



STRING
4th TEA and PSC meeting
December 11-12, Colmar FR

MINUTES

Tuesday - December 11th 2018

Welcome and agenda

- The host and the LP greeted everyone and then Peter Astrup (CDR) joined through GoTo Meeting. Due to the administrative changes in Denmark, CDR has to leave the partnership and they were not able to attend the meeting in person. Peter Astrup addressed all partners and said that he was very pleased to participate in this project and that his region has learned a lot. Following that the agenda was presented and the meeting started with the discussion on management related issues.

Daily project and financial management by Grants Europe

Following topics were discussed as part of this session:

Reporting

- 3rd JPR was submitted in early October while the first clarification was submitted on December 10th. The LP waits for the JS feedback and after all clarifications are fulfilled the JS will approve the report. Then the MA will be required to approve it and the EDRF funds will be transferred to the LP, and within a few working days to the partners respectively.
- Important upcoming deadlines in relation to reporting:
 - By January 10th 2019 partners should submit the partner level PR to the FLC
 - By January 20th 2019 partners should submit PP report to the LP
 - By March 15th 2019 partners should obtain verified report and submit it to the LP via iOLF and submit their verified report to the LP via IOLF
 - By April 1st 2019 the LP will submit the fourth JPR and then the 90 days rule starts
- Partners were also strongly encouraged to fill in Policy Instrument Progress section in the iOLF. As part of the presentation, partners could see a short video made by Interreg Europe explaining how to properly fill in this section.

Financial performance

- Financial performance of the project was also presented and partners were informed that the project is doing well. However, they were all encouraged to follow the spending forecast as closely as possible.

Project related indicators:

- Good practices - partners submitted their GPs and the JS checked them and sent back feedback. Now partners are required to make changes in line with the JS requirements and send the updated GPs to the LP, to be uploaded to the PLP. The



deadline for completing this task was set for December 31st 2018. Partners were urged to complete their tasks before the deadline but Alsace team might need an extension.

- “Survey on increased capacity” – the survey was shared with the partners on the last partner meeting in June. Now the opportunity was used to remind partners to carry out their surveys and send the replies to the LP. Each partner should fill in the form and demonstrate that they have increased the capacity of 11 people. Presenters have mentioned that these forms should be filled in by staff and stakeholders from each partner. These forms should be completed by the end of Phase 1. The template is available in word format, and as the [google form](#). Each participant should do the survey only once, it is up to the partner to decide what form is better for which participant.
- The topic of “Amount of Funds influenced” and in particular if partners are allowed to make some modifications since the programming period is almost over - this is to be discussed on bilateral basis between the partner who has this need and the LP, through the Indicators template shared by the LP for this purpose. The presenters urged partners to approach them via email and discuss this issue as soon as possible. A question was raised about “amounts influenced” – whether the whole amount dedicated for a specific call should be listed or only the amount that will be “influenced” by specific projects. The latter is correct.
- Policy Learning platform event in Hamburg – Lead partner briefed partners about the PLP event in Hamburg Pieter de Boer on behalf of the STRING LP team took part in earlier this month. PLP was shown on the screen and partners were encouraged to make use of PLP and especially check similar projects, such as “Regions for foods”.
- Partner change - all partners were informed about the process; this change will not affect other partners and they don’t have any tasks related to this. The PSC members officially approved this change, in line with the PSC Rules of procedures.
- Main requirements in Phase 2 – partners have received a list of the upcoming activities and were encouraged to familiarize themselves with this.

Final event

- Covasna region presented the key information about the upcoming final event that will take place in Brasov between May 20th – 24th 2019. Partners were informed about the travel options. When they land in Bucharest, they can take the shuttle bus or train. Also, 3 local hotels are already preselected – one of which is the meeting venue. Welcome dinner is planned. The proposed title for the final conference that will officially start on the May 21st is: “Innovation in agrifood chains: (How) can successfully regions learn from each other?”. The draft agenda was presented in details. Partners were encouraged to propose speakers for the final conference and were reminded that there is a table in the Dropbox where such proposals should be listed. Organizers plan to have between 80 and 100 participants. 2 videos were screened about the Covasna region.



Knowledge exchange phase by CDR & the LP part 1

- “Knowledge Exchange” presentation summed up basic information about the whole process, highlighting the ambition of the knowledge exchange. This was used as a starting point for the methodology CDR team has developed. Besides “the Methodology”, CDR has prepared the “Ultimate knowledge guide” which is a short version of the former document. Based on these guidelines, partners were able to analyse good practices in other regions and learn from them.
- As part of the presentation, partners were asked to reflect upon the past year, implemented KE related activities and discussed what was good and what they would do differently in the future both from the perspective of hosting and visiting region. According to the partners:
 - “Host Planning Tools” was a huge success but “summaries” were a bit too complex for regular usage.
 - The lack of time as the main obstacle.
 - These activities were organized and argued that methodology was very helpful for keeping things well structured.
 - KE methodology was helpful to understand properly the common features as well as the specificities of site visits and partner exchange.
 - Sometime technical issues were an obstacle (traffic, laptops not working).
 - Short period to ponder upon what was done/achieved; Planned activities of these events should be reduced to improve the quality of the experience; Most of the learning happened “between the lines”.
 - Methodology was useful for organizing hosting activities.
 - CARDS were useful and their role/purpose/usage should have been fully utilized
 - More budget is needed for these activities in order to involve more stakeholders.
 - Stakeholder engagement was the key benefit of a site visit for some regions
 - Personal interactions – coming and seeing everything in person is essential. This way partners observed local SHs, their passion and pride about their work which is sometimes essential factor for the GP success.

Knowledge exchange phase by CDR & the LP part 2

- Interactive pitching session was organized. After the basic rules were presented, partner regions were divided into two groups. Each region had 4 minutes to deliver a presentation on the good practice they would like to adopt. These presentations were followed by 10 minutes discussion where other two partner regions could ask questions and think of potential weak spots of the presentations. Representatives of every partner region have received 4000 EUR of play money that they were asked to “invest” into presentations they have seen. They were not allowed to put any play



money on their own presentation and they could split their play money between the two presentations of “invest” it all into one. At the end of the session, Municipality of Debrecen has received the most play money and won the competition.

Updated Synthesis report by PP10 Covasna

- An early draft of the updated synthesis report was presented by Covasna region – the synthesis report is being expanded with “knowledge exchange report” which is “an analysis about all the site visits, staff exchange etc.”. Another addition will be the “conclusion” section and “Future steps for action planning”. Covasna team is planning to have the updated draft ready in January 2019 for partners review and comments.
- Interactive “Clouds of good practices” session was held with an aim to help partners in evaluating the success of the implemented actions. Partners are asked to visually present how one of the GPs they would like to include in their AP looks if it succeeds. Each region presented their GPs and a discussion followed.

Stakeholder involvement by PP7 ICE & PP8 Vitartis

- ICE and VITARTIS organized an interactive session for partners, asking them to fill in templates provided and then each region delivered a short presentation. Partners reflected upon their recent stakeholder activities, mentioned how they were inspired and presented their solution for a case study example they were given.

Wednesday - December 12th 2018

Action planning by Debrecen

- Action plan methodology was presented by Debrecen region, based on the AF, “Engines for change” and “STRING Knowledge Exchange regional summary”. The flowchart that sums up the structure of this methodology was also presented. In addition, they have presented the draft version of the “Action plan template”.
- Partners have discussed their policy instruments and related indicators. Some partners expressed concerns about the sensitive information they will have to include in the AP presented to the MA, but would prefer to remove it from the version published on the STRING website. This kind of flexibility is possible.
- The discussion built of the online TEA meeting held earlier in November and the key sections were discussed in great details:
 - “Reaching the objectives” where partners should list their objective(s) as well as the plan to achieve this goal. Stakeholders are crucial for this section and they should all work closely together and ensure their activity is well harmonized, and take into the account those stakeholders that might oppose your proposed actions and try to think of ways to address this issue;



- Partners have a repository of tools they can use to achieve these goals, such as good practices, “Engines for change”, regional summaries, etc.
- “Actions” should be precisely defined and well elaborated and all implications of the proposed actions should be explained in details. Timeline and financial aspects of the Action proposed have to be addressed.
- Partners are encouraged to think about long-term goals but to set up the key “milestones” that could be achieved within Phase 2. All partners should also list a “responsible person” and think of potential risks that might occur during the implementation.
- For the interactive workshop on an action plan partners were divided into two groups Each group was asked to select a policy instrument from the AF and describe it together with related indicators.
- At the end of this session, the basic information about the 2nd phase was presented. More precisely, financial aspects were explained as well as potential pilot actions. There is a possibility to apply for pilots and get funds from the Programme, as a way to enhance the implementation of the action plan. Partners are encouraged to start thinking of potential pilots as soon as possible and contact the JS around March 2019 with precise pilot actions.

Communication and dissemination by PP2 ZLTO

- ZLTO region led the session on communication, discussing communication efforts within this project;
 - Several informative videos related to the site visits were completed
 - Posters related to the “engines for change” are done too.
 - Partners were encouraged to utilize their own social media channel as much as they can. The project was also promoted throughout different media outlets.
 - A reminder for all – DO NOT include social media and appearances on your organization’s website among the media appearances in the GD folder for the JS!
 - By the end of 2018, the process of creating “The making of STRING” video will commence and the 1st newsletter will be prepared by December 14th.
 - Upcoming communication activities in the 5th period were discussed and tasks/responsibilities agreed with the partners
 - Newsletter is delayed, must be done by the end of December
 - ZLTO to confirm with ARIA who should issue a project level press release