

**“Innovating through training,
innovating in training”**

**Training in aid
of territorial development**



LIAISON ENTRE ACTIONS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DE L'ÉCONOMIE RURALE

LINKS BETWEEN ACTIONS
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE RURAL ECONOMY



COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE
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TRAINING IN AID OF TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

Training, in one form or another, is one of the working tools of most LEADER local action groups (LAGs). The aim of this guide is to provide these groups, and all those working to improve rural areas, with some useful pointers and “good practices” gleaned from all corners of rural Europe.

The common thread running through all the various types of training discussed in this guide is the link between:

- > Strategic territorial approaches;
- > Setting up projects, and the acquisition by a community or group (professional or social) of the elements they need to become development players, whilst at the same time realising their personal ambitions.

This type of training approach, which the French refer to as “*formation-développement*” [literally, ‘training/development’, meaning training for development], is based on the specific needs of identified voluntary target groups. A “personalised”, “tailor-made”, or “customised” response “supports” the project promoter in carrying out the project and modifies people’s behaviour in a human environment that must progress from a wait-and-see approach to one of action, whilst opening itself up to innovation.

Under this rationale, LAG leaders play a key role. They must gradually pinpoint what they expect from the training, on the basis of a territorial project and an appraisal of the human resources in need of training.

These often unexpressed needs are potentially great and concern four types of target group:

- > **The local community**, whose support and awareness must be encouraged.
- > **Civic and voluntary associations**, which are real melting pots of collective initiatives and social concerns.
- > **The project promoters** who are to be trained and professionalised.
- > **The territorial leaders** (elected representatives and technical experts) who need to find information and to manage, design and develop integrated development projects.

The challenge facing rural areas is to invent a new style of development. What is more, they must do this whilst being just as (or even more) dynamic, innovative and adaptable as urban areas, even though many rural areas are still hard hit by economic decline, demographic imbalances and remoteness from the nerve centres of the modern economy. Against this background, training can make a contribution on its own level:

- > Changing *attitudes* governs the expression of needs: this means raising awareness of the issues facing rural communities, positioning them and inculcating a development culture.
- > Mobilising local support involves *appropriating development strategies*: this means not only learning how and daring to speak up for a rural area, but also progressing from local concerns to the requirements of the open economy.
- > *The difficult transition from local concerns* (“entry into development”) to technical and economic requirements (development needs and the challenge of greater openness) can be greatly facilitated by training.
- > *Finalising projects* (hands-on training) and integrating them into an area and/or sector also call for training.

For this type of training, driven by the needs arising from a development dynamic, it is necessary to innovate “through” training just as much as “in” training:

- > Training objectives and curricula must be discussed on a case-by-case basis and must correspond to what the local players engaged in a specific development area and approach actually need. *In this case the term is innovation “through” training.*
- > The practical arrangements, teaching approach and form which training programmes adopt must be closely adapted to the course content and future beneficiaries (the trainees). *In this case the term is innovation “in” training.*

This guide is a working tool designed not only to transfer experiences and capitalise on existing methodology, but also to more clearly define possible training strategies, as well as local players’ needs, and, ultimately, through training, to encourage the transition from a “**willingness to take action**” to a “**capacity to take action**”.

INNOVATING THROUGH TRAINING

The territorial aspect of development is based on three key elements:

- > Existence of a built-up environment with a strong identity ("roots"), sufficient resources and dynamic social groups;
- > Existence of activities that are as diversified as possible, as well as being firmly established in the area and effective (open to the outside world);
- > Existence of responsible men and women "citizens" who are not only capable of promoting or supporting projects, but who also support the idea of a shared asset.

These elements form the basis for:

- > A competitive market **economy**;
- > A dynamic and attractive **area** that is open to new initiatives;
- > An innovative **society** and effective "governance".

Innovating through training means not only responding to real needs, but also making training a catalyst:

- > To **give renewed impetus to the area** and its residents;
- > To **support business and jobs**, paying particular attention to certain target groups, including young people and women;
- > To **support governance** (locally elected representatives, technical experts, etc.).

These three types of support through training are included in the "tools and method" and the "experience" data sheets.

A number of shared characteristics may be concluded from these experiences taken from all around the European Union, despite the diversity of individual situations. These characteristics are:

- > A local context with problems to resolve and the people who can be given the wherewithal to resolve them;
- > A customised response to problems, combining a cross-disciplinary approach, cooperation and partnership;
- > A gradual shift in attitudes and a growing ability to plan for the future, by adopting a team work approach.

INNOVATING IN TRAINING

In the development field, even though training needs are significant, these needs are not quickly or easily expressed, and training applicants are diverse and scattered throughout the area.

Training providers are much more geographically concentrated and, anxious to maximise the cost-effectiveness of their "product", they exert pressure to create the type of demand that is of benefit to them. In many cases this has resulted in:

- > Training provision that is based on the aims and know-how of trainers and not necessarily on the needs of development players;
- > Training programmes that are much the same everywhere, with highly unoriginal training methods and practical arrangements;
- > Some, often serious, administrative and financial constraints that hamper the more flexible and innovative forms of training. In some countries, it is such constraints that explain the poor take-up of LEADERII resources available under the European Social Fund.

Understanding an area's needs, identifying the projects which require support through training in order to succeed, putting together an application, developing a training plan and actually setting up a training course are all processes that are necessary and that call for some imaginative analysis, reflection and consultation work. This entails a needs analysis, a search to identify the best possible solution, work on the teaching approach and procedures, and evaluation.

Innovation "in" training, itself a prerequisite of innovation "through" training, is being forged in response to these issues.

DIRECTIONS FOR USING THE GUIDE

This guide advocates taking an approach to the definition and implementation of training that is centred on the requirements of the development process. This approach can be adopted whenever it is a question of designing and establishing such training courses.

This guide responds to a concern often expressed by LEADER groups: *“We know that training is important and that we won’t be able to achieve really effective and sustainable local development if we don’t make use of the area’s human resources. However, our resources are limited. Anyway, we are not a specialised training agency... So, as a LEADER group, what should our specific role in this field be?”*

HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

Designed essentially as a practical tool, this guide has been structured into two different types of data sheet:

- > **12 “tools and method” data sheets (‘M data sheets);**
- > **9 presentations of specific cases or experiences (‘E data sheets).**

The list of subjects and their numbers figure on the contents page preceding the data sheets.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE?

- > **To make better use of an area’s human resources .**
- > **To provide better support for territorial development projects, through training.**
- > **To ensure greater coherence between the design, development, implementation and evaluation of training courses .**
- > **To clarify the role and possibilities of the LAGs in their efforts to understand and to negotiate with training leaders (developers and fund providers).**

This guide was drafted by **Malcolm Moseley** and **René Caspar**, in collaboration with **Leo Baumfeld**, **Yves Champetier**, **Pirkko Eino**, **Michel Schlaifer** and **Catherine Leroy**. It draws on the lessons learned from the LEADER transnational seminar *“Innovating through training, innovating in training”* held at Muurevesi (north-east Savo LEADER area, Finland) in October 1997. **Jean-Luc Janot** (LEADER European Observatory) helped to finalise the document. Production coordination: **Christine Charlier** (LEADER European Observatory).

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SUMMARY

TOOLS AND METHODS ('M DATA SHEETS)

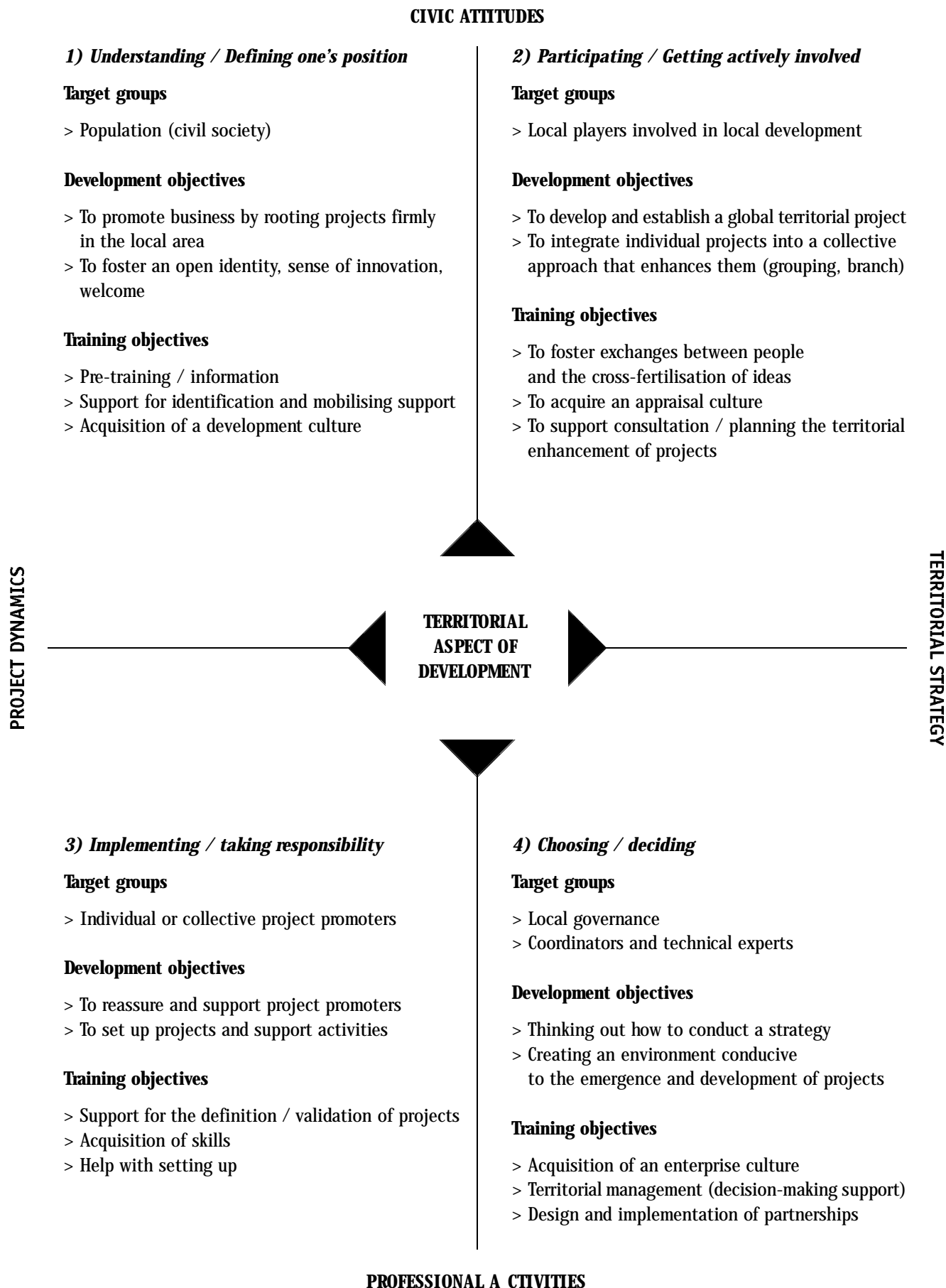
- M1: "Innovating through training" – Training, a development lever
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- M3: Training and local governance – Providing an area with the means to manage itself
- M4: Training and business creation – Practical lessons
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- M8: Defining a training strategy – A major role for training
- M9: Analysing training needs – Multiple possible approaches
- M10: rganising training – Partnership, quality and pragmatism
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- E1: Harnessing and enhancing the skills of the population
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Strengthening participatory democracy by means of "study circles" (Mitt-i-Landet LEADER area, Sweden)
- E2: Training development officers – *The experience of the Fondation Rurale de Wallonie (Belgium)*
- E3: Master's degree in rural development – *A training programme offered by the University of Galway (Ireland)*
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- E7: Distance training
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“INNOVATING THROUGH TRAINING”

TRAINING , A DEVELOPMENT LEVER



TRAINING AND LOCAL DYNAMICS

ACQUIRING SKILLS

A large number of LEADER groups have sought to use training to improve the skills and capabilities of the local population and local organisations, in order to induce them to play a greater role in the development of their area.

We are **not** speaking here of training for local development professionals, but rather for **volunteers working for the good of the community during their spare time** (locally elected representatives, LEADER group members, economic and cultural leaders, etc.), as well as “ordinary folk” living in the area, especially those who feel, initially at least, that they have little or nothing to offer.

In most cases, LEADER groups that have conducted initiatives in this field adopt a multi-phase approach:

1) A “needs analysis”, based on the group’s global strategy, makes it possible to conduct:

- > A brief assessment of the local organisations that already exist in the area – what they are, what they do, their level of development knowledge, etc.
- > An appraisal, with the help of local leaders, of the groups that are not as yet involved or are insufficiently involved, but which could be encouraged to play an active role.

As a result of targeted coordination measures by LEADER groups, the definition of training needs and local priorities (through numerous consultations) can help to trigger a local dynamic and to raise awareness about the benefits of training.

2) The training objectives defined include:

- > Acquiring a collective perception of the changes that would be desirable in the area;
- > Increasing the number of people who are capable of taking responsibility;
- > Promoting a better flow of local information within the area;
- > Relaunching or substituting a number of inactive or fragile institutions or organisations;
- > Training LEADER group members to become “territorial coordinators”;
- > Getting the local population to draw up a “territorial development plan”.

The selected objectives have led to the development of specific training initiatives that serve as a reference for subsequent evaluations.

3) A strategy and organisational choices are adopted

This needs analysis makes it possible to develop a strategy for training these people, groups and networks locally, so as not to waste the LEADER group’s limited resources. Implementing a training course in local dynamics here, or setting up a training course for municipal councillors there, is highly unlikely to be effective unless such initiatives are placed within a wider perspective.

This strategy is defined following consultation with target group representatives, in order to ascertain their particular priorities and determine whether they are keen to play a constructive role. It indicates the priorities, resources and time that could be allocated.

Organising the implementation of such training courses calls for consultation with at least two types of partner:

- > Organisations with experience of local dynamics;
- > Organisations with experience of training for local development.

Based on the specifications presented by LEADER group managers, the latter may be asked to propose the most suitable training responses and, where appropriate, will be made responsible for delivering some elements of training either as trainers or education managers.

4) Teaching choices are made

There are many different types of training “instrument” for promoting a local dynamic. Which one to choose depends on a variety of factors, such as the type of target group and its needs, the specific characteristics of the area and the trainer’s experience and preferences. A number of training instruments have been used successfully, in most cases to supplement:

- > **Continuing training.** Training sessions take place on one evening a week, during the winter months, for example. It is generally advisable to give participants numerous opportunities to discuss and pool their experiences. A local study or project conducted at the end of the training cycle can be useful and may provide the training with an operational objective.
- > **On-the-job training (hands-on training).** The principle behind this approach is that training often has little to do with implementing a specific project, together with others (e.g. conducting a survey on the local area, planning and implementing the restoration of an old building for community use, etc.). In order to achieve a real *training* dynamic, a rigorous collective consultation must be conducted in parallel, as the project progresses.

> **Study visits.** A third approach consists of taking participants to see another area – which may be situated in their own region, country, or even abroad – in order to induce them to reflect on the different ways of tackling a problem similar to the one they themselves have encountered.

Such visits must be carefully planned and integrated into a package that includes a preliminary presentation, follow-up and feedback on the lessons learned.

The participants, chosen for their motivation (in order to prevent the study visit from becoming a mere tourist jaunt), usually derive direct added benefit from this: they get acquainted with one another and forge contacts, making it easier to organise collective ventures later.

5) After this, the training starts to be implemented

Irrespective of the methods used, all **training programmes** rely on a series of factors that are judged to be necessary in enabling the participants to play their role of “local activists” more effectively. These include:

1. “*The area*”... its society, economy and geography. The development challenges that it faces.
2. “*The wider context*”... the institutions, policies and forces that impact on the area. Can they be influenced? How is it possible to work in partnership?
3. “*Key skills*”... e.g. working in partnership, lobbying and networking, mobilising the support of the local population, collecting funds, holding meetings, running civic and voluntary associations, conducting surveys, etc.

In the Midlands of England, a ten-week training course (“Ellesmere 2000”) was opened to all residents interested in the future of their small town. It was organised jointly by the county council and the Workers Education Association and held during six evening sessions in the autumn of 1988. Each evening, a different speaker was invited and the trainer would initiate a general discussion. The training programme tackled the subjects of: rural development in the United Kingdom, local problems, public transport, planning and development (how are decisions taken?), small rural businesses, local services (why are they in decline and do any alternatives exist?), answers to unemployment, voluntary activities and mutual assistance and organising a community appraisal. In addition, a report was published on the training course and the practical proposals.

6) Once the training programme is finished, an evaluation is made of the various training initiatives

For the most part, the evaluation consists of comparing what the training initiative has actually achieved with its initial objectives. It is necessary to evaluate the training programme as a whole, probably over a period of several years, in addition to evaluating each specific training exercise. If the objective was, for example, to improve the effectiveness of a local association or to increase the number of people willing to take on responsibilities in the community, was this objective achieved – and at what cost? The beneficiaries’ participation in the evaluation should form part of their training.

TRAINING AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

PROVIDING AN AREA WITH THE MEANS TO MANAGE ITSELF

Even though this is may not be the usual definition, the term “governance” here denotes a power structure, with a plurality of players operating at different levels, who must all be coordinated on the basis of a common project.

1) Local development officers, who provide the link between emerging needs and the potential responses to them, find themselves in an essential but particularly delicate position (“caught between the devil and the deep blue sea”). It is therefore seen as essential to train them, all the more so since they come from highly diverse backgrounds and have equally diverse qualifications.

It is a case of training professional local development officers, i.e. people employed by an organisation to implement development “in the field”.

Such officers are usually young (under 40) and highly motivated. Some already have a high standard of training and a good knowledge of local development contexts and processes. Others have a very different type of baggage, perhaps having previously worked in the education, agricultural development or health and social sectors. The training needs of such development officers, even within a single organisation, may therefore vary widely and cover very different individual requirements, such as:

- > A deeper **knowledge and understanding** of the rural world, economy and local development and all that arises therefrom;
- > Acquiring the **skills** needed to initiate, support and coordinate a local development process.

2) Training needs are not easy to analyse, due to the hugely diverse tasks of these technical experts, as well as the context in which they work. It is therefore necessary for the people responsible for analysing training needs to consider not only the expectations of the “customer”, i.e., the employer and/or user, but also those of the development officers themselves. In fact, the latter's' demands include a need for reassurance, created by an often uncertain career situation, involving casual or indefinite term contracts.

Below, based on LEADER's experience, is an overview of the most useful skills and basic knowledge required, although these may vary from one area to another and over time.

- > The development officer must be able (attitudes, behaviour):
 - to use local information to define an area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (analyse);
 - to “read” a specific local situation and decide how to act or react (“form an opinion”);
 - to think strategically, whilst remaining open to opportunities and unforeseen problems (take an objective view, put things into perspective);
 - to put across information, arguments and ideas to different people in different situations (communicate, transfer);
 - to facilitate, motivate and help others to develop and implement their own plans (bring initiatives to fruition);
 - to network and circulate information between groups of individuals or organisations (“forge links”);
 - to negotiate and bring conflicting parties to a consensus or compromise position (bring people together, negotiate);
 - to develop, present and manage projects frequently involving several parties (set up a project, foster cooperation);
 - to mobilise the support of other players whose participation is needed for a successful outcome (unite people).
- > The development officer must know and understand:
 - the dynamic of socio-economic change in the rural world and the issues arising therefrom;
 - the impact on the area of external decisions;
 - the area's administrative and political structure and the role of the various players;
 - local development processes and how and why they occur. Who can hinder or encourage them;
 - available sources of aid (local, regional, national and European);
 - specific points useful to the local context, such as rural tourism, local authority funding, assistance for certain social groups (e.g. young people).

3) Based on this coordinator's job profile, a specific training programme is defined to take into account local circumstances. However, a number of general training characteristics have been identified in the field, which to all intents and purposes constitute "good practices":

Taking an integrated approach to the issue of "knowledge" and "skills". For example, it is possible to progress from a general to a more specific approach by means of six two-day training modules, as in this example of training courses for development officers provided by **AFMR Etcharry** from the French Basque Country:

- a) Innovation. What is it? Why is it important? How can innovation be recognized (criteria)?
- b) Defining and establishing development projects for a small area;
- c) Coordinating a working group for a limited period;
- d) Understanding local authority finances;
- e) Integrating a "social dimension" into a development project;
- f) Designing a specific project as part of a workshop, in compliance with predefined criteria and objectives.

Implementing a **"hands-on training"** approach, which means establishing a training "culture" and mechanisms to which the training participants can relate and which they then incorporate into their own experience. In this case, the trainer plays an advisory role and, for this, he must understand the trainees' professional situation.

Conducting an ongoing evaluation, jointly by trainers and trainees, to assess objectives as well as results.

Getting employers to accept that improving an employee's skills also entails providing him with the wherewithal to exercise these skills, even if this means changing the organisational structure. So, in order to achieve optimum results, the trainee is not the only one that must change and develop. The trainee's host organisation may also need to adapt in order to become more effective: ***"...the aim is to find the optimum combination between the organisational framework, the development initiatives which the agency wishes to undertake and the local development officer's skills and knowledge. In other words, to succeed in creating the ideal conditions..."*** (Formation AFMR Etcharry).

When adopting this more ambitious objective, it also becomes necessary to train elected officials and development leaders.

This "spillover effect" of training is not confined to members of the governance, but also extends to trainers, who are required to alter their training practices when they come into contact with a complex reality that they must gradually learn to understand from the inside. So, in many cases, a number of members within a training organisation – or the whole organisation itself – become real "development coordinators" that are firmly integrated into their local community.

TRAINING AND BUSINESS CREATION

PRACTICAL LESSONS

Raising awareness, planning, and supporting new business creation are key aims of most of the training courses conducted under the LEADER programme.

1) This generally involves establishing two types of training:

- > **“Standardised”** training courses, where recruitment is open to anyone interested. For example, the Galloway LEADER group (Scotland, United Kingdom) regularly organises 24-hour training courses, usually in six four-hour sessions, one day a week for six weeks, to encourage business creation among specific target groups: women (“Homebase”), farmers (“Farmbase”) and young people (“Jumpstart”).
- > **“Customised”** training courses to support the development of specific business creation projects. **For the most part, this is the approach on which we focus in this data sheet.** With this type of training, there is no “open” recruitment of trainees; instead, training participants are confined to those directly involved in the business creation project.

The following lessons, drawn from these multiple experiences, appear to apply to any type of situation.

2) The aim of both types of training is to **professionalise** the people concerned, by facilitating their acquisition of the supplementary skills they need to succeed.

Training is closely linked with the project’s **technical assistance process** and **accompanies the launch of the new business activity**. For example, the Mendikoi group (Basque Country, Spain) has adopted the following formula: four months of full-time preliminary training, followed by a two-year period during which the trainees, with management and supervision, complete their business plan, set up a company and carry out a production test (“joint management” of businesses).

In most cases, training courses ally theoretical training with practical training and **simulation exercises “in the field”**. For example, many business-creation training courses also teach basic market survey skills. Provided that the project is not too complex, as part of the practical exercises the trainee will be required to carry out his own market survey under the trainer’s supervision.

Part of the training takes place **in the workplace**, which allows trainees to handle a real-life situation, learn from the experience of others and benefit from the know-how of people working on the job.

In almost all cases, therefore:

- > The training is integrated into the developmental engineering, which calls for a precise correlation between training, coordination and technical assistance;
- > The training alternates between classroom teaching, field studies and practical exercises;
- > Immersion in the world of work and the trainee’s future environment.

3) In the case of **customised** training courses (second type of situation):

- > The training forms part of previously defined development projects that are supported by the LEADER group (development-led training).
- > The training involves, jointly or separately, all the people likely to be involved in the development project.
- > Collective training courses are for everybody involved in the project.
- > “Tailor-made” training, training courses for small groups, and “personalised” training make it possible to respond to individuals’ specific needs, based on their prior experience and their need for further training, to fulfil the role they are called upon to play in the project.
- > These courses include a series of training sequences modelled on the development process itself:
 - Initially, the training may be to provide information and raise the awareness of those likely to be involved in the development project. This is the stage of **initiating a development process**;
 - Next, the training may **explore in greater depth** the practicalities of project implementation;
 - The training may go on to clarify individual expectations, define team working procedures, and **collectively organise** the players involved in the project;
 - Finally, the training may allow trainees to acquire, or in most LEADER cases, to enhance, **technical skills** (updating skills, learning the additional expertise required to carry out a job);
 - The course includes complementary training that is essential to setting up and/or running a business, including core management, organisation and marketing skills, which nowadays are needed for most rural businesses.

4) A few examples

As part of a project to market quality meat, the Pays de Gâtine LEADER group (Poitou-Charentes, France) organises special training courses for livestock producers (defining specifications, quality production techniques, classifying farms, etc.), for slaughterhouse employees (compliance with certain slaughter techniques, health standards and so on), for retailers (cutting and pricing cuts of meat, regulations, public information, quality rules). A joint training course accompanies the establishment of a computerised secure tracing network^[1].

In the Val Bormida LEADER area (Piemonte, Italy), some 50 meetings were organised in local villages and 15 medicinal herb varieties were planted, in order to raise awareness about the cultivation of medicinal plants. The experience led 10 young farmers to cultivate several plots and later to create the “Agronatura” cooperative^[2].

In the Vinschgau/Val Venosta LEADER area (Trentino Alto-Adige, Italy), the “traditional Monastery bread” initiative was created following a training session for 14 of the valley’s bakers, who decided to embark on a collective approach, even though formerly they considered themselves as competitors^[3].

[1] See article by Jean-Luc Janot: “Les Gâtinautes”, LEADER Magazine no. 19, Winter 1998-99 (LEADER European Observatory).

[2] See the “Innovative Actions of Rural Development” directory (LEADER European Observatory).

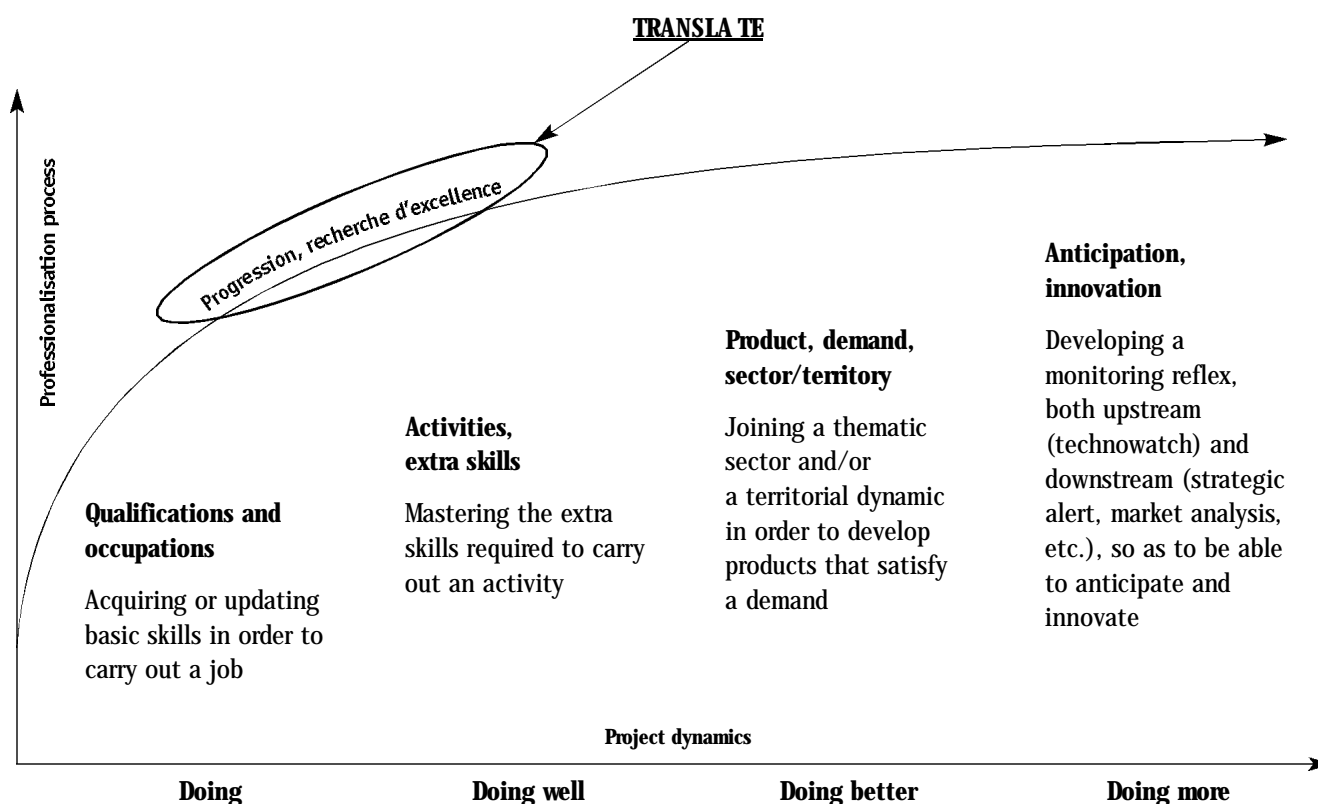
[3] See the “Innovative Actions of Rural Development” directory (LEADER European Observatory).

SUPPORTING PROFESSIONALISATION EFFORTS

A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH

Achieving a high level of professionalism is a prerequisite for successfully implementing any economic project.

The following diagram outlines the key elements of the professionalisation process:



qualifications, has not yet been acquired.

A common feature of any professionalisation process is that they all rely on three prior stages:

- > Establishment of a **job profile** (definition of the “occupation”, analysis of reference employment situations, description of tasks and activities);
- > Identification of the **required behaviour** (“to be”);
- > Definition of the knowledge to be acquired (“to know”) and of the skills to be implemented (“to have know-how”).

By measuring the gaps in such knowledge and skills, it is possible to define training needs, in a specific context and with specific players, by following the different stages of the professionalisation process. It is difficult (or even illusory) to seek to “do more” if the “doing”, i.e. the basic

The following table provides an example of a brief territorial evaluation, by category of player, principal needs and desirable developments for professionalising a branch of the tourism sector.

	Professionalisation process	Doing	Doing well	Doing better	Doing more
Type of provision	CONTENT → TARGET GROUPS ↓	Qualification (acquisition of skills and know-how, rejuvenation)	Diversification (ancillary knowledge required for the business: customer service, management, selling)	Integration Progressing from provision to production: (product assembly, territorial enrichment)	Adaptation Technowatch and forecasting, innovation
Catering for tourists	Tourist accommodation professions	✓ →	→ <i>This is what to aim for</i>		
	Catering professions	Rejuvenation ✓ →	→ <i>This is what to aim for</i>		
	Local tourism reception professions (regional tourist centres, tourist offices, etc.)	✓ →		→	→ <i>This is what to aim for</i>
Leisure	Sporting professions		✓ →	→ <i>This is what to aim for</i>	
	Cultural (and heritage) professions		✓		
	Leisure and relaxation professions	✓ →		→ <i>This is what to aim for</i>	
	Entertainment and event creation professions			✓	
Sales	Institutional operators				✓
	Registered travel agencies and associations				✓
	Individual salespersons and tour operators			✓	
Environment	Technical experts from public institutions	✓			
	Professional representatives				✓
	Officials from public administrations and training institutions	✓			

FORWARD PLANNING OF JOBS

FORECASTING EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS TRENDS

The term “forward planning of jobs” is used chiefly by business, in human resource departments. There is not much talk of this subject in rural areas. In most cases, it is a subject entrusted mainly to training systems, but it might be interesting to touch briefly upon it here, illustrated by the case of technical teams working for a local action group.

A distinction can be made between:

- > Jobs associated with an activity (e.g. coordination of an area), which calls for a whole set of skills and behaviour that evolve independently from employees;
- > Skill requirements, which are based on the strategy of the organisation providing these jobs (a local action group, for example) and allow the gap to be measured between the required level of skills and the current level of skills of the people actually occupying these jobs (development officers).

Training needs can also be measured by assessing a third factor, that of the post itself, i.e. the precise situation of the job within the organisation (“general coordinator, project coordinator/developer, etc.). The job definition describes the various tasks to be carried out, the responsibilities that the post involves and the role of the post within the internal organisational structure.

The aim is therefore to correlate expertise with an organisational structure that distributes and specifies the legitimacy of exercising this expertise^[1].

Skills management therefore involves:

- > Acting to develop individual skills (and exploiting the skills acquired);
- > Whilst at the same time acting on the work organisation that enables these individual skills to be exercised.

Expertise is therefore ultimately “accredited operational know-how”:

- > “Know-how”, i.e. the ability to implement a project;
- > “Operational”, i.e. practical implementation;
- > “Accredited”, i.e. recognized within the organisation of an enterprise or group (and remunerated accordingly).

The concept of expertise therefore encourages a strong dynamic for organisational change. It defines the human resource concept in very concrete terms.

Forward planning of jobs makes it possible to forecast trends in the number and content of jobs, based on the strategy and environment of the organisation in question (enterprise, association, local or regional authority, etc.).

It makes it possible to change people and the work organisation, thereby giving greater coherence and meaning to the concept of skills management.

To take the case of the employees of one LEADER LAG:

- > At present, at an individual level, does the current incumbent of the post of development officer need training to enable him to do his job more effectively?
- > Overall, at territorial level, do the people occupying the post of development officer (general, sectorial, etc.) fulfil the requirements of their job? Can collective needs for improving skills be identified?
- > In view of the nature of these coordinators (age, background, etc.) and their objective opportunities for development, what will become of them in terms of qualifications and opportunities in five years' time (medium term)?
- > Do the LAG strategy and the needs of the area make it possible to identify future jobs involving key skills (e.g. project developer in the agricultural and food sector)? If so, which skills?
- > What did the analysis reveal about the discrepancies between the development opportunities, five years hence, of current employees and the skill requirements of the LAG's territorial strategy?
- > Can the skill requirements, five years hence for example, be specified in terms of future jobs and posts involving specific skills that allow training objectives to be defined?
- > In particular, after training, would any current development officers be able to switch to future posts?
- > Will the current incumbents of development officer posts ultimately be the same people who will occupy future posts? Are they capable of occupying such posts? Do they wish to do so? Under what terms? At what cost, etc.? This poses the delicate issue of justifying the investment in an employee in view of that person's abilities.
- > If the current job incumbent is unable or unwilling to adapt, what decent alternative can he be offered, either inside or outside the LAG? To what extent might training mitigate the problem?
- > If it is necessary to recruit staff for these new jobs, on what basis should this be done? What supplementary training is required to enable new recruits to integrate more effectively into an existing team?

These questions, adapted to the case of territorial coordination, allow a basic training policy to be outlined and the training objectives to be classified into short-term (further training), medium-term (retraining, restructuring, promotion) and long-term objectives (new organisation, new tasks, etc.).

[1] See the organisational chart in the dossier “Organising local partnerships”, p.43 (LEADER European Observatory, 1997).

TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT

A NEW TRAINING APPROACH

The key aim of “training/development” is to reconcile two different rationales and conduct them in tandem:

- > Support for an individual, professional, sectorial, economic or operational project;
- > Support for a collective, multisectorial, cross-disciplinary, strategic territorial development project.

These two rationales, which are sometimes contrasted, are in fact related, because they:

- > Mutually affirm and stimulate one another;
- > Make it possible to meet short-term requirements, as well as to make longer-term forecasts;
- > Derive from the same management method.

Training/development aims to create a participatory dynamic to mobilise the support of local players.

Training/development supports a development process by accompanying that process and being integrated at every phase, in conjunction with coordination and technical support, in line with the following principles:

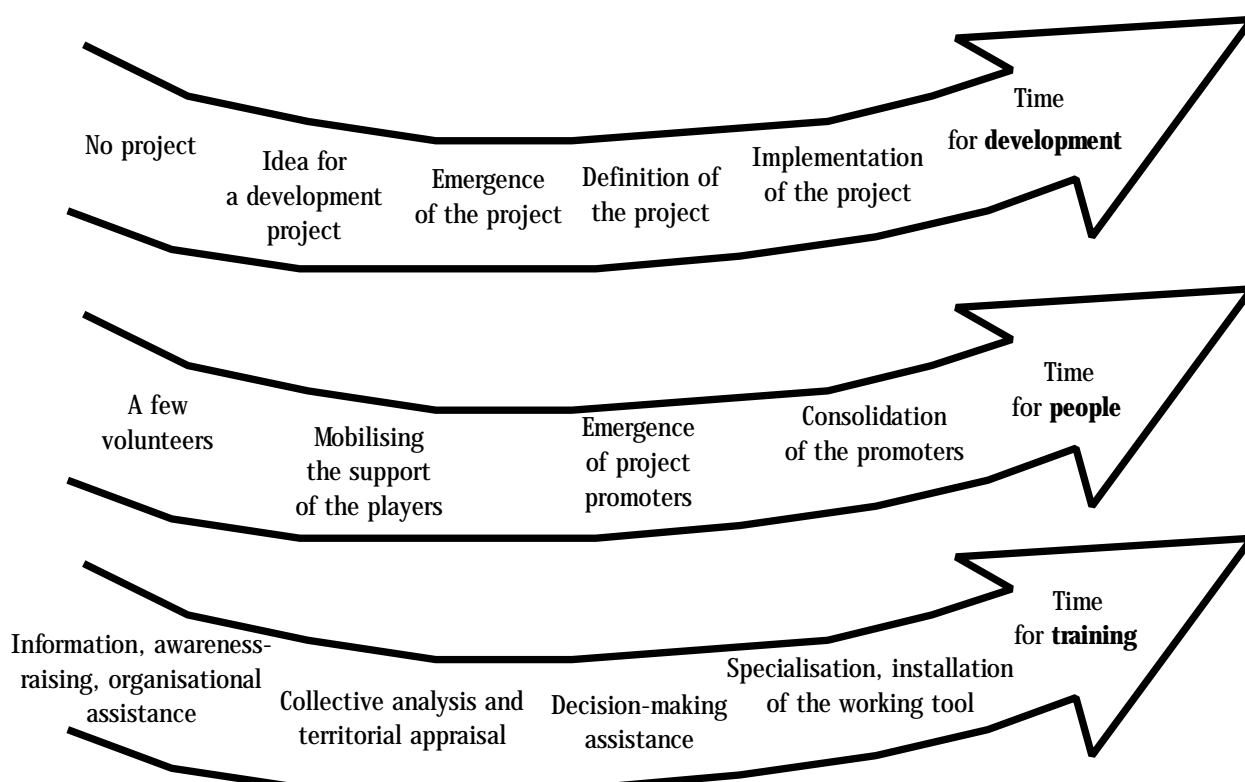
- > No substitution: training/development does not replace technical support or coordination; it is a tool that is used to boost the overall performance of the development process, in the field of acquiring knowledge, know-how and skills;
- > Flexibility: the curriculum and timetable are adapted to the local context and the advancement of the process,

not only in the design phase but also at the implementation stage. Clearly, therefore, it is not possible to transpose the method for developing “classical” training courses;

- > Organisation: training/development cannot work miracles and it is not all to do with training. The development of “accompanying” training courses therefore calls for a prior analysis of the process engaged upon, as well as its various stages and timetable. It also requires the support of a carefully selected steering committee that is able to grasp the issues at stake and make the required adjustments;
- > Professionalism: behind the general approach, setting up such training courses requires numerous highly advanced techniques (needs analysis, creation of training plans, choice of teaching methods, etc.);
- > Adaptability: establishment of a real-time response system that is tailor-made, flexible, rigorous (transparent), multiannual, assessable and partnership-based.

Training, coordination and technical support must not proceed either too quickly or too slowly, but must match:

- > the pace of project development;
- > the pace of people’s assimilation of change. The training plan is therefore tailored, in real time, to the progress of the project and of the project promoters, rather than the reverse, as the following diagram illustrates:



The actual procedures for implementing training courses must reflect the principles of flexibility, rigour (developing precise rules of the game) and transparency (establishment of a steering group that brings together, in the field, all the various skills required).

In view of the time needed to develop a project (usually between three and seven years), it seems logical not to “cut off the supplies” too early. Technical and financial support must be continuous, but reviewed regularly with a view to gradual financial autonomy.

Evaluation must be twofold. Not only must it identify what is actually produced in the training field (better qualifications, further diplomas, etc.), it must also measure the impact on development (transformation of the project, creation of synergies, etc.).

The active collaboration between a project leader and a training officer (whose role is to translate development-derived needs into a training programme) illustrates the type of partnership required between the people in charge of development (developers and fund providers) and those in charge of training (decision-makers, providers and paymasters).

This kind of partnership cannot be created just like that. It must be organised around two groups of people:

> A steering group whose tasks are to:

- Propose the training courses best suited to the local context;
- Link such training courses with the support mechanism (technical assistance, expertise, etc.);
- Coordinate project implementation as a whole around the project promoters and ensure that the project evolves in a positive environment.

In order to carry out these tasks effectively, the composition of the local steering group cannot be left to chance or convenience. It must include all those (and only those) who are required to assist in developing the project and indeed have the motivation to do so;

> A technical team, that provides a link between the development process and the training approach and continually verifies that each is appropriate. Comprised mainly of training officers (whose role is to translate development needs into a training response), the tasks of this unit or technical team are to:

- Provide the steering group with technical support;
- Monitor the implementation of training courses and help to evaluate them;
- Devise suitable training courses;
- Guide their implementation;
- Evaluate them.

DEFINING A TRAINING STRATEGY

A MAJOR ROLE FOR TRAINING

Defining a training strategy involves defining priority guidelines, organisational procedures, the rules of the game and principles and the stages that make it possible to achieve the aims and goals that have been set.

The LEADER Community Initiative is special in that it provides a link between three factors:

- > The aspirations, skills and know-how of the men and women in an area. LEADER is first and foremost an investment in the initiative of the community and in its ability to take responsibility for its own future.
- > The internal opportunities and constraints associated with the area's resources, geographical situation and history.
- > The external opportunities and constraints linked with the area's openness and the increasing need to be competitive.

By taking these three factors into account it is possible to define a development strategy and implement a **"territorial project"**.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND TRAINING STRATEGY

The crucial importance of human resources in local development inevitably means that training plays a major role that extends beyond the conventional response of retraining and improving technical qualifications. More than this, training enables a population and groups to appropriate a situation in all its various dimensions, enabling them to grasp the possibilities and opportunities it represents. The goal is to involve as many individuals as possible and to support change.

In addition to enhancing vocational skills, training therefore aims for the ideal of "regional citizenship".

SPECIFYING THE PRIORITY GUIDELINES

In order to developing a training strategy it is necessary to compare the territorial appraisal with an appraisal of an area's human resources. The aim is to ascertain how much untapped know-how there is in the area, as well as the community's real level of knowledge (accreditation of prior learning) and expertise, in order to compare this "prior learning" with the "prerequisites" required for the community to take an active part in development.

Whenever there are plans to involve the local population in a territorial initiative, first it is necessary to ascertain the local population's strengths, weaknesses and constraints. By comparing a perfectible local human reality with the know-how (as well as the social and personal skills) required for an area's development, it is possible to clarify needs and hence define the required training provision.

The *"Methodological guide for the analysis of local innovation requirements"* (LEADER European Observatory, 1996) is helpful in considering this issue. The "human resource" dimension is a major feature of each of the eight key points proposed in the guide, for which training is possible, but only after answering two questions:

- > How can training help to make positive use of the strengths and opportunities described in the territorial appraisal?
- > How can training minimise the area's weaknesses and protect it from the threats hanging over it?

In many instances, too, the training strategy will provide much more concrete support for the principal measures included in the LAG's "business plan". In this case, training is first and foremost a "support exercise".

SPECIFYING THE LEADER GROUP'S ROLE IN TRAINING

This raises the question: "What **added value** or specific contribution could the LEADER group bring to training?" Another question is: "What could the group do better than specialised organisations do and how should it position itself in relation to other organisations with more expertise and experience in the training field?"

Moreover, how this can be done is just as important as what one wants to do. Some more specific questions need to be asked:

- > Should priority be given to training for certain social groups (e.g. farmers' wives) or key sectors of activity (e.g. information technology)? Or should support instead be restricted to specific collective ventures for which a training need has been identified (the "training/development" approach so widespread in France)?
- > Should efforts be concentrated on **"acquiring expertise"** – for example by improving the local players' **general skills** so that they themselves can foster and stimulate local development? Or should the aim instead be to develop the specific skills needed by specific groups for specific operations?
- > Should a **"proactive"** approach to training be adopted – i.e. by taking the initiatives deemed necessary for eliminating certain development constraints? Or should a "reactive" approach be taken – i.e. by adopting proposals from local organisations, provided that certain criteria are respected?

These and many other questions are addressed within LEADER groups in the earliest stages and discussed with the other players and specialists involved. In order for the debate to focus on the area's interests, it must be based on the development philosophy and general development strategy and not merely be an "add-on" or "afterthought".

EVALUATING AND MOBILISING THE NECESSARY RESOURCES

The LEADER groups define the financial resources that they plan to allocate to training (in most cases these resources figure in the group's "business plan") and also any "external resources" that can be harnessed.

If external resources are used, it means raising the awareness of training-fund providers and training developers (training agencies and organisations), as well as involving them in the debate, before any decision can be taken.

These various structures often have to agree, in the interests of the area, to transcend their operating rules or their own interests in order to create a really close link between development and training and to play a proper support and assistance role.

Moreover, in the interests of coherence and economy of resources, this means that they must refrain from setting up training activities on their own scale, which fail to take account of what is happening in the area or to "add value" to the work of others.

DEVELOPING A TRAINING PLAN

Through the priorities, the training plan reflects the training strategy and its coherence with the development strategy.

These objectives and priorities, which are established by the LEADER groups, might include:

- > Help with the creation and expansion of small enterprises in certain sectors of the local economy;
- > "Acquisition of skills" and boosting the local dynamic;
- > Improving the levels of knowledge and skills of personnel and/or members of the LEADER group;
- > Improving the "training infrastructure" in certain major sectors where the infrastructure is deemed inadequate;
- > "Occupational reintegration" of certain excluded social categories such as the long-term unemployed.

The choice will essentially depend on the local context.

Action plans, which are more targeted than the strategy itself, will specify measurable indicative goals, such as the number of businesses affected, the number of people in a group who have followed a given type of training, etc.

DEFINING THE RULES OF THE GAME

The training plan defines the rules of the game and the principles governing how the various training measures should be set up, which brings us back to the earlier questions concerning the role and place that LEADER groups should assume. Should a group be proactive and/or reactive? Should it be responsible for the training itself or should it work alongside existing training organisations? Should it confine itself to "accompanying" the new enterprises or collective operations? In each case, **how** should it decide priorities and choose between the different demands?

ANALYSING TRAINING NEEDS

MULTIPLE POSSIBLE APPROACHES

Training provision in the context of a local LEADER programme relies on identifying and precisely analysing the area's different needs. However, even though considerable experience has been acquired in identifying the training needs of business firms, this is far less the case with geographical areas.

In a LEADER context, the goal is to identify the human resource constraints which:

- > Limit the area's development;
- > Can be overcome by means of training programmes.

To go a step further, it is important to identify the human resource constraints that hinder not only development "in general", but also the specific development strategy defined for the area under LEADER. Therefore, it is not possible to dissociate the identification and analysis of training needs from the more important issue of the development programme.

1) In the LEADER context we examine **five possible approaches** for analysing training needs:

> **Focusing on the area** . The identification of training needs forms part of the initial appraisal of the area. In most cases, this appraisal will identify specific problems that require specific training programmes.

This might include the existence of a particularly under-exploited local resource, for example. Or even the recent or imminent lay-off of a large number of employees, whose current skills make them highly unlikely to find other jobs. The appraisal will also have made it possible to collect basic information about the area and its human resources, such as:

- The unemployment rate – not only the overall figure, but also the breakdown by sex and age group, as well as changes over time, in order to reveal a trend;
- Any sign of "under-employment" – usually expressed as low incomes and job insecurity;
- The number of women in employment, i.e. the proportion of working-age women who have or are actively looking for a job;
- The "occupational structure" – i.e. an indication of the type of jobs working people are doing;
- The "economic structure" of the area, indicating past trends and future prospects;
- The population's level of initial training.

> **Focusing on the sector** . In this case, the objective concerns a specific economic sector that is experiencing difficulties or which, on the contrary, presents as yet unexploited growth potential. This means comparing current skills with the skills that might be required in the future.

> **Focusing on the target group** . This approach consists of analysing training needs "on a group by group basis", in the context of a previous development programme for the area. Such target groups may include, for example:

- **Development officers**, i.e. people employed by, or associated with, the development agency;
- **Groups of excluded people**, such as the long-term unemployed or women with young children, as well as **vulnerable groups**, such as employees of businesses that are experiencing difficulties and/or rapid technological change;
- **Potential entrepreneurs**, in cases where reluctance to take the risk of setting up a new business is clearly holding back development.

> **Focusing on a business firm or organisation** . In this context, the aim is to study the likely development of an enterprise and to assess:

- In light of the situation, what skills and knowledge the enterprise needs;
- In what way the necessary skills diverge from the current skills of the workforce.

This "skills gap" may involve not only individual skills, but also the methods of organisation within the company (which may or may not allow skills to be exercised). In such circumstances, the development of a training strategy will include effecting the necessary changes in the company's organisational and operational procedures.

> **Focusing on a specific project** . In this case, attention is focused entirely on, for example, all the expertise needed to devise and successfully carry out this project; the training may be aimed at all those who, in some capacity or another, will be helping to implement the project.

A combination of two or more of the above approaches is probably beneficial in the LEADER context. For example, a "territorial approach" during the initial stage and a "mission or project approach" once specific projects have been targeted for receiving support.

2) Based on one or more of these possible approaches, and according to the specific rationale of LEADER groups, it is useful to ask the following three questions:

- > **Question 1** – What skills and know-how will be useful for implementing the LEADER programme as a whole in this area? Strategic forecasting, project audit, evaluation, networking, financial management, working in partnership, etc.?
- > **Question 2** – Who needs these skills and to what extent do the people concerned already possess such skills (members of the LAG's board of directors, LEADER managers and field staff, partners in various collective operations, consultants, project promoters etc.)?
- > **Question 3** – What training is needed in order to bridge the gap between the demand and supply of specific skills?

In order to provide a precise operational response it is necessary to work in association with training specialists, training applicants (customers) and the individuals who are to receive training, in order to progress from needs to objectives and from objectives to training programmes.

Everyone involved will have a useful opinion about the specific training. Finding out each party's views and presenting them to the other party for comments is generally preferable to placing absolute trust in one party or another.

Moreover:

- > In order to decide the objectives, it is important to find a balance between satisfying identified needs and spending the available resources sensibly;
- > It should be determined whether the objectives really correspond to the strategy followed by the LEADER programme as a whole in the area;
- > As far as possible, the objectives should be "for a limited period" (for example, "for a period of two years") and should be measurable.

3) Advance planning, irrespective of the methods used, has a role to play because, in most cases, it is necessary to anticipate in order to position the area and its inhabitants in relation to the future issues at stake. There is no doubt that the true potential of innovation lies therein. **Innovating does not mean doing more than one is already doing but doing it differently or doing some thing else.**

How is it possible to progress from the strategy stage to actually launching specific training programmes or initiatives?

The organisation to be set up should be aimed just as much at the strategic level of the LEADER group's training policy as at each specific project. However, the principles to be respected are the same:

- > To ensure that each specific project is fully integrated into the LEADER group's development strategy;
- > To emphasise training quality, because nothing is more demotivating for participants than to be obliged to follow poor-quality training courses;
- > To involve the target group, the future beneficiaries, in organising the training, not only because they will have some good ideas, but also because participation induces a sense of cohesion and increases motivation;
- > To turn "partnership" into a central element of the organisational process, both because the organisation and development of a training course are almost always the product of a team effort and because the fact of bringing the players together to organise a training course is a "development exercise" in its own right.

It is also important to answer a number of questions:

- > What can LEADER contribute to the training programmes that already exist in the area?
- > Conversely, what can such training programmes contribute to LEADER?
- > What sources of financing could be used to supplement the LEADER budget?
- > What should be the cost/effectiveness ratio of training programme activities? What should be the balance between "means" and "results"? To what extent do these results match the objectives?
- > Which of the proposed programmes takes priority?

Having answered the above questions, there are a number of important organisational elements relating to the steering group, the trainers, follow-up and training.

STEERING GROUP

This may include, for example:

- > One member of the LAG, preferably one who is very interested in the activity in question;
- > One representative from the selected training organisation or agency;
- > One representative from the fund providers;
- > One representative from the target group;
- > One representative from the associations or agencies involved in the project, etc.

At its first meeting, the steering group should clarify its role and operational procedures (number of meetings, specific role of each member of the group). Subsequently, the steering group will very often be responsible for:

- > Defining the objectives;
- > Approving the training content, i.e. the skills, knowledge and attitudes which the participants will need to acquire, plus the teaching methods;
- > Examining the training budget;
- > Selecting the most appropriate trainer(s);
- > If necessary, defining the methods for publicising the training, producing the necessary promotional material and conducting a marketing operation;
- > Defining the criteria for selecting participants (note that in many cases, there is no selection of participants. The training is organised for a group of people involved in a development project, who need to boost their skills in order to succeed).

TRAINERS

In this case, **diversity** and competition are essential. This means making a deliberate choice from among several trainers and training partners and several different training approaches for several types of training applicant from various backgrounds.

It may be useful for the LEADER group to create a database of trainers working in the area or outside the area, who have proven skills in a given training field. However, a choice must be made between:

- > **Local** trainers, who are easier to get involved and, more important, have a good knowledge of the area and its specific concerns;
- > Trainers operating at regional or national level with skills and specialised experience in the subject in question. The important thing here is to choose carefully, which may necessitate a formal call for tenders.

ORGANISATION OF TRAINING

Practical training arrangements (number of days, duration, frequency, timetable, cost, etc.) can influence the enrolment of participants as well as the quality of their learning. For example, if the training is held in a place too far away, many people will not be able to attend regularly. Training days held in the "main town" of the area, combined with decentralised working groups and distance instruction may be preferable.

FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION

Training follow-up and quality control are important for the LEADER group's credibility, as well as being in the interests of participants, both at strategic level (involvement in the LEADER strategy) and at the level of each specific project.

"Follow-up", i.e. assessing the progress of the training programme whilst it is under way, should not be confused with *"ex-post evaluation"*, i.e. assessing the programme's effectiveness after it is finished.

Follow-up and evaluation require the following decisions to be adopted at the outset:

- > **What** should be measured? For example the trainer's performance, the way in which the partnership progresses, the number of individuals receiving training, the emergence of new training needs, results in terms of jobs, income, market share, etc.;
- > **How and when** should these factors be measured? Simple procedures will be needed in order to register and analyse useful information, in order to submit periodic reports to the steering group, and, as appropriate, to the LAG, on the progress of the group's training activities.

CURRICULUM AND TRAINING APPROACH

PRACTICALITIES

This data sheet proposes a list of questions and some pointers that may prove useful at the training organisation stage.

1) Familiarisation with the type of trainees, their expectations, what is expected of them, etc.

Who are the trainees? What are their experiences, expectations, availability, etc. (i.e. understanding the “customers” and “where they come from”)?

Should the emphasis be placed on knowledge, expertise or behaviour (i.e. general training approach)?

What do the trainees need to know or what must they be capable of doing (i.e. objectives of the training exercise)?

What expertise do they have at present (i.e. initial skills and knowledge)?

Consequently, what must they learn (i.e. training content, curriculum)?

What resources are available, particularly in terms of funding, staff time and other types of aid (i.e. human and financial resources)?

What constraints are linked with the organisation of the training, including time availability?

Taking all of the above factors into account, what is the best means for teaching the trainees (i.e. methods and teaching approach)?

What are they being offered (i.e. training scenario and content)?

What will the training phases be?

How will the quality of training be ensured throughout the course?

How will progress and success be measured (i.e. control and evaluation techniques)?

What will the formal deliverables be (i.e. certificate, diploma, etc.)?

Careful consideration of the above questions will provide a provisional response to concerns such as:

- > Must the training be customised for a specific project and group of customers, or must the participants be encouraged to take advantage of pre-existing “off-the-peg” training courses?
- > Will it be necessary to work individually with each trainee or will group training suffice?
- > Can the training be repeated or will it be a one-off exercise?
- > Can the training be provided in a central place or will it be necessary to organise certain meetings in different places?

2) Making training attractive

Trainers adopt many different types of teaching method, e.g.:

- > Using appropriate language, i.e. avoiding training jargon in advertising and documentation;
- > Targeting people from different backgrounds, who are starting from different levels;
- > Taking into account participants' demands, e.g. in terms of timetables or childcare problems;
- > Heeding the wishes and expectations of the participants; taking their personal needs into account as far as possible;
- > Using methods likely to motivate participants and get them involved right from the outset;
- > Creating a wide variety of teaching and learning methods;
- > Focusing on “helping participants to learn” rather than merely “teaching”;
- > “Teaching learning skills”;
- > Hiring the best trainers – a high-quality training course increases motivation.

3) Choosing the training approach

Trainers have a variety of instruments at their disposal and it is highly unlikely that a training course that involves only classroom teaching would be the most effective teaching approach.

An experienced professional trainer will be able to help explore the various approaches. A training course might include, for example:

- > *Conventional classes*, where a number of people come together in the same place and work on the basis of a pre-defined timetable and syllabus;
- > *Distance learning*, where the trainees mostly remain either at their workplace or at a local study centre and correspond with a tutor;
- > *Personalised training*, often at the trainee's workplace;
- > *On-the-job training*, to help trainees in their real working situation;
- > *Practical training courses*. For such courses, trainees must usually carry out a relatively major assignment, either individually or in small groups, over a period of a few weeks or months. The trainer's role is to help trainees to define their project, guide them and help them as the course progresses. Periodic “workshops”, during which the trainees must report on their progress, are often useful;

- > *Group work*. Here the emphasis is placed on the mutual exploration of problems and possible solutions to them
 - the trainees learn not only **in** a group but also **from** the group;
- > *Exchanges of experience* with people already working in the job in question. This may involve relatively long journeys, sometimes abroad.

The above methods overlap and can be combined.

4) Associating theory with practice

Finally, most trainees will be “hands-on” people who have little time for conventional study or abstract theories. They will want to “forge ahead” and achieve useful results right from the start. In this respect, the advantage of practical training courses, team working and on-the-job training is evident.

EVALUATING THE TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

Evaluation means measuring the elements that have withstood the test of time. This means waiting for the training measure to have its impact before assessing its effectiveness (relationship between objectives and results) and its efficiency (relationship between means, results and effects).

The gaps that exist between what was initially planned and what was actually achieved may be due not only to the way the operations were organised, but in many cases also to a certain lack of coherence (did the training initiatives fully adhere to the guidelines?) and lack of relevance (did the training objectives and initiatives match the aims and purposes pursued?).

All of these measures need to be accurately gauged in the initial stages. Also, not only quantitative, but also, and even more important, qualitative indicators need to be created in order to measure the intangible and long-term effects (changes in attitude and behaviour). However, everybody knows that such a “zero state” is not common and, anyway, the most interesting results are rarely the easiest to measure. It is also important to evaluate the individual training courses or initiatives supported by the LEADER group **in parallel with** the LEADER training programme for the area as a whole, which involves asking questions like: “*What effect has the programme had on the development of the LEADER area?*”

1) It is a good idea to ask the following **four key questions** before starting the evaluation.

WHAT SHOULD BE EVALUATED?

Two factors must be evaluated: the **organisation of the training** and the **impact of the training**.

- > In order to evaluate the **organisation of the training** (i.e. the “process” and not the “product”), it is necessary to consider the match between the course content, the teaching and learning methods used, the quality of the work achieved by the trainees, the methods used by the trainer to monitor and evaluate progress and performance, etc. The LEADER group would also wish to know whether it had chosen good training partners, whether it had made the best use of local or other financial resources, whether it had established the right objectives for the programme and whether it had given the right directions to the trainer or training partners, etc.
- > Three “targets” need to be considered when assessing the nature and extent of the **impact of the training** :
 - The trainees and the groups to which they belong;
 - The trainees’ projects, enterprises or communities;
 - The development of the LEADER area as a whole.

WHEN SHOULD THE EVALUATION TAKE PLACE?

In many cases, the **trainer** will deem it useful to measure progress more or less continuously – taking into account the reactions of the trainees in order to determine the pace of teaching.

However, for the overall evaluation (which is **not** the trainer’s responsibility), it is useful to measure progress at each of the three following stages:

- > Mid-way through a training course or programme, in order to decide whether changes of direction or approach are required;
- > At the end of the training course or programme, in order to draw immediate conclusions;
- > A short time later (e.g. one year on), in order to evaluate effects that take time to materialise.

This third point, which is all too often overlooked, is important and LEADER groups would do well to take it into consideration.

WHO SHOULD CARRY OUT THE EVALUATION?

As has already been suggested, trainers must themselves carry out continuous assessment, in order to ensure that the training does not veer from its objectives and that it is as effective as possible.

However, mid-term and *a posteriori* evaluations call for greater detachment and hence for recourse to competent outside personnel.

HOW SHOULD THE EVALUATION BE CARRIED OUT?

The evaluation consists essentially of measuring the gap between the situation before and after the training. It is also a matter of endeavouring to establish a link between the changes. Evaluation includes three separate but complementary operations:

- > To measure the gap between planned outcomes and actual outcomes;
- > To measure the impact of these outcomes on the target groups that should benefit;
- > To measure the following types of effect:
 - Direct effects, i.e. those that were expected from the training initiative, immediately or at a later stage (have the objectives been achieved or not?),
 - Indirect effects, i.e. those that are outside the scope of the training initiative, whether they were foreseen effects (such as strengthening the area, as well as territorial cooperation and the territorial identity, changes in behaviour, etc.) or unforeseen effects;

- “Transversal” effects, i.e. effects brought about by all or part of an operation, of which training was only one aspect. This might include: the creation of synergies, such as strengthening or creating partnerships; multiplier effects, such as cooperation and a taste for learning; changes in the practices of trainers and greater professionalism on their part (“training for trainers”).

3) Evaluation as a tool for improving quality – the case of ADEPFO (France)

The *Association de Développement des Pyrénées par la Formation* (ADEPFO) is a French training/development association created and financed jointly by the French government, the European Union and three regions of South Western France. Its missions are similar to those of ADEFPAT (see data sheet E5).

Since its inception (1981), ADEPFO has attached great importance to evaluation as a tool for improving the quality of the training courses it supports. By this token, it requests that two types of questionnaire be completed, one at the end of each training course followed by an economic evaluation questionnaire some time after the training has finished:

> At the end of the training

- Trainees must assess how important they consider the training that they have received and explain what benefit they have derived from it.
- The trainer or training agency must assess the aim, successes and difficulties of the training exercise and answer specific questions about its organisation.

In both cases, great importance is accorded to the evaluation of the role of the steering group and to the coherence between the trainees’ development project and the training content.

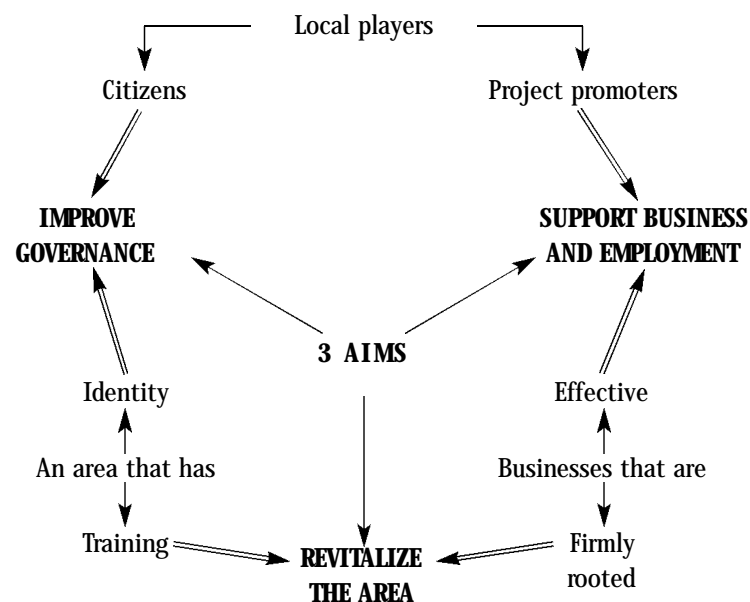
> An economic evaluation carried out a few months after the training has finished, both by the project promoter and by the organisations involved, makes it possible to analyse the impact of the training on the development project.

- The “project promoter” economic questionnaire focuses on the initial situation and on the professional sector of the project promoter, as well as on:
 - Whether or not the project has been realised and what results it has achieved (job creation, job consolidation, business creation, local dynamics);
 - The role of training and especially of the technical support deriving from such training.
- The economic questionnaire for the steering group members:
 - Repeats the questions about job creation, business creation and local dynamics;
 - Broaches the issue of possible failure and the reasons for that failure;
 - Makes a point of asking whether or not technical support was provided.

Taken as a whole, this information allows an appraisal to be made of the impact of training on the trainees, or the project or enterprise to which they belong, and, if possible, of the broader impact which the training has had on the local economy of Pyrenean areas.

The four questionnaires are presented in data sheet E8.

“INNOVATING THROUGH TRAINING, INNOVATING IN TRAINING” A FEW CASE STUDIES



AIM ONE: REVITALISE THE AREA

- > Village “developers” (Finland)
- > Strengthening participatory democracy through “study circles” (Sweden)

AIM TWO: SUPPORT BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

- > Development of a new local product: fruit and berry wine (Finland)
- > Training/development: the case of ADEFPAT (Midi-Pyrénées, France)
- > Development of a multiannual training plan for tourism (Franche-Comté, France)

AIM THREE: IMPROVE GOVERNANCE

- > Training development officers (Wallonia, Belgium)
- > Master's degree in rural development (Ireland)
- > Distance training (Scotland, United Kingdom)

HARNESSING AND ENHANCING THE SKILLS OF THE POPULATION**TRAINING FOR VILLAGE “DEVELOPERS” (NORTHERN SATAKUNTA, FINLAND)**

The idea behind this training programme, launched in October 1996, was to train “grass-roots activists”, or “developers”, with the necessary knowledge and skills to become effective agents of change at village level.

The Turku university centre for evening classes devised a training programme on request, in collaboration with the Satakunta regional council and the “village ombudsman”, who is responsible for the development of all of the villages in the province.

1. METHODS AND CONTENTS

Thirty people, all from Satakunta, participated in the training in 1996/97. Half were from the North Satakunta LEADER area, with the LAG having been actively involved in recruiting and supporting them.

Teaching methods varied: study visits, work in small groups, implementation of a real project, “on-the-job training”, etc. Participants were encouraged to work on real cases. As part of the course, groups of two to four trainees devised village or business development plans, for example. At the same time, a “network of village developers” was set up, as a result of the links forged between decision-makers, experts and “prime movers” in the village.

The university dean, the village ombudsman and other trainers recruited for specific tasks ran the course jointly. The seven-month training programme included intensive meetings lasting two days each month, with the trainees required to work independently during the intervening period.

2. RESULTS

An evaluation revealed that, by the end of the training course, the participants had acquired a much broader outlook on local development. So much so that in the summer of 1997, each participant launched a local project, nine of which were in the LEADER area. Furthermore, partnerships were set up between numerous development players. The training also demonstrated that village associations could promote entrepreneurship and economic initiatives, rather than only social events.

STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY BY MEANS OF “STUDY CIRCLES” (MITT-I-LANDET LEADER AREA , SWEDEN)

This hands-on training measure was aimed at encouraging the inhabitants of a valley to take measures for resolving their problems themselves.

1. INITIAL CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The Svågadalen valley (district of Hudiksvall) includes six villages with a total population of around 700. This area suffers from serious unemployment and heavy depopulation.

First it was necessary to give these villages renewed confidence and to promote a spirit of involvement and cooperation. The aim of the programme was therefore twofold: to develop both participatory democracy and the local economy.

A “bottom-up” strategy was adopted. The aim was to prepare development plans for each village, which would then be proposed to the Svågadalen district council which was responsible for setting up a development programme for the entire valley.

2. METHODS AND CONTENTS

The training programme included three stages:

- > First of all, “study circles”, a very widespread continuing training formula in Sweden, were set up in each village. The participants in these “circles” were given induction training in how to conduct opinion polls in their community, in order to ascertain the needs of residents, their resources and their ideas about development;
- > Based on these polls, the study circles examined a number of potential projects and the participants presented their proposed plans at a public meeting;
- > A plan was then defined and submitted to the municipal council.

The LEADER group was instrumental in facilitating initial contacts between the local communities and external organisations. It also helped to finance certain projects.

3. RESULTS

The training was therefore a sort of “by-product” of the consultation and programme-definition exercise, but the objective of “acquiring skills” or improving human resources was always considered just as important as the tangible outcome of the exercise, i.e. the development programme itself.

For example, in one of the villages, an opinion poll revealed that the population had been upset at the closure of a little library. At the initiative of the LEADER group, a meeting was organised. Twenty people agreed to run the library on a voluntary basis and the library has now been set up in the village school. It is free of charge and has been endowed with a trust fund for the regular purchase of new books. This initiative is an example of both training and local dynamics.

TRAINING DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE FONDATION RURALE DE WALLONIE (BELGIUM)

As the main provider of technical assistance for rural development in French-speaking Belgium, the rural foundation of Wallonia, *Fondation Rurale de Wallonie*, provides initial and further training for development officers and development players using a variety of means.

1. INITIAL CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

Since 1978, the *Fondation Rurale de Wallonie* (FRW) has been providing technical assistance for local development to any rural district in Wallonia that requests its services.

Provided that they are engaged in a participatory process and are in the process of developing a rural development programme, FRW provides districts with extra funding to facilitate implementation of the planned projects. In some cases, development officer/coordinators may be put at the disposal of the districts concerned.

The development officers are “hands-on” men and women who must be able to listen, encourage and realise local initiatives for any place or group of people they encounter. They are also trainers.

The FRW's teams of development officers include people with diverse but complementary experience and training, meaning that they each have access to skills to match a variety of circumstances and issues.

Since in Belgium there is no school to provide training for this new occupation and no development officer diploma exists, training courses in this field are clearly needed. The development officers apply for initial and continuing training courses, enabling them to successfully complete the variety of tasks, which they are called upon to do, whilst at the same time being capable of tackling new issues. This is why, right from the outset, the FRW took charge of organising training courses for its officers. This includes a series of training days, supplemented by a personal assignment, because development officers must take individual responsibility and see to their own needs: internal FRW training days, external training days, information and documentation searches, meetings, discussions, etc. It is up to each development officer to define which elements are of interest to him, or which he needs, and to take deliberate steps to procure them.

In terms of objectives, the FRW's training courses for development officers seek to further their understanding of rural development issues and to provide the methods and techniques to improve human relations (communication, coordination, negotiation, etc.).

Through its training courses, the FRW aims to produce teams of effective, competent and versatile development officers.

As a complement and extension of the coordinators' activities, the FRW also provides training for local players, to enable them to take an active part in the development of their district and region. These highly disparate players include elected representatives, ordinary citizens and socio-economic players of every hue and level, who all have something in common: their desire to take an active part in local development.

2. METHODS AND CONTENTS

Targeting training measures

Training for development officers is dispensed in two modules:

- > “New officers” module;
- > “Experienced development officers” module.
 - The “new officers” module is comprised of the basic training essential for the work of a development officer: knowledge of the political context of Belgium, Wallonia and Europe, knowledge of rural development legislation, etc. Added to this is in-service training in the field, allowing young officers to acquire knowledge about working “in a real-life situation”- both within the team and through practical experience.
 - The “experienced development officers” module is comprised of full days or half days of training to enable the participants to acquire or to perfect certain techniques essential to their job (conducting meetings, mediation, communication, etc.), as well as knowledge about certain fundamental issues (planning and development, local economics, seeking funding, etc.).

The training for “local players” takes the form of full-day, half-day or evening classes. This training is dispensed by experts from inside or outside the FRW, and includes discussions and sometimes field visits. It is aimed at “local rural development committees”, working groups or the entire population of one, several or all of Wallonia's rural districts.

Specifying needs

Each year a programme is drawn up in line with the needs identified by the development officers during their everyday activities and in line with developments in the problems they encounter. This training is offered to all development officers, but not all team members participate in every course. In general, a maximum of three development officers from a single team participate in the same training course.

Certain training courses are deemed vital for all development officers (public speaking, heading a meeting, etc.) and are held frequently to give everybody the chance to participate.

Training courses for local players are offered in line with the needs identified by the development officers during their meetings and talks with the community and with locally elected representatives in the districts concerned.

An “on-the-job” training approach

Training for new development officers starts with the external provision of information, data, concepts, etc., punctuated by question/answer sessions. Subsequently, a large part of the training is given “on the job”, within the team to which the officer is assigned. It is by accompanying experienced development officers, by participating while they prepare meetings and talks with local players, by gathering information and by discussions with colleagues, that new development officers gradually learn all they need to know in order to do an effective job.

Part of the training for experienced development officers is dispensed by external experts or by trainers internal to the institution who are specialised in the subject. The training generally takes the form of full days, alternating theory with discussions in which the officers are actively involved. The participants are usually provided with a curriculum and asked to pass on what they have learned to their colleagues, to ensure that the team, like the individual, quickly extracts as much of the content of these training courses as possible and applies it in its day-to-day activities.

The FRW's training courses are not confined to theory sessions. They also give pride of place to field visits, to illustrate or compare “theory” with day-to-day realities, as well as to training in the form of symposiums, in which development officers can compare their methodology in a bid to assess and improve their work. All development officers notify their successes and failures to the other participants. As time goes by, original “in-house” methods are developed for consulting with communities and designing development programmes.

3. EVALUATION

Each training module is evaluated on the spot, in the form of a questionnaire for completion by the trainees at the end of the training session. Each participant is also asked to assess the training later, at the end of the semester and of the year. These evaluations, which are made either on an individual or a team basis, are intended to identify what each training module has contributed in concrete terms to improving the development officers' day-to-day activities.

The local players, for their part, are asked to evaluate the organisation of the training and the content of the training course in which they have participated, by means of a questionnaire distributed at the end of the training session.

MASTER'S DEGREE IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

A TRAINING PROGRAMME OFFERED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY (IRELAND)

The University of Galway, in a very rural area of western Ireland, has for several years offered an advanced training programme in "rural development". This is aimed at local authority coordinators, local leaders and development officers. Training applicants must have a minimum of three years' experience in a development-related field.

The courses take place from Fridays (2 pm) to Saturdays (1 pm) throughout the academic year (a total of 30 weeks). In addition, the students must study independently for an average of 20 hours per week. The training course lasts for one year (for the Diploma) or two years (for the Master's).

1. INITIAL CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Master's degree is to train people in general and specific aspects of local development. This includes facilitating coordination and participation in "bottom-up" initiatives, whilst at the same time mastering the application of "top-down" policies. The objective is therefore to ensure that "top-down" and "bottom-up" development approaches complement and mutually reinforce one another, in order to capitalise on the economic, social, cultural and other features of rural communities.

2. METHODS AND CONTENTS

Year one is devoted mainly to the study of the theory and practice of rural development, as well as to useful analysis techniques for local development players (developing surveys, analysing decision-making, drafting reports, putting together proposals, etc.).

Year two includes a number of modules, i.e.:

- > Business management and development;
- > Public administration and development;
- > Town and country planning and development;
- > Legal aspects of development;
- > Local development;
- > Cooperatives and development;
- > The social services in rural development;
- > Rural resources and development.

Furthermore, students must prepare a dissertation on one aspect of their development work and maintain close contacts with a local development group or association throughout their training.

3. RESULTS

Close collaboration has been established with the Irish LEADER groups that support and benefit from this and other similar training courses offered by the University of Galway. For example, the Offaly LEADER group has set up a "resource centre" on its own premises for the benefit of those following these courses. It has also encouraged local leaders to become part-time "tutors" or to contribute to the training in some other way. The trainees who carry out their project in the area benefit from this and in exchange help to draft the LEADER group's newsletter. The LEADER group has also funded the participation of a number of local players in courses on rural/local development in Galway, in order to raise the general standard of development skills in the area.

TRAINING IN AID OF NEW LOCAL PRODUCTS

THE CASE OF FRUIT AND BERRY WINES IN THE NORTH-EAST SAVO LEADER AREA (FINLAND)

In 1993, the College of Agriculture and Horticulture of Muurevesi, in central Finland, launched a training programme for small-scale producers of fruit and berry wine. The aim of the course was to encourage the emergence of an entirely new business in Finland. In fact the organisers had thought ahead to a change in legislation, authorising wine production on farms.

1. INITIAL CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The project was based on a number of factors:

- > Finland's latitude and its long, sunny summer days are conducive to the growth of quality fruit and berries;
- > In the early 1990s, several local and regional development projects were launched in Finland. The objective was to create new businesses for exploiting a number of the country's resources;
- > The College at Muurevesi had for many years offered courses in domestic wine production, which made it possible to gauge the potential of commercial farm production;
- > The College principal had familiarised himself with wine production during his trips to western Europe. He was convinced that it was possible to develop this type of production on Finland's farms;
- > The College had experience in this field, as well as various international contacts that would provide it with supplementary expertise.

2. METHODS AND CONTENTS

The training combines theoretical courses with practical work at the College, projects carried out on the participants' own farm, practical training placements abroad, as well as participation in European trade fairs.

The one-year basic training programme lasts for 700 hours, with 40 days spent at the College or on training placements in other farms, at fairs, etc. The College also offers supplementary training in the form of weekend courses, as well as a consultation service for wine producers and partner firms. The training takes place outside of the summer harvesting period to enable participants to continue working full time.

The trainees do not have to pay high enrolment fees, but are required to pay their own accommodation and travel costs. The majority of the financing comes from the County of Kuopio and from Finland's Ministry of Education.

The training has provided participants with general knowledge about the processes for farm production of fruit and berry wines. It has also made it possible to turn this activity into a flourishing trade. The first group to receive training included farmers who were already growing fruit and berries, as well as some new farmers.

3. RESULTS

Direct results

In early 1998, 33 fruit and berry wine-producers obtained a license to produce and sell their wines. A total of 38 employees working on these farms were trained at the College of Muurevesi. In the College itself, seven people are employed to teach or supervise training activities for the production of fruit and berry wines. The nearby research and development centre employs a further three (*see below*).

Indirect results

- > *Further training initiatives* ensued. A vocational training course on wine production was launched in Muurevesi in 1997. Special courses are organised at the request of berry wine producers or other professionals; links have been forged with three upper secondary vocational schools in northern Finland (at Ilomantsi, Kuusamo, and in western Lapland) for teaching certain training courses in situ.
- > The "*Finnish Research and Information Centre on Fruit Wines*" was created within the College in 1995. Today it employs three people in a purpose-built laboratory. Its current work includes research into special berry varieties and a project to develop products with low alcohol content.
- > A *network of Finnish and foreign experts* has gradually been set up. It includes training institutes, wine producers' cooperatives, importers of wine-producing equipment and others.
- > Wine production has also boosted *rural tourism* in the Savo region.

Future plans

- > There are plans to "export" certain training modules to other parts of Europe through transnational partnerships: training on fruit and berry wines for catering staff; training for advisers to new businesses.
- > With regard to product research and development, plans are afoot to conduct complementary work on fermentation processes and on the vinification potential of various types of berry; consideration is also being given to hiring out equipment to entrepreneurs to enable them to develop their own products.
- > There are also hopes of setting up transnational cooperation with other European colleges and with foreign companies producing wines and fruit.

4. CONCLUSION

- > The training has played a key role in the emergence of a new business activity based on hitherto little exploited local resources. This initiative has also led to other projects and lucrative activities. There has been a high level of collaboration between the College, local authorities, farmers and other entrepreneurs, which were very quick to realise that certain know-how needed to be imported from abroad.
- > This training was devised before LEADER programme II was launched in the area. Today the LEADER programme provides supplementary support for new wine producers and encourages the development of other activities, especially in the tourism sector.

According to the *Development association par la Formation des Pays de l'Aveyron and Tarn* [association for training-based development in the counties of Aveyron and Tarn], "the objective of 'training/development' is to provide the rural population with the skills, tools and working methods they need to devise and implement their own projects. In this way they will become responsible players in their area".

1. INITIAL CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

In France, the concept of training/development associations came about as a result of two findings:

- > Firstly, support for employment and business creation in problem rural areas fell through the net of conventional technical support and training procedures, which were often unsuited to their particular problems;
- > Secondly, the veritable obstacle course imposed by a sectorial, compartmentalised, "top-down" form of technical and administrative management meant that local dynamism, which, since the 1970s, had been embodied by development associations, was having a hard time getting through.

These findings, shared by all local development "activists" led the latter, when they reached positions of responsibility, to design and implement a partnership-based system for responding to demand, as part of a wider training approach. The idea was not only to provide the qualifications needed to carry out projects, but also to help to identify and galvanise project promoters, support the technical and economic validation of their projects, and monitor and encourage project development.

ADEFPAT (*Development association par la Formation des Pays de l'Aveyron et du Tarn*, two départements of south-western France) was created in 1992 as part of pilot programmes to support local and regional development, which at the time were being instigated by the European Social Fund.

2. METHODS AND CONTENTS

Explicit rules of the game

The required flexibility and performance-related guarantee call for great rigour, so applicants must satisfy a number of criteria before ADEFPAT will agree to devise a training support programme.

- > The project must be sent through the intermediary of a development agency, district council or similar body. It must be integrated into a broader local development strategy. Project promoters are not authorised to apply direct to ADEFPAT to request training support.

- > The development agency must be willing to create and head a "project support group" in order to provide the whole project with substantial on-going support (and not just a specialised training course).
- > The project promoter must be highly motivated and agree to do what is asked of him in the context of the "training/development" approach.
- > The trainees must be clearly identified and must also agree to abide by the "rules of the game".

A careful examination of needs

ADEFPAT is now working in four départements of south-western France, in conjunction with around 40 local development associations, which identify the project promoters who need to develop greater self assurance or better working techniques in order to further their project. In this respect, project promoters tend to articulate their problems rather than a need for "training".

The development association takes note of these implicit requests and contacts an ADEFPAT training adviser, who sets up an interview with the project promoter (which may be an individual or a group), in order to ascertain exactly what the problem is and what the project promoter needs to further the project. If appropriate, the adviser will propose "support through training". For the project promoter, the very fact of preparing such "support through training" is already a training exercise in itself.

The originality of "training/development" therefore lies in the fact that it is not based on "training needs", which would lead to a classical training response. Instead, the focus is on the problems expressed by project promoters (problems of funding or credibility, or problems associated with a lack of time or poor working methods). After several interviews, these problems are translated into "requirements for skills", which can be acquired by learning from the others' experience.

An empowering method of intervention

Although the situation varies according to the local context, in general events unfold as follows:

- > The development association asks ADEFPAT to devise a training programme to support an enterprise or a specific project that it finds promising. An ADEFPAT training adviser examines the situation in order to ensure that the solution to the problem is a "need and not an offer".
- > If the request is accepted, the development officer, together with ADEFPAT, sets up a "project support group". This group is comprised of people who "contribute" something tangible to the project promoter.

- > The ADEFPAT training adviser contacts a suitable trainer, in agreement with the project promoter. The trainer may be employed by a specialised training organisation or even a private consultant; he must have skills both in a specific field and as a trainer. Together, they develop a training plan, paying special attention to the method, content, teaching and learning tools, timetable, evaluation criteria, etc. The training adviser takes care of the contractual side of the arrangement.
- > The “project support group” meets to validate the proposed training and ensure that it is compatible with the other types of support offered.
- > The training is then provided “on site” (it is the trainer who does the travelling). The theory courses and practical work are organised in such a way that project promoters and their team are able to gradually apply the theory to their work. The training is usually spread over one or two years, in line with the project promoter’s commitments and needs. From time to time, the project support group reviews progress and suggests changes to the training programme.
- > Finally, an **evaluation** is carried out on the basis of the initial objectives set by the project support group. It is generally broken down into three parts:
 - Teaching approach – concerning the level of expertise achieved and changes in behaviour;
 - Economics – concerning the impact on the company’s turnover, jobs, etc.;
 - Development – concerning the impact on the local “dynamic”.

The evaluation method used is highly empirical. It consists simply of comparing the situation “before” and “after” training. Both the trainer and trainee(s) participate in this exercise.

PLANNING TRAINING ON THE SCALE OF A SECTOR AND AREA

DEVELOPING A MULTIANNUAL TRAINING PLAN FOR TOURISM

(HAUTE-SAÔNE, FRANCHE-COMTÉ, FRANCE)

The objective of this initiative by the *département* of Haute-Saône was to professionalise the various tourism players in this region of north-eastern France by means of training.

1. INITIAL CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The existing training provision was not deemed to fully match the needs of tourism professionals. In fact, the specific features of the tourism sector needed to be taken into account:

- > Diverse professional situations of those providing tourist services;
- > Large number and dispersion of trade associations and regional and local organisations involved in tourism;
- > Problems in mobilising the support of small enterprises for “on the job” learning in cottage industries;
- > Diversity and complexity of financing sources for vocational training.

2. METHODS AND CONTENTS

In order to ensure a participatory approach to this process, three production, consultation and validation forums were created:

- > **Working groups**, comprised mainly of tourist service providers, which gathered together the material needed to draw up the training plan (development strategy, inventory of training needs, etc.);
- > **A technical committee**, comprised of technical experts/development officers from tourist areas or sectors, which coordinated the working groups and helped to draw up the multiannual training plan;
- > **A steering committee**, comprised of decision-makers and fund providers, which oversaw the entire operation.

A series of different phases followed.

Appraisal and definition of the objectives and activities of the training plan

Appraisal

This phase was to:

- > Compile and analyse data on customers, tourist provision (accommodation, catering, facilities, activities) and marketing/promotion. This work was conducted in line with the triple approach to tourism development in Haute-Saône: sector, tourist theme, territory;
- > Define the development objectives and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the various development strategies.

Defining the objectives of the training plan

Based on the appraisal made, the working groups and technical committee set out to identify the main training priorities and to define the objectives of the training plan. The principle adopted was that the training accompanying development should boost the strengths and reduce the weaknesses of participants by ensuring their acquisition of specific skills.

Defining training measures

This phase consisted of drawing up an inventory of training measures. Each training programme was given precise specifications describing the:

- > Context and the expected results;
- > Training objectives;
- > Indicative training content;
- > Target group;
- > Organisational arrangements (duration, frequency, venue, teaching method, etc.).

123 people from all over the *département* were involved in this initial phase of appraisal and definition of training objectives and activities, 73 of whom were tourist operators.

Programming and budget estimate

In the light of the results of analysing training needs, the availability of the target group and existing and planned funding, the training plan was drawn up to include three training sessions a year.

Introduction of a call for tenders approach among training organisations

This phase was implemented as follows:

- > Search for potential training providers;
- > Sending out specifications;
- > Analysis of the proposals and first selection round;
- > Interview with short-listed training organisations;
- > Selection of the winning training organisation;
- > Drafting of a definitive training programme together with the chosen training provider;
- > Definition of a training schedule and contract.

Presentation of the action plan

Objective 1: consolidate existing provision (*short-term impact*) through individual and collective further training:

- > Training for temporary reception and information officers;
- > Further training for professionals (hotel-keepers, restaurateurs, shopkeepers, etc.) in their basic trade;
- > Training in local activities (for all tourist operators)

Objective 2: support and facilitate change (*medium-term impact*)

- > Fostering the emergence of individual and collective projects ("training/development");
- > Supporting and developing individual and collective projects by setting up training for:
 - > Providers of "hiking" products;
 - > Providers of other types of product;
- > Professionalising other tourism players: elected representatives and town clerks, local council officials, local guides, managers of "Gîtes de France" [rural self-catering accommodation] and of furnished accommodation, hotel-keepers (offering more than 25 rooms);
- > Encouraging providers of tourist services to set up in business through the creation of a system for receiving, training and following up project promoters;

Objective 3: to plan for the future (*long-term impact*) by modifying the behaviour of current and future tourism players through:

- > Internal communication actions (an annual seminar in each *département*, publicising the training courses on offer, information letters, etc.);
- > Organisation of study visits for elected representatives, technical experts, service providers;
- > Training and education activities in primary and secondary schools (field studies, "tourism culture" module).

3. RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

- > 507 people participated in the programme, with an upward trend in attendance between year one and year three.
- > In the main, the target group was female (63% of participants), from the 25-40 and 60-plus age brackets.
- > 51% of the participants were in work (mostly as employees: managers, top professionals, employees, manual workers) and 34% were not in work.
- > In general the training courses made it possible to:
 - Initiate a dynamic between the different players involved in a single sector or product, either from a single area or from different areas;
 - Foster networking and exchanges of experience between service providers;
 - Develop partnership agreements;
 - Show participants the limitations of their project and to adjust or modify it;
 - Find solutions to practical problems;
 - Improve or review quality (reception, products, services provided);
 - Encourage the emergence of collective and individual projects and implement them;
 - Establish an appraisal of tourism resources throughout an area;
 - Acquire a tourism culture;
 - Progress from a "production" rationale to a "marketing" rationale and develop a more economically and commercially oriented approach.

DISTANCE TRAINING

DISTANCE TRAINING IN AID OF INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT (LEADER AREA WESTERN ISLES, SCOTLAND, UNITED KINGDOM)

In 1993, a rural development training programme, based on an integrated and multidisciplinary approach, was devised in the Hebrides (a group of islands located at the northern tip of Scotland), with the help of LEADERI. The course takes the form of flexible modules, combining theoretical content with work "in the field". The programme was such a success that it was extended to numerous Scottish rural areas via the University of the Highlands & Islands, thanks in particular to the use of information and communication technologies.

1. INITIAL CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

In 1993, a number of key socio-economic players in the Hebrides – in particular the head of Lews Castle College (*), the Development Agency for the Gaelic Language and the Scottish Crofters' Union – joined forces to support a single project: to design a rural development training course that would break with the sectorial and specialised approach traditionally used in this training field. They wanted to convey to students a global view of rural development, which would, for example, be able to overcome any conflict that might exist between economic activities, environmental protection and local development.

2. METHODS AND CONTENTS

With the support of the LEADERI programme, a training programme was devised, entitled "Undertaking rural development". This was comprised of three specific courses, to which were added nine existing courses, including aspects of management, development (economic, social and cultural) and environmental management, all combined to create a one-year training programme ("Higher National Certificate").

The first training session was held in Lews Castle College in 1993. Owing to its geographic isolation, the College in fact offered the ideal conditions for students to combine "academic" teaching with the observation of "full-scale" projects in the field. This first experience was a success.

Lews Castle College carried out a feasibility study with the support of an independent consultant and the financial support of the Scottish development agency, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, in order to ascertain the local need for such training. This called for wide-ranging local consultations involving schools, civic and voluntary associations, private entrepreneurs and development organisations. The potential employers (any organisation working in rural development) expressed great interest in the for-

mula of this training programme – of variable duration (1, 2 and 3 years) – which hitherto had been available only to graduates, whereas employers were looking for a diversity of students with different levels of qualification. The one-year programme was therefore followed by a two-year training programme ("Higher National Diploma") and a three-year programme (Degree) in 1995.

The study also reviewed the cost-effectiveness and affordability of such a training programme in a sparsely populated area (9 inhabitants/km² on certain islands), where travel is difficult. So a network strategy was devised, allowing the course to be reproduced in very isolated teaching institutions, as well as in telecentres set up in a number of island villages.

The introduction of distance learning technologies was also adopted in order to meet the needs of all those who are unable to travel because of problems of distance, availability, financial resources, etc. Designed as flexible modules, the course can be followed either full time or part time.

The highly varied training content is continuously being improved and updated. For distance training, in addition to paper documentation, there is also provision for telephone support, e-mail sessions, Web pages (as for the course on "Undertaking rural development") and video-conferencing. These facilities have made it easy to extend the course to other rural areas in Scotland.

The project is encompassed within the unique framework of the University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI), a "fragmented" university that includes 13 colleges and research centres scattered throughout the Scottish highlands and islands, one of which is Lews Castle College.

The pilot phase (development of the course programme, setting up of the distance teaching centres, etc.) will end in 2001. In 1998, the training course was offered in four colleges. The one- and two-year programmes have now been approved by the competent authorities and the three-year programme has been approved by the University of Aberdeen. However, the UHI will be able to accredit diplomas itself as soon as its university charter receives final approval.

The cost of research and development for the three new courses was ECU 6,000 (not including professional fees), financed by LEADERI. Students must pay the course fees of around ECU 100 per module (ECU 15 for the unemployed).

3. RESULTS

During the 1997/98 academic year, 35 full-time students and 12 distance students followed the training programme. Most were adults (aged 21-50) who had already had experience of development organisations and associations – either professionally or on a voluntary basis. The majority were women. In 1998, students from other European countries (Austria, Ireland and Finland) also enrolled.

The multisectorial training content has led to a process of cooperation between teaching institutions and socio-economic players, which would never have been possible if a conventional sectorial approach had been adopted. Moreover, the formula has encouraged new ideas and interest from the media, entrepreneurs, development agencies and students. A number of institutions and enterprises provide their staff with the possibility of carrying out work placements.

As the training programme developed, it became increasingly apparent that the multisectorial and multidisciplinary approach was encouraging a positive and professional attitude to rural development. Several students have found jobs in development agencies.

The use of information technologies offers the possibility of virtually tailor-made teaching (courses accessible from home or the workplace, specific responses to specific needs) and has facilitated access to training for students who are unable to travel. The main problem has been the non-availability of the Internet and video-conferencing in villages.

The introduction of this training programme into six different teaching institutions in isolated rural areas has stemmed the migration of local human resources to urban training centres (around 40 people since the start of the operation).

E8

EVALUATING TRAINING

FOUR PROPOSED EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES

Below are the four questionnaires used by the Association de Développement des Pyrénées par la Formation (ADEPFO) ^[1] to evaluate the training activities which it organises and finances in support of local development programmes in the Pyrenees.

Each year, around one hundred training courses are held, lasting from three days to several months, for a highly varied target audience.

Association de développement des Pyrénées par la formation (ADEPFO)

Toulouse 2000 – 2, Esplanade Compans-Caffarelli – B.P. 812 – 31080 Toulouse CEDEX 6

Telephone: 05 61 11 03 11 – Fax: 05 61 11 03 10

(1) The training programme actually taught was not the one that was initially planned. Please describe the programme actually taught.

TRAINING ORGANISATION QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE OF THE TRAINING COURSE

.....

Starting date: **Finishing date:**

Name of the training manager:

Position:

Organisation:

Address:

Telephone: **Fax:**

Number of trainees:
Number of trainees initially planned Number who actually participated in the training

ORGANISATION OF THE TRAINING AND TRAINERS

1 Trainer
2 Trainer
3 Trainer
4 Trainer
5 Trainer
6 Trainer
7 Trainer
8 Trainer
9 Trainer
10 Trainer

DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

General objective of the development project

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To consider problems of local development and/or a sector of activity | <input type="checkbox"/> To create jobs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To train development officers | <input type="checkbox"/> To create one or more businesses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To provide initiative training | <input type="checkbox"/> To create complementary and/or part-time activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To raise awareness of development | <input type="checkbox"/> To consolidate existing activities |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> To exploit and process local products |

In your view, the training will ultimately make it possible to achieve this objective, etc.

☐ Totally ☐ Partially ☐ Not at all

Specify if necessary:

.....

TRAINING

Overall assessment

In your view, was the training organised as initially agreed
(in line with the programme in the project data sheet approved by ADEPFO)?

☐ YES ☐ NO

What difficulties did you encounter?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Imprecise objectives | <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate selection of trainees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too short or too long in duration
(strike through what does not apply) | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice of trainers disputed by the trainees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate pace / frequency | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice of training venue(s) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities at the training centre(s) |

Comments or suggestions on any of the above points:

.....

Distribution of training time (to be assessed as a %):

Theoretical training:

..... % Presentations

..... % Group work

..... % Independent learning

..... % Project work

Practical training:

..... % At the future work place

..... % Other:

Comments:

.....

Training centre(s):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On the premises of the development organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> At the future workplace |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In the field | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Comments :

.....

Do you think that a complementary training course would be useful for the trainees?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If so, what type of course?

.....

Who were your partners in setting up this training?

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training officer | <input type="checkbox"/> Project promoter(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Steering group | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) |
|---|--|---|--|

Who were your partners during the training? (regional association, consular office, other, etc.):

.....

.....

Did the training lead to modifications in the development project's initial objectives?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If so, which?

.....

After the training is finished, what contacts will you maintain with the trainees?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up/technical support | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): |
|-------------------------------|--|---|

STEERING GROUP

Was the steering group involved in setting up the training? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Specify the number of meetings:

Did the steering group meet during the training course? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Specify the number of meetings:

With your participation ☐ YES ☐ NO

Trainees present ☐ YES ☐ NO

To your knowledge, are further meetings planned at a later date, after the training? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Are the trainees sufficiently familiar with the activities of the steering group? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Did you explain the steering group's mission to the trainees at the start of training? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you think it would be useful to bolster the activities of the steering group? ☐ YES ☐ NO

How?

☐ Closer partnership with the training organisation

☐ More trainee involvement

☐ Other suggestions:

.....

ECONOMIC EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

(reserved for training organisations and local development officers)

Please complete this questionnaire carefully.

TITLE OF THE TRAINING COURSE

In your view, did the training make it possible to realise the development project? ☐ YES ☐ NO

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SETTING UP THE PROJECT

The project resulted in:

- ☐ Job creation(s) ☐ Directly ☐ Indirectly
☐ Job consolidation(s) (specify the number)
☐ Business consolidation ☐ Farm consolidation
☐ Business creation(s) ☐ Creation of an association or farm

Sector of activity in which the enterprise or association was created:

- ☐ Agriculture ☐ Tourism ☐ Agri-business ☐ Agri-tourism
☐ Manufacturing ☐ Craftworking ☐ Commerce ☐ Services

Name and address

Plus any projects (extensions, hiring new people, etc.)

Specify any other effects on the economic development of the area:

- ☐ Creation of supplementary revenues
☐ Creation or structuring of a sector of activity or a network of producers
☐ Maintenance or improvement of public or private facilities, services, shops
☐ Increase in tourism
☐ Keeping people in the community and revitalising the rural area
☐ Exploiting and promoting the area's image
☐ Other (specify)

While the project was being set up, following the training, did the project promoter receive technical support?

- ☐ ADEPFO ☐ Steering group ☐ Training organisation ☐ Elected representatives

☐ Administration (specify)

☐ Local development organisation (specify)

Consular offices: ☐ Chamber of Commerce and Industry ☐ Chamber of Agriculture ☐ Chamber of Trade

Other support (specify)

If the project failed to materialise, what was the reason?

- ☐ Unsuitable programme ☐ Inadequate trainee selection ☐ Other reason (specify)

Telephone number where you can be reached for further information

TRAINEE QUESTIONNAIRE

(Article 6 of the agreement)

TITLE OF THE TRAINING COURSE

Date de début: Date de fin:

Starting date: Finishing date:

Name of the training manager:

Name, Forename:

Age:

Address:

District: *Département :*

Telephone:

YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Your current job

Your professional sector

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job-seeker who has never worked | <input type="checkbox"/> Farming and related activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job-seeker who has already worked | <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry, timber trade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism and tourist activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home help | <input type="checkbox"/> Craftworking, small-scale manufacturing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive | <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public official, civil servant | <input type="checkbox"/> Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse of a farmer, craft worker or shopkeeper | <input type="checkbox"/> Elected representative, development officer, association member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student, apprentice or trainee | <input type="checkbox"/> No profession |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The development project in which you are involved or with which you are associated has the following objective(s):

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job creation | <input type="checkbox"/> Job consolidation | <input type="checkbox"/> Business creation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidation of existing enterprise(s) | | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploitation / processing of local products |

TRAINING

Overall assessment

Did the training which you have just followed meet your expectations? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Did it modify the development project in respect of its:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Initial objective | <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation schedule |
|--|--|

On what points do you have criticisms to make?

.....

.....

Overall duration (strike through what does not apply)

Theoretical training: Too short / Too long

Practical training: Too short / Too long

Inappropriate pace / frequency

Specify in which aspect of the training:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> At the future workplace | <input type="checkbox"/> In the field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work on the development project | <input type="checkbox"/> Group work | <input type="checkbox"/> Hands-on training |

Number of trainers: Too many / Not enough

Selection of trainers

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In relation to the development project | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching skills |
|---|--|

Subjects tackled in relation to the project

Do you feel you need a complementary training course? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Specify in which area:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To study in more depth some
of the subjects tackled during the training | <input type="checkbox"/> To cover subjects more appropriate to my needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To set up the development project | <input type="checkbox"/> To put into practice the knowledge I have acquired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): | |

Now that the training is finished, do you wish to keep in contact with ADEPFO? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you wish to receive ADEPFO's magazine, "OBJECTIF"? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Steering group

Were you involved in the activities of the steering group: ☐ YES ☐ NO

How? ☐ Contact prior to the training ☐ Contact during the training

What role did the steering group play:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No role | <input type="checkbox"/> A limited role | <input type="checkbox"/> An important role |
|----------------------------------|---|--|

Specify any support it provided:

.....

.....

In your opinion, should the steering group's activities be bolstered? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If so, how?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase the number of members | <input type="checkbox"/> More frequent contacts with trainees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Effective presence during the training | <input type="checkbox"/> More meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keeping up contacts after the training; during the implementation phase of the development project | |

ECONOMIC EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

(The following information should be provided by the project promoter)

Please complete this questionnaire carefully.

TITLE OF THE TRAINING COURSE

Starting date of the training:

Training organisation:

Did the training in which you participated enable you to realise your project? ☐ YES ☐ NO

CONSEQUENCES OF THE TRAINING ON YOUR PROFESSIONAL STATUS

☐ Change in status. Specify

(e.g.: you switched from being a job-seeker to being a salaried employee or head of a business or farm)

- ☐ Increase in personal or family income ☐ Diversification of your activity
☐ Creation of an enterprise or farm (see overleaf)

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SETTING UP THE PROJECT

The project resulted in:

- ☐ Job creation(s) ☐ Directly ☐ Indirectly
☐ Job consolidation(s) (specify the number)
☐ Business consolidation ☐ Farm consolidation
☐ Business creation(s) ☐ Creation of an association or farm

Sector of activity in which the enterprise or association was created:

- ☐ Agriculture ☐ Tourism ☐ Agri-business ☐ Agri-tourism
☐ Manufacturing ☐ Craftworking ☐ Commerce ☐ Services

Name and address

Plus any projects (extensions, hiring new people, etc.)

Specify any other effects on the economic development of the area:

- ☐ Creation of supplementary revenues
☐ Creation or structuring of a sector of activity or a network of producers
☐ Maintenance or improvement of public or private facilities, services, shops
☐ Increase in tourism
☐ Keeping people in the community and revitalising the rural area
☐ Exploiting and promoting the area's image
☐ Other (specify)

While the project was being set up, following the training, did the project promoter receive technical support?

☐ ADEPFO ☐ Steering group ☐ Training organisation ☐ Elected representatives

☐ Administration (specify)

☐ Local development organisation (specify)

Consular offices: ☐ Chamber of Commerce and Industry ☐ Chamber of Agriculture ☐ Chamber of Trade

Other support (specify)

**If, in your view, the training was not organised as you had wished
and did not allow the initial project to be implemented, what was the reason for this?**

☐ Too short a time-scale ☐ Training content

Other reason (specify)

.....

E9

TRAINING IN SUPPORT OF A TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

SUMMARY TABLE OF THE POSSIBLE OBJECTIVES OF A LOCAL TRAINING POLICY

The following table summarises the possible objectives of a territorial training policy, in line with the different development phases and potential priority target groups.

Various development phases		Phase 1 Position Mobilise support Instigate	Phase 2 Consider Analyse Propose	Phase 3 Validate Set up Schedule	Phase 4 Implement Follow up Evaluate	Common objectives for all phases
Target groups and functions						
Elected representatives	<i>Control Choose Decide</i>	Raise awareness	Collective discussions – Planning for the area's future	Decision-making support	Help with follow-up and skill management	Development strategy and skill management
Key local "leaders"	<i>Lead Prompt Assist Steer</i>	Build models Inform	Analytical skills	Basic economics	Help with follow-up and evaluation	Enterprise culture and knowledge of the players. Territorial management
Technical assistance	<i>Coordinate Transmit Relaunch Refocus Organise</i>	Appraisal and strategic analysis skills		Economic project analysis	Monitoring procedures and evaluation	Territorial management
Institutions	<i>Provide resources Support Instruct</i>	Knowledge and experience of development		Appropriation of the approach		Raising awareness/ Involvement in local approaches
Local community	<i>Discuss Propose Support</i>	Grant the right to speak	Realisation of its role in development		Appropriation of the finished job	Raising awareness/ hands-on training
Individual and collective project promoters	<i>Undertake Develop Manage Anticipate Earn revenues</i>	Motivate	Project analysis Team working	Professionalise	Set up	Vocational skill training Entrepreneurial training
Groups	<i>Involve – cooperate</i>	Pre-training Information	Assistance with appraisal	Participation in collective discussions	Participation in projects Project appropriation /evaluation	Creativity and providing new momentum