financial resources

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good insistence/dedication of Lead Partner ▪ Initiative of LP to terminate project when conditions were not satisfactory any more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Objectives of project were not met ▪ No alternatives within LEADER sought when partnership turned out inappropriate
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main activities outside LEADER system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New projects and partnerships pursued

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rapid implementation of new projects in Tirol triggered by TNC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transfer in project unbalanced (few effects for Italian partner)
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ attempt inappropriate transfer by neglecting context and framework conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid mistakes, learn from others

II.2 LAG LANDKREIS OBERALLGÄU/BAYERN: “ALLGÄU – WALSER CARD“ – GERMANY

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	Germany
Region	Bavaria
Responsible evaluator	M. Geissendoerfer, O. Seibert

Local Action Group

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e-mail		Web site	www.oberallgaeu.de

Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	AllgäuCard		
Name (under Measure C)	Allgäu-WalserCard		
Observatory code (if existing)	None		
Number of partners	2	Number of languages represented	1
Typology of geographical composition ¹	Inside the same European region, Border-crossing (Germany-Austria) Neighbouring regions		
Sector of activity ² in which the project has been developed	Rural tourism, introduction of IT-technologies		

¹ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

² The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Preliminary remark: Although a LAG existed in the area, the project was administered under the roof of the regional district administration (Landratsamt), not in the responsibility of the LAG.

Project objectives:

- introduction of an electronic guest card (tourists) with touchless-technology, also usable by the local population;
- more convenience for guests using touristic infrastructure (ski-lifts, swimming pools, museums, public transportation and so on).
- creation of a brand with “all-inclusive-offers” for the entire touristic region of Oberallgäu.
- simplification of obligatory registration of tourists (especially overnight staying guests) in touristic municipalities.
- use of synergy effects with another region in Bavaria (rural district Passau, member of LAG DE BA 03 Bayerwald), which carried out a twinning project (but with other rural context and partnerships).

The project Allgäu-Walser-Card developed from a common initiative of the district Oberallgäu and the Austrian municipality Mittelberg in the Kleinwalsertal. Ideas were already existing since 1994, but a first feasibility study of an external consulting company showed negative results. The project was realized at the end of the 90's when the necessary electronic systems proved to be better developed.

From its character the project was similar to the LEADER II-program (part C regional and transnational networking), for which a first application was made by the district in 1997.

Within the area an intensive promotion effort for the acceptance of this large-scale project had to be carried out. In 1998, a first basis was created for the combination of touristic offers from both, municipalities and private offerers (mountain railway operators etc.) by the “Oberallgäu-Spaß-Sommerpass” (conventional guest card with bonus system). The district always saw the project as a process of growing the touristic region together. This process was supposed to run over several subprojects. Nevertheless, an elementary understanding among the local parliaments, touristic services and infrastructure offerers had to be developed in a lengthy clearing-up campaign.

On initiative of the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs, during the conception phase contacts were made to the district of Passau that planned a similar project. The Ministry demanded to develop in partnership with Passau a pilot system transferable to Bavaria and therefore offered an increase of promotion funds. However, cooperation between both regions was limited and only focused on the common production of “terms of reference” and the common EU-wide advertisement for the system production; the data processing technology had to be individually modified for the regional structure of the offerers of touristic services.

Due to the transnational co-operation of Germany and Austria, some existing differences had to be coordinated in the following areas:

- Communal rights (obligation for hotels, pensions and private renter to report the name of their guests to the municipal administration)
- data protection law
- tax law.

Further action need: ·

- the zones of influence of the German and the Austrian Telekom had to be linked.
- touristic partners needed to be acquired and had to be convinced,
- technical EDP cross-linking had to be ensured over new interfaces between the respective Card issuing departments (hotel, many private offerers, municipalities, terminals) and most diverse acceptance places (touristic infrastructure facilities etc.).

Beyond that, the subproject "Fitting all vehicles and/or buses within the suburban traffic area of Oberallgäu/Kleinwalsertal and Kempten/Ostallgäu/Kaufbeuren with readers for contact-free smart cards" was accomplished. The ÖPNV-project (regional public transport project) was started in February 2002, almost simultaneously with the Allgäu-Walser-Card project (separate financing).

Current data:

- In May 2003 about 140.000 Allgäu-Walser-Cards were in circulation (tourism area Oberallgäu – Kleinwalsertal). The start of the real operation was on December 1, 2002.
- In addition, further 22.000 smart cards are in circulation for the ÖPNV. With the beginning of July this number will continue to increase as the Allgäu-Walser-Card is then extended also for inhabitants of the area to a combined bonus and ÖPNV card (people's card).
- The card allows to use over 80 acceptance places with individual bonuses.
- In May 2003 already 1.020 enterprises were equipped with terminals in order to be able to upload the card with individual and municipality-referred packages. In principle, each hotel and/or each municipality can ask the central clearing centre to arrange individual packages for their guests. Thus, any additional queuing e.g. in front of ski-lifts can be avoided

Many technical and organizational conversion problems had to be solved. In particular the change of assigned companies, which could not deliver the agreed upon services (or not in time), retarded the project more than 1 year. Finally, one separated from the general contractor ArGe TouristCard (Giesecke&Devrient GmbH and IRS Consult) and took over the already compiled concept components. At the end of 2001 a new partner (Willken, Ulm) was found who developed the technical components in own sponsorship. The district Oberallgäu afterwards became licensee of the IT-system. Willken is likewise responsible for the support of the clearing centre (the hardware is in Ulm

with Willken) and ensures the central data exchange between the involved card issuing centres, municipalities and acceptance places.

The time pressure up to the end of the postponed final account (at the end of 2002) demanded a very effective project management.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs(Bedarf)

- The district Oberallgäu and the region Kleinwalsertal have economically always been closely connected. This concerns in particular the tourism (it is only possible to reach Kleinwalsertal in Austria over Germany). The creation of a transnational infrastructure was therefore considered as positive and constructive by the Kleinwalsertal.
- The tourism association of the district of Schwaben and regional politicians supported the project from the beginning. Since in the middle of the 90's the topic was discussed again and again.
- The regional economic promotion department of the district of Schwaben put great importance to the use of IT-systems linking municipalities and different suppliers of local services together.
- According to the project manager, time had come for the introduction of electronic registration forms. Thus the commitment of the municipalities for the project became secured (use: facilitation of work, improvement of data accuracy, assurance of the completeness of registrations).
- The district administration repeatedly engaged external experts in order to achieve specific know-how for the solution of very diverse problems and, moreover, to examine the feasibility of the projects and project parts. A contact to the European LEADER Observatory did not exist. Due to the direct neighbourhood of the two areas, a necessity for any contacts was not seen.
- In July 2000 the OberAllgäu-Tourismus Service GmbH (OATS) was founded in Sonthofen as a regional marketing group and later as an operating company for the electronic smart cards. The OATS at the same time operates a service- and a call center with internet-based online accounting systems. In that way preconditions were built for start work as a service provider and link unit between municipalities and renters and for the creation of Allgäu-Card packages. The Austrian municipalities Mittelberg and Jungholz are members in the OATS.

1.3.2 Finding partners

In the districts of Passau and Oberallgäu, similar proposals for the introduction of a multi-functional, contactless smart card system for touristic services and/or public transportation services were developed simultaneously. A common projectcoach (m@ark consulting) was introduced by the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs and installed for the coordination of the activities. Further, a common European-wide advertisement for the pre-defined order parts was initiated.

The cooperation within the project-preparation phase was positive for both districts. However, during the project conversion the differences showed to be too great.

- The district of Oberallgäu has many mountain railways (with individual IT-systems and various possibilities of access) and many little landlords;
- On the other side, Passau only has a few baths and some larger hotels (not as many IT-interfaces required).

Therefore, the specifications (terms of reference) for the tender for the technical equipment in the district Oberallgäu later had to be reviewed and made more precise.

The realization of the project required the search for reliable partners with experienced personnel. The first partner (general contractor ArGe TouristCard: Giesecke&Devrient GmbH and IRS Consult) could not fulfill these expectations. Afterwards a small project group of the district administration took over the planning/control and looked for new partners by themselves (e.g. Willken, Ulm).

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

The main common goal of the districts of Oberallgäu and Passau was the avoidance of double development costs for similar projects and a sufficient openness of the project solutions (compatibility with other tourism and ÖPNV-projects). A further cooperation failed on account of the diverging context conditions (see above 1.3.2).

A common goal of the district of Oberallgäu with the region Kleinwalsertal (AT) was the integration of the existing electronic infrastructure into the IT-infrastructure of the Allgäu-Walser-Card

The Kleinwalsertal has always had a close connection (same culture area, even German telephone network, similar touristic context) to the Oberallgäu. So, the cooperation was free of difficulties and/or misunderstandings.

1.3.4 and 1.3.5 Defining an action plan / Implementing the project

The project was characterized by an extremely short conversion phase and remarkable technical problems.

- In 12/1999 the promotion-application for LEADER-funds was granted;
- In 5/2000 a public advertisement on EU-level as well as in Germany and Austria took place;
- Between 11/2000 and 12/2001 a not satisfying treatment of the project through the ArGe TouristCard burdened the progression of the project;
- Between 2/2002 and 5/2003 the project was finally realized by Willken in cooperation with the project team of the district administration of Oberallgäu; a first test-operation in 5 tourism municipalities was performed in the winter season of 2002/2003. The system was then extended until 5/2003.

A booklet of duties (terms of reference) had to be prepared for the first advertisement. The booklet contained – comparable to an action plan – all technical and temporal details the partners had to achieve (vgl. 1.3.2). The requirements of the project have been very complex. Therefore numerous changes of the project-plan were necessary.

After the separation from the first assigned general contractor it was necessary to develop a new functional smartcard-concept. The project team of the district administration was therefore extended (additional 3 persons). It was however clear that a successful start of the project required the cooperation with external specialists. So, an important task of the district administration of Oberallgäu was the temporal scheduling as well as the communication and coordination of working results of external consulting companies in the context of the project. In order to obtain (after the failure of the first attempt) more acceptance regarding the accommodating enterprises, a bottom-up approach was now stronger emphasized. Hence, several workshops with accommodating enterprises, infrastructure offerers and public tourism facilities and/or municipalities were accomplished since February 2002. The workshop results were integrated into the detailed concept of the project

Important experience: The conception of the smart card required a reorganisation of the registration process; the landlords now have to electronically provide their municipality with guest and accommodation data. Some smaller landlords tried to prevent this and worked against the project as the Allgäu-Walser-Card brings more transparency to the registration process and makes illicit renting almost impossible. In order to achieve higher acceptance, numerous information meetings and an intensive conviction work were necessary.

The internal and external marketing required the following actions:

- PR over the press and addressing of target groups;
- Regular information in „Allgäu Aktuell“ (Infoletter of the OATS);

- Print-brochures for guests containing information regarding the bookable packages (season-catalogues). The brochures contributed to the proclamation of the Allgäu-Walser-Card.

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

By 5/2001 the partner region Passau had already realized their (technically simpler) concept. The exchange of experience covered the following areas (decreasing significance):

- Project-preparation,
- Definition of the project-content and of the booklet of duties for the public advertisement,
- Exchange of information regarding the implementation of the project and the roll-out (start of the real-operation, accompanying-marketing in order to increase acceptance).

An exchange of information with the European LEADER Observatory did not take place. However, information and ideas were shared with several specialised consultants as these had already addressed the topic „electronic guestcard“, e.g.:

- Jan von Trott, management consultancy, Frankfurt/M.
- Kohl und Partner, tourism consultancy, Villach, Austria

The Austrian consultants Kohl & Partner examined e.g. the entire alpine region regarding already existing smart card and booking systems. Summary: The Oberallgäu and the canton Graubünden (CH) are one of the best organized tourism areas within the German-speaking alpine region. Nonetheless, the district of Oberallgäu alone is too small and would therefore have to geographically extend its card-concept and the marketing related therewith. Consequence: Together with two further neighbouring districts, the “Allgäu-marketing” will develop in the not too distant future. The marketing will be based on the already existing infrastructure (OATS, Allgäu-Walser-Card) and is supposed to strengthen the tourism-destination in the European competition.

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

See description above.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

The technical support was mostly provided by experts on a consulting basis. In this respect, the administration- and networking-centres were not able to support.

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding (net costs)

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding Bavarian State Ministry for Economics (means for public traffic)	Rural district Oberallgäu	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	TOTAL Net costs (without value added tax)
Partner Oberallgäu (co-ordinator)	2.556.000 €	511.000 €	3.133.000 €		6.200.000 €
Partner Kleinwalsertal (Austria)	Interreg	INTERREG approx. 500.000 €		Raiffeisen-Stiftung 500.000 €	1.000.000 €
TOTAL					7.200.000 €

Parts of total costs by parts of projects:

- Costs for the touristic main project: 4.100.000 €
- Costs for the electronic equipment of the ÖPNV: 3.100.000 €

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	TOTAL (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner Oberallgäu (co-ordinator)			6.200.000
Partner Kleinwalsertal			1.000.000
TOTAL			7.200.000

Moreover, a operating enterprise was established together with the OATS GmbH. The foundation required a primary deposit of 300.000 € (the OATS itself operates a call- and service-centre).

Limited partners of the GmbH:

- 26 municipalities of the district of Oberallgäu, the city of Kempten and the municipality Scheidegg;
- the region of Tyrolia (A): Municipality Jungholz; Voralberg (A): Municipality Mittelberg-Kleinwalsertal

Proportions in stock of the partners: Municipalities (1/3), district (1/3), private companies and banks (1/3).

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

No effects

2.1.2 Employment effects

Currently no employment-effects can be quantified.

The safeguard of tourism related jobs in the region is a main goal.

With approximately 10 million overnight-stays in the entire region (district of Oberallgäu and Kleinwalsertal), tourism is an important sector of economy. The duration of stay is 6.5 days/guest on average. Within the last five years the number of overnight-stays decreased by about 15%. The amenities of the Allgäu-Walser-Card are supposed to again attract more guests.

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

Due to the combination of the Allgäu-Walser-Card with the ÖPNV (local/regional public transportation network), the use of public transportation services is expected to increase. Furthermore, the Allgäu-Walser-Card will become a people's card by the beginning of July and will thus lead to a further traffic discharge.

2.1.4 Income effects

Higher potentials for the generation of added-value are expected due to two reasons:

- By the sale of standardized or individual packages over the Allgäu-Walser-Card, the guests shall be animated to spend more money in a simpler way and thus to use various bonuses.
- On account of an improved registration process (card=electronic registration form that transfers guest-data to the municipalities), higher proceeds from visitor's taxes are expected for the municipalities (in the Kleinwalsertal the number of overnight-stays increased by about 10 % in a test run).

On the other side a significant increase in turnover can not be expected by the build-up of a distribution system. That way the project cannot be financed entirely. However, landlord enterprises are anticipated to profit as they will be able to offer their guests a better service: „All-inclusive-offers“ may be booked for a final package-fee and will then be uploaded to the card. At mountain railway stations for instance, no additional queuing at the cash desks will be necessary and even theater and taxi-services can be paid with the card. The thereby generated added-value will raise the contentment

of the guest and will improve the image of the region. This will again lead to a stronger customer loyalty and thus conserve the potential to create added-value.

It is anticipated that about 500 enterprises will operate own sales-agencies over which individual packages will be offered. Presumably this will only be the larger boarding houses. For the activation of yet pre-programmed packages already 1020 enterprises are authorized.

The operating costs of the technical system are estimated to be about 0,5 Mio €/year. Additional costs will result from the preparation of season catalogues from which the guest may chose a package. The catalogues are substantial for the marketing and shall provide an overview about all the possibilities the Allgäu-Walser-Card offers. Depending on the temporal distribution of investing-costs (4,1 Mio. €) with respect to the useful life, yearly costs of about 1 million € will arise. Calculating with 10 million overnight-stays, the costs of the project can only be entirely covered if appr. 0,1 € Mehrausgaben are induziert per day. So, a one-week holiday of 4-persons family would result in additional costs of 2.80 €. This seems to be realistic.

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

No effects

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

Human resources:

In connection with the project-implementation an IT-qualification project was started in the Kleinwalsertal (over INTERREG) as well as in the district of Oberallgäu. In order to ensure that future users are familiar with the software and the Allgäu-Walser-Card itself, several trainings with over 2.000 participants were organized in the district of Oberallgäu. Some participants made their first contacts with IT-technologies so that as well basics had to be taught.

Markets:

Because many (as well smaller) hotels purchased the software needed for the registration management (with interface for public registration management) the regional software-branche experienced an economic impuls.

The foundation of the OATS GmbH was a strategically important chess move as it led to the development of a common (boarder-crossing) plattform through the tourism municipalities and private offerers. The common business areas (call-forwarding call-centre, online-registration management, services for the Allgäu-Walser-Card) ensure a better cooperation of the municipalities with respect to the marketing of the region. The pilot-project OATS will probably expand its scope and establish itself in neighbouring areas and later eventually within the entire tourism association Allgäu-Schwaben as a profit centre in the area of booking- and reservation management.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

Yet in early stages, the project was by all responsible participants understood as a process of problem solution through intensive cooperation. According to statements of the officer for regional economic promotion, the local participants would not have joined the project if they had known the dimension of intensive cooperation beforehand. Now coordination has become a working-culture. More than 40 workshops and extensive trainings for landlord enterprises (2000 persons, 8 landlords per training unit of 0.5 days each) were accomplished.

The unification of the registration forms between the municipalities alone required 6 months. Above all it was important that regional politicians (e.g. the District Administrator or several regimen-directors) smoothed the way for the project within and without the municipalities.

In order to raise the acceptance of the project among the residents, it was decided that the Allgäu-Walser-Card should as well function as a people's card and therefore be implemented until the end of June 2003.

3. Learned lessons

Lessons on TNC project: planning -implementation – project diffusion

According to the project director, the greatest learnings developed from the project management itself (e.g., cooperation with external firms and inclusion of affected people into the project development).

The project showed one weak point: It combines registration management (goal: registration of all overnight-stays) and bonus card (all-inclusive-distribution structure) in a single technical solution. Because different goals are thus pursued, it was at first not possible to convince all landlord enterprises. They primarily feared a stronger supervision (illicit renting).

For the information of the people concerned it would have been better to build small working groups (opening the possibility for one-on-one interviews) instead of arranging large public events. Due to occasional critical reporting in the press concerns of the population had to be disproved. Altogether a lack of professional and locally based PR-work could be noticed. The public relations could have been improved by a more transparent presentation of the details. **Consequence: Complex projects must be seperated into small sub-operations everyone is able to understand (=keep it small and simple).**

The commitment of the district was very positive as it invested substantial own resources in order to lead the project to success. In this respect the necessary decisions over funds by the rural district parliament was not a problem. On the Austrian side the financing also worked out well.

Because the positive development of tourism requires a stronger bundling of regional forces, the OATS GmbH is going to take over responsibility and will geographically extend the Allgäu-Walser-Card project in the context of a comprehensive Allgäu-marketing (presumably 3 districts and the city of Kempten).

The IT-know-how related to the smart cards (hardware, interfaces, software) is currently property of the Willken GmbH. Willken has also build up interfaces to all the other relevant software-providers, e.g. SKI-DATA. This guarantees a frictionless data transfer between acceptance- and clearing centres of the Allgäu-Walser-Card. The district appears as licensee. Willken is eager to sell its distribution system and yet various tourism areas posted inquiries. Thereby the electronic registration system and the bonus card with its cross-linked acceptance centres are standing in the foreground.

II.3 LAG CONDADO-JAÉN/ANDALUCÍA: “AREA-BASED QUALITY TRADE MARK” – SPAIN

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic Information

Evaluator

Country	España
Region	Andalucía
Responsible evaluator	Javier Esparcia

Local Action Group

Name of LAG/CB	Asociación para el Desarrollo Rural de la Comarca de El Condado-Jaén		
Code Nr. of LAG/CB	ES-JA-03		
Contact person	Sebastián Lozano Mudarra		
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e-mail	asodeco@infonegocio.com	Web	www.mercadorural.com

The Transnational Cooperation Project

Name (preliminary phases)	"De la idea al proyecto" "Del proyecto a la acción"		
Name (under Measure C)	"MARCA DE CALIDAD TERRITORIAL"		
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners	3	I Number of languages represented	3
Typology of geographical composition ³	Inside the same European region (Mediterranean)		
Sector of activity ⁴ in which the project has been developed	Food and agricultural production; rural tourism; heritage and the environment		

³ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

⁴ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Synthetically describe (one page) the characteristics of the project: motivations, objective, results etc.

All three territories (Condado de Jaén, País Cáataro, Valle Umbra) were undertaking an internal process of dynamisation of local actors in a development project. Starting from different local circumstances and contexts, they had identified resources and local productions already valued or those that could be valorised.

All parts were willing to go beyond this stage and work in common to pursue a Territorial Quality Label that could be established internationally by an official recognition from the EU. The concept of Territorial Quality Label was conceptualised as follows:

- (i) More than a trade mark. It goes beyond quality normative and quality labels.
- (ii) It affects all products and services offered in the territory (agriculture, craftsmanship, tourism, heritage, etc.).
- (iii) It contributes to the reinforcement of territorial identity.
- (iv) Promotes territorial development by ensuring cohesion of actions.

An added value of the project is on the different degrees of development of partners' experiences. This diversity has allowed for monitoring interrelations between the local development project and the implementation of the territorial quality label in different contexts

General objectives initially :

- To find a balance between local development processes and the economic valorisation of the products and services of a territory.
- Promote synergies between functions of territorial dynamisation and territorial production.
- Create a new form of commerce consisting of promote, exchange and introduce in the market goods and services linked to a sustainable local development process that is based on quality standards.
- Develop a collective quality label at EU level for products linked to a local development processes.
- Reinforce the development process of each territory through exchanges and cooperation between producers, technicians and decision makers of all cooperating areas.
- Improve "exterior economic results" of all cooperating territories, through actions at county level in the frame of a Territorial Quality Label network.
- Achieve the transfer from a territorial quality label for particular products to a territorial quality label for the whole development process, at EU level.

Cooperation in LEADER II has had the following results:

1. A document of principles and values of the Territorial Quality Label, signed by local actors and decision-makers of all three promoting LAGs.
2. Three territorial quality labels (one in each partner's LAG area) with their corresponding "General Letter" (document of terms and conditions), a proposal for an European "General Letter" for the Territorial Quality Label and its management procedures.
3. A range of specific «letters» for particular products and services.
4. Three models for management and control of the Territorial Quality Label that can be taken as experience for the EU Territorial Quality Label management model.
5. Establishment of an EU network of LAGs applying the concept and norms of the Territorial Quality Label in Spain, France, Belgium, Italy and Greece.

In the new context of LEADER+, objectives are:

- Creation of a true EU network for the official recognition of the Territorial Quality Label linked to an specific way to do local development, beyond the aims of a simple trade mark, or a standard quality label.
- Connections with many territories that are working in the quality concept around Europe, usually from different standpoints.
- Commercial optimisation of initiatives in fairs, franchises, Internet, etc.
- Mutual benefit from learning experiences, methodologies and models.
- Consolidation of territorial projects, beyond the time limitations of particular rural/local development policies like LEADER

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

- The local context at the beginning of the cooperation process. What was the local context in the beginning? Was there any local experience of working with external structures, was there an opening to the outside?

ASODECO is the local association constituted in 1994 in order to manage a LEADER II initiative. The territory did not have any previous experience in local/rural development policies manager from the area. ASODECO gathers all eight local governments of the county, agriculture trade unions, women associations, businesses and cooperatives.

The local partnership has worked in: (i) the dynamisation of the local society (territorial identity and image), specially necessary in a inland lagging rural area, a traditional source of out-migration to other regions and countries; (ii) economic development to valorise local resources and diversify activities;

(iii) monitoring local development projects and accompanying promoters through the starting up process; (iv) creation of service centres; (v) support to organisation and cooperation between local actors; (vi) development of tourism products and organisation of the tourism offer.

There is some experience of cooperation with other territories (interregional and transnational) in the frame of employment initiative since 1995. Therefore, there was a great deal of good attitudes towards cooperation with external areas.

- How and when was the need identified? Why it was believed that the cooperation was necessary? Was it due to the fact that the cooperation was a requirement of LEADER?

From the standpoint of the local LAG, transnational cooperation was all but an obligation of the LEADER II initiative. The need for cooperation is seen in the group when there is agreement on the need to develop a collective label (mark – brand) for all products and services offered in the territory. Existing rules and norms do not meet needs in this sense and there was a need to explore whether there were other territories that had found creative solutions to this problem. In this context, advice was demanded from the EU LEADER Observatory

- How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?

The cooperation project was « cooked » by the management team of LEADER II. There was agreement in the local partnership that a “total quality strategy” was the only way forward to achieve a real sustainable development. In this sense, this has been a flag project for the local partnership and a reference in the development strategy.

- What credibility had the project among LAG members and regional administration?

In relation to what has been pointed out in the previous question, the project was unanimously supported by LAG members. Regional administration did also support the project with the maximum possible funding.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for identifying needs?

The EU LEADER Observatory helped to identify potential partners (ie. other LEADER territories with same objectives) and even promoted the first face-to-face contact. Later, it funded the two first stages of the cooperation project: “from idea to project” and “from project to action”.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of identifying needs, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

Cooperation can not be something artificial or “forced”, separated from the needs of the local development strategy.

Cooperation must arise as the answer to a local problem that can not be solved at the local level. If the need is evident, support structures will have to identify which other territories are having (or have had) similar problems from which there are lessons to be learned.

1.3.2 Finding partners

- How did you identify the partners with whom you worked?

The partner in the País Cataro was contacted as a consequence of the recommendation of the EU LEADER Observatory. The partner of Valle Umbra was the consequence of a common call in the LEADER Magazine of the Observatory.

- As you progressed in your action, did you hear about other sources of information that you could have used to find partners? Which ones?

No

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for finding partners?

None

- What recommendations would you have in terms of finding partners, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

Use existing databases and structures available to this goal. In any case, these tools are useful as far as one has clear objectives in what is looking for. Cooperation without clear objectives “cooperar por cooperar” is a non sense.

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

- How did the negotiation on objectives and cooperation strategy proceed?
 - Firstly, a working trip was carried out to the País Cataro, where a wide representation of local actors participated.
 - Secondly, a delegation of the País Cataro LAG visited the Condado de Jaén to learn about the situation there.
 - Thirdly, there were several meetings with technicians, decision-makers and entrepreneurs of all three promoting territories to establish objectives of the cooperation project and to learn about demands and expectations of each type of local actor (technicians, decision-makers and entrepreneurs)
 - Finally, it is important to point out that an external technical assistance was hired from the beginning in order to coordinate all actions.

- Did you and your partners have comparable national elements (context, legislation...) enabling you to avoid misunderstandings? If that was not the case, how did you overcome this difficulty?

The contexts of the three promoting LAGs were different. It was needed much common thinking and a deep mutual knowledge and understanding, in order to find strategies to meet goals. It was not an easy task.

- Did you substantially modify your initial objectives to arrive at common objectives?

Original objectives were modified to a great extent, since they were very limited at the beginning. Other partners also modified their initial objectives. When there is common thinking and mutual knowledge, a new cooperation project raises, with new objectives that are common for all partners. No one has the feeling that is loosing. It is a “win-win” situation.

The goal is to establish an EU official denomination and to develop the rules and management procedures for it. These were the finally agreed objectives.

- Did you “formalise” the agreements that you reached (e.g. in a contract or in a partnership agreement)?

A partnership agreement was developed including a detailed description of objectives and actions, the participation of each partner and the funding compromises. This agreement was signed by all partners.

- If you took on one or more new partners, what steps did you take to rapidly bring the partner(s) up to date and to ensure integration with existing links?

Once the cooperation partnership was strong and stable, a new objective was to enlarge the network in order to meet the objective of an official recognition of the Territorial Quality Label at EU level. This is being implemented during LEADER+ and, therefore, new partners were not part of the original partnership during LEADER II. New partners were invited to national and European meetings. The cooperation project was explained to interested new partners that participated in the definition of the new cooperation project. In the design of the new cooperation project for LEADER+, the experience of the original partnership was deeply taken into account. The current partnership is around 40 LAGs from Spain, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy and Greece.

- At what stage is negotiation the most difficult in a project and why?

Problems that arise during the implementation of the project and that had not been foreseen. For example, to agree indicators to measure territorial quality for the definition of an EU Territorial Quality Label. The cooperation was about to fall apart. Quality Indicators constrained the way in which some partners had been working before. Several partners believed their territories would never meet these quality indicators. This was the real debate. The solution came with a lot of equilibrium, a strong wish

to keep working together, and changes in the working criteria used by some partners. The cooperation was, in the end, a key part of the work in the territory, conditioning at all levels.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for negotiating common objectives?
 - The EU LEADER Observatory facilitated the first contact with potential partners.
 - The Nacional Unit of the EU LEADER Observatory facilitated the search for spanish partners and a meeting place in Madrid
 - The external assistance contracted provided valuable technical support.
- What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?
 - The first step is that cooperating partners know well to each other. Only if there is enough mutual understanding and knowledge of each other's problems and realities, there is room for cooperation and common objectives. Initial stages are fundamental.
 - An external technical assistance is essential to coordinate, monitoring and control of the working flow of the project.

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

- How did you determine the feasibility of your project? Did you hire outside experts for the feasibility and engineering? What part of this work did you do in house?

There have always been external experts that have helped to define agreements reached by partners, elaborate documents and minutes, guarantee success of meetings (preparation of materials and coordination of attendants). Partners have defined and decided the content of the documents (goal, objectives, actions and philosophy of the cooperation project). The external support has provided working methodologies to improve participation and effectiveness.

- How did you find the necessary funding?

From LEADER II budgets.

- Were you able to diversify the sources of funding? What obstacles or difficulties did you encounter?

In the particular case of Condado de Jaén, several actions of the transnational cooperation project had to be funded with alternative programs. On the other hand, the participation of entrepreneurs was quantified as "private contributions". Co-funding in small territories with small local governments is difficult.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for defining an action plan?

No support from any LEADER structure. Support came from external experts in terms of coordination, document writing and working methods.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?
 - The first step is that cooperating partners know well to each other. Only if there is enough mutual understanding and knowledge of each other's problems and realities, there is room for cooperation and common objectives. Initial stages are key.
 - An external technical assistance is essential to coordinate, monitoring and control of the working flow of the project.

1.3.5 Implementing the project

- How were the actions managed? Who took care of this, what methods were used and how was this set up? What feedback mechanism was introduced for the actors and financial backers?

Each partner was responsible for some actions, but participated in the remaining actions of the project. All partners had external assistance for coordination with the rest of the transnational partnership. Information among partners was coordinated and distributed by the external assistance. Each partner was responsible to distribute information in his territory.

- Did you try to develop networking or did you facilitate it? Why? How did you go about doing this?

A consequence of the project was the consolidation of a wide network for territorial quality. Each national partner was responsible to enlarge the partnership in its country. The external assistance effectively contributed to this multiplication. New countries were included. There are now "national quality networks" of LAGs in the frame of this cooperation project. External assistance has been essential to facilitate the consolidation of the network.

- How did you keep the various local actors involved throughout the project's life?

From the very beginning (initial working trip) there was a direct implication of the public and private sectors. Both parts have always participated actively in the project. Actions have been designed to facilitate a wide participation.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for implementing the project?

The Observatory provided meeting place in Madrid. Support came from external experts in terms of coordination, document writing and working methods.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the cooperation project, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

External technical support is essential to avoid the risk that the cooperation turns to be a heavy load of work on top of the already saturated agendas of LEADER managers and partners. It is also essential to make a clear share of responsibilities in the cooperating partnership, monitor each action and assess it in the form of written documents.

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

- Did you communicate the transnational cooperation action and its results? Y/N

Yes

- How did you bring together the good practices acquired during the various cycles? Did you formalise them in one way or another? Did you disseminate these good practices? How?

Not systematically. It was not an objective of the project and was not foreseen as an action. It was, however, dissemination in the LEADER magazine that provoked some expressions of interest from LAGs.

There were, however, some reviews from the Observatory and publications in the LEADER Magazine. Moreover, the LAG has participated in many seminars to explain the project and its results. There have been a lot of articles in the local press.

- How is access to information about the project or information created by the project (e.g. new production or processing techniques) organised? Who has access and how?

Apart from the official information available in databases of the EU LEADER Observatory and its national unit, the project launched its own webpage with links to the websites of the three promoters.

However, the LAG is more worried about the long-term sustainability of the project than about the results of a particular period of time. The project is unfinished.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for assessing and disseminating the cooperation project?

The EU LEADER Observatory has provided: (i) support to enlarge the network of participating LAGs; (ii) dissemination of the project via LEADR Magazine and website; (iii) a meeting place. The Regional Government has provided its office at Brussels to hold some coordination meetings. Some universities and organisations have studied and disseminate the project as a good practice.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of assessing and disseminating the cooperation project, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

A transnational cooperation project should include concrete actions from the beginning in order to ensure that these are carried out. An external coordination is convenient and contributes to increase effectiveness and to ensure better performance.

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

- What were the determining factors in your decision to embark on a new phase of cooperation? What difficulties did you encounter?

Factors:

- Official recognition of the Territorial Quality Label from EU still pending.
- Book of norms and procedures for the Territorial Quality Label still unfinished.
- It was necessary to enlarge the partnership to create a more powerful lobby to negotiate the importance of the official recognition.
- In the case of Spain, a larger partnership is needed to ensure feasibility of certifying costs and promotional actions.

Difficulties:

- End of LEADER II reduces capacity of action of most LAGs that disintegrate their management structures.
 - Reorganisation of LAGs in other countries for LEADER+.
 - Lack of common criteria for cooperation projects from different administrations in Spain. This constraints possibilities of cooperation.
 - Lack of funding in many LAGs for the transitional period between LEADER II and LEADER +.
- Were you helped by the experience that you acquired in the first stages/phases of your project? To what extent?

New stages of the project rely in the experience of initial stages. Main contributions of these initial stages are: (i) consensus on principles and values of the Territorial Quality Label; (ii) development of the "General Letters" for the territorial quality label in each participating area; (iii) specific "letters" for particular goods and services; (iv) management structures; (v) working methodologies.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other)

Support from the EU LEADER Observatory in the phases: "from idea to project" and "from project to action"

- What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project?

Benefits from the assistance:

- Increase mutual knowledge between participating LAGs, thus favouring the development of the project idea and design.
- Availability of a period of time for reflection on the objectives of the project. This thinking period also allowed for matching the territorial strategy with the objectives of the cooperation project.
- Participation of different collectives of the territory.
- Increased efficiency.

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
Partner 1 (co-ordinator) CONDADO DE JAÉN (SPAIN)	FEOGA	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ANDALUCÍA	PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ENTREPRENEURS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT	120.000€
Partner 2 PAYS CÁTARO (FRANCE)				120.000€
Partner 3 VALLE UMBRA (ITALY)				120.000€
T O T A L				360.000 €

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator) CONDADO DE JAÉN (SPAIN)	Training and seminars Promotion and marketing	Fairs on the Territorial Quality Label in all towns of the area	120.000€
Partner 2 PAYS CÁTARO (FRANCE)	Political and technical management		120.000€
Partner 3 VALLE UMBRA (ITALY)			120.000€
T O T A L			360.000 €

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

The cooperation project focus on a Territorial Quality Label based on the rationalisation of good and service production in a collective marketing strategy. The goal is to promote economic diversification and the consolidation of new goods and services different to the traditional olive mono-crop. In the case of agricultural adjustment and diversification, the quality label will have a clear impact (olive oil quality label, organic farming, etc.)

2.1.2 Employment effects

The LAG representatives believe that it would be too ambitious to expect that a two-year project is able to create or maintain a significant number of jobs in the area. However, they expect that the diversification produced as a consequence of the cooperation project will help to maintain employment and generate new one.

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

Environmental indicators are in the centre of the Territorial Quality Strategy “Comarca del Condado-Jaén”.

Enterprises located in the area will need to take into account environmental impact of their activities. Moreover, it is expected that public institutions and organisations will observe these requirements if they are to join the quality label. In relation to this, several municipalities have started Agenda 21 processes.

For LEADER +, environmental aspects sum 1/3 of the final mark for projects.

2.1.4 Income effects

No specific data available

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

“Social quality” of companies holding the quality label is essential. It is one of the agreements of the cooperation partnership. For LEADER+, social aspects make up other 1/3 of the mark.

One of the main general aims of the LAG is the promotion of social quality. In relation to this, the group manages an EQUAL project.

2.2 **Enhancement of the territorial capital**⁵

1. **Physical resources and their management:** The project allows for the valorisation of natural and cultural resources of the area because they are considered key elements of the quality label. All actions on heritage (environmental and cultural) have already been defined for the period 2000-2006. The territorial quality label imposes conditions and procedures that have to be met on heritage protection and recuperation.
2. **The culture and identity of the area:** The project relies on a reinforcement of territorial identity with a common image (quality label) around the most significant elements of the territory. Every product or service holding the quality label need to be linked to the identity of the area (using local raw materials, promoting local gastronomy, using traditional or current know how of the area, preserving architectonic values, etc.).
3. **Human resources:** The cooperation project and its territorial quality label require the mobilisation of all human resources of the area on the basis of a particular development strategy. All inhabitants of the area have a role to play in the process to achieve a total quality strategy. The territorial quality label is a “way of doing” development in which participation of local population must be guaranteed at all levels. Another principle of the project is solidarity between actors (equal opportunities).
4. **Implicit/explicit know-how and skills:** The territorial quality label valorises know-how and skills inherited from one generation to the next, formalising all this historical knowledge in the General and Specific Letters. Also, the project pursues innovation and incorporation of new technologies, specially in management and distribution.
5. **Governance:** Cooperation and its consequence (Territorial Quality Label) allow to conduct investments and actions (both public and private) in a single direction that is in line with the development strategy. Moreover, there is a single coordinating and managing structure, the LAG, where all collectives of the area are represented, and where the private sector is as important as public sector.

⁵ Siguiendo el estudio del Observatorio europeo LEADER II (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Bruxelles, 1999), los componentes del capital territorial son 8:

1. *Recursos físicos y su gestión* en particular los recursos naturales (relieve, subsuelo, suelo, vegetación, fauna, recursos hidráulicos y atmósfera), equipamientos e infraestructuras, patrimonio histórico y arquitectónico.
2. *Cultura e identidad del territorio.* Los calores comúnmente compartidos por los agentes del territorio, sus intereses, su mentalidad, sus formas de reconocimiento, etc.
3. *Recursos humanos.* Los hombres y las mujeres que viven en el territorio, los que acuden a vivir y los que se van, las características demográficas de la población y su estructuración social.
4. *Conocimientos técnicos implícitos y explícitos, y las competencias,* así como el control de las tecnologías y la capacidad de I+D
5. *Gobernación y recursos financieros.* Las instituciones y administraciones locales, las reglas del juego políticas, los colectivos; la disponibilidad y gestión de los recursos financieros.
6. *Actividades y empresa.* Su mayor o menor concentración geográfica y estructuración (tamaño de las empresas, sectores, etc.)
7. *Mercados y relaciones externas.* En particular, su integración en los distintos mercados, redes de intercambio, de promoción, etc.
8. *Imagen y percepción del territorio.* Tanto interna como externa.

6. **Activities and business firms:** The project diversifies local economic activity and concentrates efforts in a single direction (quality linked to the territorial identity). It is specially promoting family businesses.
7. **Markets and external relations:** The Territorial Quality Label aims at offering a single, quality image of the products and services offered in and from the area, and a quality image of the territory itself. Along with other territorial quality labels will have enough critical mass to compete in the market with big producers.
8. **The image and perception of the area:** On the one hand, an important internal difficulty has been overcome by increasing self-reliance and confidence in a territory that had lost many important elements due to traditional lack of dynamism and migration. On the other hand, the territory has gained an innovative image, showing dynamism and collective compromise.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

Area-based approach: at present local actors have fully assumed that the development process needs to be territorial, integrated and participative rather than sectoral and disintegrated. And this development process goes far beyond the management of a single program like LEADER. Culture and sport policies and actions are now managed at county level (not municipal) in order to increase rationalisation.

Local Partnership: most local actors believe now (after the experience of LEADER working in partnership) that the partnership provides more positive results by promoting the pact and agreement as the basis of work.

Innovation: It takes longer for innovation to enter procedures and ways of doing things in the area. Innovation has been easier in common (ie. collective) projects.

Networking: It is quite consolidated. LEADER, EQUAL and other employment initiatives have contributed to create a culture of networking in the area.

Transnational Cooperation: This is part of networking. However, language barriers are a strong difficulty. The importance of cooperation is more rooted among technicians and politicians of the area.

Decentralised management and financing: assumed and demanded. Lately there is concern from local actors because there is a trend towards a reduction of the decentralisation trend. Decision-making of the LAG is less free than during the previous period, requiring a permanent control from the Regional Government.

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

- It is very important the mutual knowledge of partners (territory, main trends and processes, etc.) .
- Decisions in the group must be collectively assumed in order to avoid that any personal change (ie. new people coming in or “old” people leaving) cause problems.
- Maintain a degree of flexibility (always when there is justification).
- Identify where is decision-making in each group. An adequate interlocutor is key.
- Do not mix technical and political decisions.
- Make politicians feel part of the project planning.
- Define responsibilities of each partner in each action. Define budgetary commitments.
- An external technical support (coordination) provides stability, continuity and monitoring of commitments.
- Each action needs previous planning (meetings, preparatory documentation).
- Working language must be agreed in advance. Translation services are sometimes necessary and guarantee success. Translators must learn all about the project and be familiar with the technicalities. They are also “members of the partnership”.
- Agreement on shared expenditure and how to deal with this.
- Need to formalise the cooperation with contracts or agreements.
- To define well the profile of participants for each type of action.

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

- Information and communication among partners is essential. And this is sometimes only possible with an external technical coordination.
- Discipline in functions and responsibilities agreed between partners.
- Use contractual obligations if there area political or technical changes inane area to avoid that the project collapses or gets stopped by this kind of changes.
- Do not allow participation in actions of people that was not planned (ie. politicians external to the project, relatives, etc.).
- Guarantee documentation of each action when it is finished.
- Flexibility to change initial objectives and actions with addenda to the initial agreement. Any change must be agreed and formalised.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

- This must be planned in advance.
- Dissemination must not be at the end of the project (risk to fail). It needs to be carried out continuously, after the implementation of each action.
- Do not concentrate too much on diffusion through IST. It takes longer to prepare and the market is still reduced. It is better to first use traditional means: press, specialised magazines, radio, etc.
- Dissemination must happen at different levels: internal (people involved in the area), intermediate authorities and organisations, other organisations linked to the area, etc. The nature of dissemination is different in each case.

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extensive partnership at this stage (over 40 partners across 6 countries) makes possible wide dissemination. ▪ The role of the EU LEADER Observatory through its databases and magazine. ▪ The external coordination was responsible for the dissemination of information between partners. ▪ Each partner was responsible to disseminate the project in its territory. ▪ - Project's own website with links to the three websites of promoter partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No particular dissemination strategy. ▪ Each partner was responsible to disseminate the project in its territory
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of IST as the centre of the dissemination strategy. Market is still reduced in some places. Better to use traditional means of communication (press, specialised magazines)- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consolidation of an extensive dissemination strategy for the new cooperation period under LEADER+.

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ External coordination helping to disseminate results and to extend the partnership.▪ Creation of a document of principles and values of the Territorial Quality Label, signed by local actors and decision-makers of original partners (3).▪ Extension of the original partnership from 3 members to over 40 members. The careful definition of procedures and norms will make easier the transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice developed during the first stage.▪ Partners have participated in several seminars to explain the project and its results.▪ Project's own website with links to the three websites of promoter partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No particular dissemination strategy▪ Increased complexity of coordination in an extended partnership.
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Use of IST as the centre of the dissemination strategy. Market is still reduced in some places. Better to use traditional means of communication (press, specialised magazines)▪ Extension of the original partnership from 3 members to over 40 members. The high number of partners will increase management and coordination complexity. There is the risk that in the new partnership are not only "believers" but also "opportunists"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The EU assuming the project and the Territorial Quality Label as a goal.

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of a document of principles and values of the Territorial Quality Label, signed by local actors and decision-makers of original partners. ▪ Important degree of mutual knowledge among partners, previous to the implementation of the project. Achievement of common objectives in a “win-win” situation. ▪ External technical assistance is essential to coordinate, monitor and control the working flow of the project, provide working methodologies, document writing, ensure partners implication. ▪ Strong wish to maintain the cooperation partnership over difficult periods ▪ Contracts and agreements clearly stating all obligations and compromises of partners prevent the project being stopped by political or technical changes in one of the areas ▪ Each partner is responsible of one or more actions, but participates in all actions. ▪ Cooperation project linked to the global development strategy of the territories ▪ Support from LAG members and regional administration ▪ Actions carefully planned with preparatory meetings and documentation stating objectives, procedures and leading actors. ▪ Actions have been designed to allow for wide participation of the local actors ▪ Each action is assessed by the external coordination in the form of written documents ▪ A degree of flexibility in planning is necessary ▪ Identification of adequate interlocutor in each territory is essential for success of cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Innovation flowing slowly in the private sector ▪ Definition of common parameters and indicators for the Territorial Quality Label and all the goods and services in the territory. Different levels of exigency and concerns of partners to achieve the standard level. ▪ High dependency on LEADER funding. Co- funding in small territories with small local governments is difficult.
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language barriers (partially solved by the external coordination and a translation strategy) ▪ Very different local contexts of participating partners. Need to initial stage of mutual knowledge and understanding. The most difficult part of the cooperation project. ▪ The project is unfinished. The final stage consists of the official recognition from the EU of the Territorial Quality Label ▪ Books of norms and procedures for the Territorial Quality Mark and derived goods and services still unfinished ▪ End of LEADER I reduces capacity of action and funding ▪ Reorganisation problems of LAGs in new period ▪ Lack of common criteria for cooperation projects among different levels of government in Spain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The EU assuming the project and the Territorial Quality Label as a goal. ▪ The project is unfinished. The final stage consists of the official recognition from the EU of the Territorial Quality Label ▪ Extended partnership to create a more powerful lobby to negotiate the importance of the official recognition

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of economic diversification through rationalisation of good and service production in a collective marketing strategy. ▪ Employment maintainment and creation through promotion of new economic activities. ▪ Environmental issues in the centre of the cooperation strategy. ▪ Valorisation of natural and cultural resources because they are considered key elements of the territorial quality label. ▪ Territorial identity reinforced. Every good or service holding the territorial quality label needs to be linked to the identity of the area ▪ Implication of all collectives and actors of the territory in the design and implementation of the Territorial Quality Label ▪ Formalisation of the historic know-how and skills of the area in the norms and procedures of the quality label ▪ Strategic development guided by a book of objectives and procedures (Territorial Quality Label) allows to conduct investment and actions (both public and private) in a single direction ▪ A common image of the products and services of the area is being marketed. Moreover, this image goes "hand by hand" with the other territorial images to build an alternative to traditional producers. ▪ Increased self-confidence 	
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of "freedom" of LAGs to implement the development strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The EU assuming the project and the Territorial Quality Label as a goal.

II.4 LAG ASOCIACIÓN NERIA: “CRAFTSMANSHIP OF COSTA DA MORTE” – SPAIN

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic Information

Evaluator

Country	España
Region	Galicia
Responsible evaluator	Javier Esparcia

Local Action Group

Name of LAG/CB	Asociación Neria		
Code Nr. of LAG/CB	ES-GA-13		
Contact person	Juan Agustín García Pouso Jose Antonio Vila García		
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The Transnational Cooperation Project

Name (preliminary phases)	La Artesanía de la Costa Da More en Plonéour Lanvern		
Name (under Measure C)	La Artesanía de la Costa Da More en Plonéour Lanvern		
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners	2	Number of languages represented	2
Typology of geographical composition ⁶	Inside the same European region (Mediterranean)		
Sector of activity ⁷ in which the project has been developed	Heritage (craftmanhip)		

⁶ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

⁷ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Synthetically describe (one page) the characteristics of the project: motivations, objective, results etc.

Craftsmen and craftsmanship of Costa da Morte are not prosperous. However, there are some innovative professionals in his sector that produce and create with new methods, still respecting tradition. The collective of craftmen is not well organised and the scenario for the future is obscure.

Craftsmanship of Costa da Morte is one of the productive areas with more potential to diversify the local economy and increase development possibilities (the area has suffered from severe outmigration due to structural problems of the fishing activities, one of the main sources of income in the area. In this context, a project aimed at structuring and reinforcing the craft production sector was considered a strategic priority. Moreover, craftsmanship is strongly linked to tourism promotion, another strategic priority for the area.

Although their production is high quality, craft producers had not contacted with other similar professionals of different areas, did lack marketing strategies and were mostly out of any commercial network.

The initial idea of a cooperation project to promote added value and sustainability of the craftsmanship industry in Neira was to facilitate a contact of craft professionals with similar experiences in France.

Bretagne, and more particularly the region of Finistère (Plonéour Lanvern), has many geographical and cultural similarities with the Costa da Morte (spanish Finisterre), and has an ancient craftsmanship tradition. This tradition crystallizes in the annual *Salon International des Métiers d'Art* (the meeting gathers every year the Salon gathers around 70 art artisans, several cultural and professional associations, training schools, etc. The Salon is open to the public for demonstrations, conferences, videos and debates). Artisans of Costa da Morte had the opportunity to participate in talks, round tables, conferences and workshops. On the other hand, French artisans have the opportunity to learn about works and methods of artisans of Costa da Morte (lace, linen, leather, wood, etc.)

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

- The local context at the beginning of the cooperation process. What was the local context in the beginning? Was there any local experience of working with external structures, was there an opening to the outside?

There had not been any previous cooperation with external structures.

- How and when was the need identified? Why it was believed that the cooperation was necessary? Was it due to the fact that the cooperation was a requirement of LEADER?

Although transnational cooperation is a requirement of LEADER II, this was not the only reason to undertake the cooperation project. The needs of the craftsmanship sector and the identification of a territory with similar geographical and cultural conditions (both are called “finisterra”) were the main reasons for cooperation.

- How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?

Initial assessment was positive. Basis of the project were agreed in continuous meetings with craftsmen association of the area.

- What credibility had the project among LAG members and regional administration?

Very good credibility both with the LAG partners and with the regional government responsible for LEADER. At the end of the project implementation, the assessment from craftsmen associations was also very positive.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for identifying needs?

None

- What recommendations would you have in terms of identifying needs, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

All transnational cooperation projects should have three aims:

1. Dynamize of the craftsmen sector (including incorporation of youth)
2. Dignify the craftsmen sector
3. Introduce new methods and technologies for production and commercialisation in order to increase profitability and viability. Otherwise, run the risk of creating nice projects from the cultural point of view that do not contribute to the sustainability of life in rural areas.

1.3.2 Finding partners

- How did you identify the partners with whom you worked?

Through the Internet

- As you progressed in your action, did you hear about other sources of information that you could have used to find partners? Which ones?

No more partners were searched. There were contacts with other LAGs at the end of the LEADER II period that did not produce any cooperation project due to the closure of the program.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for finding partners?

None

- What recommendations would you have in terms of finding partners, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?
 - Territories must be similar.
 - Use of IST
 - Use of the LEADER Observatory tool

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

- How did the negotiation on objectives and cooperation strategy proceed?

Working meetings and visits

- Did you and your partners have comparable national elements (context, legislation...) enabling you to avoid misunderstandings? If that was not the case, how did you overcome this difficulty?

There were substantial commonalities.

- Did you substantially modify your initial objectives to arrive at common objectives?

Yes. As the implementation went on, there arose common objectives that were not explicit at the beginning of the preparation period. In any case, initial objectives were similar.

- Did you “formalise” the agreements that you reached (e.g. in a contract or in a partnership agreement)?

Yes

- If you took on one or more new partners, what steps did you take to rapidly bring the partner(s) up to date and to ensure integration with existing links?

N/A

- At what stage is negotiation the most difficult in a project and why?

It depends on the degree of similarity between territories and partners' needs and interests. It also depends on the willingness to come close in the search for common objectives.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for negotiating common objectives?

None

- What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

- How did you determine the feasibility of your project? Did you hire outside experts for the feasibility and engineering? What part of this work did you do in house?

All the project was designed by the technical team of the LAG

- How did you find the necessary funding?

From LEADER II budgets and from own funding of the LAG

- Were you able to diversify the sources of funding? What obstacles or difficulties did you encounter?

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for defining an action plan?

No support.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

1.3.5 Implementing the project

- How were the actions managed? Who took care of this, what methods were used and how was this set up? What feedback mechanism was introduced for the actors and financial backers?

Management teams of the two involved LAGs managed the cooperation actions. Craftsmen were informed in several meetings.

- Did you try to develop networking or did you facilitate it? Why? How did you go about doing this?

- How did you keep the various local actors involved throughout the project's life?

Through several meetings with the sector

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for implementing the project?

None.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the cooperation project, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

- Did you communicate the transnational cooperation action and its results? Y/N

Y

- How did you bring together the good practices acquired during the various cycles? Did you formalise them in one way or another? Did you disseminate these good practices? How?

An analysis and global assessment were carried at the end of the implementation period with the craftsmen sector. Dissemination has existed.

- How is access to information about the project or information created by the project (e.g. new production or processing techniques) organised? Who has access and how?

All local actors can access to the global assessment carried out.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources) for assessing and disseminating the cooperation project?

None.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of assessing and disseminating the cooperation project, for LAGs and for future technical assistance?

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

- What were the determining factors in your decision to embark on a new phase of cooperation? What difficulties did you encounter?

- Were you helped by the experience that you acquired in the first stages/phases of your project? To what extent?

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other)

No. All the cooperation project was designed and carried out by the management teams of LAGs and with the direct participation of the craftsmen sector.

- What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project?

N/A

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
Partner 1 (co-ordinator) NERIA	95.616	25.791	15.504	136.522
Partner 2				
T O T A L				

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator) NERIA	136.522		136.522
Partner 2			
T O T A L			

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

Income increases for part of the local society due to the compatibility of craftsmanship with farm activities.

2.1.2 Employment effects

Employment creation and maintainment with effects on population maintainment in the area.

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

Positive effects because the diversification of agriculture activity has meant, for many families, the opportunity to remain in the area. The highly sparsely settlement in the area makes it specially important the maintainment of the population in the territory to preserve the cultural landscape and the environmental values.

2.1.4 Income effects

Income increases for part of the local society due to the compatibility of craftsmanship with farm activities.

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

Very positive since most “craftsmen” in the area are, in fact, craftswomen.

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital⁸

Increased awareness of the need for environmental conservation and a sustainable use of the rich environmental resources of the area, in order to increase quality of life.

The cooperation project has contributed to a general improvement on the cultural sector of the area. It has also contributed to increase a positive territorial identity from local actors, specially those more involved.

⁸ Siguiendo el estudio del Observatorio europeo LEADER II (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Bruxelles, 1999), los componentes del capital territorial son 8:

9. *Recursos físicos y su gestión* en particular los recursos naturales (relieve, subsuelo, suelo, vegetación, fauna, recursos hidráulicos y atmósfera), equipamientos e infraestructuras, patrimonio histórico y arquitectónico.
10. *Cultura e identidad del territorio*. Los calores comúnmente compartidos por los agentes del territorio, sus intereses, su mentalidad, sus formas de reconocimiento, etc.
11. *Recursos humanos*. Los hombres y las mujeres que viven en el territorio, los que acuden a vivir y los que se van, las características demográficas de la población y su estructuración social.
12. *Conocimientos técnicos implícitos y explícitos, y las competencias*, así como el control de las tecnologías y la capacidad de I+D
13. *Gobernación y recursos financieros*. Las instituciones y administraciones locales, las reglas del juego políticas, los colectivos; la disponibilidad y gestión de los recursos financieros.
14. *Actividades y empresa*. Su mayor o menor concentración geográfica y estructuración (tamaño de las empresas, sectores, etc.)
15. *Mercados y relaciones externas*. En particular, su integración en los distintos mercados, redes de intercambio, de promoción, etc.
16. *Imagen y percepción del territorio*. Tanto interna como externa.

There has been also a valorisation of certain local resources and heritage that were previously ignored by the own inhabitants and, therefore, not used at all for the development of the area and the generation of income.

The recuperation and valorisation of the craftsmanship sector can contribute very importantly to the population maintainment by offering new income opportunities and a diversification of traditional activities.

There is also a strong concern and support from public administrations with the need to preserve rural population living in their original areas.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

There has not been many changes since it was only one experience. It is needed some kind of long term cooperation that does not exist yet.

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

Local actors must be directly involved in the cooperation project planning and implementation

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

Every cooperation project need to have a strong “bottom-up” focus. That is to say, local actors have to be directly involved in its implementation. The role of a good technical team is also essential to provide advice and assessment.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

A written publication of the project and its results is very recommendable. Other means of communication (local media and Internet) are also important tools. It is important a process of assessment by the collectives involved.

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role of the EU LEADER Observatory through its databases and magazine. ▪ Existing dissemination strategy (although not explained) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced partnership (only two partners). ▪ Demonstration project rather than cooperation project (only exchange of visits). Direct results of the project can not be "spectacular".
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstration effect can disappear soon in the absence of a real development strategy for the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interesting cooperation project. Needs a second stage (maybe during LEADER +) in which territories (should increase partnership) with very similar realities and needs, work together in a common development strategy for the craftsmanship sector.

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Special care in the implication of the target sector (craftsmen). ▪ Creation of a written publication about the cooperation project. ▪ Global assessment with craftsmen sector at the end of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased complexity of coordination in an extended partnership. ▪ Demonstration project rather than cooperation project (only exchange of visits). Direct results of the project can not be "spectacular".
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstration effect can disappear soon in the absence of a real development strategy for the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interesting cooperation project. Needs a second stage (maybe during LEADER +) in which territories (should increase partnership) with very similar realities and needs, work together in a common development strategy for the craftsmanship sector.

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Important degree of mutual knowledge among partners, previous to the implementation of the project. Achievement of common objectives in a "win-win" situation. ▪ Support from LAG members and regional administration ▪ Very similar local contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstration project rather than cooperation project (only exchange of visits). Direct results of the project can not be "spectacular". ▪ High dependency on LEADER funding. Co-funding in small territories with small local governments is difficult.
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language barriers ▪ Demonstration effect can disappear soon in the absence of a real development strategy for the sector ▪ End of LEADER I reduces capacity of action and funding ▪ Reorganisation problems of LAGs in new period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interesting cooperation project. Needs a second stage (maybe during LEADER +) in which territories (should increase partnership) with very similar realities and needs, work together in a common development strategy for the craftsmanship sector. ▪ Extended partnership

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of economic diversification. ▪ Employment maintainment and creation through promotion of new economic activities. ▪ Valorisation of natural and cultural resources. ▪ Territorial identity reinforced. ▪ A common image of the products of the area 	
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstration effect can disappear soon in the absence of a real development strategy for the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interesting cooperation project. Needs a second stage (maybe during LEADER +) in which territories (should increase partnership) with very similar realities and needs, work together in a common development strategy for the craftsmanship sector.

II.5 LAG EURADOUR/AQUITAINE: “CULTURAL HERITAGE” – FRANCE

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	FRANCE
Region	Aquitaine
Responsible evaluator	

Local Action Group

Name of LAG/CB	EURADOUR "Pays du Val d'Adour"		
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Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	Trans-national cooperation with Luxembourg		
Name (under Measure C)			
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners		Number of languages represented	2
Typology of geographical composition ⁹	Different European region		
Sector of activity ¹⁰ in which the project has been developed	Environment ant agriculture		

⁹ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

¹⁰ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Synthetically describe (one page) the characteristics of the project: motivations, objective, results etc.

The objectif of this project is the opening of the territory outside for all the "périscolaire" (schools and centers of leasures) and elected officials :confrontation of differents cultures.

The choice of this project comes from common objectives with Luxembourg on actions related on the maintenance of the banks and water.

The partnership was created because the action of Luxembourg was already advanced and they had started to make local dialogue what got for Euradour a transfer of methodology. However, Euradour had created teaching aids for the children of the schools and the centers of leasures. That got an interest for Luxembourg. All this constituted a common interest.

A problem appeared because the local actors of Luxembourg had an interest very developed for ecology and the adaptation between the two partners was progressive. Consequently Euradour employed a full-time person for working on the transnational project.

Besides this, the LAG of Luxembourg worked on projects very much multisector.

The results are interested because the LAG Euradour continues the project with the projetc "Aquafil" which is a partnership with Romania and Bulgaria for an opening on other sectors (technical exchanges and pedagogy of teaching) and the local partners have the desire to continue.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

Explain as the local strategy of cooperation was born:

- What was the local context in the beginning? Was there any local experience of working with external structures, was there an opening to the outside? (cf question 1.2)
- How was the need identified? when the project was launched or perhaps during its progression? Need to exchange points of view and techniques. Need to go to territory to discover it
- How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?
- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)? Not need of the Observatory because they know what's happen on the territory.
- What recommendations would you have in terms of identifying needs
 - for the other LAGs? To work with reliable actors
 - for future technical assistance? To work with reliable actors

1.3.2 Finding partners

Explain as the partnership has been created.

- How did you identify the partners with whom you worked? [opportunity](#)
- As you progressed in your action, did you hear about other sources of information that you could have used to find partners?
- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?
- What recommendations would you have in terms of finding partners for the other LAGs? [To have shared common interests](#)
for future technical assistance? [To have shared common interests](#)

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

Explain as a common strategy has been defined among the partners.

- How did the negotiation proceed? [Exchange of experience and methodology](#)
- Did you and your partners have comparable national elements (context, legislation...) enabling you to avoid misunderstandings? If that was not the case, how did you overcome this difficulty? [structuring primary school](#)
- Did you substantially modify your initial objectives to arrive at common objectives? [These common objectives have not modified initial objectives although the LAG of Luxembourg work more on the multisector.](#)
- Did you “formalise” the agreements that you reached (e.g. in a contract or in a partnership agreement)? [yes](#)
- If you took on one or more new partners, what steps did you take to rapidly bring the partner(s) up to date and to ensure integration with existing links?
- At what stage is negotiation the most difficult in a project and why? [integrism on both sides.](#)
- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)? [none](#)
- What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives for the other LAGs? [Simple negotiations](#)
for future technical assistance?

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

Explain as the action plan has been defined.

- How did you determine the feasibility of your project? Did you hire outside experts for the feasibility and engineering? What part of this work did you do in house? *The feasibility of the project was made in-house (SEMADOUR) and not intervention of outside experts.*
- How did you find the necessary funding? *convention of application (5000€ and 20 000€)*
- Were you able to diversify the sources of funding? What obstacles or difficulties did you encounter? *Problem to find an institution local reliable which brings the financial counterpart (30%)*
- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?
- What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan
 - for the other LAGs?
 - for future technical assistance?

1.3.5 Implementing the project

Describe the implementation of the project.

- How were the actions managed? Who took care of this, what methods were used and how was this set up? What feedback mechanism was introduced for the actors and financial backers? *At the beginning, each LAG was a director of project and after, the LAG was in charge of the operationnality of the action*
- Did you try to develop networking or did you facilitate it? Why? How did you go about doing this? *The making was in France and in luxembourg because there was a director of local project in each country and each LAG built free boxes of play in the center of leisures in France and in the primary school in Luxembourg)*
- How did you keep the various local actors involved throughout the project's life? *the grouping of communes, the trade unions and associations were in charge of the implementation of the actions with a work of piloting and of synchronization*
- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?
- What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the actions
 - for the other LAGs?
 - for future technical assistance?

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

Describe the modalities of diffusion of the project.

- Did you communicate the transnational cooperation action and its results? [To develop](#)
- Was the project assessed? What were the conclusions of the assessment? [Aquafile has been evaluated but it is not in the case of Leader 2](#)
- How did you bring together the good practices acquired during the various cycles? Did you formalise them in one way or another? [problem because they did not know not formalized the action nor with the organism which finance. But the project Aquafile has been realized after in the same spirit with motivation](#)
- Did you disseminate these good practices? How? [Yes with the continuity with the project Aquafile](#)
- Did you disseminate the results of the transnational cooperation actions carried out by your area? How did you do this and what interest was shown in this? [Project Aquafile](#)
- How is access to information about the project or information created by the project (e.g. new production or processing techniques) organised? Who has access and how?
- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?
- What recommendations would you have in terms of assessing and disseminating for the other LAGs?
for future technical assistance?

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

- What were the determining factors in your decision to embark on a new phase of cooperation? [Motivation of local actors](#)
- What difficulties did you encounter?
- Were you helped by the experience that you acquired in the first stages/phases of your project? To what extent? [Methodology and experience](#)

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other)
- What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project?

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)				
Partner N				
T O T A L				183 000€

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)			
Partner N			
T O T A L			183 000€

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on agricultural adjustment and diversification in your area. *none*

2.1.2 Employment effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect in terms of employment in your area. *none*

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered environmental effects in your area. *Thanks to the ecological aspect of Luxembourg, use of soft techniques of revegetalisation on the long term. They avoid also heavy manures.*

2.1.4 Income effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered income effects in your area. *none*

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on equal opportunities in your area. *none*

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

- Explain which components¹¹ of the territorial capital of your area have been enhanced by the project and in which way. *A strong added value comes from the formation that the technicians and the political representative had*

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

- Explain if and how the TNC project helped the LAG and the involved local actors in the learning process related to the achievement of the LEADER specific behavioural objectives (area-based approach, bottom-up approach, local partnership, innovative approach, multi-sectoral integration, networking, trans-national cooperation, decentralised management and financing).

The TNC project made it possible to confront the cultures of 2 different countries. The local actors profited from experiment and new methodologies. This project is at the origin of a change: the opening to the others and the installation of partnerships.

¹¹ According to the dossier of the Observatory (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Bruxelles, 1999), the various elements of an area's capital can be classified into a number of components, which every individual is able to define in relation to his own specific situation or to what he is looking for. The dossier proposes the following eight components:

1. *Physical resources and their management*, in particular natural resources (topography, soil, subsoil, flora and fauna, water resources, atmosphere), the historical and architectural heritage and public facilities and infrastructure;
2. *The culture and identity of the area*, the shared values of the players in the area, their interests, attitudes, forms of recognition, etc;
3. *Human resources*, the men and women living in the area, those who take up residence there and those who depart from the area, the population's demographic characteristics and its social structure;
4. *Implicit/explicit know-how and skills*, as well as technological mastery and research and development capabilities;
5. *Governance*, the political rules of the game, the collective players involved, and, more generally, what is nowadays referred to as the area's "governance"; this component also includes financial resources (institutions, businesses, people, etc) and their management (savings, loans, etc), since an area's governance cannot be dissociated from the formal commitment that local players are willing to make together (public/private financing, etc);
6. *Activities and business firms*, their degree of geo-graphical concentration and their structure (size of firms, sectors, etc);
7. *Markets and external relations*, especially their integration into the different markets, exchange and promotion networks, etc;
8. *The image and perception of the area*, both internally and externally.

3. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

3.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Problem of different languages ▪ Lack of formalization of the actions in real time
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structuration in-house ▪ creation of a Web site

3.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diffusion of soft techniques locally 	
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Danger to remain on the same topic 	

3.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the opening of the territory forms integral part of the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ miss public counterparts for the trans-national cooperation ▪ difficulty of admitting the local and of making confidence
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "ideological" risks of confrontations 	

3.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Real exchange on the technical support and the common formations 	
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possibility of continuing in the same direction thanks to Europe (project Aquafil)

II.6 LAG “CHATAIGNERAIES ET SUCS D’ARDÈCHE”/RHÔNE-ALPES: “LES PAYSAGES DE TERRASSES: DES MILLÉNAIRES D’INNOVATION” – FRANCE

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4.4	More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC	103
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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	France
Region	Rhône-Alpes
Responsible evaluator	Jean-Calude BONTRON

Local Action Group

Name of LAG/CB	Chataigneraies et Sucs d'Ardèche		
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e-mail	pnr-monts-ardeche@inforoutes-ardeche.fr	Web site	

Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	Les cultures de terrasses: des millénaires d'innovation		
Name (under Measure C)	Les paysages de terrasses, des millénaires d'innovation		
Observatory code (if existing)	FR-RA03		
Number of partners	4	Number of languages represented	4
Typology of geographical composition ¹²	border-crossing; inside the same European region: mediterranean region		
Sector of activity ¹³ in which the project has been developed	patrimoines paysagers, savoirs-faire et valorisation des cultures en terrasses, "heritage and the environment"		

¹² According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

¹³ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Synthetically describe (one page) the characteristics of the project: motivations, objective, results etc.

L'histoire du projet de coopération transnationale a été rendu possible grâce à la ténacité de la coordinatrice, du LAG "Chataigneraies et Sucs d'Ardèche". En effet, le Business Plan de ce LAG était orienté vers les patrimoines, les savoirs-faire de tous les domaines, notamment culturel et paysager. Le thème des terrasses faisait déjà parti de leur programme d'actions. Il est à noter que la Région a convaincu les groupes de l'obligation de la coopération transnationale comme partie du programme d'un groupe, aussi la coordinatrice s'est-elle fortement impliquée dans la recherche de partenaires.

Après différentes pistes suivies, les autres partenaires définitifs du projet ont été réunis autour d'un projet de valorisation des paysages de terrasses. Il s'agissait de: "Serra de Tramuntana" aux Baléares, "Alta Langa" en Italie et "Ipiros" en Grèce.

L'état d'avancement et de maturation des projets de ces groupes étaient très disparates:

Le groupe des Baléares était très avancé sur la réhabilitation des terrasses, la valorisation en tourisme de découverte, une école de formation aux techniques de la pierre sèche qui fonctionnait depuis déjà 10 ans; les groupes d'Italie et d'Ardèche avaient des territoires très proches, travaillant sur une valorisation agricole et agrotouristique des terrasses, avec des projets similaires; le groupe grec où la maturation était la moins avancée, avec quelques sites rénovés, mais dans un contexte d'abandon généralisé et de déprise plus forte.

Ces différences, en même temps que difficultés indéniables, ont constitué par la suite un atout puisque les groupes ont tirés partis de l'échange d'expérience (notamment des Baléares: étude de fonctionnement de l'école de la pierre sèche pour transférer l'expérience, édition à 3 d'un manuel technique sur les terrasses).

Les objectifs communs établis, après des rencontres sur sites, étaient les suivants:

- communiquer pour sensibiliser différents publics, et se défaire d'une connotation passéiste,
- affirmer les paysages de terrasses comme un patrimoine européen,
- développer une argumentation sur l'intérêt économique des terrasses,
- rechercher des financements,
- développer des innovations techniques,
- sauvegarder les savoirs-faire

Les réalisations ont été basées sur des cas concrets, et sur une stratégie commune de communication:

l'identification de sites démonstratifs et des expériences pilotes à mettre en valeur sur chaque territoire, l'ensemble de ces sites permettant un véritable tour d'horizon des enjeux liés aux paysages de terrasses

la déclinaison à partir d'un titre volontairement provocateur ("1000 ans d'innovations") d'une stratégie d'interprétation du patrimoine "terrasses"

une campagne de communication commune pour susciter prise de conscience, intérêt et curiosité sur la nécessité de préservation des terrasses: film vidéo, mobilisation des médias, sponsoriastion d'évènements Land'Art, guide des sites...

Cette expérience de coopération a été très enrichissante pour les groupes, mais elle est empreinte de difficultés et d'une demande considérable en termes de temps et d'implication des partenaires. Il aura fallu deux ans de montage de projet, pour un an de mise en oeuvre!

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

Explain as the local strategy of cooperation was born:

- *What was the local context in the beginning? Was there any local experience of working with external structures, was there an opening to the outside?*

Le contexte local s'appuie sur une stratégie très volontariste du groupe coordinateur et surtout sur l'existence dans chacun des groupes d'un projet concernant les terrasses dans leur programme d'actions. Un groupe (Baléares) avait déjà créé une école sur les techniques de pierres sèches, en collaboration avec des structures externes. Cependant aucun n'avait d'expérience avec d'autres pays.

- *How was the need identified? when the project was launched or perhaps during its progression?*

Les besoins ont été identifiés dès la présentation à la Région du programme en Ardèche, ainsi que pour les autres groupes. C'est à partir de problématiques communes, ou plutôt d'un intérêt commun pour les terrasses, que s'est fondé le projet. Les objectifs ont quant à eux été définis au fur et à mesure des contacts établis, notamment au cours des rencontres (tables rondes de recherche de partenaires, rencontres sur sites avec les partenaires retenus...).

- *How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?*

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

Une assistance technique importante a été fournie par la Cellule d'Assistance Technique de la Région Rhône-Alpes. C'est au cours d'une réunion organisée par cette CAT (Montbrison, juin 1998) que le

groupe coordinateur a discuté pour la première fois avec ses partenaires, pour la définition des besoins communs et l'émergence du projet. L'Observatoire Européen a également été une aide, grâce à l'obtention de fonds (5000 et 20000 Ecus) qui ont permis de mettre en place des réunions de préparation et de construction du projet commun.

■ *What recommendations would you have in terms of identifying needs*

for the other LAGs?

Un projet de coopération transnational ne permet pas de pallier aux déficiences du projet de développement, il peut seulement l'amplifier, donner une autre dimension à ses actions: les groupes tentés de s'en servir pour financer des projets "oubliés" dans le volet B ont vite fait marche arrière, à cause des exigences de la démarche (qualité, délais...). Le projet local doit être suffisamment mûr.

for future technical assistance?

Ce qui a été mis en oeuvre pour faciliter la constitution de la coopération au niveau de la Région Rhône-Alpes est un bon exemple de ce qui peut être entrepris.

1.3.2 Finding partners

Explain as the partnership has been created.

■ *How did you identify the partners with whom you worked?*

La recherche de partenaires est une quête complexe. L'assistance technique durant cette phase a été importante, puisque c'est au cours de réunions et de colloques que se sont faites ces rencontres. En septembre 1997 à Alès, le Colloque relatif à la mise en valeur des terrasses, à l'initiative du Parc National des Cévennes, a permis la rencontre avec l'expert coordinateur de Proterra (projet financé par le FEDER au titre de l'article 10, sur le thème des terrasses) qui a ouvert son réseau de partenaires à la future coordinatrice du projet de coopération. Elle a identifié alors le premier partenaire, le GAL "Serra de Tramuntana" de Majorque aux Baléares. Ce dernier travaille sur le thème depuis Leader I et a déjà fondé l'école de formation au travail de la pierre sèche. Ce GAL apportera une expertise très fructueuse au partenariat. Cependant, la coordinatrice ne souhaite pas se rapprocher de Proterra, qu'elle estime trop éloigné des préoccupations de terrain. Lors du Colloque Leader en novembre 97, la table ronde qu'elle organise sur les terrasses est voué à un relatif échec, puisqu'aucun nouveau partenaire ne se déclare. Cependant un échange avec le coordinateur d'Ecovast (une ONG) lui fait connaître un autre partenaire, le GAL italien "Alta Langa". Enfin, Proterra alors encore présent lui indique le GAL grec "Ipiros". Le partenariat, enfin complet, ne donnera naissance à une première rencontre qu'en juin 1998, lors des Rencontres transnationales rhônalpines à Montbrison, organisées par la CAT avec l'intervention d'experts internationaux qui ont joué le rôle de facilitateur à l'émergence et à la définition d'un projet commun.

- *As you progressed in your action, did you hear about other sources of information that you could have used to find partners?*

C'est par le biais des rencontres organisées que tout s'est mis en place. Le partenariat s'est constitué grâce aux personnes rencontrées et à l'accès à leurs propres réseaux.

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

Une assistance technique importante a été fournie par la Cellule d'Assistance Technique de la Région Rhône-Alpes. C'est au cours d'une réunion organisée par cette CAT (Montbrison, juin 1998) que le groupe coordinateur a rencontré pour la première fois ses partenaires. L'observatoire a également été une aide, grâce à l'obtention de fonds (5000 et 20000 Ecus) qui ont permis de mettre en place des réunions de préparation et de construction du projet commun, mais aussi par la tenue du colloque Leader de novembre 1997, où le groupe coordinateur a identifié certains partenaires.

- *What recommendations would you have in terms of finding partners*

for the other LAGs?

Il est essentiel de baser le partenariat sur des rapports humains de qualité, il faut que "le courant passe". Le nombre de partenaires ne doit pas être trop grand (3 ou 4 au maximum) afin de faciliter l'organisation des rencontres et des échanges et de trouver des intérêts communs à l'ensemble des partenaires. Enfin, la stabilité des personnes représentant les groupes est très importante pour la mise en oeuvre et le suivi.

for future technical assistance?

Il faut privilégier le côté humain dans les rencontres, bien que cela prenne du temps. Toutefois, ce temps-là est un bon investissement!

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

Explain as a common strategy has been defined among the partners.

- *How did the negotiation proceed?*

La stratégie du projet a été modifiée au cours de la recherche de partenaires. Au début, le partenariat avec le groupe italien a fortement orienté le projet vers une valorisation économique des terrasses, jusqu'à travailler sur la valorisation de la pierre sèche en général. Cette orientation était justifiée notamment par l'existence de partenaires potentiels en Ecosse. Cependant, les problématiques étaient trop éloignées du contexte ardéchois. La présence d'experts a aussi permis de définir les intérêts communs, de dégager clairement les attentes de chacun et leur apports respectifs. Cependant les experts peuvent parfois imposer leurs visions selon leur propres préoccupations: une experte française souhaitait absolument les faire travailler sur le montage de route touristique, ce qui ne correspondait pas aux souhaits des partenaires. Le processus d'élaboration d'objectifs commun

est difficile et requiert du temps. Dans ce cas, les objectifs communs ont été arrêtés à la suite des rencontres sur les sites des partenaires.

- *Did you and your partners have comparable national elements (context, legislation...) enabling you to avoid misunderstandings? If that was not the case, how did you overcome this difficulty?*

Une difficulté majeure a été de prendre en compte les différents stades d'avancements de chaque groupe. Mais le fait de considérer cet état de fait comme facteur de dynamisme a permis de dépasser ce handicap.

- *Did you substantially modify your initial objectives to arrive at common objectives?*

Cela ne s'est pas avéré nécessaire lorsque les partenaires ont été clairement identifiés: ce partenariat repose sur des problématiques communes, et n'a requis qu'une harmonisation et une hiérarchisation des objectifs communs à développer.

- *Did you "formalise" the agreements that you reached (e.g. in a contract or in a partnership agreement)?*

Une convention de partenariat a été signée par tous les partenaires, bien qu'au stade de confiance où ils étaient, elle n'était plus nécessaire.

- *If you took on one or more new partners, what steps did you take to rapidly bring the partner(s) up to date and to ensure integration with existing links?*

Il n'y a pas eu d'intégration de partenaires en cours de projet.

- *At what stage is negotiation the most difficult in a project and why?*

Le moment le plus délicat a eu lieu surtout au début. La recherche de partenaires est simultanée avec la recherche de problématiques communes. Puis, la définition des objectifs du projet est aussi difficile, parce que l'exercice demande à chaque groupe de clarifier son propre projet aux yeux des autres. Mais ce travail a été profitable à chacun.

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

L'expert facilitateur a apporté une aide dans le premier tri des attentes des besoins et des intérêts de chacun pour l'établissement d'une stratégie, dans le cadre de l'assistance technique fournie par la CAT.

- *What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives for the other LAGs?*

Le même niveau d'implication des partenaires est indispensable: chacun doit être présent à chaque réunion, il faut avancer de concert avec les mêmes interlocuteurs au fil du temps.

for future technical assistance?

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

Explain as the action plan has been defined.

- *How did you determine the feasibility of your project? Did you hire outside experts for the feasibility and engineering? What part of this work did you do in house?*

Les sites pilotes ont été facilement identifiés par chacun des groupes sur leur propre terrain. Une partie du projet nécessitait un expert en communication qui n'a jamais été trouvé. Il a été remplacé par un expert en interprétation du patrimoine. La campagne de communication a donné lieu à un travail collectif, dans la mesure où elle visait également l'aspect transnationale du projet (par exemple: définition d'un logo commun, d'un film vidéo sur les quatre territoires).

- *How did you find the necessary funding?*

Le plan de financement a été établi par une demande au titre du volet C. Au préalable, l'Observatoire a financé l'élaboration du projet par les phases 5 000 et 20 000 Ecus.

- *Were you able to diversify the sources of funding? What obstacles or difficulties did you encounter?*

Des sponsors, notamment pour les actions événementielles Land'Art, ont été mis à contribution pour la mise en oeuvre du projet. Les co-financements n'ont pas posé de grandes difficultés, puisque les co-financeurs étaient associés aux travaux et aux réunions.

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

- *What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan*

for the other LAGs?

Il est important de répartir clairement les responsabilités entre chaque partenaire et de savoir précisément qui fait quoi et suivant quel calendrier. Il est également nécessaire de bien penser le plan de financement en fonction des règles en vigueur dans chaque pays.

for future technical assistance?

1.3.5 Implementing the project

Describe the implementation of the project.

- *How were the actions managed? Who took care of this, what methods were used and how was this set up? What feedback mechanism was introduced for the actors and financial backers?*

Une difficulté réside dans les différentes exigences de calendrier des pays. L'Italie avait un calendrier plus court, mais l'obstacle a pu être contourné partiellement en finançant prioritairement les réunions en Italie par ce partenaire. Un groupe était identifié comme responsable pour chaque action, y compris sur le plan financier. Cela permettait d'éviter les problèmes de paiements à l'étranger. Ainsi, chaque groupe finançait une action qui bénéficiait à l'ensemble des partenaires, en échange de quoi il était financé à son tour pour d'autres actions sur son territoire par les autres groupes. Le suivi et le partage des résultats ont été faits au cours de réunions dans chaque pays. Mais le groupe coordinateur a eu un rôle prépondérant pour effectuer ce suivi. Cette élaboration financière, si elle permettait de dépasser les contraintes administratives de chaque pays, a rendu plus difficile la recherche de co-financeurs: ce montage leur apparaissait un peu trop comme "bricolé". Cependant, le sérieux du projet a finalement convaincu ces co-financeurs.

- *Did you try to develop networking or did you facilitate it? Why? How did you go about doing this?*

L'importance du facteur humain ont rendu nécessaire la mise en réseau des partenaires. Le partage d'expériences humaines fortes, au moyen des rencontres de terrains, sont un ciment entre partenaires, mais également à l'intérieur du GAL.

- *How did you keep the various local actors involved throughout the project's life?*

La participation de la population a été une préoccupation constante du groupe français (qui ne peut pas se prononcer sur les autres). Des acteurs locaux (la coordinatrice du projet de conservatoire des terrasses, un représentant de la chambre des métiers, les élus) ont été largement impliqués au processus de mise en oeuvre du projet, ont suivi les réunions sur site (à Majorque notamment). cela a donné lieu à une extension vers d'autres projets, comme la conception d'un projet de formation "pierre sèche" par la chambre de métiers. Par ailleurs, l'organisation de plusieurs séminaires (nouvelles cultures en terrasses par exemple) ont rendu possible l'implication dans le temps de la population.

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

- *What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the actions*

for the other LAGs?

Il est important de pouvoir associer étroitement l'ensemble des acteurs au projet. Les séminaires techniques, les visites, l'organisation événementielle sont à cet égard fortement constructifs.

for future technical assistance?

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

Describe the modalities of diffusion of the project.

- *Did you communicate the transnational cooperation action and its results?*

L'échange d'expérience a été largement diffusé, tant en France qu'au niveau européen, par la participation à des colloques organisés par les différents réseaux d'animation. De nombreuses présentations ont été ainsi réalisées.

■ *Was the project assessed? What were the conclusions of the assessment?*

Il n'y a pas eu de bilan spécifique à ce projet à notre connaissance. Cependant, un bilan informel de la coordinatrice constate l'apport méthodologique de ce projet transnational, notamment sur les phases d'élaborations du projet.

■ *How did you bring together the good practices acquired during the various cycles? Did you formalise them in one way or another?*

Il n'y a pas eu de formalisation spécifiques à notre connaissance. Par contre, les principaux acquis de cette expérience ont été formalisés pour être présentés aux séminaires des réseaux d'animation (présentation orale avec powerpoint, par exemple).

■ *Did you disseminate these good practices? How?*

Le partenariat développé a engendré des extensions du projet sur certains territoires (élaboration d'une formation aux techniques de pierre sèche par la chambre de métiers) et également l'extension des relations entre partenaires. Certains souhaitent développer par la suite d'autres collaborations, qui restent difficiles à mettre en oeuvre lorsqu'elles dépassent le cadre défini. Enfin, les présentations du projet aux séminaires organisés par les unités d'animation ont contribué à la diffusion des acquis.

■ *Did you disseminate the results of the transnational cooperation actions carried out by your area? How did you do this and what interest was shown in this?*

La participation des acteurs locaux a permis de diffuser les acquis, autant que les présentations qui ont suivis la réalisation du projet.

■ *How is access to information about the project or information created by the project (e.g. new production or processing techniques) organised? Who has access and how?*

Ce projet a été étudié et publié par l'Observatoire Européen, qui a diffusé les résultats. Il a également été mis à la disposition des unités nationale et régionale d'animation.

■ *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

■ *What recommendations would you have in terms of assessing and disseminating for the other LAGs?*

for future technical assistance?

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

- *What were the determining factors in your decision to embark on a new phase of cooperation?*

La bonne marche du partenariat, l'envie de continuer, a poussé chacun à faire plus: pleins d'idées et de nouveaux projets surgissent en cours de route! Par contre, nous ne savons pas si ces autres projets ont effectivement abouti.

- *What difficulties did you encounter?*

La question s'est posée de savoir comment continuer, au delà du programme Leader II. Le projet a donné l'envie à certains partenaires de faire perdurer leur coopération, mais sans savoir comment s'y prendre.

- *Were you helped by the experience that you acquired in the first stages/phases of your project? To what extent?*

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- *Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other)*

Phase 5000 et 20000 Ecus de l'Observatoire.

- *What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project?*

Cela a permis d'identifier les partenaires et de les rencontrer pour définir un projet commun.

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)	48%	27%	self-financing (Parc Naturel Régional) 25%	66 010
Partner N				
T O T A L				222 000

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)			
Partner N ...			

Ex-post evaluation of Community Initiative Leader II

TOTAL	222 000
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2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

- *Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on agricultural adjustment and diversification in your area.*

La recherche de valorisation économique des terrasses passe également par une valorisation des cultures en terrasses. Ainsi, l'agriculture a été la cible de certaines opérations, comme les séminaires sur les nouvelles cultures en terrasses.

2.1.2 Employment effects

- *Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect in terms of employment in your area.*

Il est très difficile d'évaluer les effets emplois d'un projet. Nous pouvons cependant considérer l'importance de l'aspect de valorisation économique et de formation (l'école de Majorque) du projet, sans pour autant en quantifier les effets.

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

- *Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered environmental effects in your area.*

La communication à laquelle le projet a donné lieu a fortement joué en faveur de la préservation de ce type paysager particulier que sont les terrasses. Elle a suscité un regain d'intérêt de la part de la population, en lui conférant une image plus dynamique que jusqu'alors, et une prise de conscience de l'intérêt patrimonial que ces terrasses constituent. L'effet est sans conteste très important, mais reste impossible à mesurer autrement que qualitativement.

2.1.4 Income effects

- *Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered income effects in your area.*

Il est très difficile d'évaluer les effets sur les revenus d'un projet. Nous pouvons cependant considérer l'importance de l'aspect de valorisation économique du projet et de formation (l'école de Majorque).

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

- *Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on equal opportunities in your area.*

Cet aspect n'a pas été pris en compte dans l'élaboration du projet. Les femmes n'ont pas été considérées comme un public cible particulier.

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

- *Explain which components¹⁴ of the territorial capital of your area have been enhanced by the project and in which way.*

Le patrimoine paysager historique est la base du projet de coopération. Il contribue fortement à l'identité des territoires et des populations, notamment par le partage et la conservation de pratiques et de savoirs-faire spécifique aux paysages de terrasses.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

- *Explain if and how the TNC project helped the LAG and the involved local actors in the learning process related to the achievement of the LEADER specific behavioural objectives (area-based approach, bottom-up approach, local partnership, innovative approach, multi-sectoral integration, networking, trans-national cooperation, decentralised management and financing).*

Le projet de coopération donne au GAL une ampleur renforcée à l'innovation, puisque ce type de projet n'était pas répandu auparavant. L'innovation s'est également marquée par une communication audacieuse et anti passéiste: la dimension transnationale permet de faire des choses que l'on n'oserait pas faire seul!

L'effet sur le partenariat a été très important. Le projet transnational permet de souder le partenariat local, de renforcer les liens au sein d'un groupe. Il force les acteurs locaux à clarifier leurs objectifs.

¹⁴ According to the dossier of the Observatory (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Bruxelles, 1999), the various elements of an area's capital can be classified into a number of components, which every individual is able to define in relation to his own specific situation or to what he is looking for. The dossier proposes the following eight components:

1. *Physical resources and their management*, in particular natural resources (topography, soil, subsoil, flora and fauna, water resources, atmosphere), the historical and architectural heritage and public facilities and infrastructure;
2. *The culture and identity of the area*, the shared values of the players in the area, their interests, attitudes, forms of recognition, etc;
3. *Human resources*, the men and women living in the area, those who take up residence there and those who depart from the area, the population's demographic characteristics and its social structure;
4. *Implicit/explicit know-how and skills*, as well as technological mastery and research and development capabilities;
5. *Governance*, the political rules of the game, the collective players involved, and, more generally, what is nowadays referred to as the area's "governance"; this component also includes financial resources (institutions, businesses, people, etc) and their management (savings, loans, etc), since an area's governance cannot be dissociated from the formal commitment that local players are willing to make together (public/private financing, etc);
6. *Activities and business firms*, their degree of geo-graphical concentration and their structure (size of firms, sectors, etc);
7. *Markets and external relations*, especially their integration into the different markets, exchange and promotion networks, etc;
8. *The image and perception of the area*, both internally and externally.

Face aux autres, le groupe se resserre et fait mieux connaissance. Les partenaires socioprofessionnels ont été convaincus du sérieux du projet, ce qui a eu un effet bénéfique sur le projet local. Les élus ont été impressionnés par les actions menées, leur ouvrant de nouvelles perspectives: "il est possible de faire autre chose que ce qui se faisait jusqu'à présent".

La dimension de l'intégration multi sectorielle était déjà présente dans le cadre du projet de Parc Naturel Régional, mais l'observation des méthodes d'autres états membres a été bénéfique (cas de l'expérience de Majorque).

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

La définition d'un plan d'actions demande de la souplesse et de l'imagination. Il s'agit en effet de trouver des modalités de fonctionnement qui permettent au projet de se dérouler dans différents environnements institutionnels et réglementaires. Le temps de montage du projet est long, (2 ans, pour une année de réalisation)! La coopération ne permet pas de pallier aux déficiences du projet de développement, comme cela a déjà été mentionné: le haut niveau de qualité d'un projet transnational nécessite un programme local solide. Enfin, l'appui technique du réseau d'animation a été salutaire pour le montage du projet.

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

La phase de démarrage est longue, mais il est utile de prendre ce temps pour définir les finalités et les objectifs. La stabilité du partenariat est aussi garante de l'efficacité du projet, ainsi que les rapports humains entre partenaires basés sur la confiance réciproque. L'harmonisation entre les contraintes administratives des états membres est à rechercher pour baser la coopération sur des règles du jeu similaires.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

A l'usage, l'échange et le transfert d'expérience sont une dimension très importante, qui correspond finalement aux besoins réels des porteurs de projets.

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> partenariat restreint: meilleure communication au sein du projet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nombre d'information accessible plus restreint à cause du nombre de partenaire
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> barrière de la langue entre différents partenaires, coût de l'interprétariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voir différentes approches méthodologiques

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accès aux réseaux par la CAT et les unités d'animation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulation plus importante, une autre dimension: on veut bien faire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> diffusion des pratiques plus étendue

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> les contextes institutionnels et réglementaires des pays différent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plus d'imagination, de possibilités

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expérience et méthodologie différentes des groupes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contexte réglementaires et financiers de chaque pays
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> montage financier complexe pour contourner les difficultés 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> échanges constructifs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> impression de montage financier "bricolé", rendant l'obtention de co-financements plus ardue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

II.7 LAG KENAKAP/THESSALIA: “EUROPEAN WILDERNESS CHALLENGE” – GREECE

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	Greece
Region	Thessalia
Responsible evaluator	Prof. S. Efstratoglou

Local Action Group

Name of LAG/CB	KENAKAP SA (Development Centre of Kalambaka Pyli SA)		
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Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	European Wilderness Challenge		
Name (under Measure C)	European Wilderness Challenge		
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners	3	Number of languages represented	3
Typology of geographical composition ¹⁵	Crossing different European regions		
Sector of activity ¹⁶ in which the project has been developed	Other miscellaneous services		

¹⁵ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

¹⁶ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Synthetically describe (one page) the characteristics of the project: motivations, objective, results etc.

THE PROJECT

In the framework of Measure C. «Transnational Cooperation» of the Kalambaka – Pyli LEADER II programme, an «Adventure Race» was designed to take place in the mountainous part of the area as a 3-day event, with the participation of teams and solo racers both from Greece and abroad.

This adventure race is a multi-disciplined race under the name of «Pindos Crossing» including the following disciplines :

- a) mountaineering, (mountain hiking or running)
- b) mountain biking
- c) white water canoeing
- d) lake canoeing and
- e) rock climbing.

The adventure race developed under TNC project “European Wilderness Challenge” with co-ordinator Western Isles LAG (Scotland) and partners Greece and Sweden and it has grown very fast in popularity over recent years, as it combines multiple sporting skills with stamina, determination and team spirit, as well as promoting a more harmonious approach to the environment. In this race 4 person teams (men, women, or mixed) participate, with 2 persons or more as backup crew. The race follows a continuous route, something like a relay race, where team members do various route legs alternatively in pairs. The route starts from Kalambaka and, after crossing the whole of the mountainous region of the LEADER area (South-western Pindos Range) with an emphasis on the most remote points in the area in 3 days, ends up in Kalambaka again with the finish line set against the world famous Meteora Rocks.

In parallel with the team race a solo race is held for individual athletes, on a less exacting route of course, where larger international participation is expected, since travel costs for an individual are much lower than those of a 4-person team together with the necessary equipment.

At the same time with the race parallel activities are planned to take place, such as small scale school races (short legs of the route with local school teams), cultural events (Byzantine chorus performance, local traditional dance performance, local traditional costume exhibition) etc.

The Pindos Crossing adventure race is aimed to be part of a world championship of adventure racing by the name of «Series Adventure» together with similar events to be held:

1. In Europe with partial funding from the corresponding LEADER groups:

- a) in Scotland (Western Isles Challenge),
 - b) in Sweden (Arctic Circle Traverse),
2. Worldwide with already established adventure races:
- a) in British Columbia (Sea to Summit),
 - b) in New Zealand (Southern Pathfinder), and
 - c) in South Africa (African Extreme).

The Series Adventure will be endorsed by the ARA (Adventure Racing Association), an association of international standing based on the USA, which will also provide security and organization assistance to the Series.

The primary concern of the LAGs involved in the project was to ensure the financial viability of the individual races and the series even after the initial stage of financial support through the LEADER II programme, so that the races will continue to take place after the year 2001, with the obvious benefits to the areas involved. It is an innovative project on a national level since it is the first event of this kind in Greece; also innovative on an international level, since, despite the growing popularity adventure sports enjoy in recent years and the great number of races organized worldwide, there is no adventure racing championship worldwide.

A key benefit of the project for the LEADER partners is that it turns remoteness and difficult terrain from a disadvantage into an advantage. Participants are actively seeking terrain which will test not just their fitness, but also their teamwork, logistical planning and outdoors skills in a variety of disciplines. By using remoteness and difficult terrain in a positive way, the project therefore aims to convert what otherwise are seen as economic disadvantages into economic opportunities.

Overall Objective

To develop a European LEADER series of «adventure races» in very remote areas in harmony with their environment by implementing the adventure race in the European Regions of Scotland, Greece and Sweden. This will potentially in turn be part of a «world series» of such events, which is expected to generate both substantial eco-tourism benefits and international media coverage for the local LEADER areas.

Expected results of the project

1. Enhancement of the area «eco-touristic profile», as a region of highly developed mountain-alternative tourism.
2. Promotion local identity of the mountainous area of Kalambaka – Pyli as mountainous areas of natural beauty and of high aesthetic and traditional value, since this kind of race attracts media coverage both on national and international levels.

3. Substantial touristic benefits in the mountainous area through the «off-season» 5-day residence of racers, support crews, reporters-journalists etc. (Between 100-150 persons involved).
4. Involvement of local actors-groups (Climbing Association of Kalambaka, Mountaineering-Skiing Club of Trikala, Hotel Owners Association of Trikala, etc.) in the project implementation, aiming at the achievement of the best possible result through a joint operation and the development of the feeling of cooperation and involvement in the local development process.
5. Establishment of the local race on a long-term basis, even after the LEADER programme financial support, with obvious multiplier effects on the effort of «reviving» the disadvantaged mountain areas, and adding value on infrastructure carrier out under Leader I.
6. Strengthening of links among local actors in the TNC Leader areas and learning through exchange of experiences and approaches to local development.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

The Leader II area is a mountainous area with experience in Leader I. Under Leader I investment infrastructure like mountainous paths, mountainous agro-tourism settlements, shelters, path signing etc. was developed.

The LAG of KENAKAP had been considering the development of an activity that would combine the exploitation and promotion of natural resources in which the intervention area had a significant comparative advantage, through adventure athletic activity and at the same time adding value to the local infrastructure carried out in Leader I. However since they had no previous experience in similar activities they were trying to find someone who had the know-how and the expertise that they could benefit from. The opportunity came at a LEADER II Symposium in Brussels, where they discovered that the Scottish LAG had been implementing this activity since LEADER I. They expressed an interest and discussions began in order to organise the cooperation.

The sport of Adventure Racing - long-distance multisport events in wild surroundings – has grown very fast in popularity over recent years, particularly in North America and Australasia. In Europe, multi-sport adventure racing is far less developed, with only a small number of races taking place. One of these is the Western Isles Challenge. The opportunity therefore exists for remote areas of Europe to take advantage of this ever-faster growing sport, before the market becomes dominated by other regions.

In order to organise the trans-national cooperation plan more effectively, the Greek LAG submitted applications to the European Observatory for funding under the preliminary phase A (5,000 ECU) and B (20,000 ECU) to be used for technical assistance.

1.3.2 Finding partners

THE PARTNERSHIP

The partnership has brought together three rural areas (two from Objective 1 and one from 6). Each of these areas have the kind of especially remote terrain which is required for this type of event and each area is very different so providing a wide diversity of terrain between them. The areas also each have a distinct local culture and languages (language and culture of the Celts in the Western Isles, the Laps in Sweden, the Vlachi in Greece), which culture will enrich the experience of participants in the events and provide further interest for the media. Each LAG worked closely with local experts in race organisation and adventure sports and the partnership working group also included expert in adventure racing (Robert Nagle, one of the top AR athletes in the world, co-founder and president of the Adventure Racing Association), as well as experts on fund-raising from the private sector (sponsorship).

In the Western Isles, the local race started to be implemented under Leader I and the LAG had a great experience in organising and implementing it. The local race in Western Isles has international standing as a highly challenging, good quality event which attracts teams and individuals from several continents. It is supported by the local LEADER Programme as a part of their Rural Tourism initiative and the race has strong involvement by the local community, both as competitors and participating in the event organisation and providing hospitality to the visitors. The event generates a large amount of world-wide media interest and coverage which is excellent for the local area, but is too small scale and local to attract the commercial sponsorship required to support the race and guarantee the future. The organiser of the Western Isles Challenge developed the proposal for establishment of a series of races, as a means of ensuring the long term sustainability of the event through the benefits which will accrue from the trans-national co-operation.

The Greek Lag was looking for a partner with know-how and experience in Adventures races in remote areas and the opportunity was given during the Leader II Symposium in Brussels to locate the Scottish LAG.

Summary description of the process which led to the co-operation project:

1997 September	WISL LEADER programme considers the extension of the concept of the Western Isles Challenge (Adventure Race established in 1994) to other LEADER areas in order to create a series of races. Potential LEADER areas with terrain suitable for adventure racing are identified.
1997 October	Consultation undertaken with AEIDL regarding potential LAG partners. Initial discussions with LAGs in several member States.
1997 November	LEADER II Symposium in Brussels. Swedish and UK partners progress discussions on project. Greeks experts interest.
1997 December	The Greek LAG partner joins discussions.

1998 Jan 10th	Application lodged with AEIDL for Phase I funding of 5,000 ECU.
1998 May 18th	Phase I Application approved by AEIDL.
1998 May	Meeting in Western Isles. Greece, Swedish and Scottish partners meet to observe Western Isles Challenge race and discuss the feasibility of progressing the associated races and the 'world series'. This first meeting of the partnership brought together the three LAGs, local experts in related fields of race organization/ outdoor activities from the three areas, a top level solo adventure race athlete (founder of the Adventure Racing Association) and an expert in the field of corporate sponsorship, financing and project design. Much of the initial project discussion also took place through the use of e-mail and internet. This meeting both enabled good understanding of the ethos and operation of the Western Isles Challenge and other existing adventure races and made excellent progress with the project planning due to the high level and spread of expertise it brought together.
1998 July 3rd	Application lodged with AEIDL for Phase II funding of 20,000 ECU.
1998 July	Meeting of partners in Sweden to observe a multi-disciplinary race taking place in Norway and Sweden and progress plans for the joint project.
1998	Meeting in Greece to discuss options for the Hellas Race and progress plans for the establishment of the series. Partners progress towards Measure C Application.
1998 Sept 23rd	Phase II Application approved by AEIDL.
1998 October	Marketing surveys for series initiated.

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

As a result of the co-operation among partners, the following common objectives were developed for pursuing through the trans-national cooperation plan:

1. Plan, organise and implement two new adventure races, the 'Arctic Circle Traverse' (Sweden) and 'Pindos Crossing' (Greece), through the transfer of know-how from the Western Isles (Scotland).
2. Develop the 'Western Isles Challenge' (Scotland)
3. Establish links between the three LEADER areas and their local actors based around the focus of the races.
4. Establish a 'European Series Adventure', for ensuring a long-term sustainability.
5. Achieve long term funding options for the three races as part of the funding of 'series Adventure' through a negotiated funding proposal with sponsors.

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

The first meeting in Scotland, May 1998, was a good opportunity for the Greek LAG to attend also the implementation of the adventure race in-situ. Besides, learning from the Scottish LAG experience, they observed themselves the whole organisation. In this event the Greek LAG had with them a technical adviser from "Trekking Hellas", a competent organiser of adventure events in Greece. In this meeting a common platform and action plan has developed.

Following this, the Greek LAG with the support of the Trekking Hellas experts, developed the "Pindos Crossing" action plan. The races had to adjust to the mountainous characteristics of Kalambaka-Pyli, compared to the Western Isles races that involved different actions.

Funding of the Greek LAG's action plan was ensured by the Leader II (70%) and 30% the LAG's own contribution. However, significant contribution came from sponsors like TV channel Alpha, that covered the Greek race event and by other local sponsors that contributed also in kind (sports items, food, refreshments, etc.).

The action plan proved to be rather ambitious, as parallel activities were foreseen for implementation, based on the experience of the Scottish LAG (coordinator). However, it proved that not all actions are transferable, as the extreme mountainous Greek context did not allow them (e.g. participation of school children possible in highly areas, but not in high mountains).

Main difficulty faced in diversifying funding has been:

- (a) No funding of adventure races is foreseen in the mainstreaming policies although cultural events are included. However cultural events are interpreted very narrow and adventure racing is not eligible.
- (b) Sponsors tend to sponsor different races every year and not the same one in their effort to expand their market influence.

In general the common action plan proved to be very ambitious, as part of its objectives were never realised. Main recommendation is that in TNC common objectives should be clearly elaborated and action plan should adjusted to partners local context. By recognising local constrains (geography, attitudes, local actors, envelopment, etc.).

1.3.5 Implementing the project

The Greek action plan was managed by the Greek LAG. The technical organisation of the adventure race was undertaken by Trekking Hellas. However, local actor's involvement in the event was mobilised by the LAG. About 150 people for 4-5 days were directly involved in adventure race (athletes and supporting crew), while a much greater number of local people (community leaders, enterprises, NGO's) were also involved in the area of Kalambaka-Pyli.

The project was implemented in 2000 and 2001, with Leader II funding, own contribution and sponsor's support. The races did not continue in Greece in 2001, due to financing constraints and the interviewee was not in a position to say if the races continued in the other TNC Leader areas.

However, as significant experience has been obtained and the race event has become known, the "Pindos Crossing" race has been developed into a trans-territorial co-operation of three bordering Leader + areas for financing under Leader +.

It should be noted that not all plan actions and objectives have been achieved. A main objective that was not realised, was the strengthening of the links and ties among local actors in the TNC Leader areas. Such a strengthening would have contributed to the embeddedness of the action plan but also to stimulating further effects and impact through twinning of towns, exchange of visits, exchange of experiences between local people, which are long-term effects of the TNC.

Main recommendations for TNC is "not to concentrate only on the tangible aspects of the TNC action plan and the LAG's networking, but promote and strengthen also the less-tangible aspects of the TNC e.g. local actors networking, twinning, which have long-term and more lasting effects and impact on local development".

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

The TNC co-operation was communicated in the local context and at national level through the publicity and advertisement of the "Pindos Crossing" race in the mass media (TV, press, racing magazines, website).

The TNC project was assessed through self-evaluation and during the on going and ex-post evaluations of the Leader II programme. It was assessed as a successful project, good financing performance, but also as transfer of a good practice, that added value to Leader I infrastructure projects in Kalambaka-Pyli and promoted local identity in harmony with the environment.

The TNC added value did not refer only to the transfer of the know-how, but also to the insurance of the required scale for the project's implementations, as the Greek LAG could not achieve this scale by itself.

The dissemination strategy of the TNC project ("Pindos Crossing") and its advertisement was undertaken and organised by a technical advisor (Prestige advertisement). The involvement of the local actors groups in the project was another source of dissemination.

Dissemination strategy and the successful implementation of "Pindos Crossing" for two years put also the foundations for its future implementation under a trans-territorial cooperation in Leader +.

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

Once phase I of the TNC (establishing common objectives and developing an action plan) was completed, the Greek LAG moved to phase II (implementation of the project in the local context).

The implementation phase developed rather independently from the other partners (e.g. partners from Sweden did not participated in the Greek race or vice-versa).

Organising adventure races in a remote mountainous region was quite demanding in qualified expertise, provided by outside technical experts. The greatest difficulty encountered was the mobilisation of the local actors groups and organisations to participate and provide support to the project as the project was innovative and its results not easily perceived, particularly in the first year.

During the second year, local responsiveness was much higher and the experience acquired facilitated and improved project implementation. Also as the project became quite known, it raised the interest of neighbouring LAGs and moved it to a trans-territorial cooperation project under Leader+ (new partnership of three LAGs undr Leader+).

However, the European dimension, an important factor for its sustainability, did not continue after the TNC project.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

In order to organise the trans-national cooperation plan more effectively, the LAG used funding from the European Observatory under the preliminary phase A (5,000 ECU) and B (20,000 ECU) for technical assistance. About 70% of the KENAKAP's project budget was provided by Community funding, 30% by its own contribution and by local and national sponsors.

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/ Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
WISL	37,350	13,300	32,390	83,040
KENAKAP SA	98,917	0	40,402	139,319
SKOGLANDET	115,189	115,189	230,378	460,756
T O T A L	251,456	128,489	303,170	683,115

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	TOTAL (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)			
Partner N			
TOTAL			

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

The TNC project "Pindos Crossing" was not related to agricultural adjustments and diversification.

2.1.2 Employment effects

The trans-national cooperation project had both direct and indirect effects on local employment conditions. The organisation of the adventure race attracted a large number of participants and tourists in the area during a 5-day residence of racers, support crews, reporters-journalists etc. (between 100-150 persons per year) and thus stimulated practically the economic sectors: tourism and tourist related activities and services, promotion of locally produced products etc. It also contributed to the employment of local qualified personnel required for its organisation and implementation. However, it should be noted that employment effects were of "seasonal nature".

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

The organisation of the TNC project was directly related to the environment, as its main objective was to develop athletic races in harmony with the local environment. It also exploited the natural resources of the area and added value to the relevant infrastructure developed under Leader I in the area.

2.1.4 Income effects

The income effects should be considered positive and are directly related to the employment effects mentioned above. However, employment and income effects were of "seasonal nature and not permanent for the local population".

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

It addressed both genders and gave equal opportunities for participation. Further to that it promoted women's or women's groups participation in the races, through special awards.

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

1. It created territorial capital through explicit transfer of know how and skills in a sector (adventure race) not existing before in the area.
2. The TNC project promoted the image and perception of the area both internally and externally since it assisted in the establishment and promotion of the mountainous area of Kalambaka – Pyli as a beautiful and virgin rural area in Europe, given that this kind of race attracts media coverage both on national and international levels
3. The culture and identity of the area have been promoted through the organisation of the adventure race, which contributed to the enhancement of the area «eco-touristic profile», as a region of highly developed mountain-alternative tourism.
4. Also the TNC project created added value at local economy through natural resources explanation and management.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

The TNC project, an innovative project for the Greek Leader II and successfully implemented by the Greek LAG for two years, cannot be argued that it caused behavioural changes to the local actors. As the tangible and direct benefits of the “Adventure race” are not easily perceived and are only of “seasonal nature” (5 days adventure race), this constrained the broad participation of local actors (bottom-up).

Also intangible benefits expected from strengthening links and ties of local actors at cross-European level, were not achieved, although stated as an objective of the action plan. “ If this had been achieved it would have been the most sound effect of the TNC” as stated by the LAG interviewee.

The operational principles mostly strengthened by this TNC project seem to be: Innovation, networking at LAG's level and TNC.

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

- (a) Identifying a common platform with common objectives and common action is a learning process by itself.
- (b) A common platform and action plan is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a successful TNC project. It requires significant planning adjustments and elaborations to make it effective and realistic into your own context.

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

- (a) Learning from your partners experiences difficulties and problems faced, it is a key factor for avoiding mistakes and ensuring a smoother development of the TNC project.
- (b) In a TNC project actions with tangible and direct effects tend to be easier implemented and promoted, while actions with intangible effects are more difficult to implement.
- (c) TNC's intangible effects on behavioural changes of the local actors have to be integrated into tangible effects and methods and means to achieve them should be clearly stated in the action plan.
- (d) Such an approach to actions with tangible and intangible effects should be transferred to Leader + TNC or Tran- territorial cooperations.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

- (a) In a TNC project, partners can mutually benefit from each other's diffusion strategy and achieved scale.
- (b) Diffusion strategies however should be further elaborated by each partner and adjusted to its local context.

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The common platform, Common action plan and the achieved project scale through TNC, facilitates dissemination of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TNC innovative actions require well defined dissemination strategy to maintain its European dimension.
Threats	Opportunities

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building among partners from the TNC project based on transfer of good practices and exchange of experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good practices embody strong contextual elements many times not found in other partner's contexts
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further opportunity for transferring the European know-how to the trans-territorial team

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer of experiences, problems and difficulties faced, is a learning process for TNC partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing aspects, techniques, rules not always transferable, unless highly adjusted to local attitudes, mentalities etc. Actions with intangible effects not easily perceived by local actors. Highly qualified expertise required and not economically sustainable only at an area's level.
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "Adventure race" is not an economically sustainable project at the level of the an area (small scale) and its dependence on support is the main threat for its continuation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The experience gained from its implementation is a local "capital" that can be exploited under LEADER+ or mainstreaming based on a broader partnership

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Common planning, common platform and transfer of good practices tend to create a more effective exploitation of local resources.▪ Feedback processes tend to strengthen this effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Actions with tangible benefits tend to be more implemented by TNC partners, while those with intangible benefits seem to have a lower priority as not easily perceived by local actors.
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The move of the project from a European TNC under LEADER II to the prospect of a trans-territorial (3 LAGs) under LEADER+ creates the necessary scale that could turn it into a sustainable action and lead to more effective use of local resources.

II.8 LAG BALLYHOURA: “SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE” – IRELAND

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	Ireland
Region	Ireland
Responsible evaluator	Brendan Kearney

Local Action Group

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Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	Sustainable Development Initiative		
Name (under Measure C)	Sustainable Development Initiative		
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners	4	Number of languages represented	2
Typology of geographical composition	Crossing different European Regions		
Sector of activity in which the project has been developed	Speed up pace of rural regeneration Other miscellaneous services especially infrastructure and IT		

1.2 Description of project

The core objectives in the Ballyhoura LEADER 11 Business plan were to diversify the rural economic base and create conditions which would improve the quality of life in Ballyhoura Country. The overall objective of the SDI is to strengthen the socio-economic base and improve the socio-economic environment of the selected region through the transfer of models which have helped to create enterprises and jobs in transnational partner regions (Germany, Wales and Northern Ireland) by the transfer of technical know how to two innovative indigenous initiatives and by the provision of technical support to selected projects in Ballyhoura. The TNC project consisted of the following elements:

SSDI 2:

Limerick Co. Council

Brief Description of Project:

To develop and promote a programme to position Kilmallock as an information age town. Inform and prepare community for hi-tech advancement

Development of an infrastructure plan based on best practice in partners' home countries including liaison with technology partners, the identification of suitable sites, the accompanying Bebauungsplan (German (partner DE-BW01) expertise) and the preparation of a marketing plan and marketing materials for promoting Kilmallock to the ICT industry. The second feature related to image building activities within the community: informing and preparing the community for high tech advancement (transnational expertise via the Welsh LAG (WA-04))

The main impact has been the motivation of the private sector in the development of a Teleservices Facility and the establishment of indigenous businesses.

SDI 4

Cork Co. Council

Brief Description of Project:

To attract an ICT industry to an enhanced 20-acre Park in Charleville so that it can contribute to economic development in Ballyhoura Country.

The first objective of this project was to utilise the transnational expertise (mainly from Germany) to get a 'Bebauungs type plan' prepared for the site. The second objective was to promote the Charleville ICT Park to potential entrepreneurs and investors. The Northern Ireland expertise in business park management was to be used to identify management structures and prepare the business plan for the ICT centre.

The main result has been the development of a site character that will be unique among Business Parks allowing for the development of an active marketing approach.

SDI 5

Cork Co. Council

Brief description of Project:

To devise a strategy which will develop a car park and town park in a co-ordinated and sustainable way to maximise the benefits of the larger community.

The first objective of this project was to utilise the transnational expertise (mainly from Germany) to identify the potential of the car park in animating commercial sector investment. The second objective was achieving community consensus on realisable recreational needs with a specific focus on the town park. The transnational know-how will come from Wales. The third objective is to create the structures, which will implement the strategy. The specific know how of Development Rural Enterprise (LAG (NI-16) in Northern Ireland) in relation to the integration of commercial and recreational projects was to be used to achieve this third objective.

The plans have directed activities of a number of groups in the town including the Chamber of Commerce, the Estate Management Committee and the Community Council.

SDI 6

Ballyhoura Community Sub Board

Brief Description of Project:

To pilot models of community consensus building in relation to the way forward for the 2000-2005 period (aimed at communities at different stages of development – major project completed, major project faced and a community targeting small -scale objectives.

This project sought to bring the experience of the SPARC LAG (Wales) to Ballyhoura by pilot actions in three communities at different stages of development. This is a project expected to benefit from transnational inputs especially Wales. SPARC was an innovator in community appraisal activity in the late 1980s. This project concerned the facilitation and co-ordination of transnational know-how from Wales to three specific Ballyhoura communities, one at an advanced level, one at a performing level and one at an under performing level.

Ballyhoura Development Ltd gained valuable experience from the SDI project which has enhanced the relationships with all the partners involved and provided a firm foundation with the German and Welsh partners in particular for future collaborative projects.

However for all elements of the Project it must be stressed that the true impacts will unfold in the years to come as the communities, inspired by new ideas and approaches to the development of their areas, work alongside the councils and other partners in order to realise their objectives.

1.3 Progression of the Project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

This project was mainly one-way in character with assistance being sought from partners on a paid consultancy basis to speed up the pace of development in Ballyhoura. The Group had originally been in touch with the German contact pre-LEADER I with regard to their model of development. The depression in the agricultural sector was the main stimulus for the development and the principal need identified. Visits were arranged and exchanged between the partners and there was an ongoing assessment and redefinition of the process and more aspects added on. The Group received advice and support from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Observatory. The essential element at this stage of the project of this nature is to have a clear objective in order to benefit from the assistance available. Another factor, which is useful to keep in mind, is to ensure the maximum amount of flexibility in the funding for technical assistance to give partners the opportunity of getting to know each other as they could see elements or dimensions of co-operation, which might not be envisaged at the outset.

1.3.2 Finding partners

The German partner became known to the LAG from pre-LEADER I time from a twinning project while the Welsh partner was known to the LAG manager during LEADER I also. The intermediary Department suggested a Northern Ireland Partner. AEIDL was particularly helpful during this phase also but it could be said that the partnership developed out of the professional and personal contacts built up by the manager. Again it is critically important that the partners are very clear at the outset as to what precisely their interests are. It was also noted that a comprehensive database should be available by an Observatory similar to that in EQUAL.

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

This may not be a typical TNC project as the support was largely one-way. However the early meetings with the partners concentrated on continually refining and clarifying objectives. No problems were encountered in seeking the agreement of the “guest” partners in providing the necessary services for the project. The agreements were formalised in correspondence. Given the unique nature of this partnership it is difficult to make recommendations to others.

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

Some outside expertise was sought in defining the plan but all of the animation, co-ordination and administration was carried out in-house. The most difficult aspect was in acquiring matching funds but this was eventually obtained from local authorities. The Observatory assisted in making application for the Measure C project. With respect to recommendations, it has to be recognised that there is not always the same closing date for the LEADER programme in different countries and this should be taken into account in the very early stages of programme planning.

1.3.5 Implementing the project

One lead person was delegated for the project. Specific actions were delegated to local authority offices with whom extensive consultations took place and the feedback from these consultations enhanced the projects involving the local authorities and communities. Technical assistance was sought from outside consultants supported by matching assistance from the local partners. In terms of implementing actions it would be useful to have independent mediation in the event of some partner(s) not performing in a given situation, but it was not relevant in this case.

1.3.6/1.3.7 Assessing and disseminating

The progress of the project was constantly discussed with the relevant partners including local authorities and communities and as such there was an ongoing assessment and dissemination process. The planning sessions were held in public and the views of participants were taken into consideration. The progress of the project was conveyed to the intermediary Department and a Final Report prepared. The good practices of the German planning model were adopted in local planning. The process had spin-off effects in that enterprise units were established especially in one of the development centres. The process is also coming along satisfactorily in the communities which participated. The most favourable outcome of the process locally was the spirit of co-operation, which was engendered by local communities and authorities in the furthering of local development.

Assessment and dissemination should be decided at the outset and appropriate indicators of performance devised so as to facilitate ex post analysis. This should be adequately resourced also as these features of the programme require funding. It is also important to ensure that networking supports to facilitate assessment and dissemination should remain in place for the duration of such projects. In Ireland the national networking services ended the operation in December 1999 – a full year and a half before the effective end of LEADER II.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other) **Yes, from the Observatory**
- What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project? **In phase 1 following the review of the issues in the area, the Transitional Partners proposed a draft route forward which the local Partners endorsed. This formed the basis for phase 2 submission of the Observatory. During phase 2 the combined Transnational and local partners developed the detailed concept and brief for the project implementation. This formed the basis for the application for Measure C to the National Lead Agency.**

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF,)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
SDI2	24,500	10,500	29,280 Local Authority	64,281
SDI4	24,500	10,500	23,333 Local Authority	58,333
SDI5	13,608	5,832	12,960 Local Authority	32,400
SDI6	6,320	2,709	6,019 Private	15,048
T O T A L	68,928	29,541	71,592	170,062

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

The project offers the potential to create off-farm employment in the area and to diversify the agricultural sector. As new enterprises are established in the industrial units, more job opportunities will come on stream.

2.1.2 Employment effects

As for 2.1.1 but there are also supply side effects

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

The project must comply with environmental standards from a regulatory point of view but it will also promote quality of life and living standards by assisting in retaining people in their own communities.

2.1.4 Income effects

The income effects flow from employment and the direct, indirect, and induced effects of the investments.

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

Through the dispersal of the industrial base and the provision of employment the project extends the range of opportunities for all citizens.

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

The elements of territorial capital which have been enhanced by this project were largely of a social capital nature. They mainly include the culture and identity of the area, human resources, governance and the image and perception of the area. The bringing of people together and their participation in local planning was the highlight of the project.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

The project study was grounded and built on the LEADER specificities and operationalised them to a greater extent

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

In brief, in terms of TNC planning it is critically important to have a clear view at the outset as to what the Group wants to achieve. In the case of the Ballyhoura TNC project, in the beginning it largely was a one-way process although the other partners also gained from the experience. Joint projects of this nature usually mean that the respective partners are involved in the learning process, each group developing a particular skill from interaction with the other. The real challenge is for the partners to get to know each other and this can be facilitated by utilising the technical assistance provided to the maximum extent. The effective use of this assistance is fundamental to the ultimate success of the project.

With respect to implementation it is not helpful that two agencies are involved in TNC i.e. the Observatory and the Intermediary Department. It is also very important that language competence should be a feature of the programme and the language issue should not depend on translation. In the process of implementation, the timeframe should clearly delineate the sequence of actions in the overall project. The different cultural contexts must be well understood and appreciated and there ought to be an ongoing evaluation of the progress of the project.

With respect to project diffusion, no clear-cut lesson was emerging. This aspect should be outlined at the outset of the project and all the partners engaged in it should be party to the diffusion process and this should be made clear at the beginning of the project.

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

With respect to implementation it is not helpful that two agencies are involved in TNC i.e. the Observatory and the Intermediary Department. It is also very important that language competence should be a feature of the programme and the language issue should not depend on translation. In the process of implementation, the timeframe should clearly delineate the sequence of actions in the overall project. The different cultural contexts must be well understood and appreciated and there ought to be an ongoing evaluation of the progress of the project.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

With respect to project diffusion, no clearcut lesson was emerging. This aspect should be outlined at the outset of the project and all the partners engaged in it should be party to the diffusion process and this should be made clear at the beginning of the project.

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If adequate will increase participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requires considerable resources
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Late introduction of Programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases scope for TNC

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adequate resources and indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Different cultures and legal systems ▪ Know-how could be area specific
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programmes may not be running concurrently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scope for new models of local development

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead person for project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Different cultures and legal structures
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programmes not coinciding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased value-added and specialised services

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dedicated staff input▪ Specialised skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ TNC may take focus off local programme
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Skills may not transfer if large cultural differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ More effective use for specialised skills

II.9 LAG DELTA 2000/EMILIA-ROMAGNA: “METHODS OF INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM POTENTIAL” – ITALY

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	ITALY
Region	EMILIA ROMAGNA
Responsible evaluator	CARLO RICCI

Local Action Group

Name of LAG/CB	GAL DELTA 2000		
Code Nr. of LAG/CB	IT-ER04		
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Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	Methods of integration of environment and tourism potential		
Name (under Measure C)	Methods of integration of environment and tourism potential		
Observatory code (if existing)	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		
Number of partners	2	Number of languages represented	2
Typology of geographical composition ¹⁷	Crossing different European regions		
Sector of activity ¹⁸ in which the project has been developed	Rural tourism and environment		

¹⁷ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Brussels, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, Anglo-Celtic, Mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

¹⁸ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

In this project were involved 'Delta 2000' and its Irish partner 'ECAD' (= East Cork Area Development). Both of them were engaged first with a substantial exchange of mutual know-how and with an acquisition of know-how about the advanced experiences at international level (like "the RSPB case in Great Britain), and then afterwards with the realization of numerous actions oriented towards the integration between tourism and environment.

The objectives of this project are twofold:

- To maximise the return on valuable yet fragile wetlands through product development, promotion and education/awareness, by cooperating with another wetland area in the process of developing its tourist infrastructures.
- To develop tourist and educational products and the communities' capacity to manage them.

In particular the interventions of the LAG 'DELTA 2000' were oriented towards the creation and the promotion of a bird-watching product in the Park of the Po delta.

Within the project were realized actions in following sectors:

- Tourism and promotion: definition of a bird-watching itinerary in the Park of the Po Delta and production of specific material for the promotion of the bird-watching product (a guide entitled "Bird-watching in the area of the Po delta" edited in Italian, in English and in German; booklets, posters etc); participation to the 'British Bird-watching Fair', held in Rutland Water (UK), to international fair manifestations; realization of a familiarising trip in the delta area for tour operators and specialized press and contacts with specialized tour operators and associations at European level; implementation of guided free visits in the park of the Po delta;
- Education and environmental awareness: realization of the teaching handbook for the schools entitled "The bird-watching in the area of the Po delta"; organization of a competition for the students and exchange programmes for the young people in the Po delta and in the East Cork areas;
- Infrastructures and conservation: introduction of innovative equipments and techniques, like "heated bird-watching cabins"; visit of the experts of the Po delta to the area of East Cork; studies about the management procedures of the environmental sites of the delta.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

Also for the actions of trans-national cooperation, as well as for the other Leader II activities of great importance revealed to be the animation phase carried out by the LAG on the territory in order to stimulate the planning acts among the operators of different sectors. The contents of the trans-national cooperation projects were in fact defined contextually at the moment of the realization of the

programme, in base of the needs and vocations that derived from the territory and of the planning acts, sensibility and availability to invest on determined theme objectives from the part of public and private actors.

The area of the Po delta represents a unique environment of its kind, where the forests, dunes and valleys alternate, with the presence of more than 450 species of birds. Considering the increase of knowing the Delta on the market, to reinforce the imagine and to place it as unit area with the characteristics of unique attractiveness represents one of the priority objectives of the LAG, it was tried, during the realization phase of the Local Action Plan, to aim at the creation of specific products relative to the environmental peculiarities of the Park, by getting over the stereotyped imagine about the delta (dampness, mosquitoes, etc.), and by valorising the naturalistic emergencies and the possibility of fruition.

- How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?

Recommendations for the other LAGs?

As Transnational cooperation is requiring a lot of energy and commitment it's very important to choose a topic strictly connected and functional with the local project.

1.3.2 Finding partners

During the Observatory seminar "Protected areas as an asset for rural development" in Ostvorpommern, Germany from 10-15 September 1997, the Delta 2000 coordinator and the ECAD Chief Executive Officer (CEO) had the first contact. This meeting revealed that the two LEADER areas have many commonalities; both have substantial wetlands supporting a rich wildlife population and both had taken actions at local level to develop the tourist potential of these areas. The two LAGs viewed an exchange of experiences as a way to enlarge the scope of these local actions. Of interest to ECAD was Delta 2000's experience in developing the infrastructure appropriate to develop its wetlands as a tourist product and to establish associated educational tools. In return, ECAD's experience in assisting local tourist actors to create a cooperative marketing channel and marketing for bird-watching tourism appealed to Delta 2000.

Telephone and written correspondence was maintained over the subsequent 2 months. The LEADER colloquium in Brussels in November, 1998, provided a further opportunity for the two LAGs to meet again to discuss further the idea of cooperating on issues related to eco-tourism and education. During this event, the two CEOs were able to sit down and complete an application form for Phase I technical assistance funding with supports provided by AEIDL in the specific "Trans-national cooperation space". The application was filed in December 1997 and approval received in April 1998.

Recommendations for the other LAGs?

Take your time. Be clear with your objectives. Don't hide the warts!

Recommendations for future technical assistance?

In base of the gained experiences, in consideration of the importance of the cooperation between areas with homogenous or complementary characteristics, could be useful in order to rationalize the definition of relationships that can affectively result in a common planning in harmony with the needs of the territories, in organizing of thematic “sub networks“ like for example the club of wetlands, where the members can continuously exchange their experiences or real and proper project ideas about very specific themes. This level of relationship could more easily succeed in the definition of trans-national cooperation projects, concrete and capable to involve efficiently a higher number of partners.

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

The purpose of phase I was to enable the LAGs to:

- make an inventory of their achievements with regards to eco-tourism;
- discuss the idea of developing a new opportunity/product in wetland development, protection and joint marketing initiatives.

Meanwhile, interest had been expressed by two further LAGs, one from Greece and the other from Finland. It was decided to broach this matter at the joint meetings planned in phase I.

Exploratory visits to each of the two areas were organised in May/June 1998 (Po delta: 26-30/5/98 and East Cork: 1-6/6/98) to enable the LAGs: 1) to view first hand the characteristics of each local area and its resources; 2) to familiarise themselves with the working reality of the two organisations and their current priorities and actions; 3) to understand further the expectations of both groups in participating to a trans-national project and to identify a common approach in moving towards future cooperation.

Two ECAD officers and a representative from East Cork Tourism (a LEADER II funded body representing tourist operators in East Cork) attended the trip to Delta 2000. Through a series of presentations and site visits, delegates were provided with an overview of the activities of Delta 2000 and the characteristics of the Basso-Ferrarese region, including a comprehensive understanding of those local tourist facilities already in place in the Po delta wetlands.

The subsequent visit to ECAD a week later was attended by two representatives from Delta 2000 (the CEO and the tourism promotion officer). Its itinerary similarly involved presentations giving an overview of the area and ECAD's eco-tourism related projects, which were complemented by field trips. On the fourth day, both parties undertook a review of the two visits. The discussion identified complementary characteristics between the two areas: the Po delta is more advanced than East Cork in the development of its infrastructure, with many of the facilities and services for the creation of this eco-tourism/educational product already in place, whereas, East Cork has more experience of targeted cooperative marketing for eco-tourism.

It was agreed that a trans-national cooperation project would allow for a useful exchange of expertise that would facilitate the two areas to reach a common stage of development from which relevant pilot schemes could be launched. Common objectives were therefore agreed under several headings and the need for further technical assistance to research how to achieve these objectives was identified. During this meeting, the terms for the application for Phase II technical assistance funding were agreed, and reviewed the following day.

The issue of expanding the partnership to take on board the two LAGs interested in the cooperation project was also discussed. After careful consideration, ECAD and Delta 2000 agreed to limit cooperation to the two original partners for several reasons:

- To enable them to move realistically to a trans-national project under Measure C within the LEADER II time frame. With hindsight, the time factor proved to be especially crucial for ECAD as the deadline for Measure C applications in Ireland was later set for 31 December 1998 by the Department of Agriculture. (We didn't know this deadline 'til much later)
- Moreover, substantial time and effort had been invested in getting to know one another. Hence, both parties came to the conclusion that widening the partnership may serve to dilute the project and weaken the cohesion fostered between them.

The reached agreements were "formalised" in the following ways:

- each meeting minutes were agreed;
- A Contract was signed after Phase II and this document formed the basis of the project.

About difficulties, between Phase I and Phase II, it was easy to identify commonalities, compatibility etc. Trying to find practical things to implement, interpreting ideas and putting them down on paper, that they both understand, was the difficult part. RSPB (Royal Society of the Protection of Birds) acted as mediators between the 2 groups for Phase II and the Observatory provided Phase II funding for this.

- [What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives for the other LAGs?](#)

During the first half of phase I, the difficulty of sourcing a quality interpreter/translator able to deal successfully with the technical aspects of the project in both languages became apparent. For subsequent meetings Italian nationals resident in Ireland (and later in England) with a working knowledge of these specialist areas were employed. This proved to be more successful. It also transpired that the cost of hiring such expertise, particularly in the case of translating documents, was considerably more economical in Ireland. Indeed it was then agreed between the two LAGs that all future translation/interpretation be organised by ECAD.

Use of outside mediator to define common objectives/actions to keep it realistic.

for future technical assistance?

To provide mediation facilities

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

The application for Phase II support was entered in 22/07/98 and approved in September 1998. This phase of cooperation foresaw:

- the compilation of a feasibility of a study how to maximise resources on wetlands through product development, promotion and education/awareness,
- the formation of voluntary expert groups in both areas (2 members of every LAG and 3 representatives for each thematic area) bringing together key local players from the fields of education, site design and development, conservation, tourism provision and the LAGs, whose remit was to identify local examples of best practice and methodologies under the headings of educational tourism, environmental engineering and eco-tourism.

The work groups participated to the following actions:

Step 1: Every group of experts produced a concise report about the current projects and the possible future actions regarding every of those sectors described here above. A mutual exchange of the reports took place through the participation of respective experts (November 1998).

Step 2: The representatives of each group attended to a meeting in order to discuss about the possible actions to develop within the Measure C. The open debate took place in Suffolk, England with the experts of the Royal Society of the Protection of Birds and of Wetlands e Wildfowl Trust (21/11/98-27/11/98). The obtained result owing to the help of experts of these two areas and of the RSPB leads to a wide number of actions and specific projects. The actions refer to the valorisation interventions of natural areas which are pilot cases and to the transfer of methodologies and good practices at local and trans-national level in order to set up an eco-tourist product directed towards the bird-watching, particularly by operating in following fields:

- Environmental education at school (at all levels – primary, middle and secondary)
- Eco-tourism – development of products, services and tourism promotion
- Conservation – pilot projects for the management of sites
- Environmental engineering (infrastructures) – development of innovative techniques to favour the accessibility to sites and to structure the individuated pilot sites in each area for the eco-tourist bird-watching product.

Step 3: A plan of combined actions for the implementation of the Measure C (26/11/98).

- [What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan?](#)

[for the other LAGs?](#)

Respect different approaches used by your partner organisation. These approaches reflect the phase of development of the respective projects; respecting the professionalism and knowledge that experts can bring to a project and respecting the importance of involving our community in all aspects of planning and implementation. It is through a combination of both approaches that our projects will gain most from the trans-national cooperation.

Remain realistic within your goals and targets and align closely to the time frame within which objectives must be achieved.

Ensure that both parties are striving to achieve common objectives. What proved invaluable in this regard was 1) the two meetings held between the CEOs of the respective groups prior to the initiation of phase 1 of our trans-national project and 2) utilising the support of the Observatory through phases 1 & 2 to bring more local actors into the discussions, thus further developing and clarifying our ideas, targets etc.

Minimise delays between the initiation and completion of phases. Phase 1 was a case in point. The visit by the Irish group to Delta 2000 was followed immediately by a return visit by the Italian delegation to ECAD. Thus this process involved a seven-day meeting which transferred from one partner's area to the other without a break. Although a tough work load for all concerned, it enabled a continuity of purpose and process, and allowing for a dedicated amount of time to review lessons learnt and create the framework for the way forward.

Related to this last point it is important before phases 1 & 2 that the partners agree to a beginning, middle and end for the process and that these 'sections' of each phase are given a specific time frame. The key to the beginning section was the development of informal as well as formal communication channels facilitated through experiential learning. The key to the middle section was a detailed review of all issues, realities and opportunities related to the trans-national project. The key aspect to the end section was the development of realistic, shared goals combined with individual approaches.

An underestimation of the human resources required to mount a trans-national cooperation project. Phases I and II demonstrated the difficulties of developing a TNC project and also assuming ones normal workload. In view of this lesson, a part-time (%) project coordinator has been designated for the duration of Measure C.

Underestimation of the cost of translation / interpretation & therefore realisation of the importance of shared language skills. Also linked to this was the decision to use expat interpreters with a working knowledge of both languages used.

Find an outside benchmark – in this case RSPB

1.3.5 Implementing the project

Within the project were realized different activities:

- the creation of a specific itinerary relative to the bird-watching,
- the planning of a tourist package to diffuse on the English market,
- the organization of educational tours for English tour operators,
- the realization of didactic forms destined to the environmental education,
- the exchange between the schools of the two countries,
- artistic initiatives
- environmental week
- pilot interventions to improve the observation of the birdlife.

In order to understand the methods of implementation (management, involvement of local actors, etc.) it can be useful to describe two of these actions as examples: the educational tours for English tour operators (so called fam trips) and the realization of didactic modules.

FAM TRIPS

In order to deepen the acquaintance with the market, in October 2000 was organised a fam trip (educational tour) in the Po delta with the participation of Mrs. Carol Debney and Mr. Bob Scott, two leading figures of the English "bird-watching world". This fam trip gave an occasion for the English guests to know the territory of the Po delta and its birdlife offer, but not only: also the artistic, cultural and gastronomic features. During their permanence Bob and Carol were accompanied by a guide expert of the area to discover the most interesting sites. They appreciated very much the cultural offer of the surroundings of the Po delta as well as the local gastronomic specialities.

In occasion of the visit of these two English bird-watching experts, were organised two meetings, to which attended various subjects interested in the tourist development in the area of the Po delta:

- A seminar to which the private operators of the area were invited and to which participated actually 18 representatives of camping places, hotels, rural tourism operators, travel agencies, B&B and companies of tourist services. For these last it was an opportunity to come into direct contact with the "English bird-watching world". Carol Debney and Bob Scott presented the English demand of bird-watching tourism, expressed their considerations about the offer of the Po delta, with regard to both strong points and to weak points, and answered to the different questions of the participants.
- Another important meeting Carol Debney and Bob Scott had with the representatives of the local public bodies and of the various institutions (like the province of Ferrara, the communes of the delta area, the Association of the Regional Park of the Po delta, agency 'Valli di Comacchio', WWF), to whom they illustrated how to equip and to prepare in a best way the

territory in order to propose the Po delta as a destination for the English keen on the bird-watching and not only for them.

DIDACTIC MODULES

Among the actions realised during the putting into effect of the project, were also prepared didactic modules for the primary, middle and secondary schools. ECAD and DELTA 2000 agreed to make use of the competences of the local teachers and experts in their quality of educational operators, in order to “adapt” the didactic material for the formative programmes valid in both two areas, by respecting obviously the practices and the organization of respective school systems.

DELTA 2000 involved the experts of the cooperative ATLANTIDE of Cervia (RA) that got ready a didactic manual, “The Bird-watching in the Po delta”, destined to the secondary and advanced schools, based on an intense activity on the field and on the direct experiences. The manual is a didactic tool that puts the student in the middle of the attention in the role of direct actor and promoter of new forms of tourism, through a different way to live the environment. The exercises proposed in this manual help the teachers and the students to create “an outdoor workshop”, in order to learn to watch the birds through the identification of the profiles, the flight and the singing. At last, the manual contains the proposals of tourist-naturalistic offers destined to the schools: the classes that participate to the project can choose between different itineraries, of the duration of 1-3 days in order to deepen on the field the knowledge acquired in the class room.

Then was realised also a catalogue, for the same schools, containing the routes and the itineraries of bird-watching to do in the Park area of the Po delta, during the class trips (from 2 to 4 days). The catalogue was sent by mail to about 20.000 schools of the region Emilia-Romagna and of neighbouring regions.

Among the promotional activities were organised educational tours, structured in two days of residential information/formation for the teachers of the middle and secondary schools, officers of the local education superintendent of Ravenna and Ferrara. These two moments of formation obtained the recognition of the IRRSAE (= Regional Institute for Educational Research) Emilia Romagna and of the local education superintendents. During the two days of the meeting, to which attended in total 33 teachers, were presented the activities, the didactic tools, the proposed routes, the project in general and the manual was distributed.

The promotional actions were carried on through an intense activity of mailing at national level to about 12.000 schools (primary and middle, didactic superintendents...) in a way that the teachers interested, by asking for the didactic manual, could insert the activities and the trips into the didactic planning for the school year 2000/2001.

Moreover was organised an exchange programme between the schools involved with the project and it also revealed to be a great success in the two areas interested. The delegation representative of the Italian school was so enabled to observe the methods of environmental management in a wetland

area similar to the Po delta, on trying to adapt the methods for their own use, to exchange and to transfer the most significant experiences. The didactic course of the single students, started in the class for the realization of a critical analysis about the environmental problems, ended with the direct contact with the students living in a territory as much unique and interested in the dynamics of integrated development between tourism and environment.

- [What technical assistance did you receive \(from the Observatory or from other sources\)?](#)

none

- [What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the actions](#)

[for the other LAGs?](#) None

[for future technical assistance?](#) None

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

The dissemination in the area is described above.

The trans-national cooperation action and its results were disseminated outside the area tanks to the Observatory and the Italian National Unit through case studies.

The project was object of a self-evaluation assessment with positive conclusions.

Good practices were collected in internal document and in the above mentioned manual.

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

The group is organizing a interterritorial cooperation project with the other LAG who is in the Delta (Region Veneto)

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

The project had a financial support to start up of 5.000 + 20.000 euros.

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)	188.071	72.456	82.610	343.143
Partner N	55.200	21.668	19.200	96.068
T O T A L	188.071	72.456	82.610	343.143

Types of investments

	For the trans-national aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)	67%	33%	100%
Partner N	67%	33%	100%
T O T A L	67%	33%	100%

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

In general the determined effects of the project must be seen in respect of the quantity (reduced) of invested resources. In fact, in different areas connected to the objective of rural development and Structural Funds, such effects regard principally the phenomena of learning and demonstration.

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

No direct effect

2.1.2 Employment effects

A quantification does not exist yet but the project created new seasonal jobs.

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered environmental effects in your area.

The project determined a strong effect of awareness of the local community in respect of the value of the natural heritage. Moreover were realised small improving investments of the environmental quality (see the following chapter).

2.1.4 Income effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered income effects in your area.

The project, through a specific reinforcement of the local context (in terms of infrastructures and know-how) determined an effect of improvement on the sale opportunities and therefore on the income of the activities relative to the tourist services and to environmental didactics.

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on equal opportunities in your area.

No direct effect.

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

- Explain which components¹⁹ of the territorial capital of your area have been enhanced by the project and in which way.

One of the main objectives of the local development strategy was to increase the knowledge about the Po delta on the market, the reinforcement of its image and its positioning as a unit area with the characteristics of attractiveness. With coherence to such a strategy, the project allowed to build up a specific product, the one of the bird-watching, destined to aimed targets and markets. It is therefore evident that the creation of a new and specific product, relative to the environmental peculiarities of the area, by getting over the stereotyped image about the delta (dampness, mosquitoes, etc.) and by valorising the naturalistic emergencies and their possibilities of fruition, represents in general an enhancement of the territorial capital.

¹⁹ According to the dossier of the Observatory (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Brussels, 1999), the various elements of an area's capital can be classified into a number of components, which every individual is able to define in relation to his own specific situation or to what he is looking for. The dossier proposes the following eight components:

1. *Physical resources and their management*, in particular natural resources (topography, soil, subsoil, flora and fauna, water resources, atmosphere), the historical and architectural heritage and public facilities and infrastructure;
2. *The culture and identity of the area*, the shared values of the players in the area, their interests, attitudes, forms of recognition, etc;
3. *Human resources*, the men and women living in the area, those who take up residence there and those who depart from the area, the population's demographic characteristics and its social structure;
4. *Implicit/explicit know-how and skills*, as well as technological mastery and research and development capabilities;
5. *Governance*, the political rules of the game, the collective players involved, and, more generally, what is nowadays referred to as the area's "governance"; this component also includes financial resources (institutions, businesses, people, etc) and their management (savings, loans, etc), since an area's governance cannot be dissociated from the formal commitment that local players are willing to make together (public/private financing, etc);
6. *Activities and business firms*, their degree of geo-graphical concentration and their structure (size of firms, sectors, etc);
7. *Markets and external relations*, especially their integration into the different markets, exchange and promotion networks, etc;
8. *The image and perception of the area*, both internally and externally.

In particular it can be interpreted as follows:

Physical resources and their management

Realisation of thematic routes and mini-infrastructures through pilot projects for the realization of structures ad hoc to receive the bird-watchers (cabins, towers, specialized visit centres) and to complete the connection routes between the sites.

The culture and identity of the area

Increase of the awareness of the environmental identity of the area through projects of environmental didactics in collaboration with the local schools and sensitizing of public administrations and private operators.

Human resources

Initiatives of formation for guides specialized in naturalistic aspects and creation of local employment opportunities more in line with the imaginary and the expectations of the young population (tourism and environment).

Implicit/explicit know-how and skills

All the new local know-how relative to the production and the marketing of tourist and didactic products about the theme of the bird-watching was prepared within the project.

Governance

The project contributed the coordination of the politics of the local administrations towards a sustainable and integrated approach for the rural development.

Activities and business firms

The project contributed to enlarge the range of the local tourist products and in particular:

- it supported the local tourist business firms in their efforts to prolong the duration of the tourist season (the bird-watching of the Po delta is a typical seasonal activity);
- it contributed to the enlargement of the offer range of the business firms operating in the field of the didactic and tourist services.

Markets and external relations

Different actions regarded the promotion and the marketing of the local tourist offer: production of a brochure with a description of the itineraries and with technical cards relative to the sites where the bird-watching is possible; participation to European fairs in particular in Great Britain; editorials in specialized magazines; creation of a club "friends of bird-watching"; proposals of holiday packages; realization of a manual for the hospitality and the reception; educational tours for the tour operators etc.

The image and perception of the area, both internally and externally.

Beyond the actions already mentioned of territorial marketing, the project and its actions enhanced the image of the area and the perception of its resources, by increasing the awareness from the part of the economical operators about the potential on which to direct the investments.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

The development of a tourist product like the bird-watching, in manners and according to the methods with which it was realised, represented a considerable innovation for the area of the Po delta. An innovation however metabolized immediately at local level because existed a hidden interest from the part of the public actors, the Park of the Po delta, the province of Ferrara, the private actors and the tourist operators of the area to valorise adequately one of the perhaps strongest vocations of the entire area.

It is possible to affirm that the participation to a trans-national networking certainly stimulated the local actors to find new ways with the application of innovative methods for the valorisation of the area and of the proper offer. In particular with reference to the environmental and naturalistic values of the area, perceived always more than a fundamental resource and as a such to be invested on through those innovations that the evolution of the markets requires.

The comparison with that what was happening in other areas and the new awareness about the necessity to make irremissible moves in order to be competitive at European level, led to the development of the territorial competences ready to catch completely the opportunities deriving from the performed activity inside the network.

The active participation to the activities of the networking led to reduce what was the isolation of the Po delta area that today is collaborating on manifold themes with a remarkable number of European areas. The trans-national cooperation determined moreover the activating of relationships between subjects different from the Local Action Groups, particularly public bodies that demonstrated their willingness to widen the fields of collaboration beyond the Leader and to continue, where possible, the collaboration also after the expiration of the programme.

The project of trans-national cooperation contributed, also thanks to the coordination action of the LAG, to make to reason in a united and integrated way the public and private actors about innovative interventions for the area. This made it possible to realize interventions that in some other way would not have done it or not certainly with the same level of involvement and interaction among the different subjects operating in the area.

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

The fact to have pointed much on the selection of the partners in areas with features and needs similar or characterized from realities complementary facilitated in some way the definition of common objectives and the communication between the same partners.

The distance and the linguistic and cultural difference are variable that can somehow create such problems capable to jeopardize the whole feasibility of cooperation. Very important in this sense are certainly the direct meetings between the partners and the exchange of visits that could be utilised to examine better the different realities and to individuate immediately the potential working fields in common. It is undoubted that the coordination of different subjects belonging to different countries is an extremely difficult activity and that often many problems can be solved through the individuation of a leader subject with strong operative and organizational skills. This allows also accelerating the development of projects which because of their same nature and of their raising problems have realization times very prolonged, that can effectively represent a problem for the aim of an efficacious involvement of the local operators.

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

Considering that anyway exist technical times that regulate the relationship between the partners and between these last and the commission, times can unlikely be reduced, the LAG should perform a further action on the area in order to maintain alive the interest of the local actors about the theme of the project to be realized, by organizing information meetings and opportunities of comparison about the potential developments. In case of private operators whose working times are reported to the needs of the markets; the LAG should collaborate to the definition of determinate actions in a way that they can correlate themselves before with development of the project.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

None mentioned

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good dissemination of project results in the Leader network through observatory and national units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shortage of time for large dissemination The administrative procedures limit the involvement of neighboring areas
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To involve neighboring areas with the same attitude

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each one of the two partners was able to utilize the specific know how brought by the other The new know how has been well diffused in the area and utilized by the local players 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient time to consolidate the change
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enlarge the partnership and maximize transfer

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong connection with the local project Strong involvement of local private and public actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administrative procedures limit the involvement of neighbouring areas Lack of time for strong territorial marketing
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The action risks to fail if it will not be supported after the end of Leader 	

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong in local natural wealth 	
Threats	Opportunities

II.10 LAG VALLE ELVO: “ENHANCING THE VALUE OF AUTOCHTHONOUS WOOL” – ITALY

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	ITALY
Region	PIEMONTE
Responsible evaluator	

Local Action Group

Name of LAG/CB	GAL VALLE ELVO		
Code Nr. of LAG/CB	ITPI15 COD.RETE: E 36		
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Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	“Enhancing the value of autochthonous wool”		
Name (under Measure C)	“Enhancing the value of autochthonous wool”		
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners	5	Number of languages represented	2
Typology of geographical composition ²⁰	Crossing different European regions		
Sector of activity ²¹ in which the project has been developed	Rural tourism and environment		

²⁰ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

²¹ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Synthetically describe (one page) the characteristics of the project: motivations, objective, results etc.

The initiative had as promoters the following groups:

'Valle Elvo' (the leader group) of Occhieppo Superiore (BI), 'Anglona Monte Acuto' (LEADER partner group) of Ozieri (SS), 'Asocacion Montanas del Teleno' (LEADER partner group) of Valderrey (Estacio)-Spain, Asociacion para el desarrollo rural integral "Tierras y Campos Valladolid Norte" (leader partner group) of Valladolid, Spain, and the LAG "Monti Sibillini Marche" Italy.

Compared to other partners, GAL Valle Evo presents some particular features :

the presence in the area of the Valley Elvo of the entrepreneurs of the textile wool sector with avant-garde technologies and of specialized research institutes, but of not very high number of sheep (in fact in the province of Biella are present 7 000 sheep against the 4 000 000 in Sardinia and the 5 000 000 in Spain) induced this LAG to search for partners that would have at disposal a considerable number of sheep, or in other words not utilized raw material, but deficient from the entrepreneurial and technological viewpoint. The LAG 'Valle Elvo' made itself responsible for the qualitative analysis of the wool, the different typologies of obtainable products, the design and the marketing by entrusting the predisposition on the whole to the hands of experts.

The initiative aims at the carrying into effect of a common project called "Enhancing the value of autochthonous wools". The interested areas are characterized in particular by the abundance of sheep and unused raw materials, the traditional manufacturing processes slowly falling into disuse and the technical professional potentials and technologies applicable to wools of not high quality.

The target of the project is to reevaluate a local resource with the objective to promote the productivity of a sector, the sheep farming sector, that enjoys favourable conditions in the rural environment of the interested partners. The utilization of the wool of the autochthonous sheep varieties as the Sardinian, Biellese and Castilian ones presupposes an economical integration with the sheep farming division and in the meantime allows to recover a traditional resource, to rediscover ancient traditions and to stimulate the productions of handmade articles connected to the local habits, by making to know a culture that identifies itself mainly in the rural context.

Beyond the pursuit of the general lines of the trans-national project, each group intends to focus on specific aims:

The LAG 'Valle Elvo': the project "Enhancing the value of autochthonous wools" foresees to extend the production chain of the sheep farming also to the utilization of the wool, because the Biellese sheep variety is raised for meat. The LAP allocated funds for the purchase of sheep and for the study on the valorization of the mutton variety of the Valley of Elvo area.

The objectives are:

- the sheep farmers' income integration;
- the environmental safeguard;
- to conceive the sheep farmer as a guardian of the landscape, by stimulating the income and by encouraging him to not abandon the area;
- to render the products as a promotion vehicle of the area in order to increase the tourist flows and by linking up the process of economical development of the rural areas with a major attention towards the local resources without any kind of cultural distortion;
- to create new occupational opportunities;
- to place the technical skills and the professional technical know-how at disposal of the involved partners.

The project "Enhancing the value of autochthonous wools" foresees therefore to extend the production chain of the sheep farming section also to the utilization of the wool where it can reach results both in economical terms, being able to foresee an integration on the sheep farmers' income, and in environmental terms through the research of a solution for the polluting problem from the point of view of a sustainable development, the promotion of a territory through the promotion of its products, the fruition of professional technical know-how, the strengthening of the cultural identity.

In light of what said here above the following interventions have been realized:

Animation – Realization of an animation action through the formation of a work and coordination team among the subjects interested in the project, the involvement of the different associations: sheep farmers', craftsmen, dealers' trade associations and touristic-cultural associations.

Qualitative and technological analysis of the wools – realization of an analysis about the qualitative characteristics of the raw material from the part of LAG 'Valle Elvo', with the help of the CNR (=National Research Council) "Oreste Rivetti" of Biella, which beyond to be an expert of these matters is equipped also with adequate machineries.

Individuation of the typology of the products- individuation of the existing technologies in the wool industry and the subjects interested in experimenting new production lines; products on trial and realization of manufacturing test to verify the range of obtainable production. This testing is addressed to the two kind of typologies of products: the touristic-commercial connected to the territory and the innovative high-tech products in order to propose an alternative utilization for the autochthonous wools.

Design and marketing – The objective was to harmonize the local inputs and to research the elements in common to be valorized. The research was resolved to lead to the creation of collection connected to the territories without forgetting which are the needs of the market indicated by the experts of the sector.

Production – Every LAG was determined to realize with autochthonous wools a production of clothing products and accessories of ethnical inspiration, relative to the surrounding environment and to the

local traditions; initially a plaid, to amplify successively with other productions of different items (bags, pouches, gauntlets); but the experimentation of innovative productions does not exclude the possibility of different sectors like the building and furnishing industries.

Marketing – This last phase of the project represents also the source of self-feeding of the system. The finished products were distributed through the local distribution channels that will involve the single LAGs, a web site and the creation of sale points for the products with the special logo “LEADER Wools” at big shopping malls in some European cities.

Formation – The idea to activate formation and training courses for the professional figures of the wool industry has been suggested.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

Explain as the local strategy of cooperation was born:

- What was the local context in the beginning? Was there any local experience of working with external structures, was there an opening to the outside?

The only previous attempt in Valle Elvo at using wool from the local area was made by the Woolmakers ‘Lanificio F.lli. Piacenza’, who tried to produce wool products together with a consortium of sheep farmers raising “Sambucana” variety in the province of Cuneo. Apart from this initiative launched by a local entrepreneur there have been no other experiences with external organizations.

Despite some external contacts on the part of local operators, due to the presence close by of textile industrial zone, there has not been much opening towards the outside and, in fact, there is a tendency in the area to maintain a certain isolation.

- How was the need identified? when the project was launched or perhaps during its progression?

The local needs of the region were identified in the process of writing the local action plan; during the working sessions aimed at gathering ideas for the integrated plan, the problem on the part of sheep farmers with regard to unused wool emerged on the one hand while, on the other, there was the availability of an entrepreneur who was willing to put his technology and know-how at disposal of the project.

- How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?

The level of consensus around the project increased as implementation continued: sheep farmers because they now succeeded in selling their wool; operators in the textile sector because they saw that, from initial scepticism, the project had moved to appreciation of the quality of the finished product. Finally, various local institutions began to understand that the product of this project could be

a vehicle for promoting and marketing the territory and there was likewise a realisation that the product was also worthwhile from a commercial point of view.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

The project promoters regard the technical assistance from the Observatory as being of fundamental importance both from the technical and the financial point of view. Planning was done following the given indications and using the literature made available by the Observatory.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of identifying needs for the other LAGs?

The identification of needs has to come from a bottom up process and from the creation of an identity and awareness that allows us to share competences and know-how in order also to satisfy other local needs.

- And for future technical assistance?

The promoters think that the present organisation of technical assistance was well structured and that the instruments used were appropriate and easily accessible. In the future, they would like to see it strengthened but without modifying the structure.

1.3.2 Finding partners

Explain as the partnership has been created.

- How did you identify the partners with whom you worked?

After having discussed the idea at local level and clarified the objectives to be reached the search for partners was conducted on the basis of two basic criteria:

Territories with a large sheep population and therefore sharing the common problem of the under-utilization of wool;

Territories where there was a limited skills base and know-how in the textile sector.

- As you progressed in your action, did you hear about other sources of information that you could have used to find partners?

As the action got underway, contacts with the European Wool Group (of which Carlo Piacenza of Lanificio Piacenza is currently president) increased and this became an important source of information.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

The technical assistance from the Observatory was important insofar as the partners were contacted due to their database. The project benefitted from both the 5000 € and 20 000€ for technical

assistance as well as for the meeting organisation. In the course of a seminar in Rome a representative of AEIDL who was able to give useful information concerning the presentation of the request for technical assistance. The help received from INEA through its database, seminars and direct assistance was also useful.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of finding partners for the other LAGs?

The search for partners is a very delicate issue of fundamental importance to the project, and the presenters of the project would have the following suggestions to make in this regard:

- partners should have very clear ideas when proposing to cooperate;
- partners who are not the project leader should carry out a very detailed analysis of the proposal to cooperate;
- partners in a project should either provide complementarity or, where they are homogeneous, they should reinforce it considerably;
- the possible problem of languages should be considered.

In any case, partners should really get to know each other during the implementation phase of the project.

- And for future technical assistance?

Similar to comments above, the only suggested change needed is that the AT could be reinforced.

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

Explain as a common strategy has been defined among the partners.

- How did the negotiation proceed?

The idea for the project was first discussed at local level and the support of external collaborators highly specialised in the sector was sought. After having clarified the possibilities and objectives, the search for partners began. This facilitated the negotiation phase because the partners now had a project leader who could bring, working in a serious and concrete fashion, competences and know-how that were useful to them. At the same time, the partners made themselves very available and open to exchange. The readiness of each of the partners permitted negotiation to be both very regular and fast.

- Did you and your partners have comparable national elements (context, legislation...) enabling you to avoid misunderstandings? If that was not the case, how did you overcome this difficulty?

A strong point of the project was the difference in context in which the various partners operate and therefore the complementarity established between the partners. There were no problems of differences in principle between the partners.

- Did you substantially modify your initial objectives to arrive at common objectives?

It was not necessary to make important changes to the project, since the problem faced was that of using a resource that had been little used up to now. All the means invented to achieve these objectives were of benefit in themselves.

- Did you “formalise” the agreements that you reached (e.g. in a contract or in a partnership agreement)?

Yes, a partnership convention was drawn up between the partners.

- If you took on one or more new partners, what steps did you take to rapidly bring the partner(s) up to date and to ensure integration with existing links?

At their own request, a new partner, GAL Sibillini Marche GAL IT-MA06(Marche, IT) was integrated in a second phase, after having met the project leader and visited the area and examined the project. The other partners were in favour of admitting a new partner to the project because it would bring a reinforcing element to the project. The context of the Marche partner was a little different, being an area where traditionally there existed a variety of sheep with high quality wool which had begun to disappear due to the competition from Australian and New Zealand producers. The idea is to counter this threat of extinction by raising awareness, of the possibilities of indigenous wool production, especially in the Monti Sibillini National Park.

- At what stage is negotiation the most difficult in a project and why?

The initial phases were the most difficult ones because of the limited level of mutual knowledge about other partners and, in some case, the slowness to trust. The project promoters consider that it is important not to impose an idea but to promote the sharing of an idea and it is necessary to be open to modify positions taken during the course of the negotiation. The project promoters found that one difficulty during the negotiation was that when it was necessary to discuss about the final products, it was therefore often consequently a discussion about technical questions which were understood only by those working directly in the wool sector.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

In this first phase, there was not a direct contribution from the Observatory but rather application of the LEADER philosophy in the negotiating and decisional process.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives for the other LAGs?

As mentioned above, it was of fundamental importance to have carried out a detailed examination before proposing the idea and to have reached the greatest possible clarity with regard to the objectives. Again, it was found that it was essential not to impose ideas but convince partners through argumentation. It is not worthwhile trying to convince partners if they do not have the same needs and if they do not believe in the project.

- And for future technical assistance?

In this phase the real job of technical assistance is to provide case studies that are similar or complementary to the project themes, to ensure a certain availability, and to provide some materials and direct contact information. These are all things that were provided under the existing technical assistance.

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

Explain as the action plan has been defined.

- How did you determine the feasibility of your project? Did you hire outside experts for the feasibility and engineering? What part of this work did you do in house?

The feasibility assessment of the project was provided through the experience of a similar project carried out by the external project partner, Lanificio F.lli Piacenza, This experience involved a variety of sheep raised for meat in another part of Piemonte. Since the project's beginning, the determination of the project's feasibility was made by the external experts from the technical point of view. The project itself, nevertheless was, conceived and developed internally by the LAG – principally by the Financial and administrative officer and by the Technical coordinator.

- How did you find the necessary funding?

To obtain the funds necessary for the implementation of the project, the coordinators went to local institutions, the mountain communities, partners of the LAG, all of whom were ready to participate, given the inter-sectorial nature of the project. Other kinds of contribution came from companies and private organisations, especially banks (San Paolo di Torino) who acquired many examples of the finished product (the 'Peregrino'-rug) to offer to their clients as Christmas present.

- Were you able to diversify the sources of funding? What obstacles or difficulties did you encounter?

Even though most of the financing came from the partners of the LAG or from the local bodies, it was possible to diversify the sources of financing by involving other financiers once the final project was defined.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

In this regard, lessons were drawn from the similar experiences from the past.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan for the other LAGs?

An action plan that can really be followed and that can lead to concrete results in the short term is also of great help for the search of financing and the involvement of the private sector in the project.

- And for future technical assistance?

In this phase, the real job of technical assistance is to provide case studies that are similar or complementary to the project themes, ensure a certain availability, and to provide some materials and direct contact information. These are all things that were provided under the existing technical assistance.

1.3.5 Implementing the project

Describe the implementation of the project.

- How were the actions managed? Who took care of this, what methods were used and how was this set up? What feedback mechanism was introduced for the actors and financial backers?

The management of the actions was handled by the LAG acting as project leader operating in close collaboration with external participants in the area who had also been accepted by all the partners. With specific regard to the primary material, (wool) was sent to the project coordinator, where it was transformed by the competent partners. The finished product was presented in the territories of the LAGs involved and it served as a vehicle for promotion for all the territories of the partners.

The project was also presented on national media and articles were published in specialist magazines on the textile sector and in a tourism and nature magazine. The project even led to an agreement between Sardinian sheep farmers and a Spanish company that was looking for a supply of wool.

- Did you try to develop networking or did you facilitate it? Why? How did you go about doing this?

The project promoters are setting up a specific site presenting the project as well as setting up links on the sites of all the partners involved. With regard to the creation of an European network of operators in the wool sector, relations with the European Wool Group have become more intensive. The EWG is an association at European level working for the development of European wools, and common actions are foreseen in the future.

- How did you keep the various local actors involved throughout the project's life?

All the operators and especially the sheep farmers who participated in the implementation of the project were invited to the project's presentation. The local press followed the project closely and was a constant source of assistance. The product is nowadays exhibited at the local Tourist office and in the principal sanctuaries in the Biellese region.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

In this regard, the database of the Observatory was very useful, both because it offered the possibility of finding new partners and also because it offered the possibility of getting to know other region's initiatives in order to promote their products and territories.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the actions for the other LAGs?

The project promoters consider that the coordination of the partners is very important and that projects are more effective when the idea and objectives of the project are clear. The outcome of the project implementation also depends on the quality of external partners.

Possible linguistic problems are also worth mentioning here.

- And for future technical assistance?

As far as those involved in this project are concerned, the present organisation of technical assistance is perfectly satisfactory, though it could be strengthened.

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

Describe the modalities of diffusion of the project.

- Did you communicate the trans-national cooperation action and its results?

Three official presentations were made of the "Plaid del Giubileo" ('Peregrino'-rug) and it was also mentioned on both local and national media. The project coordinator (Stefano Mosca) also participated and made a presentation at the first European Wool days in Merida in Spain.

- Was the project assessed? What were the conclusions of the assessment?

The project was also assessed by the Region of Piemonte, that approved it and even by the company 'Ernst & Young', that was tasked to evaluate the operations of the Region of Piemonte.

- How did you bring together the good practices acquired during the various cycles? Did you formalise them in one way or another?

The implementation of the project was followed by a partnership agreement after the negotiation. In addition all the relations with the external collaborators were also formalised.

- Did you disseminate these good practices? How?

No.

- Did you disseminate the results of the transnational cooperation actions carried out by your area? How did you do this and what interest was shown in this?

The project promoters officially presented the project on various occasions at which the first product of the project "Peregrino"-Jubilaum rug was also presented. The main objective was to raise awareness about this new way of exploiting an unused resource that actually poses a problem at European level.

- How is access to information about the project or information created by the project (e.g. new production or processing techniques) organised? Who has access and how?

At present, no particular executive plan has been developed to organise access to information in a more efficient way. Nevertheless, a series of meetings was organised in Italy and in Spain and the promoters participated in all kinds of events which presented opportunities to present the project. In theory, it is possible for anyone to have access to information about the project but up to now the tendency has been to approach the project coordinators from the outside for information.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

The contact with the European Wool Group was useful in this regard as they put the project into contact with other operators of the wool sector. The project promoters were very willing to carry out actively dissemination activities and to widen their original scope, but they would have liked to be supported by the Observatory with these both activities: the actual dissemination of the information and the improvement of certain aspects.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of assessing and disseminating for the other LAGs?

- And for future technical assistance?

The impression is that the already existing network could be used in a more dynamic way – other than simple participation in seminars organised by the Observatory.

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

- What were the determining factors in your decision to embark on a new phase of cooperation?

The positive progress and good results of the previous phase, producing a concrete finished product in a short period, was a determining factor in reaching the second phase of the project and laying the basis for forms of cooperation in other sectors.

- What difficulties did you encounter?

The main difficulties were in relation to the lack of time available.

- Were you helped by the experience that you acquired in the first stages/phases of your project? To what extent?

The experience of the first phase was very useful and since then the level of knowledge and trust between partners increased considerably.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other)

The project promoters made a request for technical assistance for the Observatory for the amount of 5000 € and of 20 000 €. The project received 5000 € and then 17 596.392 € during the “from project to action” phase.

- What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project?

The first phase of the technical assistance was important because it allowed to the partners to finance the first meeting where to discuss about the idea and to get to know each other. In the project action phase, the assistance was used to pay the external consultants and the analysis and experimentation activities. These last activities were important, because the basic primary product to be transformed (Biellesse wool) had to be analyzed thoroughly.

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
1 GAL Valle Elvo	16.117,33	19.698,96	19.285,69	55.101,98
2 GAL Anglona Monte Acuto			33.569,7	134.278,79
3 A.D.R.I. Valladolid Norte	15.025,30	6.439,42		21.464,72
4 Asociacion Montanas del Teleno	10.320,00	12.900,00		23.220,00
	13.487,48	17.589,66		31.077,14
T O T A L				265.142,63

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
1 GAL Valle Elvo	16.530,60	38.571,38	55.101,98
2 GAL Anglona Monte Acuto	80.567,27	53.711,52	134.278,79
3 A.D.R.I. Valladolid Norte	15.025,30	6.439,42	21.464,72
4 Asociacion Montanas del Teleno	16.254,00	6.966,00	23.220,00
5 GAL Sibillini Marche	21.753,99	9.323,15	31.077,14
TOTAL	150.131,16	115.011,47	265.142,63

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on agricultural adjustment and diversification in your area.

The project represented a valid contribute to the sheep farming division, characterized in the contexts of the LAG project partners, by the breeding of the autochthonous varieties of sheep essentially raised for meat and milk. The utilization of a product considered devoid of economical value demonstrated to

the operators the possibility to find a valid economical integration to the income deriving from the traditional activities of the sector. Moreover the project plays also a cultural role in order to recover a traditional resource, rediscovers the ancient local know-how, boosts the production of handicraft articles connected to the local habits, by recalling those cultural elements that characterize and identify most the rural contexts. It signifies, after all, to convert a productive situation at risk of total abandon (because of the inexistent margins of economical profit) into a chance of development through the valorization of a local resource.

2.1.2 Employment effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect in terms of employment in your area.

In a short term, it can be considered that the project contributes to the maintenance of jobs at risk. In a long term the project could stimulate the creation of new small enterprises and companies and cooperatives that run the phase of collection, coordination and marketing.

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered environmental effects in your area.

The fleece wool is got rid of because its working is not profitable, although it seems strange, it is a very polluting product and difficult to recycle, in fact, considered and listed actually as a product among the dangerous waste materials. The reutilization of the product makes possible the elimination of a polluting factor for the mountain areas.

Moreover the realized products thanks to the project enable to eliminate the consequences due to the dyeing the wool in the yarn (its worldwide consumption is estimated to be about 30.000.000 of tons, and it requires about 700.000 tons of dyestuffs per year), which contact cause the allergies with synthetic dyestuffs.

2.1.4 Income effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered income effects in your area.

The first product was realized first of all for demonstrative and verification reasons in order to testify the feasibility of the action. The enlargement of the range of the articles and the new prospects of the initiative that assist the development of the project called "Enhancing the value of the autochthonous wools" towards the project named "The wools of the Parks", in which are involved the "Agenzia Lane d'Italia" (= Agency for Italian wools), the association "Legambiente" (= Italian association for environmental protection), the Federparchi (= Italian Federation of Parks) and other institutions, offers further perspectives to the operators of the sector in the direction of the consolidation of this production complementary to that more traditional one deriving from the sheep-farming.

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on equal opportunities in your area.

The female population of the rural areas taken into the consideration has historically been interested in the textile activity. In particular the LAG 'Valle Elvo' has foreseen for the marketing of the products the establishment of an enterprise that takes its stand on the Cooperative Society 'ONLUS Progetto Donna Più' – Social Development Agency – born within the project 'NOW', financed by the EU. This agency attends to the research on the territory of the area of young women interested in the formation of the enterprise.

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

- Explain which components²² of the territorial capital of your area have been enhanced by the project and in which way.

The project can be considered effective in the enhancement of the territorial capital in a great number of ways, due to its environmental, economic and cultural value.

Physical resources: to conserve sheep farming in mountain areas has a valuable importance in maintaining soil stability and typical flora. Moreover the recycling of actually unused wool has an environmental importance, being wool considered as a dangerous waste.

Culture and identity of the area: the project contributes to the maintenance of a traditional human activity in mountain areas and to the rediscovery of ancient skills and know-how.

Human resources: the project contributes to the enhancement of local workers' skills by an exchange of experiences both between the different LAGs of the area and by the transfer of know how from an important wool industry which participates in the project.

Markets and external relations: the project includes a promotion action and contributes to the creation of good conditions for further marketing and commercialisation actions.

²² According to the dossier of the Observatory (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Bruxelles, 1999), the various elements of an area's capital can be classified into a number of components, which every individual is able to define in relation to his own specific situation or to what he is looking for. The dossier proposes the following eight components:

1. *Physical resources and their management*, in particular natural resources (topography, soil, subsoil, flora and fauna, water resources, atmosphere), the historical and architectural heritage and public facilities and infrastructure;
2. *The culture and identity of the area*, the shared values of the players in the area, their interests, attitudes, forms of recognition, etc;
3. *Human resources*, the men and women living in the area, those who take up residence there and those who depart from the area, the population's demographic characteristics and its social structure;
4. *Implicit/explicit know-how and skills*, as well as technological mastery and research and development capabilities;
5. *Governance*, the political rules of the game, the collective players involved, and, more generally, what is nowadays referred to as the area's "governance"; this component also includes financial resources (institutions, businesses, people, etc) and their management (savings, loans, etc), since an area's governance cannot be dissociated from the formal commitment that local players are willing to make together (public/private financing, etc);
6. *Activities and business firms*, their degree of geo-geographical concentration and their structure (size of firms, sectors, etc);
7. *Markets and external relations*, especially their integration into the different markets, exchange and promotion networks, etc;
8. *The image and perception of the area*, both internally and externally.

The image and perception of the area: the project includes initiatives for the tourism promotion related to the local culture and traditions and the quality of environment and the product of this project can be a vehicle for promoting and marketing the territory.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

- Explain if and how the TNC project helped the LAG and the involved local actors in the learning process related to the achievement of the LEADER specific behavioural objectives (area-based approach, bottom-up approach, local partnership, innovative approach, multi-sectorial integration, networking, trans-national cooperation, decentralised management and financing).

The local approach permitted to focus and to individualize taylor-made solutions for the area in the specific productive division. The difficulties of the sheep-farming division in the area, in particular connected to the market problems, in fact, the LAG took into consideration by identifying more than one initiative, which are, for instance, the project of the trans-national cooperation and the project relative to the slaughter methods in conformity with the precepts of the Islamic religion, followed by numerous muslim immigrates living in the area.

In particular the project of trans-national cooperation, through its concrete results represented for the interested mountain areas, a strong innovation in arousing lively interest not only from the part of the local actors, but also from the part of the institutions that had acquired trust to the possibility to individuate new complementary activities and market opportunities for the sheep-farming. Moreover the project proved in a exemplifying way that it is possible to establish moments of contact and exchange between the small producers and big companies for the transfer of the know-how and the utilization of modern technologies.

The participation in a trans-national networking certainly stimulated the local actors, private and public, to find new ways in applying innovative methods of valorization of their own product and territory, and in contributing also substantially to a new awareness about the local identity, to pay more attention to their own traditions and ancient skills and know-how and to the environmental and naturalistic values of the area, perceived always more a fundamental resource and as such to be put to good use through those innovations that the market requires.

The project of trans-national cooperation contributed, also thanks to the LAG's coordination action, to make to argue in a united and integrated manner the public and private actors about the innovative interventions on the territory and managed to establish an interest that went beyond the the limits of the specific project.

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

The first lesson concerns the capacity of selection and individuation of motivated partners that show to have an adequate complementarity. This can happen only if a correct analysis has been carried out about the local needs through a real activity of involvement of local actors; very important is the clear definition of objectives and of the different steps of the project, too, both in local relationships and in the phase of partners search. Moreover results fundamental the complex role of coordination and the presence within the work team of technical skills and management capacities.

The success of the project also depends on the definition of a concrete and feasible action plan with certain costs and a detailed timetable. This is really a key issue in the search for financing and the involvement of the private sector in the project.

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

A real coordination among the partners and the clear definition of objectives are very important. The idea and objectives of the project must be clear and it is necessary to formalise an agreement between all the partners in order to avoid difficulties and misunderstandings along the implementation process.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

It is necessary to maintain always the interest vivid about the project in its every phase. The system of diffusion of the information and of the results of the project must involve and reach all the interested actors.

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All the operators, and in a particular way the farmers that participated in the realization of the intervention were invited to the presentation of the project;▪ The local stamp followed since the beginning the project attentively and it was a constant source of help;▪ The contribute of the European Observatory that organized various moments of meetings and comparison;▪ The study cases, similar or complementary to the themes of the project, provided by the technical assistance favoured the direct access to the information;▪ The help received from the INEA (= The National Institute of Agrarian Economics) with its database, seminars, and the direct assistance contributed to make the project more efficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is hoped for a major support from the part of the Observatory for the diffusion activity;▪ Requests of cooperation characterized by an insufficient analysis of detail;▪ Linguistic problems in contacts and exchange of information.
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Personal engagement of the project promoters that turn out to be ready to carry out the activities of information and diffusion;▪ The Bank of San Paolo of Torino acquired many samples of finished product (the 'Peregrino-rug') as Christmas gift to its clients and in this way contributed to the diffusion of the information.

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The presence of centres and activities in the forefront of the diffusion of the skills on the textile field; ▪ The leader LAG, in working concretely, produced useful skills and know-hows for all the partners; ▪ The presence of an important and historical wool factory ("Lanificio Piacenza"); ▪ The promoter subjects presented officially the project in various occasion by utilizing the 'Peregrino-plaid' as an instrument of diffusion about a new manner to turn resources not utilized before to profit; ▪ The finished product was presented in all the areas of every participant LAG, and in this way it became a vehicle of promotion for the same territories; ▪ The project was, moreover, presented on the national media and different articles were published both on the specialized magazines of wool manufacturing sector and on the magazines about the tourism and nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The poor diffusion activity of the better practices before the intervention.
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project contributes to the valorization of the local workforce through the exchange of experiences both between the different areas of LAGs and through the transfer of technical know-how from the part of an important textile factory involved in the project; ▪ The financial support and professional formation aiming at the recovery and the development of the local specificities; ▪ The project contributed to the rediscovery of ancient traditions and professions; ▪ To place the technical competence and the technical professional know-how at disposal of the involved partners; ▪ The fruition of the technical professional know-how for the formation of qualified personnel.

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaboration of an important partner, the “Lanificio Piacenza”, a wool factory with a long tradition and prestige in the production of wool fabrics of quality in order to verify the feasibility of the project; ▪ Mr. Piacenza, the owner of the wool factory, is the president of the ‘European Wool Group’; ▪ Capacity to harmonize; ▪ Entrepreneurial vocation and the autonomous work of the territory; ▪ The specific traditional professional skills; ▪ The intersectorial nature of the project met in the mountain communities and in the local institutions a decisive interest to participate and a prompt economical support; ▪ Other types of contributions were offered by organizations and private companies, among which also some banks; ▪ The realization of the project was followed by the formation of a partnership beyond the formalization of specific contracts with external consultants; ▪ Efficacious coordination between the partners and clear definition about the objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fragmentation and poor competitiveness of the enterprises; ▪ Critical mass of typical products insufficient for the normal channels of trade; ▪ Enterprises little inclined to the horizontal organization opportune for the realization of integrated interventions of rural innovation; ▪ The partners reach an adequate level of coordination only beginning from the implementation phase of the project.
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possibility to create “innovative” products with wools of not high quality: the project proposes to realize with the autotchonus wools collections relative to the environment and the culture of the partners’ areas, gift and fancy goods for home and touristic-cultural gadgets; from the woollen product can be made by-products like felt (already extracted), yarn and textile that can be utilized to make slippers, bags, knitwear, clothes; ▪ Variety of typical local productions; ▪ Small enterprises which are flexible and relatively sensitive towards the innovation; ▪ Development of innovative projects that integrate the local productions with the cultural and environmental valorization and support the dynamics of touristic development.

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project contributes towards the preservation of the typical traditional activities of the mountain areas and the rediscovery of ancient know-hows; ▪ The project includes initiative of touristic promotion of culture, local traditions, quality of the environment in order to valorize the territorial imagine. 	
Threats	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project has become a strategic vehicle to foster a development process of other initiatives that will pursue autonomously with time.

II.11 LAG APRODER: “PARALELO 40” – PORTUGAL

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	Portugal
Region	Portugal
Responsible evaluator	António Oliveira das Neves

Local Action Group

Name of LAG/CB	APRODER – Associação para a Promoção do Desenvolvimento Rural do Ribatejo – Association for the promotion of rural development of Ribatejo		
Code Nr. of LAG/CB	PT – RO02		
Contact person	Eng. João Maria Tomáz		
Address	Centro Nacional de Exposições, Apartado 513, 2002 Santarém-Codex		
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Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	PARALELO 40		
Name (under Measure C)	PARALELO 40		
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners	31	Number of languages represented	3
Typology of geographical composition ²³	Inside the same European region (mediterranean)		
Sector of activity ²⁴ in which the project has been developed	Rural tourism and food and agricultural production		

²³ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

²⁴ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Synthetically describe (one page) the characteristics of the project: motivations, objective, results etc.

The main motivation was the need – felt by everyone – to promote the regions: tourism in a rural environment, namely in Portugal and Spain, the two countries that were in the project at the beginning

All the projects were related with diffusion and promotion of products from the TER in each of the participating countries. In spite of the cultural differences in each region, the basic ideas were that we could learn with each other, and that each one could present a similar product in terms of quality.

Initially the promotion was done BTL and FITUR and later Paralelo 40 was enlarged totally and Greece, but Greece, in fact, didn't join. The ones that joined were 5 groups from the south of Italy and they did the promotion in BIT in Milan.

In Paralelo 40 project, initially, the logo had a knapsack for adventure/nature tourism. When Italy joined the project the logo was changed to the representation of a Mediterranean window – symbol that links the three countries.

at the moment there are 9 groups that constitute the Portuguese association Paralelo 40 founded on 15/01/2003. APRODER chairs the group now. The portuguese groups that are involved are: ARODER, CHARNECA RIBATEJANA, LEADERSOR (these 3 are members of Portuguese association), ROTA DO GUADIANA, ADL, ALENTEJO 21, ADREPES, LEADEROESTE and TAGUS.

At international level there are 4 italian and 18 spanish groups. The members of Paralelo 40 are 31 groups that in each country have a Paralelo Association and there is an international Federation that represents the 3 national associations, this is, the 31 groups.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

Explain as the local strategy of cooperation was born:

Exchange of experiences and know-how of the several groups of the TER product. Since Spain is more developed there is an effort so that the product has more quality in Portugal.

- What was the local context in the beginning? Was there any local experience of working with external structures, was there an opening to the outside?

It was the first experience of opening to the outside.

- How was the need identified? when the project was launched or perhaps during its progression?

the groups, if alone, didn't have the money to be present in International tourism Fairs, where great promotions are done. The promotion done individually had a small impact. the solution was to join the regions in such a way that the products could be organized by themes. In this way the impact could be stronger.

- How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?

Very well accepted, mainly in Spain, where the groups had other public funds to support the project. this was an added value that was not available in Portugal.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

there wasn't any technical assistance available to the project. The only external assistance came from an enterprise, which was hired to make the promotional leaflets.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of identifying needs
for the other LAGs?
for future technical assistance?

There is the need that the LAG agree, since the very beginning, what they want to do. The common objective of this project was the promotion of TER, in its several aspects.

For the proposal to INTERREG in II QCA we already had the assistance of a spanish expert and this exchange of experts should be more frequent so that know how and experiences could be transferred.

1.3.2 Finding partners

Explain as the partnership has been created.

- How did you identify the partners with whom you worked?

The partnership started with two portuguese and 5 spanish groups. Later, a portuguese group gives up and new portuguses and spanish groups join. Only at a third phase do the italian groups join.

The spanish groups contacted ADIRN, which traveled to Spain in order to discuss in detail what everyone wanted to do. ADIRN contacted APRODER and this group started working immediately after the formal signature of Paralelo 40. At this time there were about 17 grups, 12 spanish and 5 portuguese.

At the moment Paralelo 40 is an International Federation, because there is a Paralelo 40 association in each of the participating countries. Therefore, the project to be implemented by each of the groups

doesn't imply the participation of each member of the group. Each group participates according to its interest in the actions to be promoted.

- As you progressed in your action, did you hear about other sources of information that you could have used to find partners?

meetings were held in Portugal with the initial partners, where the agreement was made and these groups disseminated the idea to other LEADER groups. This dissemination was done informally. Many times when things are done formally, the results are not always the best (Greece was formally invited because it is in the area of Paralelo 40 and they didn't join the project).

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

None.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of finding partners for the other LAGs?
for future technical assistance?

There were several preparatory meetings for the interested partners so that the aims could be clearly understood by each one. Also to assure that all of them were involving similar means.

In what concerns the Observatory, its activities should be object of a better diffusion, eg, invitations for seminars. The structure should be flexible and self-sustainable..

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

Explain as a common strategy has been defined among the partners.

- How did the negotiation proceed?

In the first meetings, everyone clearly explained its intervention area. These meetings were held in different regions/spaces, to see the differences and similarities in order to there were common interests to negotiate, the products (olive oil, wine, cheese ...) had the same characteristics, but also the specificities of each of the regions.

The promotion was enlarged to touristic products to promote the region as a whole.

Later, inside some Paralelo groups other projects about other themes arose – gastronomy, promotion of quality typical products. These projects allowed that some groups could participate in an informal way due to the lack of budget. Their motivation led them to participate in the meetings and processes of work.

- Did you and your partners have comparable national elements (context, legislation...) enabling you to avoid misunderstandings? If that was not the case, how did you overcome this difficulty?

The decrees of the associations in each country facilitated these comparable elements. The international federation is ruled by the laws of the country where its headquarters are. The biggest difficulties happen when the same programme is to be implemented, because in each country there are rules and procedures that do not come from the Observatory or the European Commission.

- Did you substantially modify your initial objectives to arrive at common objectives?

No. What was originally defined was implemented by everyone. In a 3rd or 4th phase, with more partners, the portuguese groups proposed that the agro-food and arts and crafts should be included in the promotion strategy).

- Did you "formalise" the agreements that you reached (e.g. in a contract or in a partnership agreement)?

There was a formal agreement, where objectives were defined. The agreement also defined the direction, the procedures to call the meetings. Also the rights and duties of each member were defined.

The first agreement was made in 1994 and since then have been signed when the network is enlarged.

- If you took on one or more new partners, what steps did you take to rapidly bring the partner(s) up to date and to ensure integration with existing links?

When new partners are taken, they usually already have a general idea of what Paralelo project is and they receive information. They get in touch and integrated themselves in the work through the previous partners.

- At what stage is negotiation the most difficult in a project and why?

There was no problem in the negotiation of objectives. the problems were in the discussion of 'details' for the promotion (what kind of leaflets, colours, pictures)

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

None.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives for the other LAGs?
for future technical assistance?

The essential thing is that the previous discussion is positive, that when they join the partnership everyone has a common objective. What can change after that is the form, but not the content. The important thing is to forget about nationality and concentrate in the tasks to implement.

The leader entity of European LEADER has a very important role: to facilitate meetings of groups of different nationalities about several themes (how to promote tourism, how to organize fairs, how to design routes). In the journal, the practices of groups should be disseminated so that new groups could appear.

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

Explain as the action plan has been defined.

- How did you determine the feasibility of your project? Did you hire outside experts for the feasibility and engineering? What part of this work did you do in house?

It was a project whose objective was that the partnership could last to continue the promotion, and not that the project was sustainable in economical terms.

- How did you find the necessary funding?

It was insufficient, because it is a project without an immediate economical return for the groups. The regions have an indirect economical return. The funds for cooperation are small – 5000 Euro in a 1.st phase and 20000 in a 2.nd phase. to contract experts for the design and production of leaflets, CdRoms, posters for the promotion and the participation in fairs are very expensive activities.

- Were you able to diversify the sources of funding? What obstacles or difficulties did you encounter?

In Portugal there are no public funds for these projects. The Spaniards developed a CDROM with the support of another programme. The interactive CDROM was made available on the internet and it worked a booking central.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

- What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan for the other LAGs?

None.

for future technical assistance?

The important role of the European structure.

1.3.5 Implementing the project

Describe the implementation of the project.

- How were the actions managed? Who took care of this, what methods were used and how was this set up? What feedback mechanism was introduced for the actors and financial backers?

The Spanish group was a kind of co-ordinating group. In the general assemblies everybody participates, but the first contacts with the proposals are done with the co-ordinators of each country.

- Did you try to develop networking or did you facilitate it? Why? How did you go about doing this?

The European co-ordinator sends the information to each of the coordinating groups and these give the information to other members.

- How did you keep the various local actors involved throughout the project's life?

Through the meetings in the several regions. As there is a national network there is a meeting of Paralelo 40 every month on the last Monday and it has worked. Contacts with the other transnational since it is an informal contact with the 'older' groups.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

None.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the actions for the other LAGs?
for future technical assistance?

The most important is to have periodical meetings and that co-ordinators inform all the groups so that everybody is motivated and continues to participate in the actions.

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

Describe the modalities of diffusion of the project.

Diffusion at national level with information given to National Management, National network of information (INDE) for the newspaper. At International level information was given to IDL that disseminated some contents in INFO-LEADER. At regional level there were general assemblies in the countries and regions, making the region known to the participants who were there on work.

- Did you communicate the transnational cooperation action and its results?

With the results of the project, such as: posters, leaflets, books and participation in fairs.

- Was the project assessed? What were the conclusions of the assessment?

There wasn't a formal assessment. Each group had a positive evaluation, because the aims were reached and contacts were facilitated.

- How did you bring together the good practices acquired during the various cycles? Did you formalise them in one way or another?

It was not assessed in a formal way. The spanish government assessed the project positively in what concerns the promotion on-line and the booking central on the internet.

- Did you disseminate these good practices? How?

The spanish government recommended that other systems to be developed have the structure of what was developed in the framework of this one.

- Did you disseminate the results of the transnational cooperation actions carried out by your area? How did you do this and what interest was shown in this?

The actions were disseminated with its own results – leaflets and promotional posters.

- How is access to information about the project or information created by the project (e.g. new production or processing techniques) organised? Who has access and how?

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

None.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of assessing and disseminating for the other LAGs?
for future technical assistance?

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

- What were the determining factors in your decision to embark on a new phase of cooperation?

To reach the objectives. the groups still have the need to promote the region. The possibility to workwith transnational groups is also valued because they have know how and experience in other areas and new agreements can be reached.

- What difficulties did you encounter?

the difficulty now is that there are more groups and it's more difficult to join together. And that's why there are national associations, whose coordinators meet and give the information to others.

- Were you helped by the experience that you acquired in the first stages/phases of your project? To what extent?

to now the people with whom we are going to work, easiness in dealing with the linguistic barrier, a greater motivation that improves with contacts and common experience that improves trust among partners.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other)
- What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project?

They didn't have, but they think it would be important to have the help of an external expert to clarify doubts and that could disseminate experiences and other knowledge.

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)				
Partner N				
T O T A L				

* Note: the funds for this project were only from Measure C – 5000 Euro at the beginning and 20000 later.

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator)			
Partner N			
T O T A L			

* Note: this project was of promotion and dissemination. The results were leaflets, participation in fairs – that were used either in a national or a transnational context.

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on agricultural adjustment and diversification in your area.

In the diversification of activities, the objective was the diffusion of TER, the diversification of agricultural fields to other activities, leisure and agro food activities

2.1.2 Employment effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect in terms of employment in your area.

Directly it only gave employment to whom developed the leaflets. If the promotion was successful it increased the possibility of having effects in the employment in other activities related with TER.

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered environmental effects in your area.

Exchange of experiences in terms of what other countries were doing in what concerns nature tourism, in the framework of sustained tourism.

2.1.4 Income effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered income effects in your area.

In the framework of the project Quality of Products it was done a bilingue catalogue to be used in the promotion at the european level, with the identification of the promotor.

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on equal opportunities in your area.

What was promoted was the products- without caring if they were produced by men or women. But many activities were developed by women's work.

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

- Explain which components²⁵ of the territorial capital of your area have been enhanced by the project and in which way.

Markets and external relations, especially their integration into the different markets, exchange and promotion networks, etc; and The image and perception of the area, both internally and externally.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

- Explain if and how the TNC project helped the LAG and the involved local actors in the learning process related to the achievement of the LEADER specific behavioural objectives (area-based approach, bottom-up approach, local partnership, innovative approach, multi-sectoral integration, networking, trans-national cooperation, decentralised management and financing).

It helped in cooperation with other countries with different realities and it facilitated the exchange of experiences and it stimulated new cooperations.

The innovation was in the way the promotion of territories with different identities but common interests in terms of promotion was made.

3. Learned lessons

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

to learn how to define a common objective and what is the role of each one in the structure to be set up. To develop trust among the partners.

²⁵ According to the dossier of the Observatory (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Bruxelles, 1999), the various elements of an area's capital can be classified into a number of components, which every individual is able to define in relation to his own specific situation or to what he is looking for. The dossier proposes the following eight components:

1. *Physical resources and their management*, in particular natural resources (topography, soil, subsoil, flora and fauna, water resources, atmosphere), the historical and architectural heritage and public facilities and infrastructure;
2. *The culture and identity of the area*, the shared values of the players in the area, their interests, attitudes, forms of recognition, etc;
3. *Human resources*, the men and women living in the area, those who take up residence there and those who depart from the area, the population's demographic characteristics and its social structure;
4. *Implicit/explicit know-how and skills*, as well as technological mastery and research and development capabilities;
5. *Governance*, the political rules of the game, the collective players involved, and, more generally, what is nowadays referred to as the area's "governance"; this component also includes financial resources (institutions, businesses, people, etc) and their management (savings, loans, etc), since an area's governance cannot be dissociated from the formal commitment that local players are willing to make together (public/private financing, etc);
6. *Activities and business firms*, their degree of geo-graphical concentration and their structure (size of firms, sectors, etc);
7. *Markets and external relations*, especially their integration into the different markets, exchange and promotion networks, etc;
8. *The image and perception of the area*, both internally and externally.

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

During implementation the group worked as a whole, regardless of each one nationality.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

In the case of touristic promotion there was an initial mistake: They tried to promote the region without the diffusion of the network Paralelo 40.

Later there was the understanding that was better to group the regions by the kind of products they offered, this is, touristic routes, activities/themes to be developed (equestrian, fluvial or nature tourism).

The image of Paralelo 40 is better diffused in this way, because the idea to have a common promotion project, with the possibility of going to fairs in Portugal or/and Spain. This method worked better with tourism operators as well.

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">In general there is a good image of the regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A bad dissemination strategy for tourism operators
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">shortage of funds for promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The product (TER) has potentialities to continue to develop and there is the need to continue the promotion

4.2 Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the cooperation among 27 groups brings a good dissemination to the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">31 groups have more difficulties in contacts and exchange of experience
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the enlargement of the partnership can deviate the project of its initial objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To improve the conception/design of TER, to enlarge the views on cooperation, even in the framework of other programmes

4.3 The implementation of measures and projects

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Permanent motivation of partners groups, so that they don't get unmotivated when the rhythm of activities slows down.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promotion of products and learning with other countries experiences.
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some groups can give up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conciliation of other objectives with the original objective of the project.

4.4 More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some groups gave up, because they no longer had the need to promote the region
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some groups can give up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New small cooperations

II.12 LAG INLANDSLAGET/OBJ. 6: “RURAL TOURISM NET – RTN” – SWEDEN

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	Sweden
Region	Objective 6
Responsible evaluator	Ulla Herlitz

Local Action Group

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Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	Rural Tourism Net – RTN		
Name (under Measure C)	Rural Tourism Net – RTN		
Observatory code (if existing)			
Number of partners	27	Number of languages represented	3
Typology of geographical composition ²⁶	Crossing different European regions		
Sector of activity ²⁷ in which the project has been developed	Rural tourism		

²⁶ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

²⁷ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Rural Tourism Network emerged at the LEADER seminar organised in Brussels in November 1997. In 1998-1999, the project idea developed in the framework of the phases A and B of AEIDL technical assistance.

RTN aimed at developing a transnational network to support small-scale rural tourism.

Transnational objective: joint strategy for information about and marketing of tourist services in rural areas; reinforcement of transnational exchanges of know-how and skills within tourism; building of a joint IT portal; exchange of experience in the field of building local and regional tourist structures.

Local and regional objective: enhancing the guaranty of quality of tourist offers in national and international marketing; development of network and partnerships as well as reinforced exchanges of experience between tourist companies.

The project developed throughout about 20 national and international meetings and workshops and a tourism fair in Milan.

Results – indicators:

25 companies involved (objective: 20)

Minimum 3 new transnational network and partnerships (objective: 2)

Minimum 4 new local/regional co-operation projects (objective: 4)

Minimum 15 local/regional workshops and seminars (objective: 5)

The objective of 20 RTN products and services with guaranty of quality was not reached under the framework of measure C.

Other transnational results: building of a first web-site that was transformed, after the integration of RTN with the Rural Market Place network, into the European portal “E-country”; new opportunities of development with partners in Germany, Austria, France, Spain, Greece.

Other national results: identification and anchorage of the RTN concept among tourist companies and other actors in the region; identification of the profile Inland area-Lapland as a rich nature, culture and environment resource in Europe and mapping of the tourist companies and their offer; development of products and marketing; broader competence and co-operation as concerns tourist companies, broad network of co-operation partners in the tourist and travel industry in the region; building of the economic association “RTN Swedish Lapland” with members in the tourist sector. Its aim is to support members through co-operation and development of tourism in Swedish Lapland.

Conclusion and continuation

The project developed mostly as planned. The national part has led to broader co-operation between actors than expected and to joint actions and progress, that in a longer run will be meaningful for the development of the tourist and travel industry. The transnational part didn't develop first at the rhythm expected because of different enterprise and project culture, language barriers, communication difficulties, etc. Nevertheless, at the end of the project, a broad and stable platform was established for joint development measures in the future. The partners are carrying on the planning for the establishment of a European Economic Interest Group Ecountry EEIG that will manage and develop the portal and deepen the transnational work in the field of rural tourism.

Locally RTN Swedish Lapland is progressing in the development work to broaden the tourism network and to initiate and co-ordinate business competence and development programmes in the region. RTN Swedish Lapland has also established a production and marketing company, Destination Lapland, for the promotion and selling of tourism offers in the region.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

Explain as the local strategy of cooperation was born.

- What was the local context in the beginning? Was there any local experience of working with external structures, was there an opening to the outside?

The local context was already characterised by an opening to the outside. The work between municipalities, not only in the same region but also cross-regionally, was a first step (SOS – partnership, an inter-municipal association to support training and distance learning in the inland area, Vindelälvs kommunerna, an inter-municipal organisation to support rural development along the Vindel River, the establishment of the LAG group, etc). A project within the Interreg II A programme with a partner in Finland and another project within the Leonardo programme with partners in Portugal, Scotland and Norway gave good experience of transnational co-operation. However, at the level of the local actors (in particular tourism companies), the opening to the outside and capacity to co-operate with foreign partners was limited.

- How was the need identified? when the project was launched or perhaps during its progression?

The need was partly identified when writing the Local Action Plan, and then more deeply as the project developed, through the discussion with local actors and more precise analysis of the situation regarding rural tourism,

- How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?

The assessment was processed at business visits and networking, meetings and consultations at regional level.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

We were inspired and supported by the Observatory to start up to transnational co-operation.

A specific common assistance (private consulting company) was useful in the preliminary phases of the project

- What recommendations would you have in terms of identifying needs for the other LAGs?

It is fundamental at the beginning to have an overall knowledge of the local needs, but also of the ones in the territories involved.

Identifying needs must be deepened then as the project develops and changes.

for future technical assistance?

Technical assistance has to be assured internally at partnership level and externally assured by tools like the Observatory.

The internal level has to be built with experts provided by each partner, co-ordinated by a leader or a board with real powers and working at the side of the project responsible body.

The administrative and legal aspects are important features regarding technical assistance because of the extreme difficulty to unify different situations.

As regards logistics, it is important to apply to one professional body for the organisation of the meetings and the translation assistance.

The external assistance should be totally dedicated to methods, legal and administrative aspects that have been missing. The problems related to papers (conventions, contracts, EEIG...), financial aspects (payments between partners, accounting, bank reports...), or internal democracy (decisional aspects, types of meetings and of structures of leaders and delegates, etc...) are of paramount importance, specially as co-operation projects are now expected to show more concrete actions and last longer.

This assistance should define models (available on reference documents) to which partners and related public authorities would be obliged or at least advised to refer.

1.3.2 Finding partners

Explain as the partnership has been created.

- How did you identify the partners with whom you worked?

The co-ordinator of Inlandslaget met the one of LAG Marsica (future project co-ordinator) at the LEADER II symposium organised in Brussels by the Leader Observatory in November 1997. The contact was initiated by an external consultant.

All partners were identified by the Italian LAG Marsica in three different and progressive modes:

A first group of partners was identified through two international meetings:

- Brussels – Observatory November 1997
- Vienna – national Austrian, German and Italian networks

The identification was possible thanks to partner-search with comparison of project ideas.

A second group was formed by the initiative of LAG Marsica which informed about the different phases of the project in Italy, at the regional and then national level. A third group was formed by fusion of similar projects started by other partnerships.

- As you progressed in your action, did you hear about other sources of information that you could have used to find partners?

No relevant information

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

Technical assistance from the Observatory has been important through the LEADER magazine and LEADER symposium in Brussels.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of finding partners
for the other LAGs?

To select the ideal partnerships, the following aspects are required:

1. a project idea with general outlines, elastic enough to allow adaptability but not too vague to allow its demonstration, its dissemination and its comparison.
2. verification of the partners' credibility through a common direction.
3. capacity to speak foreign languages in a fluent way. It is fundamental that all partners are able to speak in the same language. The co-operation action has to include language training if necessary. Translation has indeed not given satisfying results and above all can't be a solution in the long run.

4. immediate verification of the communication capacity via internet to limit the number of meetings. The contact via internet is important and cost effective and has to be continuous.

for future technical assistance?

Technical assistance should provide:

1. models of project presentations easily understandable.
2. a complete platform where to search and compare project ideas. It should be a stable service of partner-search with an easy service of orientation.
3. a tool of knowledge and mutual verification of the partners' credibility. It could be a questionnaire with a possibility of verification through request to an organisation like the Observatory.
4. interpreters with high competence level, as an additional contribution or at accessible prices.

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

Explain as a common strategy has been defined among the partners.

- How did the negotiation proceed?

The negotiation proceeded through the comparison of project ideas and meetings. Then, in the framework of the project, common objectives were defined and deepened by transnational workshops co-ordinated by team leaders.

- Did you and your partners have comparable national elements (context, legislation...) enabling you to avoid misunderstandings? If that was not the case, how did you overcome this difficulty?

There is a great diversity between participating countries and regions and it has been great difficulties to understand it. A good organisation at the leading level is necessary to overcome this difficulties. The project co-ordinator had to centralise all information, propose solutions, ask the partners to check its feasibility at the local level, correct it if necessary and send the final schedule to the partners for approval. Then, a transnational organisation took over the role of the project co-ordinator.

- Did you substantially modify your initial objectives to arrive at common objectives?

General objectives remained those pointed out to tackle the needs. In the other hand, the tools and the intermediary objectives were deepened and partly modified, not to make them common, but mostly to make them efficient.

- Did you “formalise” the agreements that you reached (e.g. in a contract or in a partnership agreement)?

At the outset, the project was ruled by partnership agreements based on the reports signed during meetings. At the occasion of the definition of the project, a common project protocol (document of joint application) was set up.

We were directed by an international structure (CON = Council of nations) made of delegates. It worked at the side of a technical co-ordinator and a general administrative director, and was supported by them. The relations were regulated by:

- the signed joint project
- an international convention of partnership
- an international contract regulating financial flows
- an international regulation

- If you took on one or more new partners, what steps did you take to rapidly bring the partner(s) up to date and to ensure integration with existing links?

We established an interactive web-site, www.ruraltourismnet.com (later on transformed under a new address: www.ecountry.it) for communication, dissemination, filing and elaboration. By this way, old and new partners could get the information, react, communicate, ask, etc. Moreover, a budget and specific actions were dedicated for spreading directly in the countries involved, with precise delegations to the CON members. A new partner could make an application and be admitted as an observant. Then, provided that this partner had

- a local project
- appropriate resources
- suitable structures
- and recognised the leading organisation and found the objectives, projects and regulations appropriated

they could apply for definitive membership.

This has been the case for so many that the observers got the possibility to participate at the meetings and take information from the web-site.

- At what stage is negotiation the most difficult in a project and why?

The most difficult stage is the attribution of financial resources, for two reasons:

- 1- the availability of resources has to be guaranteed or at least contemporary for all.
- 2- it is very complicated to regulate the payments flow jointly.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

None

- What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives for the other LAGs?

1. To have from the beginning a project outline following a common scheme.
2. To assure the reciprocal knowledge of the areas.
3. To have the guaranty that what is said to be is real.
4. To get organised in a progressive way as the project develops and on the basis of documents and contracts available from the beginning and structured according to a certain calendar.
5. To have a good system of communication and distance work.
6. To guarantee the availability and transparency of work documents.
7. To adopt a common language.
8. To provide oneself with a structure of internal democracy of growing complexity.
9. To recognise since the outset precise responsibility to a few leaders or assure an effective steering capacity.

for future technical assistance?

There should be at the Observatory or at any other legal organisation a database available with all important information about the diverse procedures and legislation in each country (office of legal, administrative and normative consulting). There should also be available:

- Models of contracts, conventions, statutes
- A service to verify references
- A service of partner-search with a specific web-site dedicated to it

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

Explain as the action plan has been defined.

- How did you determine the feasibility of your project? Did you hire outside experts for the feasibility and engineering? What part of this work did you do in house?

At the beginning, a contract was signed with an international organisation of experts for the logistics and the feasibility of the project. On the way, we agreed that it was better to work with a good technical direction and with the groups inside the partnership.

- How did you find the necessary funding?

We first agreed on the rule that a partner would become definitive partner only provided that they had the appropriate resources. Those have been of two kinds:

- 1- Technical assistance of the Observatory (5 000 and 20 000 ECU)
- 2- LEADER II funds and private funds

- Were you able to diversify the sources of funding? What obstacles or difficulties did you encounter?

Difficulties were met when trying to find the balance between the different financing capacities. We differentiated the funding for joint actions and the funding that each partner would spend for local actions. The national funding was shared by EU-funding, regional public funding and private in-kind contribution. The process to get funding from the Observatory was demanding. The responsible body of the project had to anticipate completely this funding, with no assurance to recover it.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

Thanks to the Observatory funding of 5 000 and 20 000 ECU we could meet and process the final action plan.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan
for the other LAGs?

Working groups have to emerge quickly and work before the meetings. Therefore, a good communication structure is necessary. In any case, the project organisation has to be granted with a technical structure well separated from the institutional and administrative roles of the responsible body of the project. Finally, the anticipation expenses of eventual additional contributions have to be common from the start.

for future technical assistance?

Because of all financial problems, heavy bureaucracy and accounting errors, the mechanism of fund distribution is to be eliminated and replaced by access to operative systems:

- organisation and financing of meetings
- consulting and translation services
- models of documents
- verifications and controls
- publications and software

1.3.5 Implementing the project

Describe the implementation of the project.

- How were the actions managed? Who took care of this, what methods were used and how was this set up? What feedback mechanism was introduced for the actors and financial backers?

RTN was made of a national and a transnational part. The transnational part was led by the CON (steering group) with representatives from partners and countries. Leopold Sjöström represented Inlandslaget and Sweden. The operative management of the national part was confided to Sorsele Alliance AB (SAAB). SAAB recruited a project leader working part time (50%). Leopold Sjöström co-ordinated the national part and a co-ordinator for ICT was appointed.

Regarding the transnational part, the three phases of the project have to be distinguished:

- Preparatory project phase: The responsible body of the project was chosen (GAL Marsica). The work was done mainly through meetings. The co-ordinator dealt with the documentation, administrative and technical issues with the support of an external company. This phase concluded with the first agreement protocol and led to the identification of needs and primary objectives.
 - Project phase: We named a team of technicians and a technical co-ordinator. The responsible body of the project kept the administrative, secretarial and logistical charges. This phase was carried out through distance work and small international meetings, while the co-ordinator checked the situation of each partner. The responsible body of the project followed the administrative and financial issues (20 000 ECU and individual resources).
 - Realisation phase: A partnership structure was set up and made of national delegates (and regional groups in Italy) and an international board (CON). Modifications and new ideas had to be ratified by partners. The project co-ordinator also assured the technical direction, and co-ordinated two team leaders (data processing and marketing).
- Did you try to develop networking or did you facilitate it? Why? How did you go about doing this?

The project was a network itself with three components: strategic contacts (to study alliances, projects, development of the partnership), e-business (where the actors from the different areas take information, give and receive technical and commercial services, etc) and promotion/support of the rural tourism offer. The development of networking between operators and rural areas was justified by the need to reach a critical mass to prevent marginality and isolation. The use of internet was indispensable to carry out networking and co-operation. Regarding the national part, the network was animated mostly via meetings and e-mails, more than through the web-site which was dedicated to promotion.

- How did you keep the various local actors involved throughout the project's life?

Through the regular and gradually expanding business networking and meetings local actors (businesses) were informed in the progress of the project.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

We had some inspiration of the LEADER magazine and Info LEADER II.

- What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the actions
for the other LAGs?

Local actors have to be involved at the relevant stage. Preparatory stages are necessary for dialogue, spreading, training, choice of technical structures, human, physical and financial resources.

for future technical assistance?

Additional to the financial support by the Observatory there is a need of services as explained earlier and a tutor.

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

Describe the modalities of diffusion of the project.

- Did you communicate the transnational cooperation action and its results?

Yes, at different levels: internationally (through the presentation of the project in different meetings and through the web-site), nationally, regionally and locally (through information meetings and reports).

- Was the project assessed? What were the conclusions of the assessment?

We made an own final report and an evaluation report was set up by INEA, Italy

- How did you bring together the good practices acquired during the various cycles? Did you formalise them in one way or another?

We had a corpus of standards and practices as part of the CON regulation.

- Did you disseminate these good practices? How?

Yes, through the web-site.

- Did you disseminate the results of the transnational cooperation actions carried out by your area? How did you do this and what interest was shown in this?

Yes, through the web-site of Swedish Lapland, the organisation issued from the national part of RTN (www.swedish-lapland.com), a separate information brochure, meetings with project actors, companies and organisations and media-coverage.

- How is access to information about the project or information created by the project (e.g. new production or processing techniques) organised? Who has access and how?

The access to the information about planning and realisations is possible via the web-site. It can also be requested from the contact person in Sweden, Leopold Sjöström.

- What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?

None

- What recommendations would you have in terms of assessing and disseminating for the other LAGs?

To use internet with possibility of interaction and dialogue. To give the possibility to be an observer in the project.

for future technical assistance?

There is a further need of project information, experience exchanges and competence services by the Observatory.

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

- What were the determining factors in your decision to embark on a new phase of cooperation?

Need of a broader co-operation to strengthen the network and support competence development, ICT and marketing. Need to create a long-lasting partnership (European Economic Interest Group).

- What difficulties did you encounter?

Partners represent various organisational structures and are at different stages of actions. There are difficulties in allocating funding. There are also various regulations and legal aspects among partner countries and we have difficulties in communication due to language barriers.

- Were you helped by the experience that you acquired in the first stages/phases of your project? To what extent?

Yes since the first stages helped to know the partners and facilitate communication and planning.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other)

Observatory phase A and B.

- What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project?

Definition of needs and objectives, planning, meetings, development of the project idea.

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
Partner 1 (co-ordinator) Marsica	60%	35%	5%	63,524
Partner 2 Abruzzo Italico	60%	35%	5%	63,524
Partner 3 Maiella Verde	60%	35%	5%	123,950
Partner 4 Agora	60%	35%	5%	63,524
Partner 5 Laga	60%	35%	5%	123,950
Partner 6 Vastese Inn	60%	35%	5%	123,950
Partner 7 Patavino	80%	0	20%	137,721
Partner 8 Sx Piave	80%	0	20%	114,913
Partner 9 Dx Piave	80%	0	20%	112,273
Partner 10 Colli Berici	80%	0	20%	111,517
Partner 11 Prealpi Dolomiti	80%	0	20%	138,438
Partner 12 Cargar	80%	0	20%	136,173
Partner 13 Baldo Lessinia	80%	0	20%	123,249
Partner 14 Mugello	45%	35%	20%	100,000
Partner 15 Reatino	45%	45%	10%	185,373
Partner 16 PNA	45%	45%	10%	140,132
Partner 17 Aniene	45%	45%	10%	133,135
Partner 18 Meridaunia	50%	25%	25%	121,761
Partner 19 Valle Cupa	50%	25%	25%	113,620
Partner 20 Acerenza	77,71%	22,29%	0	12,050
Partner 21 Lucania	77,71%	22,29%	0	12,050
Partner 22 Aproccl	77,71%	22,29%	0	12,050
Partner 23 Carnia Leader	45%	55%	0	9,142
Partner 24 Montagna Leader	45%	55%	0	34,334
Partner 25 Open leader	45%	55%	0	113,221
Partner 26 Inlandslaget	33,33%	33,33%	33,33%	241,857
Partner 27 Suupohja.....	0	0	0	0
T O T A L				2,665,431

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator) Marsica	3,950	59,574	63,524
Partner 2 Abruzzo Italico	3,950	59,574	63,524
Partner 3 Maiella Verde	3,950	120,000	123,950
Partner 4 Agora	3,950	59,574	63,524
Partner 5 Laga	3,950	120,000	123,950
Partner 6 Vastese Inn	3,950	120,000	123,950
Partner 7 Patavino	4,710	133,011	137,721
Partner 8 Sx Piave	4,710	110,203	114,913
Partner 9 Dx Piave	4,711	107,562	112,273
Partner 10 Colli Berici	4,711	106,806	111,517
Partner 11 Prealpi Dolomiti	4,711	133,727	138,438
Partner 12 Cargar	4,711	131,462	136,173
Partner 13 Baldo Lessinia	4,711	118,538	123,249
Partner 14 Mugello	32,975	67,025	100,000
Partner 15 Reatino	10,992	174,381	185,373
Partner 16 PNA	10,991	129,141	140,132
Partner 17 Aniene	10,990	122,145	133,135
Partner 18 Meridaunia	16,487	105,274	121,761
Partner 19 Valle Cupa	16,488	97,132	113,620
Partner 20 Acerenza	10,992	1,058	12,050
Partner 21 Lucania	10,991	1,059	12,050
Partner 22 Aprocel	10,992	1,058	12,050
Partner 23 Carnia Leader	9,142	0	9,142
Partner 24 Montagna Leader	10,993	23,341	34,334
Partner 25 Open leader	10,993	102,228	113,221
Partner 26 Inlandslaget	22,975	218,882	241,857
Partner 27 Suupohja.....	0	0	0
T O T A L	242,672	2,422,755	2,665,431

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on agricultural adjustment and diversification in your area.

The project had no specific agricultural effect but there was a raised awareness of the potential of local food as a means for qualitative tourist offers

2.1.2 Employment effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect in terms of employment in your area.

The project had no direct effects. The established national and international network of tourism businesses in the area and initiated business-business co-operation will certainly have a positive effect on employment in a longer perspective

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered environmental effects in your area.

The project focus on quality aspects and environmental care has raised awareness and knowledge which will have a positive impact on the local environment

2.1.4 Income effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered income effects in your area.

The project had no direct effects. It has however set a base for future development and commercial activities through raised business competence, networking, modern technique and marketing

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on equal opportunities in your area.

The project had no direct effects. Indirectly the project focus and activities stimulated both women and men involved in small scale nature based tourism companies

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

- Explain which components²⁸ of the territorial capital of your area have been enhanced by the project and in which way.

²⁸ According to the dossier of the Observatory (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Bruxelles, 1999), the various elements of an area's capital can be classified into a number of components, which every individual is able to define in relation to his own specific situation or to what he is looking for. The dossier proposes the following eight components:

1. *Physical resources and their management*, in particular natural resources (topography, soil, subsoil, flora and fauna, water resources, atmosphere), the historical and architectural heritage and public facilities and infrastructure;
2. *The culture and identity of the area*, the shared values of the players in the area, their interests, attitudes, forms of recognition, etc;
3. *Human resources*, the men and women living in the area, those who take up residence there and those who depart from the area, the population's demographic characteristics and its social structure;
4. *Implicit/explicit know-how and skills*, as well as technological mastery and research and development capabilities;
5. *Governance*, the political rules of the game, the collective players involved, and, more generally, what is nowadays referred to as the area's "governance"; this component also includes financial resources (institutions, businesses,

Physical resources and their management

The project raised awareness of the territorial potential of the region.

The culture and identity of the area

The project initiated a dialogue about a joint definition of the specific culture and identity of the area.

Activities and business firms

The project identified tourism companies and actors with common features: small scale, based on natural and cultural quality features and traditions.

Markets and external relations

The project initiated a long-term network and joint marketing activities and business-business activities.

The image and perception of the area

The project initiated a dialogue on the image and label of the area for marketing and promotion activities.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

- Explain if and how the TNC project helped the LAG and the involved local actors in the learning process related to the achievement of the LEADER specific behavioural objectives (area-based approach, bottom-up approach, local partnership, innovative approach, multi-sectoral integration, networking, trans-national co-operation, decentralised management and financing).

The project was in line with all the above listed objectives, mainly concerning area-based approach, innovative approach, networking and transnational co-operation. The limited project time and financial resources and the focus on tourism businesses limited the multisectoral integration.

The LAG was strategically and operatively represented by the LAG manager.

people, etc) and their management (savings, loans, etc), since an area's governance cannot be dissociated from the formal commitment that local players are willing to make together (public/private financing, etc);

6. *Activities and business firms*, their degree of geo-graphical concentration and their structure (size of firms, sectors, etc);
7. *Markets and external relations*, especially their integration into the different markets, exchange and promotion networks, etc;
8. *The image and perception of the area*, both internally and externally.

3. Learned lessons

Background: This part is a summary of discussions in the focus-group meeting and also from an interview with the Swedish RTN co-ordinator. The LAG members verified that they had been informed about the plans, had taken decision to run the project and then followed the project at a distance. They had not been very much involved in the project, although information was given continuously at the LAG meetings.

3.1 Lessons on TNC project planning

As TNC came too late in the planning and as the seat at the board of the LAG means extra work, the members had difficulty to follow the project and only the co-ordinator of the Inlandslaget could be involved actively in the project planning. The fact to have many partners in Italy and a complicated management made it also complex to follow. Looking back it should have been more suitable to focus on some activities. It was shortage both of time and money. "We were a bunch of enthusiasts, and our separate roles were not clear and a lot of new partners were entering the RTN." A lesson is how crucial it is to make a good planning process develop in a common view of the objectives, and as a partner be aware of good results assume planning enough working time continuously for the project. Also the balance between participating countries has to be taken into account.

As for local projects, it is important to have a long-term view in mind when planning the project. It is important to develop a common agenda and involve actors already working in field. Many regional authorities are in one way or another working/funding projects or activities that aim to stimulate the tourism industry in the area. A broader co-operation from the beginning is a critical point. Another lesson is that networking takes time and claims activities. Members of the network expect things to happen within the network. Therefore activities must be planned and somebody has to take that responsibility.

3.2 Lessons on TNC project implementation

The fact that one of the LAG members has a tourism company herself was very useful for the project as she could catch people's interest in the project and contribute with her own experience in order to be go carry out the project, involve the more actors and the broader area possible, etc. The national part of the project developed more positive than expected. More actors were involved, which is good for the future of the national network "RTN Svenska Lapland" and the tourism industry in the area. The trans-national part didn't develop that good. Problems with information, huge mass of documents, active dialogue, definition of the common objective for the web-site, strategies and implementation took a long time to overcome. The co-operation was difficult in the beginning due to different habits of running businesses and projects; the languages and communication was also a constraint. At the end of the project a common platform was developed on which to continue the co-operation after LEADER II.

3.3 Lessons on TNC project diffusion

One important issue for the continuation of the project and the spreading of its results and the information is a network which has to be maintained and developed. The RTN-Italy made a professional and active contribution of disseminating the knowledge and results of the project. Important to have entrances to all levels, and the final conference in Brussels was very appreciated. In the national part of RTN a lesson learned was to create reference-groups of actors concerned, connecting the findings to the policy.

RTN was a real challenge, with big objectives for little time. The direct outputs and outcome of the project were limited but will certainly have impact in the long run. It is therefore important to wait before concluding on results. If the process started up is successful, the trans-national co-operation initiated under Leader II can be of paramount significance in this process.

4. Conclusions on the key elements of the project

4.1 Dissemination of information

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ many trans.nat. partners▪ many enterprises in the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ languages▪ mass of written documents
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ cost-consuming▪ one-way information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ web-site▪ study-visits, good practices, meetings

4.2 **Transfer and dissemination of know-how and good practice**

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the RTN partnership itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ languages ▪ big information flow
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ stay within the inner circle ▪ lack of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ combine meetings with visits to good practices ▪ more effective use of ITC

4.3 **The implementation of measures and projects**

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a broad partnership ▪ committed partners ▪ measure C opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ too many new partners during implementation ▪ diversification instead of focusing
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ technical complexity costs money and resources ▪ different visions and objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RTN represents a broad competence and valuable experiences ▪ rural areas is/has a potential

4.4 **More effective use of the resources common to the areas involved in TNC**

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ bottom up concept ▪ strong involvement from local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ limited planning and implementing resources ▪ limited involvement of regional organisations
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ lack of time ▪ lack of common objectives ▪ projects instead of continuing activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ variation, variety with many partners ▪ great resources when co-operating

II.13 LAG WESTERN ISLES, SKYE AND LOCHALSH/HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS: “EUROPEAN WILDERNESS CHALLENGE” – UNITED KINGDOM

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1. Description of the action

1.1 Basic information

Evaluator

Country	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Region	Highlands and Islands of Scotland
Responsible evaluator	Robin McDowell

Local Action Group

Name of LAG	Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh		
Code Nr. of LAG	UK-HI-02		
Contact person	Calum Iain MacIver		
Address	Western Isles Enterprise Company, James Square, 9 James Street, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2QN		
Phone	01851 703703	Fax	
e-mail	calum.maciver@hient.co.uk	Web site	

Trans-national cooperation project

Name (preliminary phases)	European Wilderness Challenge		
Name (under Measure C)	European Wilderness Challenge		
Observatory code (if existing)	UK-HI-02		
Number of partners	3	Number of languages represented	3
Typology of geographical composition ²⁹	Crossing different European regions		
Sector of activity ³⁰ in which the project has been developed	Rural tourism – heritage and the environment		

²⁹ According to the study of the Observatory (JONES S., SOTO P.: LEADER II and Cooperation. Lessons from the past, tools for the future. Bruxelles, 2000), the geographical partnership can be classified through four typologies: border-crossing; inside the same European region (Scandinavian, anglo-celtic, mediterranean, continental); crossing different European regions; project type X + 1 (X partners from country A and one partner from country B).

³⁰ The same study shows that the great majority of LEADER II cooperation projects analysed gravitates around five sectors of activity: food and agricultural production; rural tourism; information technology; heritage and the environment; other miscellaneous services.

1.2 Synthetic description of the project

Aim

The aim of the project was to develop a European series of Adventure races in very remote, wilderness areas, which would potentially become part of a world series of such events and generate substantial local benefits over the medium to longer term in terms of increased tourism income and employment for local communities, and an enhanced profile for the participating areas through the international media coverage attracted through the races.

Context

The sport of Adventure Racing (long distance multi-sport events in wild surroundings) has grown rapidly in popularity over recent years, particularly in North America and Australasia. In Europe, multi-sport racing is far less developed, with only a small number of races taking place, including the Western Isles Challenge which was established in 1994. The opportunity existed for remote areas of Europe to take advantage of this fast growing sport before the market became dominated by other regions.

Partnership

The partnership brought together three rural areas from Objective 1 and 6 regions, which have the very remote and challenging kind of terrain required for this type of event but with different geo-physical characteristics, so providing diversity and turning remoteness and difficult terrain from an economic disadvantage into an economic advantage. The areas also each have a distinctive local culture and language (Gaelic, Saami and Vlachi) which would enhance the experience of participants, spectators and media organisations. Each local area worked closely with local experts in race organisation, adventure sports and local tourism, and the transnational partnership group included experts from the international Adventure Racing Association and on corporate sponsorship and private sector financing.

Project Objectives

- 1) to plan, organise and implement two new adventure races, the 'Arctic Circle Traverse' (Skogslandet, Sweden) and 'Pindos Crossing' (Kalambaka-Pyli, Greece)
- 2) Develop (further) the 'Western Isles Challenge' (Isle of Lewis, Western Isles, Scotland)
- 3) Establish links between the three LEADER communities based around the focus of the races.
- 4) Establish 'Series Adventure'
- 5) Achieve long term funding options for the three races as part of the funding of 'Series Adventure' through a negotiated funding proposal with sponsors.

Implementation

The project development and feasibility work was conducted between September 1997 and October 1998 through a series of meetings held between the partners in each local area in turn, including some field observation of an established race (Western Isles Challenge), and funded by grants of 5,000 and 20,000 Euros from the European Observatory. The main implementation phase commenced in 1999 with Measure C funding of 873,455 Euros and involved raising funds from sponsors, detailed operational planning for the new races in Sweden and Greece and work to develop the concept of 'Series Adventure'. The main results were:

- full scale adventure races held in Skogslandet in July 1999 and in Kalambaka-Pyli in June 2000
- continuation and expansion of the Western Isles Challenge race over 1999-2001
- production of sponsorship packs for fund-raising for individual races or a 'series'
- increased local tourism income, media profile and part-time employment creation, especially for the Western Isles area, where races have continued after the end of the LEADER programme
- on-going contacts and cultural exchanges between the three areas.

1.3 Progression of the project

1.3.1 Identifying needs

Explain as the local strategy of cooperation was born:

- *What was the local context in the beginning? Was there any local experience of working with external structures, was there an opening to the outside?*

The Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh LAG already had considerable experience of working on a transnational basis from a LEADER 1 project with LAGs in Greece and France on developing animation methods, and a NOW (New Opportunities for Women) project with partners from France, Austria and Finland promoting enterprise skills during the transition period before LEADER II. The LAG enjoyed a good reputation for its transnational and local development work, and was very active in the European LEADER network participating in many seminars and responding to requests for advice and assistance on an informal level. At the same time as the European Wilderness Challenge, other transnational projects were under development, e.g. in the field of ICT.

- *How was the need identified ? When the project was launched or perhaps during its progression ?*

The driving force for the project was a local entrepreneur who had already established the Western Isles Challenge adventure race back in 1994, and, hearing about the LEADER II programme and the transnational co-operation dimension to it, saw the opportunity to gain financial and technical

assistance to develop linked races in other similarly remote and wilderness areas within European Union. Thus he approached the LAG with the idea of developing a series of races in Europe which would raise the profile of adventure racing in Europe and offer better prospects to raise on-going financial sponsorship from private and public sector sources than one single annual race operating in isolation. For project promoters in a very remote and sparsely populated area with very few companies of any size, raising private sector sponsorship or investment has always been very difficult. So the transnational dimension offered by LEADER was seen as a practical way of raising the profile of the event and achieving a critical mass to attract more sponsorship.

The LAG, in turn, responded positively as it saw the potential to create a new asset out of its wilderness terrain which would generate new tourism and income to the Isles from the participants and spectators, and, at the same time, due to the unusual and spectacular nature of the races, attract media coverage which might stimulate an interest to visit the area from new audiences. In the Western Isles (as in the other partner areas) the factor of extreme peripheral location has limited the growth of tourism and thus innovative activities and attractions are needed to encourage more people to visit. In this case the needs of a private entrepreneur seeking to establish and extend a specialised sporting event coincided with the local public interest in making best use of the distinctive local resources and attracting new sources of external income for the benefit of a variety of other businesses and communities.

- *How does one assess (and reassess at each new cycle) the basis of the project and the credibility of the project holders at the local level and at the regional level?*

The feasibility of the project and compatibility of partners were progressively assessed through a number of preliminary contacts and then formal meetings facilitated and funded by the LEADER European Observatory. This process was supplemented by telephone and e-mail contacts between the prospective partners both prior to and after the first meetings. The credibility of the co-ordinator and key project holders was established essentially through face-to-face contact at meetings and the opportunity to share of the substantial knowledge and expertise in the fields of adventure racing, outdoor sports and commercial fund-raising which each partner brought to the table. This process revealed that, although the level of experience was higher in the Western Isles due to the race already established there, each area was able to identify appropriately experienced individuals and organisations in the project development, who were able to contribute different kinds of technical expertise as well as in-depth local knowledge. In order to address gaps in skills / experience of the local area project promoters, other international experts (from the Adventure Racing Association and corporate fund-raising profession) were recruited to advise the project partnership. It was certainly an important contributor to the eventual success of the project that this was done at an early stage, and so this also contributed strongly to the overall credibility of the group.

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

In 1997 the Observatory assisted with advice and preliminary research of the comparable 'wilderness' areas within the LEADER programme which might be interested in such a project. This coincided with

a major gathering at European level of the local action groups at the LEADER II Symposium, which provided an ideal opportunity to make and explore contacts with potential partners (see below).

■ *What recommendations would you have in terms of identifying needs*

for the other LAGs ? – Carry out a systematic review of area's resources, opportunities and threats at early stage and seek to use transnational co-operation as a strategic tool.

for future technical assistance ?

1.3.2 Finding partners

Explain as the partnership has been created.

■ *How did you identify the partners with whom you worked ?*

As already explained, there was a very specific concept and type of activity envisaged for the co-operation project which gave rise to a clear set of criteria for selection of partners. The Western Isles LAG made an early approach to the European Observatory which was able to use its knowledge of the wider network of LAGs and search its database for a short list of areas which met their criteria of remote and rugged terrain for adventure racing, interest in innovative tourism development and/or promotion of the area. As it turned out, existing personal contacts developed from networking during LEADER 1 also proved very important. Over September to October 1997 a number of potential partners from different member states were identified and assessed for suitability before preliminary discussions took place by telephone / e-mail. But it was the LEADER symposium held in Brussels in November 1997 which provided the crucial opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with the first partner to emerge, Skogslandet, and also to publicise the project idea directly to a wider audience of LAGs. As a result, the Kalambaka-Pyli area, led by Kenakap SA, responded to the proposal and effectively joined the project development partnership one month later. Within a relatively short period of time the three areas had agreed to investigate the feasibility of developing the adventure racing series, and the Western Isles led an application for a 5,000 Ecu initial grant from AEIDL.

■ *As you progressed in your action, did you hear about other sources of information that you could have used to find partners?*

Not really, the early consultations with the Observatory and the Symposium sufficed as mechanisms for partner search.

■ *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

The initial grant of 5,000 Ecu was used to bring the prospective partners together to examine the feasibility of the 'European series' idea in greater depth, establish a common understanding around objectives and a working relationship between key individuals from each area who would lead project development in their respective local areas, and commence project planning.

- *What recommendations would you have in terms of finding partners for the other LAGs ?*

Make full and early use of the European Observatory (or similar wider area networks) both to obtain information about other areas and to publicise the project idea or co-operation needs of the area(s).

For future technical assistance ? – ensure that the grant funding for initial feasibility work can be assessed and delivered more quickly (it took four months to obtain approval)

1.3.3 Negotiating common objectives

Explain as a common strategy has been defined among the partners.

- *How did the negotiation proceed?*

To a large extent, initial proposals and negotiations took place by e-mail ahead of the first meeting. But this first meeting of the partners which was held in the Western Isles and co-incided with observation of the Western Isles Challenge race, was crucial in establishing a common understanding and bonding of the partners. Also it brought into the project design at an early stage the knowledge of two outside experts which provided greater realism and saved time. Excellent progress was made at this meeting and in a context of learning from observation of the practical organisation of an actual race event. A consensus about how to progress the creation and linkage of three separate races in a 'series' was achieved relatively easily and quickly.

- *Did you and your partners have comparable national elements (context, legislation...) enabling you to avoid misunderstandings? If that was not the case, how did you overcome this difficulty?*

There were no serious difficulties arising from the different national contexts, although there were different circumstances affecting the timescale and feasibility of organising the route and format of the adventure races, creating local support infrastructure and raising private funding in each country. Also, whilst there were to be common features and linkages between races, it was the declared intention of the project to design the races in each country flexibly according to the character and resources of each local area. This required careful assessment of the operational environment in each country, especially in Sweden and Greece where adventure racing was new to the local areas concerned, and realism about the timescales needed for preparation of each new race and for effective co-ordination of all three races and their integration with a new world-wide 'series'.

- *Did you substantially modify your initial objectives to arrive at common objectives?*

No, there was no need to substantially modify the initial objectives.

- *Did you "formalise" the agreements that you reached (e.g. in a contract or in a partnership agreement)?*

Yes, there was a basic partnership agreement set out in writing after the first joint meeting. This was especially necessary for the Greek partner to satisfy the managing authority.

If you took on one or more new partners, what steps did you take to rapidly bring the partner(s) up to date and to ensure integration with existing links?

Not applicable to this project.

- *At what stage is negotiation the most difficult in a project and why ?*

At the beginning, or at the first face to face meeting before the partners have established a personal rapport and come to terms with their different cultural and institutional backgrounds. This is the stage at which relatively small issues can lead to large misunderstandings or doubts about compatibility to work together and overcome differences. Also if one of the partners' technical teams is encountering local difficulties whether related or unrelated to the project, it can often lead to a cessation or slow-down of transnational contacts making negotiations and further implementation steps extremely problematic.

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

For the first stage of agreeing objectives for the project, there was a 5,000 Ecu grant obtained from the Observatory to cover travel and meeting costs.

- *What recommendations would you have in terms of negotiating common objectives for the other LAGs?*

Try to exchange as much information and views as possible by e-mail ahead of the first face to face meeting and then prepare thoroughly the agenda / structure for the meeting. Immediately after transnational meetings, make sure that detailed notes and action points are written and circulated without too much delay to maintain the momentum and avoid a relapse into a parochial mentality.

for future technical assistance? A more rapid system for processing financial assistance

1.3.4 Defining an action plan

Explain as the action plan has been defined.

- *How did you determine the feasibility of your project? Did you hire outside experts for the feasibility and engineering? What part of this work did you do in house?*

Already explained above. Two outside experts were consulted at the beginning of the project and participated in the first meeting of prospective partners. The people involved in developing the races in each local area were also skilled and experienced individuals in outdoor sports events, if not adventure racing. In effect, the overall feasibility of establishing the three linked adventure races in Scotland, Sweden and Greece and their integration with a world series was explored through three separate planning meetings, linked to observation of existing races / events and/or terrain / routes for races, over a period of five months in 1998.

■ *How did you find the necessary funding?*

100% of the feasibility costs were provided by the European Observatory. The match funding sources for that part of the project implementation under Measure C, for which the Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh LAG was responsible, were primarily private sector corporate sponsors of the Western Isles Challenge (identified by the race promoter and outside fund-raising experts) and secondarily the Western Isles Local Enterprise Company (lead organisation for the LAG).

■ *Were you able to diversify the sources of funding? What obstacles or difficulties did you encounter?*

Yes, a substantial part of the action planning phase was dedicated to designing a promotional pack for the purpose of raising funds from the private sector for the races in each local area and for the series as a whole and planning the strategy. There were some delays and difficulties to put all the private sector funding into place at a sufficiently early stage.

■ *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

A second European Observatory feasibility grant of 20,000 Ecu met the costs of all relevant partners and associated organisations to hold two meetings in Sweden and Greece to progress detailed race planning and development of a fund-raising strategy for the new series of adventure races.

■ *What recommendations would you have in terms of defining an action plan for the other LAGs?*

Try to be very realistic about the long timescales required for preparing and co-ordinating linked activities in the context of different member states. Even if the working relationship between partners is very good, there are always unforeseen contingencies which will impose or threaten delays. Allow sufficient time and good working conditions for the international meeting process, taking care of translation and other support facilities to facilitate communications. Where there is a need for systematic fund-raising from the private sector for event costs etc, a highly professional approach is required and advice from outside experts with an understanding of your sector, as well as of financial strategy, will be desirable, if not essential.

- *for future technical assistance?* None specifically.

1.3.5 Implementing the project

Describe the implementation of the project.

After the feasibility and planning stage described above, the project moved into implementation with Measure C funding, which involved the on-the-ground preparation for and delivery of the three complementary races in each of the partners' local areas, and the formal establishment of 'Series Adventure', as it was named and marketed, linking the three European events to three other 'world' adventure races in Canada, New Zealand and South Africa over the period 1999-2000. Another

important dimension of the project were the associated local community, sporting and cultural events, e.g. schools events in the Western Isles, organised on the fringe of the main races and which contributed to the attraction of tourists and local visitors as well as intangible benefits to each local area in terms of image building and community development.

- *How were the actions managed? Who took care of this, what methods were used and how was this set up? What feedback mechanism was introduced for the actors and financial backers?*

After the joint planning stage during 1998, the overall co-ordination and monitoring of the Measure C application was undertaken by the Western Isles, but the assembly of private funds from sponsors and implementation of each local area event had by necessity to be managed by the promoters in each local area with support from their LAG. There was exchange of information on progress and mutual support provided by e-mail / telephone between the three LAGs and their outside experts, but no further co-ordination meetings (other than at the events themselves) were initiated by the LAGs due to pressure of other local development work in the latter stages of the LEADER II programme.

- *Did you try to develop networking or did you facilitate it? Why? How did you go about this?*

The contacts and understanding achieved between the three LAGs and local project promoters during the intensive initial planning stages in 1997-98 provided a basis for continuing the networking and exchanges between the areas. In particular there was an interest to try to stimulate cultural links between the local communities who were the hosts of the events in each local area and seeking to derive economic benefits from the tourism and general media publicity associated with the adventure races. Whilst there was a strong networking between the event and project promoter groups in each country, which was embedded in the world series concept supported by the Adventure Racing Association, there is little evidence that exchanges between host communities have been developed and sustained.

- *How did you keep the various local actors involved throughout the project's life?*

This was largely the responsibility of each LAG. In the case of the Western Isles the group organising the Western Isles Challenge race and associated events enjoyed very good links with the LAG co-ordinator and were able to meet frequently to progress and review the local implementation of the project.

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

No further technical assistance from the Observatory was received. Other assistance came from specialist adventure or sports organisations based in each region / country and from the international Adventure Racing Association members.

- *What recommendations would you have in terms of implementing the actions for LAGs?*

Ensure each partner is committed to implement the action plan and the roles / responsibilities are appropriate to local resources / expertise and balanced as far as possible. The co-ordinator should maintain regular contacts by phone, e-mail and visits (if practicable) to monitor problems and progress, and motivate partners where necessary

For future technical assistance? A role to provide more practical support to co-ordinating LAGs should be given to networking units at the national or regional levels.

1.3.6 Assessing and disseminating

Describe the modalities of diffusion of the project.

- through the LEADER networks – primarily the European Observatory but also the Scottish and UK networks – through transnational co-operation seminars, factsheets, and articles.
- through the Adventure Racing Association which was promoting the idea of a World Series
- through web sites which were set up for the individual races in each local area in 2000.

■ *Did you communicate the transnational cooperation action and its results?*

The early outcomes of the project were relayed by the European Observatory, and in Scotland, Western Isles Enterprise publicised outcomes locally and to the wider Highlands and Islands Enterprise network.

■ *Was the project assessed? What were the conclusions of the assessment?*

No formal assessment of the project was made, except positive references made to the relative success of the transnational co-operation in the local evaluation of the Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh LAG programme; also in so far as Western Isles Enterprise has appraised some of the local impacts of the project in considering applications for on-going funding support of the Western Isles Challenge race since 2001.

■ *How did you bring together the good practices acquired during the various cycles? Did you formalise them in one way or another?*

This has not been done in any formal way, except in the fact sheet and magazine articles prepared for the European Observatory .

■ *Did you disseminate these good practices? How?*

Through the LEADER networks as already stated.

■ *How is access to information about the project or information created by the project (e.g. new production or processing techniques) organised? Who has access and how?*

Access to information about the project is available through either the European Observatory web site or Western Isles Enterprise. Also, for technical issues around adventure racing, through the Adventure Racing Association.

- *What technical assistance did you receive (from the Observatory or from other sources)?*

Assistance to produce the project fact sheet and articles.

- *What recommendations would you have in terms of assessing and dissemination for the other LAGs?*

Make full use of web sites and local, regional and national media as far as possible.

for future technical assistance?

This could be used to enable more external dissemination and project evaluation work to be done by the national / European networks.

1.3.7 Moving from one phase of your project to another phase or to another project

- *What were the determining factors in your decision to embark on a new phase of cooperation?*

the success of the three planning meetings during the feasibility stage in terms of ability of the project group to work together and learn from each others' experiences; also the positive conclusions being reached about the technical feasibility of holding each race, ability to overcome problems and raising the necessary finance from private sponsors.

- *What difficulties did you encounter?*

No serious difficulties, other than some uncertainties about raising sufficient private sponsorship for the 'series' concept as distinct from the individual local area races.

- *Were you helped by the experience that you acquired in the first stages/phases of your project? To what extent?*

Yes, to a very great extent – as explained above, and confidence and ability to meet both technical and organisational and inter-area communication and co-operation challenges.

1.4 Budgetary issues and project funding

1.4.1 Technical assistance in setting up the project

- *Did you benefit from this kind of assistance? If so: Source (Observatory or other)*

No additional or special assistance was required over and above the know-how and systems for financial management and control already in place in the co-ordinating LAG team.

- *What did this assistance enable you to do and to what extent was it necessary for the project?*

1.4.2 Project implementation (under the C measure)

Sources of funding

<i>All figures in Euros</i>	Community funding (ERDF, EAGGF, ESF)	Other public funding (National/ Regional)	Private/local funding (specify the sources)	T O T A L
Partner 1 (co-ordinator) Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh	37,350	13,300	32,390	83,040
Partner 2	115,189	115,189	230,378	460,756
Partner 3 Kalambaka-Pyli, Greece	87,926	0	35,913	123,839
T O T A L	240,465	128,489	298,681	667,635

Types of investments

	For the transnational aspects of the actions	For the local aspect of the actions	T O T A L (identical to that indicated in the table above)
Partner 1 (co-ordinator) Western Isles, Skye and Lochalsh	3,000	80,040	83,040
Partner 2 Skogslandet, Sweden	5,000	455,756	460,756
Partner 3 Kalambaka-Pyli, Greece	5,000 (estimated)	118,839	123,839
T O T A L	13,000 (estimated)	654,635	667,635

2. Analysis of the impact of TNC in terms of tangible outputs and intangible benefits

2.1 Achievement of rural development and Structural Fund objectives

2.1.1 Effects on agricultural adjustment and diversification

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on agricultural adjustment and diversification in your area.

No effects.

2.1.2 Employment effects

- Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect in terms of employment in your area

Some part-time and seasonal jobs have been created since the races have become established and better known (since the start of the project in 1999) by attracting more and more visitors (participants and spectators). Also the events have led to a growing interest in year round adventure and outdoor activity-based tourism, which has catalysed the creation of several new micro-businesses, e.g. cycle and canoe hire, adventure guiding, camping barns and other accommodation providers. Direct employment creation year-round by the local area project is estimated at 1.2 full-time equivalent.

2.1.3 Effects on the environment

- *Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered environmental effects in your area.*

The races have been alleged to have had a negative impact in terms of disturbance of wildlife and sensitive habitats, e.g. those of nesting Golden Eagles. So it has been agreed to change the scheduling of the race to avoid the most critical times of the year, and take fuller account of sensitive sites in planning the route

2.1.4 Income effects

- *Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project triggered income effects in your area.*

Economic benefits for individual businesses servicing and communities hosting the race have been significant – estimated in 2002 to be around 50,000 Euros. This excludes any spend by competitors or the value of goods and services provided as in-kind support. There are also indirect multiplier impacts on tourism expenditure locally as many race participants express intention to stay on in the area after the race or to return on holiday with family and friends to the Western Isles in future years.

An estimate has also been made by Western Isles Enterprise of the value of the national / international media coverage attracted based on a total of 300 athletes and their support teams involved in the race over 7 days: this is some 3.2 million euros.

2.1.5 Equal opportunities

- *Explain to what extent and in which way the TNC project took effect on equal opportunities in your area.*

It stimulated a lot of debate about the relative difference of ability of men and women to participate in adventure racing, and led to a commitment, for instance, to introduce a prize category for women. Also in the Western Isles the management of the race has now been transferred from an individual private operator to a new community association, The Hebridean Challenge, which is a community owned company limited by guarantee, which offers new opportunities for local people to become involved in the events as organisers, participants, service providers etc.

2.2 Enhancement of the territorial capital

- *Explain which components³¹ of the territorial capital of your area have been enhanced by the project and in which way.*

The image and profile of the area has been improved and more widely disseminated to international sporting and adventure tourism audiences.

New small firms and micro sectors of tourism have been stimulated

Culture and identity of communities involved in hosting the race has been promoted and sustained.

Skills and know-how of the local tourism industry and communities have been raised.

2.3 Behavioural changes of the local actors

- *Explain if and how the TNC project helped the LAG and the involved local actors in the learning process related to the achievement of the LEADER specific behavioural objectives (area-based approach, bottom-up approach, local partnership, innovative approach, multi-sectoral integration, networking, trans-national cooperation, decentralised management and financing).*

It is generally considered that, although the TNC project was a success and the adventure racing in the Western Isles continues to this day, there was little or no direct influence of this project on the general course and methods of local area development. However, it has left a legacy in terms of the positive local attitude to networking and transnational co-operation projects and a willingness to adopt an outward orientation, and a confidence in local ability to stage a major event of this type.

³¹ According to the dossier of the Observatory (FARREL G., THIRION S., SOTO P.: Territorial competitiveness. Creating a territorial development strategy in light of the LEADER experience. Bruxelles, 1999), the various elements of an area's capital can be classified into a number of components, which every individual is able to define in relation to his own specific situation or to what he is looking for. The dossier proposes the following eight components:

1. *Physical resources and their management*, in particular natural resources (topography, soil, subsoil, flora and fauna, water resources, atmosphere), the historical and architectural heritage and public facilities and infrastructure;
2. *The culture and identity of the area*, the shared values of the players in the area, their interests, attitudes, forms of recognition, etc;
3. *Human resources*, the men and women living in the area, those who take up residence there and those who depart from the area, the population's demographic characteristics and its social structure;
4. *Implicit/explicit know-how and skills*, as well as technological mastery and research and development capabilities;
5. *Governance*, the political rules of the game, the collective players involved, and, more generally, what is nowadays referred to as the area's "governance"; this component also includes financial resources (institutions, businesses, people, etc) and their management (savings, loans, etc), since an area's governance cannot be dissociated from the formal commitment that local players are willing to make together (public/private financing, etc);
6. *Activities and business firms*, their degree of geo-graphical concentration and their structure (size of firms, sectors, etc);
7. *Markets and external relations*, especially their integration into the different markets, exchange and promotion networks, etc;
8. *The image and perception of the area*, both internally and externally.