

Evaluation methods for rural development policy



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Evaluation methods for rural development policy

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The Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF) is used for evaluation of the EU Rural Development Policy 2007-2013. In this study a set of 22 evaluation methods of rural development policy measures is analysed in order to explore whether these methods give rise to recommendations for improvement and adaptation of the CMEF. Following evaluation methods in the mixed case-study approach, the use of case studies for evaluation could be considered in the CMEF.

Het 'Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework' (CMEF) wordt gebruikt voor de evaluatie van het EU-Plattelandsbeleid 2007-2013. In deze studie worden 22 methoden voor de evaluatie van plattelandsbeleid onder de loep genomen om na te gaan of deze aanleiding geven voor aanbevelingen voor verbeteringen en aanpassingen van het CMEF. Net zoals de evaluatiemethoden in de gemengde casestudiebenadering doen, zou het CMEF met casestudies kunnen gaan werken.

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Preface

Nowadays, evaluation of EU policies forms an integral of the policy process. For the evaluation of the EU Rural Development Policy in the programming period 2007-2013, the European Commission has designed a Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF). The principal objectives of evaluations are to improve decision-making, resource allocation and accountability. As such, evaluations can help policy makers in the formulation and reorientation of policies.

The CMEF forms a rather comprehensive approach of rural development policy evaluation: data for about 160 indicators have to be collected and analysed and nearly 140 common evaluation questions have to be answered. Given this large amount of indicators and evaluation questions in the CMEF, the question arises whether alternative evaluation approaches for the evaluation of EU rural development policy exist which are less comprehensive, less costly and easier to apply. In this study a comparative analysis of 22 evaluation methods on the effectiveness of rural development policy is conducted in order to explore whether these methods give rise to recommendations for improvement and adaptation of the CMEF.

This study has been financed by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (BO-01-009-902). We greatly acknowledge the stimulating cooperation and useful comments of Willem Schoustra (LNV-AKV/PD GLB), who supervised this study on behalf of the Ministry and the members of the Steering Committee: Elke Boesewinkel (Provincie Flevoland), Alfred Boom (LNV-DR), Marijke Langeveld (LNV-AKV), Mart Mensink (Provincie Gelderland), Sophieke Nijhuis-Bouma (LNV-DLG) and Aart Vorstenburg (Regiebureau POP). Petra Berkhout (LEI) gave useful comments on the first draft of the report.



Prof. Dr R.B.M. Huirne
Managing Director LEI

Summary

Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF)

For the evaluation of the EU Rural Development Policy in the programming period 2007-2013, the European Commission has designed a Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF). The CMEF forms a rather comprehensive approach of rural development policy evaluation: data for about 160 indicators have to be collected and analysed and nearly 140 common evaluation questions (CEQs) have to be answered. Concerns on the CMEF refer amongst others to this large amount of indicators and evaluation questions, indicators and questions that bear little relevance to the circumstances of particular Member States or regions, and the emphasis on quantifiable indicators, which describe what has happened and detract attention from the more qualitative diagnosis of how and why it (not) happened. A last concern refers to the detailed approach of monitoring which is required within CMEF.

Objective of this study

Given these concerns on the CMEF, the question arises whether alternative evaluation approaches for the evaluation of EU rural development policy exist. In this study, we make a comparative analysis of evaluation methods on the effectiveness of rural development policy at measure and programme level in order to explore whether these methods give rise to recommendations for improvement and adaptation of the CMEF. Our study is restricted to evaluation methods that measure the effectiveness of rural development measures, i.e. the outcome in relation to the objective(s) of the measure.

Methodological comments on evaluation

The principal objectives of evaluations are to improve decision-making, resource allocation and accountability. As such, evaluations can help policy makers in the formulation and reorientation of policies. Evaluation can take place at any time in the policy life cycle, and often a distinction between ex ante, mid-term and ex post evaluations is made. The evaluation process is comprised of three major steps: evaluation design, data collection and an analytical step. In the evaluation design, the intervention logic is specified: the logical base for measuring results and attributing results to programmes. In this step, it is also decided which methods will be used and which data are needed. In the analytical step, data col-

lected during the data collection step are analysed and effects of the policy are identified. For assessing the impact of an intervention, it makes sense to distinguish between direct and indirect results caused by the intervention. Evaluations, which only focus on the assessment of the direct target of an intervention, give a one-sided picture, as other potentially important causal pathways would be missed.

Assessment scheme for the analysis of 22 evaluation methods

A wide array of approaches, methods and tools can be used to conduct evaluations. In this study, we analyse a set of 22 evaluation methods for rural development policy. These refer to individual measures of axis 1, 2, and 4 of the EU rural development policy or to Rural Development Programmes, the CAP, EU Structural Policy, the Nordic Aid scheme, Federal Policy Programmes in the US and national environmental and nature management measures. We applied an assessment scheme with a list of 11 questions, which allows for a systematic description of the evaluation methods.

Five groups of evaluation methods

According to their approach, we can broadly classify the set of 22 evaluation methods into five groups:

1. the CMEF type approach: this group includes evaluation methods that employ a hierarchy of indicators combined with evaluation questions, often used for EU-wide policy programmes;
2. the tally approach: this group refers to methods that simply measure by means of counting whether a quantified objective has been achieved;
3. the econometric approach: this group uses econometric methods in the policy evaluation;
4. the modelling approach: this group employs models for policy evaluation;
5. the mixed case-study approach: this rather diverse group uses broad quantitative and qualitative analyses of direct and indirect results of the policy intervention, usually based on case studies.

Strengths and weaknesses of evaluation methods

For assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation methods, we have listed main properties of evaluation methods and explored whether these properties are applicable to the five groups of methods (Table S.1). It appears that a striking difference can be revealed between the evaluation methods in the CMEF type, tally, econometric and modelling approach on the one hand, and

those in the mixed case-study approach on the other hand: methods in the first four groups in particular identify quantitative effects of the policy intervention, whereas the mixed case-study approach tends to focus on the qualitative effects and features in the context of the policy intervention.

On the whole, the impact of the policy intervention is measured at the appropriate territorial level for the methods in the tally, econometric and mixed case-study approach. This is only partly the case for methods in the CMEF type and modelling approach. Methods in the CMEF type approach tend to measure the impact at regional or national level, which might be satisfying as far as territorial policies are evaluated. However, when sectoral policies are evaluated, it should be preferred to measure the impact at farm or local level, as the impact of such measures is often only felt locally, and fades away in the total amount of actions at the regional or national level. Within the modelling approach, Social Accounting Matrices (SAMs) are able to capture the impact at the right level, whereas the LEITAP model is only able to identify impacts at the relatively high national level. Methods in the CMEF type, tally and econometric approach and LEITAP can be applied to the whole EU territory, whereas SAMs and methods in the mixed case-study approach are restricted to case study areas.

Considering the amount of data required for the evaluation method and the way in which these data have to be processed and analysed, it could be noted that the methods in the tally and mixed case-study approach are rather easy to apply for evaluators, whereas methods in the econometric and modelling approach require specific skills of the evaluator and methods in the CMEF type approach are rather time consuming due to its huge number of indicators and evaluation questions.

Concluding remarks

It seems that the methods in the tally approach do not result in suggestions for adaptations of the CMEF, as counting whether the objective has been achieved is already included in the hierarchy of indicators in the CMEF. Although the method for measuring the impact of the policy intervention in the group of the econometric and modelling approach differs with that in the CMEF type approach, substitution of the hierarchy of indicators in the CMEF by econometrics or models like in the econometric and modelling approach would increase the complexity of the CMEF. On the other hand, the mixed case-study approach provides some useful ideas for adapting the CMEF.

Table S.1 Assessment of main properties of the evaluation methods

	CMEF type approach	Tally approach	Econometric approach	Modelling approach	Mixed case study approach
Diagnosis of cause and effect:					
- description of what has happened (in quantitative terms)	x	x	x	x	
- description of what has happened (in qualitative terms)					x
- description of how and why it has happened in interaction with the local context and other policies					x
- impact is measured at the right territorial level	partly	x	x	partly	x
Indirect results of policy intervention are taken into account	x		x	x	x
Unintended effects of the policy intervention are taken into account					x
Reveals reasons why actors participate in a policy measure					x
Covers the whole territory in which measure is applied	x	x	x	partly	
Easy to apply for evaluator		x			x

Recommendations for improvement and adaptation of the CMEF

It is recommended to consider an approach to monitoring and evaluation of the EU rural development policy, in which monitoring is conducted for the whole EU territory and in which evaluation is restricted to a number of case study regions. Such an adapted CMEF could operate as follows:

- monitoring the continuous progress of input and output indicators in all EU regions;
- evaluating whether the objectives of the rural development policy have been achieved in a few case study regions in each Member State. In the case study analysis, the baseline, result and impact indicators could be replaced by a set of location-specific indicators describing the rural economy,

whereas the common evaluation questions could be replaced by questions addressing not only what has happened, but also why and how the effect has happened.

In order to explore the perspectives of such an evaluation of EU rural development policy in case study regions, it could be considered to conduct a few 'test' case studies in addition to the regular mid-term evaluation by means of the CMEF.

Samenvatting

Om het EU-plattelandsbeleid voor de programmeringsperiode 2007-2013 te kunnen evalueren, heeft de Europese Commissie het 'Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework' (CMEF) ontwikkeld. Dit raamwerk is een nogal veelomvattende evaluatiemethode: data voor ongeveer 160 indicatoren moeten worden verzameld en geanalyseerd en bijna 140 gemeenschappelijke evaluatievragen (CEQs) moeten worden beantwoord. Bezwaren tegen het CMEF hebben onder andere betrekking op dit grote aantal indicatoren en evaluatievragen, op indicatoren en vragen die niet relevant lijken voor de specifieke situatie in lidstaten of regio's, en op de nadruk in de evaluatievragen op wat is gebeurd, waardoor er weinig aandacht overblijft voor een meer kwalitatieve analyse hoe en waarom iets (niet) is gebeurd. Een laatste bezwaar betreft de gedetailleerde wijze van monitoring die vereist is binnen het CMEF.

Doel van deze studie

Gelet op bovenstaande bezwaren tegen het CMEF doet de vraag zich voor of er alternatieve methoden voor de evaluatie van het EU-plattelandsbeleid bestaan. In deze studie voeren we een vergelijkende analyse uit van evaluatiemethoden van de effectiviteit van plattelandsbeleid op maatregel- en programmaniveau, om erachter te komen of deze methoden aangrijpingspunten bieden voor aanbevelingen voor verbeteringen en aanpassingen van het CMEF. Onze studie beperkt zich tot evaluatiemethoden van de effectiviteit van plattelandsbeleidsmaatregelen, waarbij het effect van de maatregel wordt gezien in het licht van het doel van de maatregel.

Methodologische opmerkingen over evaluatie

De belangrijkste doelen van evaluatie zijn het verbeteren van de besluitvorming, van de verdeling van de middelen en van de verantwoording. Op die manier kunnen evaluaties bijdragen aan het formuleren en bijstellen van beleid. Evaluatie kan op elk moment van de beleidscyclus plaatsvinden, en vaak wordt een onderscheid gemaakt naar ex ante-, midterm- en ex post-evaluaties. Het evaluatieproces bestaat uit drie fasen: het evaluatieontwerp, dataverzameling en analyse. In het evaluatieontwerp wordt de interventielogica gespecificeerd: dit vormt de logische basis voor het meten van de resultaten en het relateren van de resultaten aan maatregelen. In deze fase wordt ook bepaald welke evaluatiemethode

wordt gebruikt en welke data er nodig zijn. In de analysefase worden de data, die in de dataverzamelingfase zijn verzameld, geanalyseerd en worden de effecten van het beleid bepaald. Voor de beoordeling van het effect van een beleidsinterventie is het zinvol om directe en indirecte resultaten te onderscheiden. Evaluaties die alleen kijken naar de directe resultaten van een beleidsinterventie kunnen een eenzijdig beeld geven, omdat het gevaar bestaat dat mogelijk belangrijke indirecte resultaten over het hoofd worden gezien.

Beoordelingsschema voor de analyse van 22 evaluatiemethoden

Een groot arsenaal van benaderingen, methoden en instrumenten kan worden ingezet voor het uitvoeren van evaluaties. In deze studie analyseren we een reeks van 22 evaluatiemethoden voor plattelandsbeleid. Deze hebben betrekking op maatregelen in as 1, 2 en 4 van het EU-plattelandsbeleid of plattelandsontwikkelingsprogramma's, het GLB, het EU-structuurbeleid, het EU-subsidieschema voor agrariërs in het noorden van Finland en Zweden, federale beleidsprogramma's in de VS en nationaal milieu- en natuurbeleid. Om tot een systematische beschrijving van de evaluatiemethoden te komen, hebben we een beoordelingsschema met 11 vragen gebruikt.

Vijf groepen evaluatiemethoden

Op basis van hun methodologische benadering kunnen we de reeks van 22 evaluatiemethoden in vijf groepen verdelen:

1. de CMEF-achtige benadering: deze groep bevat methoden die gebruik maken van een hiërarchie van indicatoren in combinatie met evaluatievragen, meestal toegepast op beleidsprogramma's;
2. de turfbenadering: deze groep verwijst naar methoden die door simpelweg te turven nagaan of een gekwantificeerd doel is bereikt;
3. de econometrische benadering: deze groep methoden gebruikt econometrische methoden in de beleidsevaluatie;
4. de modelbenadering: in deze groep wordt de evaluatie uitgevoerd met behulp van modellen;
5. de gemengde casestudiebenadering: dit is een diverse groep van methoden, die brede kwantitatieve en kwalitatieve analyses van de directe en indirecte effecten van een beleidsinterventie uitvoeren, vaak in casestudiegebieden.

Sterke en zwakke punten van de evaluatiemethoden

Om inzicht te krijgen in de sterke en zwakke punten van de evaluatiemethoden, hebben we een aantal belangrijke eigenschappen van evaluatiemethoden op een rij gezet en zijn we nagegaan in hoeverre deze van toepassing zijn voor de vijf groepen van evaluatiemethoden (tabel S.1). Het blijkt dat er een opmerkelijk verschil bestaat tussen de evaluatiemethoden in de CMEF-achtige benadering, de turfbenadering, de econometrische benadering en de modelbenadering enerzijds en de gemengde casestudiebenadering anderzijds: methoden in de vier eerstgenoemde groepen beogen de exacte kwantitatieve effecten van een beleidsinterventie aan te geven, terwijl de gemengde casestudiebenadering gericht is op kwalitatieve effecten en omgevingsfactoren van de beleidsinterventie.

Over het algemeen kan worden gesteld dat het effect van de beleidsinterventie op het juiste territoriale niveau wordt gemeten in de methoden in de turf-, econometrische en gemengde casestudiebenadering. Dat is slechts gedeeltelijke het geval voor de methoden in de CMEF-achtige en modelbenadering. Methoden in de CMEF-achtige benadering meten de impact op regionaal of nationaal niveau. Dat loopt goed voor zover er sprake is van evaluatie van territoriaal beleid. Echter, in het geval van sectoraal beleid verdient het meten van het effect op bedrijfsniveau of lokaal niveau de voorkeur, omdat de effecten van het beleid vooral op dit niveau worden gemerkt. Binnen de modelbenadering zijn de Social Accounting Matrices (SAM's) in staat om het effect van de beleidsinterventie op het juiste niveau te meten, terwijl LEITAP alleen de effecten op het vrij hoge nationale niveau kan weergeven. Methoden in de CMEF-achtige, turf- en econometrische benadering en LEITAP kunnen worden toegepast voor het hele grondgebied van de EU. De toepassing van SAM's en methoden in de gemengde casestudiebenadering is beperkt tot casestudiegebieden.

Gelet op de hoeveelheid data die nodig is voor de evaluatie en de wijze waarop deze data moeten worden bewerkt en geanalyseerd, kan worden gesteld dat evaluatoren de methoden in de turfbenadering en de gemengde casestudiebenadering vrij gemakkelijk kunnen toepassen. De methoden in de econometrische en modelbenadering vergen specialistische kennis van de evaluatoren, terwijl de methoden in de CMEF-achtige benadering nogal tijdrovend zijn door het grote aantal indicatoren en evaluatievragen.

Tabel S.1

**Beoordeling van enkele belangrijke eigenschappen van
evaluatiemethoden**

	CMEF-achtige benadering	Turf- benadering	Econometrische benadering	Model- benadering	Gemengde case- studiebenadering
Analyse van oorzaak en gevolg:					
- beschrijving van wat er is gebeurd (in kwantitatieve zin)	x	x	x	x	
- beschrijving van wat er is gebeurd (in kwalitatieve zin)					x
- beschrijving van hoe en waarom het is gebeurd in interactie met omgevings- factoren en overig beleid					x
- effect wordt op het juiste territoriale niveau gemeten	gedeel- telijk	x	x	gedeel- telijk	x
Indirecte resultaten van de beleids- interventie worden meegenomen	x		x	x	x
Onbedoelde effecten van de beleidsinter- ventie worden meegenomen					x
Geeft aan waarom actoren meedoen aan beleidsmaatregel					x
Beslaat het hele grondgebied waarop de maatregel wordt toegepast	x	x	x	gedeel- telijk	
Is gemakkelijk toe te passen door de evaluator		x			x

Concluderende opmerkingen

De methoden in de turfbenadering leveren niet direct aanwijzingen op voor een verandering van het CMEF, omdat het turven of een doel is gehaald al onderdeel uitmaakt van de hiërarchie van indicatoren in het CMEF. Hoewel de manier om het effect van een beleidsinterventie te meten in de econometrische en modelbenadering verschilt van die in het CMEF, zou vervanging van de hiërarchie van indicatoren in het CMEF door econometrische schattingen of modellen zoals die in de econometrische en modelbenadering worden gebruikt, de complexiteit van

het CMEF vergroten. Aan de andere kant lijkt de gemengde casestudiebenadering wel enkele nuttige aangrijpingspunten voor aanpassing van het CMEF te bieden.

Aanbevelingen voor verbeteringen en aanpassingen van het CMEF

Het zou overwogen kunnen worden om voor een benadering van monitoring en evaluatie van het EU-plattelandsbeleid te kiezen, waarbij monitoring wordt uitgevoerd op het hele EU-grondgebied, en waarbij evaluatie wordt beperkt tot een aantal casestudiegebieden. Zo'n aangepast CMEF zou er als volgt uit kunnen zien:

- continu monitoren van de voortgang van de input- en outputindicatoren op het hele EU-grondgebied;
- evalueren of de doelen van het EU-plattelandsbeleid zijn gehaald in een aantal casestudiegebieden in elke lidstaat. In die casestudies zouden de baseline, resultaat- en impactindicatoren kunnen worden vervangen door relevante lokale indicatoren om de plattelandseconomie te beschrijven en de gemeenschappelijke evaluatievragen door vragen over wat, maar ook hoe en waarom iets is gebeurd.

Om de perspectieven van een dergelijke evaluatie van het EU-plattelandsbeleid in casestudiegebieden te verkennen, zouden er bijvoorbeeld naast de periodieke midtermevaluatie van het EU-plattelandsbeleid met behulp van het CMEF ook enkele 'test'-casestudies kunnen worden gedaan.

1 Introduction

Evaluation of EU activities has importance over time and now forms an integral part of the policy process. The reform of the Structural Funds (1988) introduced a system of monitoring and evaluation in EU regional policies (OECD, 2009a). The initiative to reform the management of EU spending, known as Sound and Efficient Financial Management (SEM 2000), in the mid-1990s gave a boost towards the encouragement of evaluation (Dwyer and Hill, 2009). Afterwards the European Commission produced a number of major evaluation guides like the *MEANS Collection on evaluating socio-economic programmes* (1999), *Evaluation of rural development programmes 2000-2006 supported from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund* (1999) and the *Rural Development 2007-2013 Handbook on Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* (2006). In 2002 the European Commission announced a new approach for impact assessment of major proposals in all its policy areas, which established a procedure for an integrated assessment of the potential impacts of policy proposals on the economy, on society and on the environment (EC, 2002). Today all Directorates-General involved in spending EU funds have dedicated units responsible for evaluation of their respective policy areas.

Four types of evaluation of RDP 2007-2013

The *Handbook on Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* (CMEF) (EC, 2006) acts as a guide for the evaluation of rural development policies in the programming period 2007-2013. CMEF distinguishes four types of evaluations of rural development policies (EC Reg. 1698/2005, art. 85-86):

1. ex ante evaluation, aimed at the optimisation of the allocation of budget resources and improvement of programming quality;
2. an ongoing evaluation to examine the progress of the programme, improve the quality and implementation of the programme, examine proposals for substantive changes of the programme and prepare for the mid-term and ex post evaluation;
3. and 4. mid-term evaluation and ex post evaluation: these examine the degree of utilisation of resources, the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, draw lessons for rural development policy, identify factors that contributed to the success or failure of the programmes' implementation and identify best practice.

Briefly summarising, the principal aims of these various evaluations may be characterised as supporting decision-making, improving the implementation of policy measures, assisting in resource allocation and enhancing accountability and transparency of public policies (OECD, 1999; EC, 2006). The evaluation information is applicable throughout the whole policy cycle of planning, preparation, budgeting and delivery. As such evaluation can be perceived as a feedback mechanism and a learning process, in which its success highly depends on close collaboration and mutual trust between its key participants: evaluators, users, stakeholders and the Commissioner (OECD, 1999). Such cooperation may benefit from an evaluator understanding the substance and culture of the evaluated policy.

Some concerns about CMEF indicators and evaluation questions

The CMEF forms a rather comprehensive approach of rural development policy evaluation. According to the guidelines in the CMEF handbook (EC, 2006), data for about 160 indicators (of which 83 output indicators, 12 result indicators, 7 impact indicators, 36 objective related baseline indicators and 23 context related baseline indicators) have to be collected and analysed and nearly 140 common evaluation questions (CEQs) have to be answered. Given the fact that the RDP comprises 40 measures, this means on average about 4 indicators and 3 evaluation questions per measure. The fact that evaluation questions to be addressed are prescribed in advance by the European Commission might imply a reduction in the independence of the evaluation exercise (Bradley and Hill, 2009). However, considering the wish of the European Commission to synthesise the results of the evaluations of all RDPs into an overall evaluation at the EU level, the use of prescribed CEQs is understandable. Another main drawback of using prescribed CEQs is that - given the heterogeneity of rural areas in the EU - some CEQs bear little relevance to the circumstances of particular Member States or regions. In such cases, there is a danger that answers given are of poor quality or doubtful validity.

With regard to the indicators specified by the European Commission, concerns have been raised about their linkage to the evaluation question and the use of inferior indicators (Bradley and Hill, 2009). In addition, it has been argued that the emphasis on quantifiable indicators for outputs, results and impacts detracts attention from the diagnosis of cause and effect: it describes what has happened and not how or why (Midmore, 2009). Understanding how policy measures interact with the structure and performance of the local rural economy, other policy impacts and support delivery mechanisms can be considered

as critical for enabling evaluation to play its full role in improving policy and encouraging institutional learning and adaptation (Dwyer and Hill, 2009). Finally, the extraction of data for the prescribed indicators from statistical data sources may impose heavy demands, which are not always provided for by the programming authorities (Dwyer and Hill, 2009). From the RDPs 2000-2006, there is evidence that the burden of record keeping and reporting placed upon individual beneficiaries has acted as a major disincentive to seeking support. Within this context of benefits and costs of using EU funds for rural development, Dwyer and Hill (2009) also pinpoint at the fact that there is an incentive for those national governments - which experience evaluation as an obligatory activity - to economise on evaluation expenditure.

Objective of this study

Given these concerns on the CMEF, the question arises whether alternative evaluation approaches for the evaluation of EU rural development policy exist. In this context, we will address the following research issues:

- a. to conduct a comparative analysis of evaluation methods on the effectiveness of rural development policy at measure level;
- b. to conduct a comparative analysis of evaluation methods on the effectiveness of rural development policy at programme level;
- c. to explore whether these comparative analyses give rise to recommendations for improvement and adaptation of CMEF.

In order to restrict our study, we only focus on evaluation methods that measure the effectiveness of rural development measures, i.e. the outcome in relation to the objective of the measure. So methods for determining efficiency and evaluation questions on policy implementation and accountability, which are also addressed in policy evaluation, are disregarded.

Outline of this report

The outline of this report is as follows. In chapter 2 we give a brief introduction into the use of evaluation in the policy life cycle, followed by the methodological framework used in this study for assessing evaluation methods. In chapter 3 different evaluation methods are assessed: both methods evaluating single measures from the four axes of the second pillar and methods evaluating rural development programmes as well as other (EU) policies and programmes. A comparative analysis is then presented in chapter 4. The report finishes with some concluding remarks in chapter 5.

2 Methodological approach

2.1 Introduction

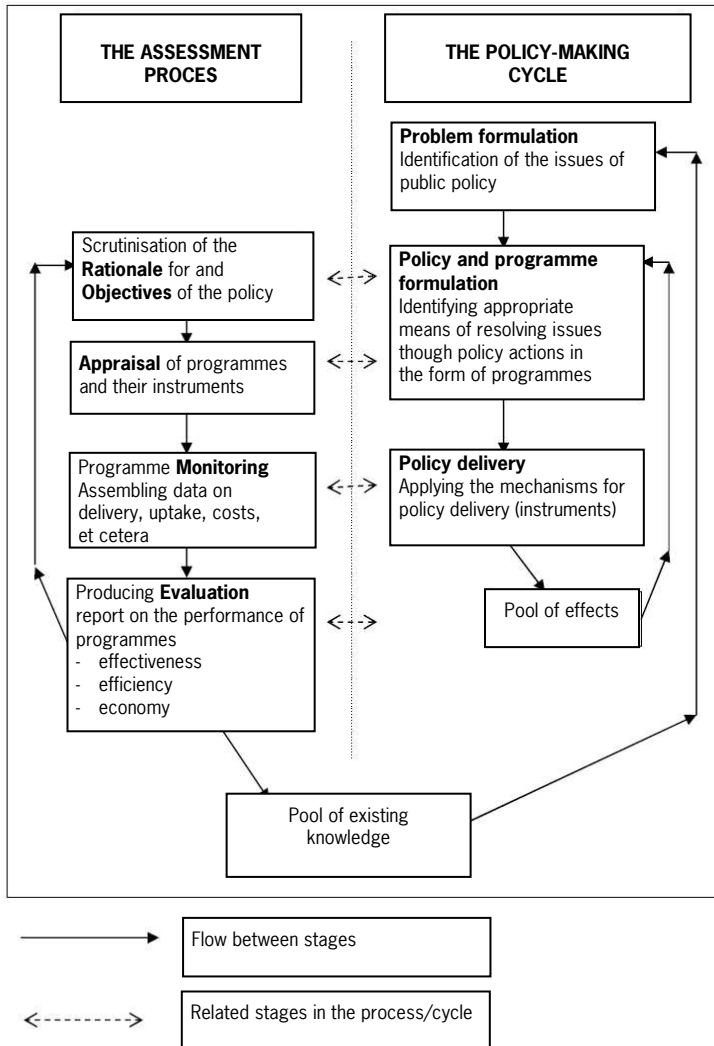
In this study we intend to analyse a number of evaluation methods on the effectiveness of rural development measures. These evaluation methods are collected by literature research. In order to structure the analysis of evaluation methods, we design an assessment scheme with questions. This assessment scheme is applied in the analysis of evaluation methods in the following chapter. The questions in the assessment scheme are amongst others related to the type of evaluation (ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation) and the design of the evaluation method. These two issues are discussed in more detail in section 2.2, where we elaborate on the use of evaluation in the policy life cycle, and in section 2.3, where we pay attention to the evaluation process and key evaluation questions. Then, in section 2.4, we present the assessment scheme.

2.2 Use of evaluation in the policy life cycle

The principal objectives of evaluations are to improve decision-making, resource allocation and accountability (OECD, 2009b). As such, evaluations can help policy makers in the formulation and reorientation of policies. Often, there is some confusion about the terminology and the distinction between monitoring and evaluation (Dwyer and Hill, 2009; OECD, 2009b). Monitoring can be defined as the ongoing process of collecting and assessing qualitative and quantitative information on the inputs, processes and outputs of programmes and policies, and the outcomes they aim to address. Evaluation is not aimed at tracking continuous progress, but aims to assess if particular objectives have been achieved. Monitoring and evaluation are synergistic, as evaluation relies heavily on information collected in the monitoring process. Evaluation can take place at any time in the policy life cycle, and often a distinction between ex ante and ex post evaluations is made. Ex ante evaluations - or appraisals - explore policy options and probable effects; ex post evaluations examine the actual effects of policies. Ex post evaluations can be divided into formative and summative evaluations. Formative evaluations are undertaken during the implementation of the policy, whereas summative evaluations are conducted when the policy has been

in place for a longer period of time. In the CMEF handbook, formative evaluations are referred to as mid-term evaluations. The interaction between evaluation and the policy life cycle is presented in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 The assessment process in relation to the policy life cycle



Source: Dwyer and Hill (2009).

2.3 Evaluation process and key evaluation questions

The evaluation process is comprised of three major steps: evaluation design, data collection and an analytical step (OECD, 2009b). In the evaluation design, the intervention logic is specified: the logical base for measuring results and attributing results to programmes. In this step, it is also decided which methods will be used and which data are needed. In the analytical step, data collected during the data collection step is analysed and effects of the policy are identified.

Key evaluation questions

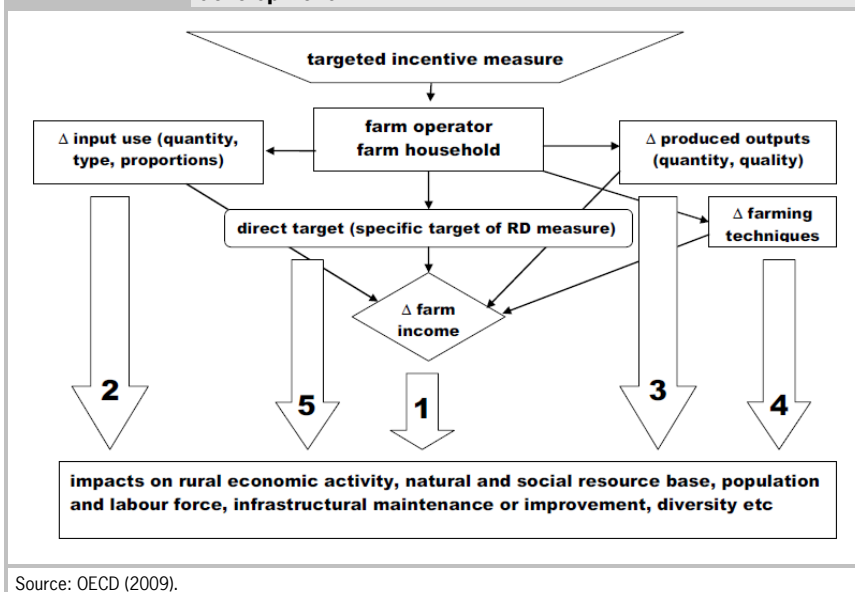
From the literature, a number of key evaluation questions emerge which together constitute a comprehensive approach to the task of evaluation (OECD, 2009b):

1. *rationale of the policy intervention*
Why is it necessary for the government to intervene in the area concerned? which distortion or market failure does the intervention seek to address?
2. *continued relevance*
To what extent do policy objectives remain relevant in the light of changes in the external environment?
3. *effectiveness*
To which extent have the objectives of the programme been achieved?
4. *efficiency*
To which extent have the objectives of the programme been achieved at minimum costs?
5. *impact*
What are the net effects or changes in the socio-economic or environmental situation that can be attributed to the programme?

Impact: causal pathways between policy measures and rural development objectives

For assessing the impact of an intervention, it makes sense to distinguish a range of changes caused by the intervention: intended changes, unforeseen changes, deadweight effects which might have occurred anyway, and displacement and substitution effects, which shift the benefit of the intervention to particular beneficiaries at the expense of others (OECD, 2009b). A comprehensive approach for assessing the impact of an intervention is presented in Figure 2.2. The figure starts with a measure, which hopes to change the farm operators' or

Figure 2.2 Impact of a targeted rural development measure on rural development



Source: OECD (2009).

farm households' behaviour in order to reach a certain direct target, e.g. improvement of water quality. This direct target has an indirect impact on rural development if it contributes to the quality of life of rural inhabitants or sustainability of the rural area (arrow 5 in the figure). Apart from the direct effect of the intervention, the figure shows untargeted or unintended consequences of the intervention, which affect rural development via the arrows 1-4. First, a change in farm income, resulting from the intervention, might boost demand for goods and services, inducing multipliers in the up- and downstream industry (arrow 1). The benefits for the local economy tend to be larger if this demand is spent on locally produced goods and services rather than on items produced outside the local economy. In the latter case, the additional income leaks out of the local economy. Second, the intervention might also have consequences for input use, produced outputs and/or farming techniques, which affects demand and supply for goods, services and production factors in the local economy (arrows 2-4). The untargeted effects of the intervention, depicted through the arrows 1-4 could reinforce or work against the impact on rural development generated by arrow 5. The lesson to be learnt from Figure 2.2 is that any evaluation which

only focuses on the assessment of the direct target of an intervention, gives a one-sided picture, as other potentially important causal pathways would be missed. Of course, the evaluation of only one causal pathway is much simpler than the complicated analysis of several causal pathways. As such there is a trade-off between a partial approach, requiring fewer efforts but yielding one-sided results and a more comprehensive approach, demanding huge efforts and producing a more complete picture of the intervention's impact on rural development.

2.4 Assessment scheme for evaluation methods

A wide array of approaches, methods and tools can be used to conduct evaluations. In the assessment scheme for evaluation methods below (Figure 2.3) we present a list of questions which allow for a systematic description. As this study is especially focused on evaluation methods which aim at assessing the effectiveness and impact of interventions, we do not pay attention to the efficiency in this assessment scheme. This scheme is used for analysing evaluation methods in the next chapter.

Figure 2.3**Assessment scheme for evaluation methods**

1. Name of the method	
2. Source	<i>Specify both literature and on-line source.</i>
3. Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?	<i>In case of a measure: Which measure is evaluated? Include also the axis to which the measure belongs. In case of a programme: Which programme is evaluated?</i>
4. Evaluated location	<i>Specify region(s)/country(ies) where the evaluation is carried out.</i>
5. Period	<i>Which year(s) does the evaluation cover?</i>
6. Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?	
7. Description of the methodology	<i>a. Describe the overall design of the method. b. Describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact). c. How is the impact of the measure measured? d. Indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered. e. Discuss which data are needed for the method. f. Discuss how easy these data can be collected.</i>
8. What are the strengths of the method?	
9. What are the weaknesses of the method?	
10. Can the method easily be applied at EU level?	<i>Explain why or why not.</i>
11. Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?	<i>Explain why or why not, and specify to which rural development measures the method can be applied.</i>

3 Overview of evaluation methods

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter a number of evaluation methods are analysed by using the assessment scheme developed in the previous chapter. The methods are grouped according to the rural development measure or measures they intend to evaluate. So in section 3.2 we discuss evaluation methods of RD measures in axis 1; in section 3.3 evaluation methods of RD measures in axis 2; in section 3.4 evaluation methods of LEADER (axis 4); in section 3.5 evaluation methods of RD programmes; and in section 3.6 evaluation methods of other (EU) policies and programmes. We do not pretend to give an extensive overview of all possible evaluation methods in this chapter; we rather intend to provide a global overview of recently used evaluation methods of rural development measures that cover most of the measures of the second pillar of the CAP and that reflect the most commonly used approaches to evaluation of rural development policy as outlined by the OECD (2009b).

3.2 Individual measures: axis 1

3.2.1 Evaluation of the measure for setting up of young farmers in the Netherlands

1. *Name of the method*
Combined interview and survey approach.
2. *Source*
Ettema, M. (1992)
De vestigingspremie en haar effecten; Aanvullend rapport (Measure for setting up of young farmers and its effects; Additional report); The Hague, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries/Wageningen, Agricultural University.
3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*
Measure Setting up of young farmers.

4. *Evaluated location*

The Netherlands.

5. *Period*

December 1989-April 1991.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Mid-term evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. *describe the overall design of the method*

The method consists of interviews with six key actors (four extension service providers and two accountants) and a survey among 109 young farmers who received support from the measure. The survey counted 11 multiple choice questions and 7 statements, which was sent to an aselected sample of 120 farmers by mail. Then, all farmers were approached by telephone and were asked to answer the questions by phone. Out of the 120 farmers, 109 were prepared to respond to the survey.

b. *describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)*

The measure aims to facilitate the take-over of farms by young farmers and to support investments in farm modernisation after the take-over of the farm. By means of the interviews with key actors, it was asked whether the measure facilitated farm take-over and by means of the survey among young farmers it was asked whether the measure facilitated farm take-over and whether it supported investments in farm modernisation.

c. *how is the impact of the measure measured?*

By means of interviews among key actors and a survey among young farmers.

d. *indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered*

Direct results.

e. *discuss which data are needed for the method*

Data about the farm, about the farm take-over, about the use of the support and about further investment plans.

f. *discuss how easy these data can be collected*

Data are collected by means of interviews and a survey. Data collection is rather easy; the evaluation task was conducted in two months.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The questions are straightforward and give a clear insight in the functioning of the measure.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The survey was only directed at participants of the measure; so no information was collected about reasons why farmers did not participate in the scheme.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

Yes, the method of interviews with key actors and a survey among participating farmers can be applied to other measures as well. However, in case of application to other rural development measures, the list of questions has to be adjusted.

3.3 Individual measures: axis 2

3.3.1 Evaluation of the Less Favoured Area measure in the EU-25

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of the Less Favoured Area measure in the EU-25.

2. *Source*

IEEP (ed.) (2006)

An evaluation of the Less Favoured Area measure in the 25 member States of the European Union; London; A report prepared for DG Agriculture by T. Cooper, D. Baldock, M. Rayment, T. Kuhmonen, I. Terluin, V. Swales, X. Poux, D. Zakeossian and M. Farmer.

Internet source: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eval/reports/lfa/index_en.htm

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*
Less Favoured Areas (LFA) policy (axis 2).
4. *Evaluated location*
EU-25 (with most emphasise on EU-15).
5. *Period*
1975-2004 (for some questions, shorter periods were taken into account).
6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*
Ex post evaluation.
7. *Description of the methodology*

a. describe the overall design of the method

The method consists of a list of 17 'to what extent ...' questions, which are grouped in six themes. These themes are presented in Figure 3.1; as themes 3-6 refer to the impact of the LFA measure, we present also the questions belonging to these themes. The list of questions was defined by the European Commission. The questions are answered by using data from a large number of sources, including grey literature, official documentation on the implementation of the LFA measure, scientific studies, evaluations, data from the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN), data from the Farm Structure Survey (FSS), national statistical databases, and semi structured interviews in all EU-25 Member States.

Figure 3.1 Themes and evaluation questions for evaluating the LFA measure in the EU-25

<i>Theme 1: Eligibility criteria</i>
<i>Theme 2: Level of payment/compensation</i>
<i>Theme 3: Effects on farm income and farm structures</i>
<i>Q5: To what extent have LFA payments received by individual farms contributed to securing farm income? Which other direct payments did farms receive and which was the proportion of the total transfers in farm incomes?</i>
<i>Q6: What are the proportion of farms and the proportion of hectares in the designated areas that actually received compensatory allowances and were these payments provided regularly over time?</i>
<i>Q7: To what extent did the move to payments per hectare have an impact on land purchase prices and land rent prices?</i>
<i>Q8: To what extent did the level and the modulation of LFA payments have an impact on farm structures in the areas concerned?</i>
<i>Theme 4: Impacts on the environment</i>
<i>Q9: To what extent have LFA payments contributed to environmental protection (including landscape protection) and/or environmental degradation?</i>
<i>Q10: To what extent has the requirement to respect Good Farming Practice contributed to protecting or enhancing the environment?</i>
<i>Q 11: To what extent has the LFA measure worked in synergy with other CAP measures, or been in competition with them, in relation to environmental impacts?</i>
<i>Q12: To what extent has the implementation of the LFA measure contributed - in an efficient way- to match the main needs identified in terms of environmental sensitivity of the EU rural territory?</i>
<i>Theme 5: Impacts on land use</i>
<i>Q 13: To what extent have LFA payments helped to foster continued land use?</i>
<i>Q 14: What is the relative efficiency of the current LFA measure in ensuring continued agricultural land use as compared to other existing EU measures or national/regional measures?</i>
<i>Q 15: To what extent has LFA measure worked in synergy with other CAP measures, or been in competition with them, in relation to continued land use?</i>
<i>Q 16: To what extent has the implementation of the LFA measure contributed - in an efficient way- to match the main needs identified in terms of land use management of the EU rural territory?</i>
<i>Theme 6: Impacts on the rural community</i>
<i>Q 17: To what extent have continued agricultural land use and the maintenance of the countryside achieved by the measure contributed to the maintenance of a viable rural community?</i>
<i>Source: IEEP (2006).</i>

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The model of intervention logic of the method is presented in Figure 3.2. The diagram consists of two parts: an upper part and a lower part. The base assumption of the intervention logic is that the LFA measure aims to raise farm incomes to a reasonable level by granting a compensatory allowance to farmers in LFA in order to ensure the continuing of farming in LFA. The compensatory allowance is a compensation for difficult production circumstances due to the presence of natural handicaps in LFA. In the upper part of the diagram on the intervention logic, first needs of society are identified. These needs take account of the different morphological and socio-economic conditions across the EU, resulting in different types of LFA, as presented in the lower part of the diagram on the intervention logic. The needs are successively translated into general objectives, specific and operational objectives of the LFA measure. The operational objectives constitute the relevant goals and determine the rules of implementation, i.e. the input at farm level. Then the model of intervention logic continues with output at farm level, results at regional level and impacts at EU level.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact in terms of number of farms supported, income level in LFA and non-LFA and continued land use in LFA is mainly analysed by using data from FADN and FSS. The impact on sustainability and quality of the countryside was assessed by means of interviews with experts in all EU Member States and in-depth studies in a number of case study regions.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct and indirect results are considered.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Quantitative data on the number of farms, LFA subsidies, income, area and continued land use and qualitative data on sustainable farming practices in LFA.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data can be collected by using Eurostat regional statistics, the Farm Structure Survey (FSS) and the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN), by means of literature survey and interviews with experts.

Figure 3.2

Model of intervention logic for evaluating the LFA measure in the EU-25

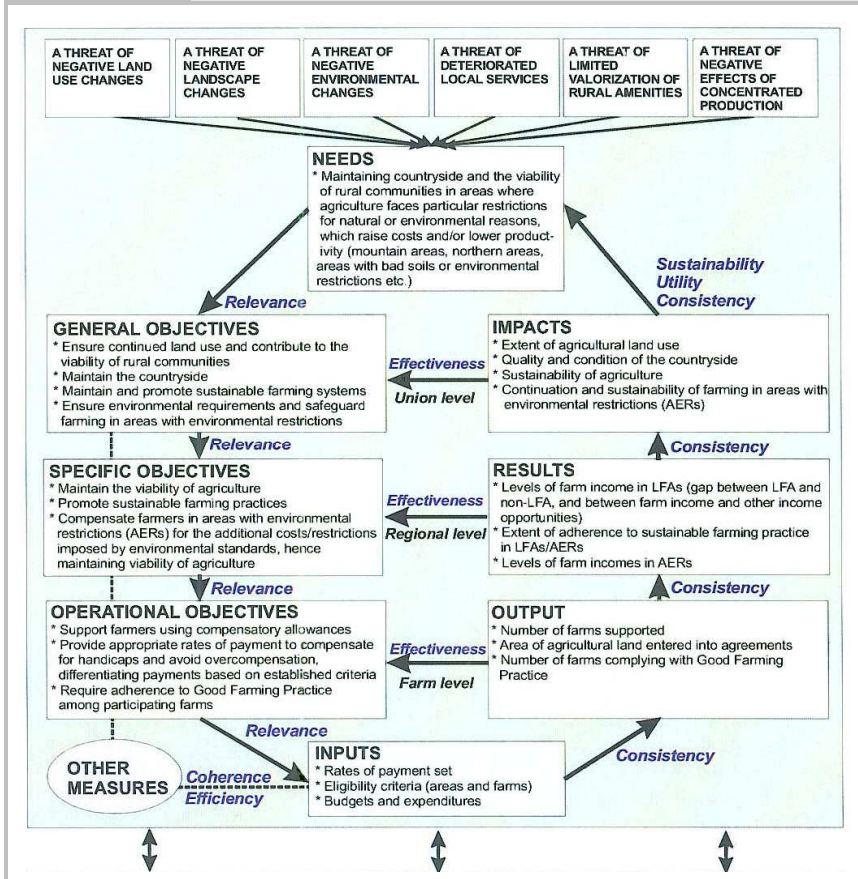
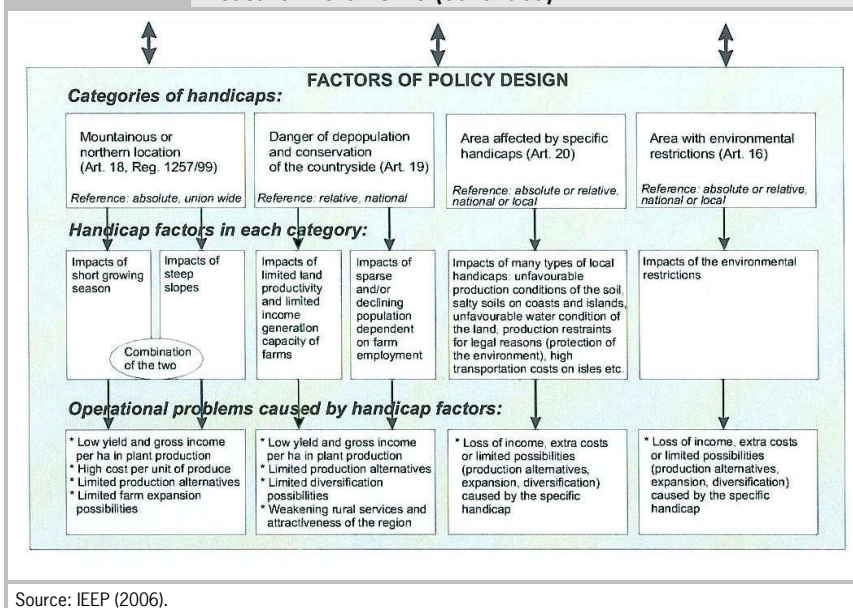


Figure 3.2 The model of intervention logic for evaluating the LFA measure in the EU-25 (continued)



8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The method produces transparent EU-wide results for those indicators that are easy to quantify, i.e. number of farms, income, area and continued land use.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The method is not able to isolate the contribution of the LFA policy in maintaining agricultural land use in LFA from other factors which contribute to continued land use in LFA.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

It is already applied at EU level.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, since the evaluation is clearly linked to the LFA policy.

3.3.2 Evaluation of the LFA policy in Austria

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of the LFA policy in Austria.

2. *Source*

Hovorka, G. (2004)

Evaluation of the compensatory allowances scheme under EU regulation 1257/99 in Austria and other EU Member States; Paper for the European Association of Agricultural Economists' seminar 'Assessing rural development policies of the CAP', Vienna, April 21-23, 2004.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

Less Favoured Areas (LFA) policy (axis 2).

4. *Evaluated location*

Austria.

5. *Period*

2000-2002.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. *describe the overall design of the method*

LFA in Austria are for the major part mountainous areas and to a lesser extent 'other LFA'. National objectives of the LFA policy are the maintenance of agricultural land use in LFA and remuneration of public goods produced by LFA farmers. In Austria, mountain farms are classified into four groups, depending on the degree of disadvantages. Compensatory allowances are differentiated for these groups. In order to analyse whether agricultural land use in LFA has been maintained, a comparative analysis of data on utilised agricultural area in LFA in 2000 and 2002 was made, based on national statistics. For assessing the remuneration of public goods, farm income from national sources is analysed. First, the share of compensatory allowances in farm income for the various

LFA farm categories is calculated, and second, the extent to which compensatory allowances close the gap between farm income in LFA and non-LFA is calculated.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The method does not describe explicitly the intervention logic between the LFA measure and the maintenance of agricultural land use in LFA and the remuneration of public goods produced by LFA farmers. It assumes that compensatory allowances make an important contribution in offsetting the disadvantages of the natural handicaps in LFA in terms of high production costs and low production potential.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact is measured in terms to which extent the gap between farm income in LFA and farm income in non-LFA is closed by compensatory allowances and by analysing statistical data on the development of utilised agricultural area.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

National farm accounting and farm structure data.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data can be collected by using national statistics.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The method is simple and transparent.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

There might be other factors beyond the level of farm income why farmers maintain agricultural land use in LFA. These factors are not taken into account by the method.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, since compensatory allowances are clearly linked to the LFA policy.

3.3.3 Non-parametric propensity score matching approach for evaluating agri-environmental and LFA measures

1. *Name of the method*

Non-parametric propensity score matching approach.

2. *Source*

Pufahl, A. and C.R. Weiss (2008)

Evaluating the effects of farm programmes: results from propensity score matching; Ghent, Paper for the 12th Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists, August 26-29.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

Agri-environmental measures and Less Favoured Area (LFA) measure.

4. *Evaluated location*

Germany.

5. *Period*

2000-2005.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. *describe the overall design of the method*

The method aims to assess the effects of policy measures with respect to input use (land, labour, fertiliser and pesticides) and farm output (sales) at individual farms. The method distinguishes two groups of farms: farms participating in the measure (treatment group) and farms not participating (control group). These groups are composed by using a panel data set (LAND data), which includes over 32,000 bookkeeping farms in Germany. It appeared that about one third of the farms could not be used due to missing observations for some variables. From the remaining farms, a group of 9,138 farms participating in the agri-environmental measures throughout 2001-2005 and a group of 7,195 farms not participating in the agri-environmental measures were identified. In

addition, for assessing the LFA measure a group of 502 participating farms and a group of 13,075 non-participating farms were selected. By using a two-logit model, the characteristics of input and output of participating farms were matched with non-participating farms in order to find pairs of participating and non-participating farms with similar input and output characteristics in the initial year 2000 (before programme participation). In total, 1,807 pairs of farms for participating/not participating in the agri-environmental measures and 452 pairs of farms for participating/not participating in the LFA measure were found. For these pairs, it was analysed to which extent farm input and farm output increased/decreased in the period 2000-2005.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The method does not describe explicitly an intervention logic between the agri-environmental/LFA measures and its impact on the biodiversity/land use. It rather aims to explore the impact of participating in the measures by comparing the development of farm input and output of pairs of farms participating and not participating in the measure.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

For the pairs of participating/non-participating farms, data on farm output (sales) and farm input (on-farm labour, off-farm labour, area under cultivation, number of cattle, cattle density, fertiliser expenditure and pesticide expenditure) in the years 2000 and 2005 is extracted from the database. As a next step, the average increase/decrease in percents in these indicators between 2000 and 2005 is calculated for the group of participating farms and the group of non-participating farms. The difference is thought to be the impact of the measure.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Farm accounting data.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data can be collected by using national statistics.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The method identifies pairs of participating and non-participating farms with similar characteristics. As a result, differences in the development of farm

input and output between these participating and non-participating farms can be denoted as the treatment effect.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

- The method only looks at the effects of policy measures with respect to input use (land, labour, fertiliser and pesticides) and farm output (sales) at the farm level, and disregards the evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy in terms of the degree to which a policy objective has been realised.
- The method employs individual data of farms in a Farm Accountancy Data Network, which are not accessible for everybody.
- The method requires a huge number of observations in order to find pairs of participating and non-participating farms with similar characteristics.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, as the Farm Accountancy Data Network is available for all EU27 Member States.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

This method can also be applied to rural development measures, which try to affect input use at individual farms, such as measures under axis 1 directed at improving human and physical capital.

3.3.4 Regression model on management of farm meadow birds

1. *Name of the method*

Regression model on farm meadow birds.

2. *Source*

Willems, F., A. Breeuwer, R. Foppen, W. Teunissen, H. Schekkerman, P. Goedhart, D. Kleijn and F. Berendse (2004)
Evaluatie agrarisch natuurbeheer: effecten op weidevogeldichtheden (Evaluation of agri-environmental measures: impact on farm meadowbird density); Wageningen, SOVON-Onderzoekrapport 2004/02.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*
Agri-environmental measures for farm meadow birds (axis 2).
4. *Evaluated location*
Netherlands.
5. *Period*
1990-2002.
6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*
Ex post evaluation.
7. *Description of the methodology*
 - a. *describe the overall design of the method*

The method analyses the development of the number of four species of farm meadow birds in 58 matched pairs of plots. In each pair, there are parcels with agri-environmental management (policy-on) and parcels without agri-environmental management (policy-off). For each pair of plots, the number of birds are counted at least three times, including a counting before the start of the agri-environmental management agreement and a counting at the end of the agri-environmental management agreement. Data on the number of farm meadow birds are derived from the national farm meadow birds data network (Nationale Weidevogelmeetnet). Trends in the number of farm meadow birds are analysed by using a regression model (based on poisson regression analysis).
 - b. *describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)*

The method does not describe explicitly the intervention logic between the agri-environmental measures and the impact on the number of farm birds. The hypothesis of the method is that the number of farm meadow birds on parcels under agri-environmental management would develop differently from that on parcels without agri-environmental management.
 - c. *how is the impact of the measure measured?*

The impact is measured by comparing trends in the number of farm birds in 58 pairs of plots (parcels with policy-on and parcels with policy-off). The number of birds are counted at least three times.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Data on the number of farm meadow birds and data on parcels with agri-environmental management schemes.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data can be collected by using existing data sets.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

It compares a policy-on situation with a policy-off situation, both at the start of the measure and after completion of the measure.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The weakness mainly refers to the used data:

- No information was available on the specific management prescribed by the agri-environmental measures, so no link could be made to the specific type of agri-environmental management and its impact on the number of farm birds.
- The parcels in each pair of plots were not exactly the same in their initial conditions; evidence exists that the number of farm meadow birds on the parcels under agri-environmental management during the analysed period were in the starting year higher than that on the parcels without agri-environmental management.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, when data on the number of farm meadow birds on parcels with and without agri-environmental management is available.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, the method is explicitly focussed at agri-environmental measures for farm meadow birds.

3.3.5 Evaluation of Dutch national policy for management of wintering goose populations

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of the Dutch national policy for management of wintering goose populations.

2. *Source*

LNV (2009)

Evaluatie opvangbeleid 2005-2008 overwinterende ganzen en smienten
(Evaluation management 2005-2008 wintering geese and widgeons);
The Hague.

On line source: http://www.minlnv.nl/portal/page?_pageid=116,1640330&dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_file_id=43322

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

A measure for the management of wintering goose populations. This measure started in 2005 and will be implemented for a period of 6 years.

4. *Evaluated location*

The Netherlands.

5. *Period*

2005-2008.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Mid-term evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. describe the overall design of the method

The management policy for wintering goose populations has four objectives:

- (a) to establish 80,000 ha of accommodation areas;
- (b) to design and implement a scheme for wintering goose populations in which farmers can participate;
- (c) to maintain the wintering goose and widgeon populations;

(d) to diminish the damage of grazing by geese outside the accommodation areas.

By analysing data in the base year and data collected in the monitoring phase 2005-2008, it is discussed whether these objectives have been achieved. Data refer amongst others to the ha of accommodation area, number of contracts with farmers, number of grazing geese and widgeons inside and outside the accommodation areas, the density of geese and widgeons in the various parts of the accommodation areas, the total population of geese and widgeons, the number of geese and widgeons shoot down outside the accommodation areas, the capacity of the accommodation areas to supply feed for the geese and widgeons, the costs of the management scheme and the prices of land inside and outside the accommodation areas.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The method does not use an explicit intervention logic.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

By analysing data in the base year and data collected in the monitoring phase 2005-2008, it is discussed whether the objectives have been achieved.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Data on the number of geese and widgeons and the number of ha of accommodation areas.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data can be derived from the Waterbird Population Estimates (published by Wetlands International), national statistics on the number of birds (SOVON) and national statistics on the ha of accommodation areas.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The strength of the method is that it is related to a policy intervention with clearly described objectives, whose achievement can easily be derived from the collected data.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The method is not able to isolate the contribution of the management of the wintering goose populations in achieving the objectives from other factors which contribute to the objectives.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, although wintering goose populations are only found in a few countries.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, the method is explicitly linked to wintering geese.

3.3.6 Evaluation of the nature management measures in the Netherlands

1. *Name of the method*

Measurement of the ecological effects of nature management in the short and medium term.

2. *Source*

Milieu- en Natuurplanbureau (2007)

Ecologische evaluatie regelingen voor natuurbeheer; Programma Beheer en Staatsbosbeheer (Ecological evaluation of nature management measures; Nature Management Programme and National Forest Management); Bilthoven.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

Measures for nature management on agricultural land (agri-environmental measure of Pillar 2) and measures for management of nature areas in the Netherlands, which form together the so-called Nature Management Programme (Programma Beheer).

4. *Evaluated location*

The Netherlands.

5. *Period*

2000-2006.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. describe the overall design of the method

The method measures both whether the ecological objectives of the management measures and whether the national policy ecological objectives as stated in official documents have been achieved.

The method consists of two approaches:

1. by combining data at grid level on the number of plant species, birds and butterflies with data at grid level on the type of land management for 2006, it was calculated which percentage of the area under nature management satisfies the objectives on the number plant species, birds and butterflies as agreed in the management scheme;
2. comparison of trends in the number of plant species, birds and butterflies in the period 1990-2000 with those in the period 2000-2006, in which a distinction was made among the various management schemes.

b. *describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)*

The method does not use an explicit intervention logic; implicitly the method assumes that the ecological effects at parcel level are affected by the management scheme and by external influences (Figure 3.3).

c. *how is the impact of the measure measured?*

By using an aselective representative sample of plots, it is calculated which percentage of the area under nature management satisfies the objectives of the management scheme in 2006.

Further, trends in the number of plant species, birds and butterflies in the period 1990-2000 are compared with those in the period 2000-2006 in order to assess whether the nature management schemes resulted in a change in the trend.

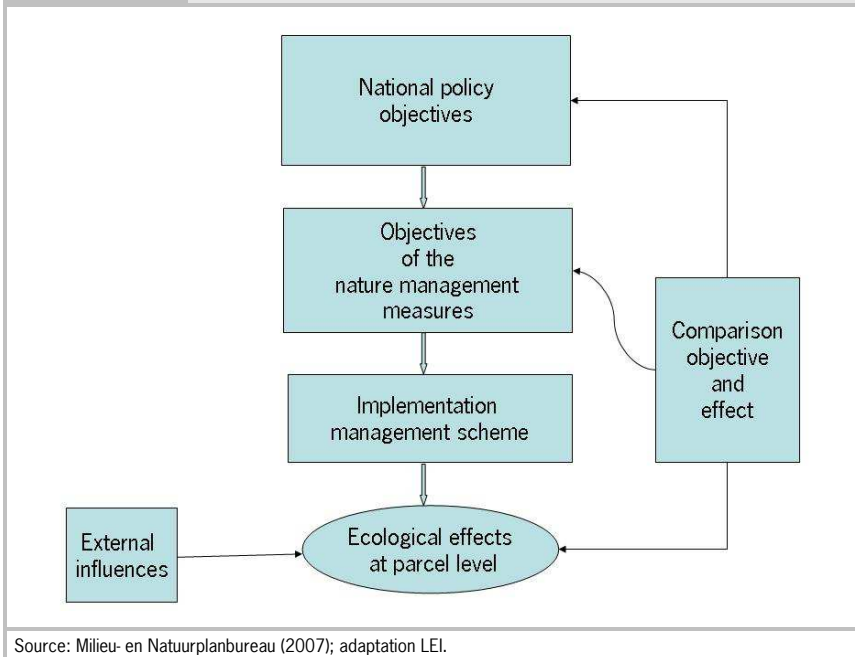
d. *indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered*

Direct results.

e. *discuss which data are needed for the method*

Data on the number of plant species, birds, butterflies and management schemes at grid level for the period 1990-2006.

Figure 3.3 Schematic approach of the measurement of the ecological effects



f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data from existing data sources have been used, supplemented by field work in an aselective sample of 187 meadows.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The method produces a transparent insight into the extent to which the quantified ecological objectives of the nature management measures have been achieved.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The method does not have a clear intervention scheme: it does not consider the causality between the management of the land and the ecological effect and it neither explains the impact of external influences on the ecological effects.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, when data on the number of plant species, birds and butterflies at grid level and data on management schemes at grid level is available.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, the method is explicitly focussed at nature management measures.

3.4 Leader (axis 4)

3.4.1 Ex-post evaluation of LEADER II programmes 1994-1999

1. *Name of the method*

Ex post evaluation of LEADER II programmes.

2. *Source*

ÖIR-Managementdienste GmbH (2003)

Ex-post Evaluation of the Community Initiative LEADER II; Wien,

Österreichisches Institut für Raumplanung (ÖIR).

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eval/reports/leader2/index_en.htm

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

The evaluation refers to a method/programme: LEADER II. In the 1994-1999 the LEADER II method consisted of four measures.

4. *Evaluated location*

EU.

5. *Period*

1994-1999.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. Description of the methodology

a. describe the overall design of the method

On the one hand, this evaluation follows the scheme of the 'classical' evaluation of Structural Funds programmes, with the descriptive assessment of inputs and outputs and the estimation of the effects (outcomes and impact) on Community objectives (Figure 3.4).

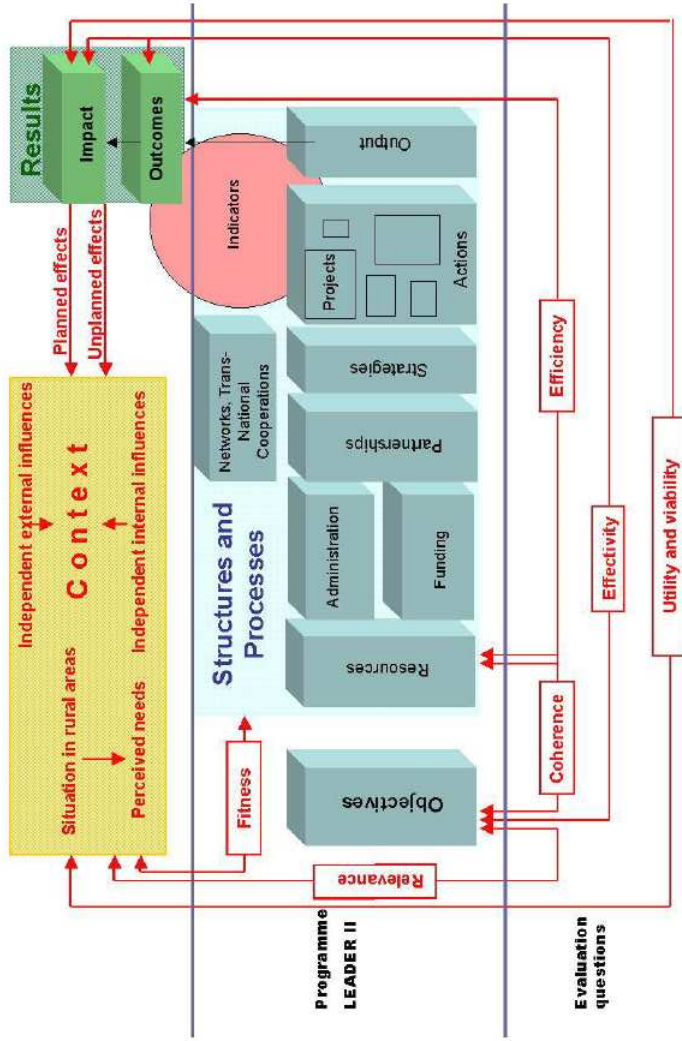
On the other hand, this evaluation looks into the specific features of LEADER II: desirable activities (inter-territorial co-operation, networking) and desirable ways to act (area-based, bottom-up, partnership-oriented, innovative, sector-integrating). This means that the evaluation is rather about the quality of processes (how) rather than the quality of outcomes (what). These specific features were regarded by the evaluation team as behavioural objectives.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

In the evaluation four blocks are distinguished in the programming cycle (Figure 3.5): context (1, 2, 7), implementation and output (3, 8, 5), impact (results and outcomes) (4, 6, 9), and effects on the context (10, 11, 12). The framework hereby distinguishes three types of context: socio-economic (1), temporal (2) and governance (7) and assumes there are effects on each category (10, 11, 12).

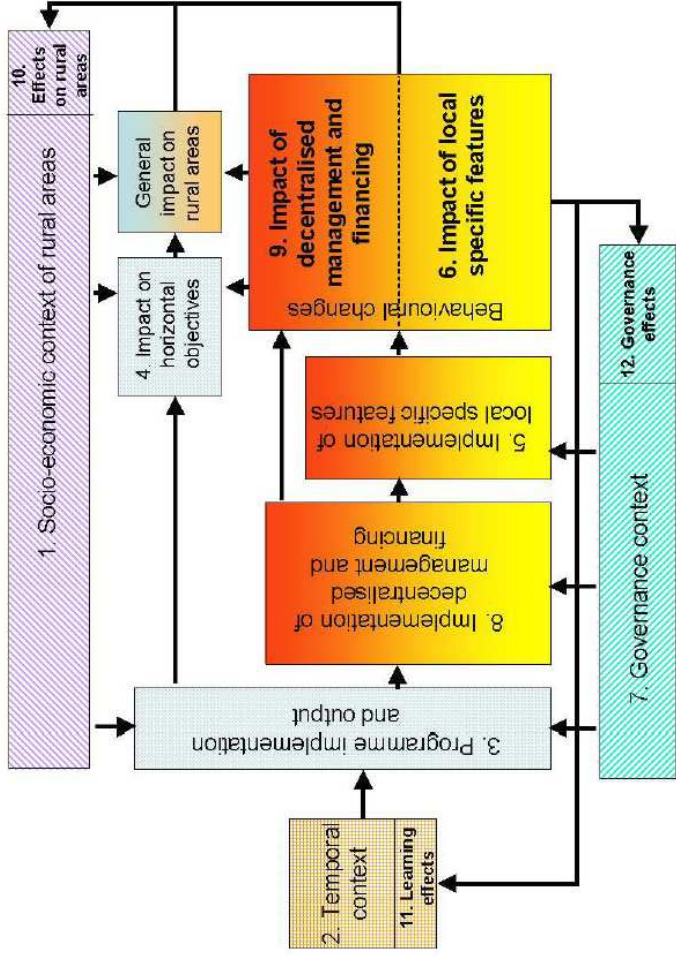
In the period 1994-1999 there were 102 Operational Programmes (OPs) and 998 Local Action Groups (LAGs) or other Collective Bodies (CBs) in the LEADER programmes of all EU Member States. From these LAGs and CBs 202 were selected to be evaluated in a survey for this evaluation study. In this survey more than 200 indicators were evaluated; all indicators can be attributed to one of the twelve boxes in Figure 3.5. 52 well-documented indicators were chosen to evaluate the influence of different factors on the implementation of the LEADER method, of its impact on rural areas and, in addition, on objectives of general Community concern. In the last step the 52 indicators were reduced to a set of 22 indicators which were used for a multi-criteria analysis (MCA). This MCA resulted in the formation of five types of LAGs according to their specific performances.

Figure 3.4 General evaluation scheme



Source: ÖIR-Managementdienste GmbH (2003).

Figure 3.5 Evaluation framework



Source: ÖIR-Managementdienste GmbH (2003).

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact of the four measures of the LEADER II method (acquisition of competences, rural innovation programmes, trans-national cooperation and networking) is measured by evaluating the effectiveness of the LAGs based on 200 indicators.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Both direct and indirect results are considered.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Data were collected through documentary analysis (of 34 operational programmes), a survey (of 202 LAGs), interviews, focus group discussions and case studies (13 trans-national projects and 10 cost-effectiveness analysis).

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

The answer on question 7e shows that data collection has been an intensive operation. The researchers faced a large diversity in the national monitoring and data collection systems and a loss of institutional memory due to fluctuation of people.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

- The methodological design is ambitious, carefully reasoned and clearly presented in the report.
- The researchers used multiple ways of data collection, which are effectively targeted towards the evaluation questions in the ToR.
- The evaluators made quite some efforts in the collection of data, which results in an impressive amount of data for the evaluation.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

- The researchers were not able to make good use (comparison and analysis) of the national/regional evaluation reports of LEADER II, because of the absence of a common framework for these reports.
- In some cases the link between data basis and judgements is not clearly visible.
- Due to the use of many data sources which give different answers to questions, there are some contradictory conclusions and recommendations.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, the method has been applied at EU level.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, although the method has been based on the classical evaluation method for Structural Funds, the method has been adapted and developed specifically for the evaluation of LEADER II.

3.4.2 Mid-term evaluation LEADER+ (2000-2006) in the Netherlands

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of LEADER+.

2. *Source*

ECORYS-NEI (2003)

Midtermevaluatie LEADER+ programma Randstad 2000-2006; Rotterdam, ECORYS-NEI.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

The evaluation refers to a method/programme: LEADER+.

4. *Evaluated location*

Randstad (Netherlands).

5. *Period*

2000-2003.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Mid-term evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

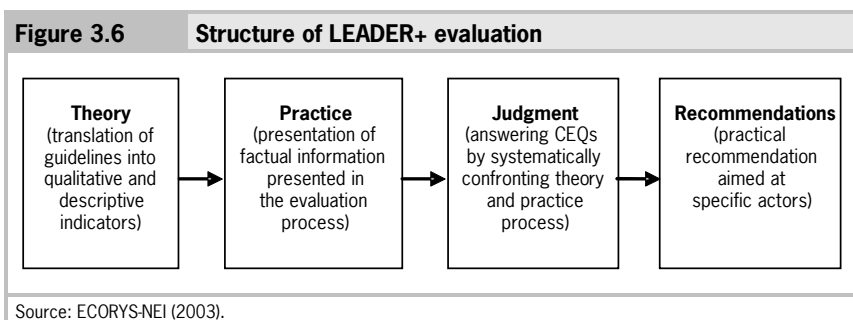
a. *describe the overall design of the method*

The evaluation method is based on the LEADER+ evaluation guidelines of the European Commission. Main element of the evaluation design is a set of common evaluation questions (CEQs) with corresponding criteria and

indicators. In this mid-term evaluation the European Commission asked to focus on the quality of the implementation of the programmes, since most programmes had just been started when the evaluation was carried out. Outcomes and impact were not evaluated. In a later evaluation the outcomes and impact were evaluated (report is not yet available).

In this evaluation three of the five subcategories of CEQs were addressed: to what extent does the programme take into account the specific characteristics of LEADER+; specific questions regarding integrated strategies in the programme, cooperation between different actors and building of local networks; and questions regarding finance, management and evaluation.

The questions are answered according to the four steps in the evaluation guidelines:



b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The method does not use an explicit intervention logic.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact of the LEADER+ measures was not measured/evaluated.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

The evaluation focuses on the quality of the programmes. This can be regarded as direct results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Programme documents (proposals, local development plans, results of the ex post evaluation of LEADER II and the ex-ante evaluation); financial and management information; own evaluations conducted by the local groups; structured interviews with key actors; and five telephone interviews with project leaders.

f. *discuss how easy these data can be collected*

Most data were supplied by management authorities; the (telephone) interviews were conducted by the evaluators and were the most time consuming. The report does however not mention the number of interviewed key actors.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The method strongly focuses on the quality of the implementation, not simply on what has been achieved.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The method does not have a clear intervention logic and does not evaluate the outcomes and impact of the programmes.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, since the evaluation design is based on the LEADER+ evaluation guidelines of the European Commission.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, the method is designed specifically for the evaluation of LEADER+.

3.5 Rural development programmes

3.5.1 Evaluation of the EU Rural Development Programmes 2007-2013

1. *Name of the method*

Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF).

2. *Source*

European Commission (2006)

Rural Development 2007-2013 Handbook on Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework; Guidance document; Brussels, DG for Agriculture and Rural development.

On-line source: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rurdev/eval/index_en.htm

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*
Rural Development Programme 2007-2013.
4. *Evaluated location*
EU-27.
5. *Period*
2007-2013.
6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*
Ex ante, mid-term and ex post evaluation (and ongoing evaluation).
7. *Description of the methodology*

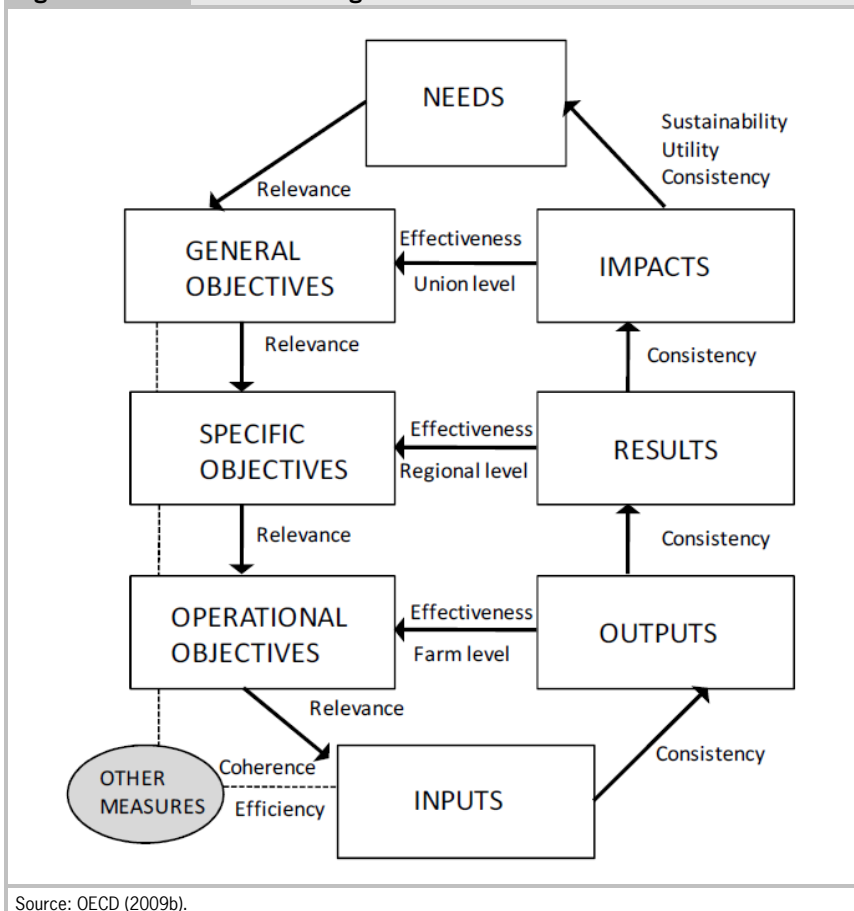
- a. *describe the overall design of the method*

The CMEF is an evaluation method that is drawn up in cooperation between the European Commission and the Member States, based on the experience from the 2000-2006 period. The CMEF employs over 160 indicators and nearly 140 common evaluation questions. The framework specifies a number of common indicators applicable to each programme. Member States are asked to define additional indicators to capture all effects of the programme and its measures, in particular to address specific local needs and circumstances. There is a distinction between baseline, input, output, result and impact indicators. For each of the RD measures in the programme there are a number of common 'to what extent ...' questions.

- b. *describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)*

The model of the intervention logic used in CMEF is presented in Figure 3.7. The intervention logic starts with the needs, which describe the socio-economic or environmental requirements to which the programme and/or measure should respond. Then the policy response is developed through a 'hierarchy of objectives', from general to specific to operational objectives. This hierarchy of three types of objectives matches with a hierarchy of indicators, reflecting the different elements of the intervention logic of a measure. Following the causal chain of the intervention logic, the indicators start with inputs (financial resources). These inputs will generate outputs (programme activities pursuing operational

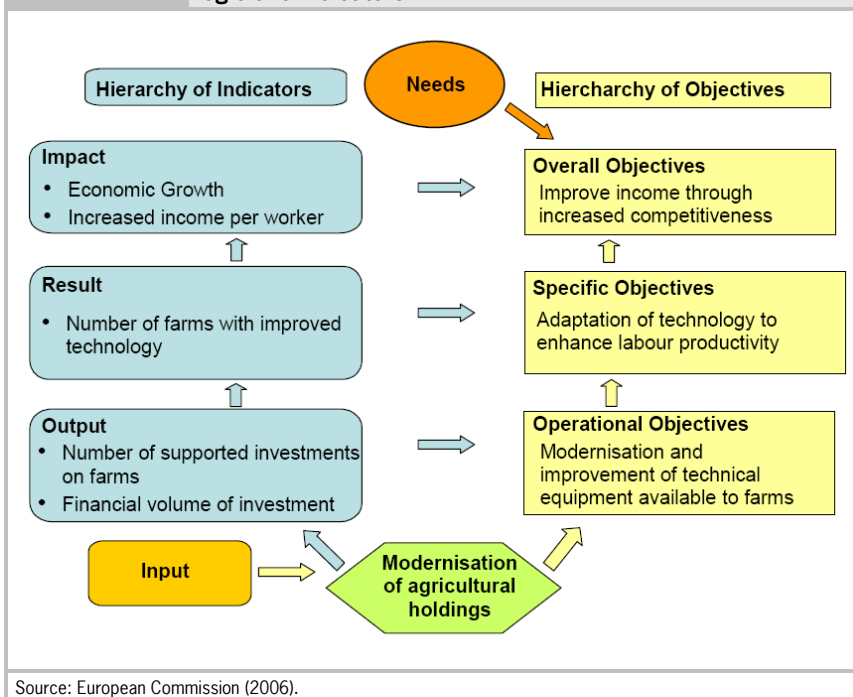
Figure 3.7 Intervention logic of the CMEF



or measures-related objectives). The subsequent results are the immediate effects of interventions (related to specific objectives), while the impacts contribute to the achievement of the overall objectives of the programme. These are to correspond to the previously identified needs. Figure 3.8 presents an example of the intervention logic for measure 121 (modernisation of agricultural holdings). The Common Evaluation Questions (CEQs) for this measure are:

- To what extent have supported investments contributed to a better use of production factors on agricultural holdings? In particular, to

Figure 3.8 **Modernisation of agricultural holdings measure: intervention logic and indicators**



what extent have supported investments facilitated the introduction of new technologies and innovation?

- To what extent have supported investments enhanced market access and market share of agricultural holdings?
- To what extent have supported investments contributed to an enduring and sustainable activity of agricultural holdings?
- To what extent have supported investments contributed to improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector?

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impacts of the measures should contribute to reaching the overall (general) objectives of the programme at EU level. The impact is measured by analysing the CMEF indicators and by answering the common evaluation questions. The baseline indicators serve as a reference point in the analysis of the output, result and impact indicators. The CMEF in-

dicators are collected by using many different sources. In addition, the common evaluation questions are answered.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

The method considers direct and indirect results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Data on the CMEF indicators and additional qualitative information for answering those common evaluation questions which cannot be addressed by the CMEF indicators.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data on the input, output and part of the result indicators are registered by the national payment organisations. Data for the baseline indicators and for a part of the result and impact indicators can be obtained from national statistics. For those result and impact indicators, which refer to the micro level (farm, firm, project), no statistical sources are available. These should be collected by the evaluator.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The European Evaluation Network for Rural Development has conducted a SWOT analysis of the EU evaluation system including CMEF (Evaluation Expert Network, 2009). They put forward the following strengths of the method:

- The method has an extensive handbook which provides guidance for all phases of evaluation;
- Measure and indicator fiches serve as good tools for describing measures, indicators and questions in the evaluation;
- There is a clear division between input, output, results, impact and baseline indicators;
- There is good consideration of the baseline situation.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

According to the European Evaluation Network for Rural Development (2009), weaknesses of the CMEF method are amongst others:

- The structure of the handbook (in terms of monitoring and evaluation logic) is unclear;
- The common framework has a number of limitations, especially with respect to indicators for axis 3 and 4 (territorial policy);
- The method ('bottom-up estimation of impact') implies methodological challenges and requires high professional skills by the evaluators;

- A clear differentiation of responsibilities between Managing Authorities and evaluators in terms of data collection is not possible.

In addition, it could be wondered whether the impact indicators are measured at the right level. According to the CMEF, the impact has to be measured at the programme level, which either refers to the regional or national level. However, the impact of many measures targeted at the farm level is often only felt locally, and fades away in the total amount of actions at the regional or national level.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

It is already applied at EU level.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

The method is already applied to all rural development measures.

3.5.2 Evaluation of the Rural Development Programme 2000-2006 (the Netherlands)

1. *Name of the method*

Ex post evaluation of the Dutch Rural Development Programme 2000-2006.

2. *Source*

Venema, G.S., L.C. van Staalduinen, K.H.M. van Bommel, F.G. Boonstra, M.E. Sanders and A.P.M. Linders (2009)

Ex post evaluatie van het Plattelandsontwikkelingsprogramma Nederland 2000-2006 (POP1); (Ex post evaluation RDP the Netherlands 2000-2006); The Hague, LEI Report 2008-073.

<http://www.lei.wur.nl/NL/publicaties+en+producten/LEIpublicaties/?id=980>

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

The evaluation refers to a programme: Rural Development Programme 2000-2006 for the Netherlands.

4. *Evaluated location*

Netherlands.

5. *Period*

2000-2006.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. describe the overall design of the method

The evaluation is carried out on the basis of Common Evaluation Questions (CEQs), criteria and indicators. The CEQs include chapter-specific questions for each of the nine chapters of the Council Regulation for Rural Development and cross-cutting questions covering all chapters. The cross-cutting questions analyse the transversal global impacts of rural development assistance, the relationship between different questions and the administrative and implementing arrangements. Figure 3.9 shows the relationship between evaluation questions, criteria and indicators for chapter III (Training).

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

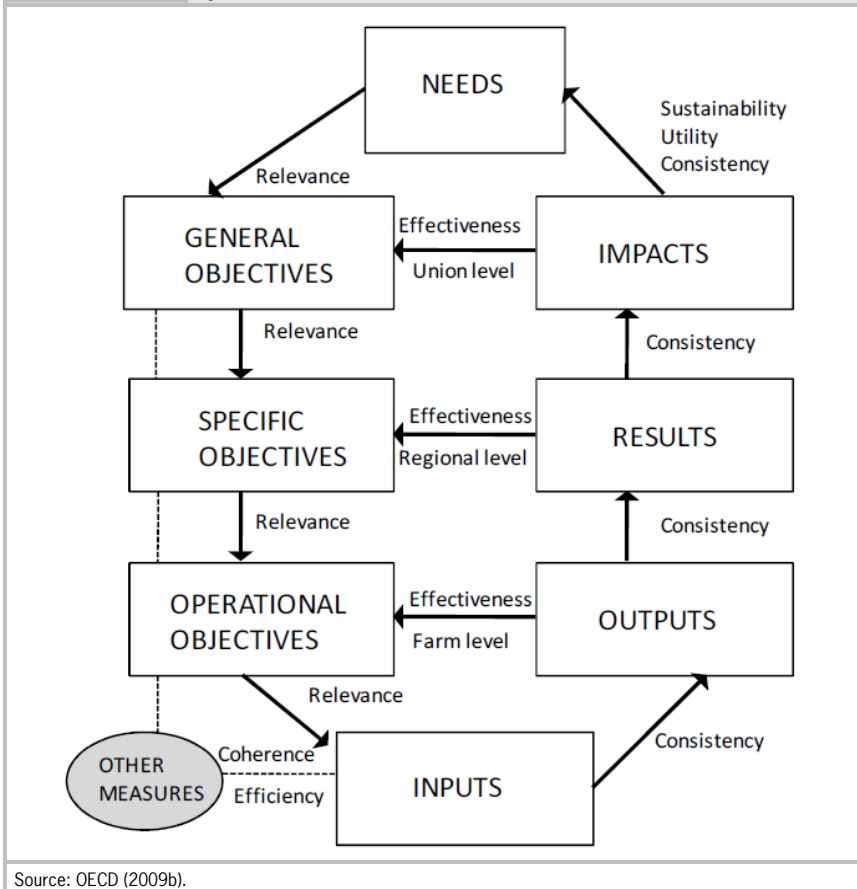
The intervention logic is similar to the intervention logic of CMEF (Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.9 Set of common evaluation questions, criteria and indicators for chapter III (Training)

Questions	Criteria	Indicators
<p>III.1. To what extent are the assisted training courses in accordance with needs and coherent with other measures of the programme?</p>	<p>III.1-1. The training responds to the needs and potential for adaptation (<i>conversion, reorientation, improvement</i>) at the level of individuals, sectors or regions (<i>including gaps/weaknesses or potential/opportunities identified during programming or ex-ante evaluation</i>)</p>	<p>III.1-1-1. Share of assisted training accommodating issues identified as gaps/weaknesses or potential/opportunities during programming/ex-ante evaluation (%)</p> <p>(a) of which thanks to the type/mix of participants (e.g., young people, women...) (%)</p> <p>(b) of which thanks to the topic/contents of the courses (%)</p> <p>(c) of which related to co-financed actions of other chapters of the programme (%)</p>
<p>III.2. To what extent have the acquired skills/competence helped improve the situation of the trainees and of the agricultural/forestry sector?</p>	<p>III.2-1. The skills/competence acquired by the trainees help improve their employment conditions</p>	<p>III.2-1-1. Share of assisted trainees (both holders and employees) experiencing job improvements related to the training (%)</p> <p>(a) of which farm/forest holders (%)</p> <p>(b) of which employees (%)</p> <p>(c) of which thanks to better remuneration (%)</p> <p>(d) of which thanks to non-pecuniary job quality (e.g., seasonal/contractual work security, exposure to risk and adverse conditions, job-variation/enrichment...) (%)</p>
	<p>III.2-2. The skills/competence acquired by the trainees facilitate the adaptation of agriculture and forestry (conversion/reorientation/improvement)</p>	<p>III.2-2-1. Share of holdings with an assisted trainee, initiating conversion/reorientation/improvement related to the assisted training (%)</p> <p>(a) of which new/additional activities (%)</p> <p>(b) of which improved quality/hygiene/added value concerning existing activities (%)</p> <p>(c) of which management related (%)</p> <p>(d) of which environmental benign methods/practices (%)</p> <p>(e) of which farming (%)</p> <p>(f) of which forestry (%)</p>

Source: European Commission (2000).

Figure 3.10 Relation between objectives and impacts in the programming cycle



c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

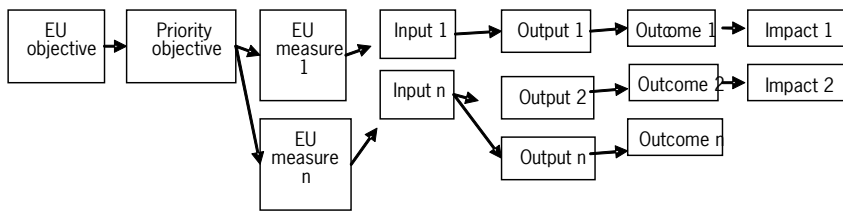
The impact of a measure in the programme is measured according to the Logical Diagram of Impacts (LDI) (Figure 3.11).

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

The method considers direct and indirect results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Quantitative data for the indicators and additional qualitative information where not quantitative data were available.

Figure 3.11**Logical Diagram of Impacts (LDI)**

Source: Venema et al. (2008).

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data on the input, output and part of the result indicators are registered by the national payment organisations. Data for the baseline indicators and for a part of the result and impact indicators can be obtained from national statistics. For those result and impact indicators, which refer to the micro level (farm, project), no statistical sources are available. These should be collected by the evaluator. For some measures, Provincial Programmes and chapters a large number (in total) of interviews were carried out with key actors.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The impact of measures is viewed in the context of priority targets and broader EU targets (see the Logical Diagram of Impacts in Figure 3.11).

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The monitoring system is not always well equipped to supply the necessary data for the evaluation (e.g. there is not systematic monitoring system for ecological impact after the implementation of the measures).

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, the method has been applied in other EU countries as well.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

The method is already applied to all rural development measures.

3.5.3 Evaluation of the Rural Development Programme 2000-2006 (Flanders)

1. *Name of the method*

Ex post evaluation of the Flemish Rural Development Programme 2000-2006.

2. *Source*

IDEA Consult, University of Ghent, Belconsulting, VUB (2008)
Ex-post evaluatie van het Vlaams plattelandsontwikkelingsprogramma 2000-2006; Research for the Flemish Government, Department Agriculture and Fisheries; Brussels, IDEA Consult

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

The evaluation refers to a programme: Programming Document for Rural Development 1.

4. *Evaluated location*

Flanders (Belgium).

5. *Period*

2000-2006.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. *describe the overall design of the method*

In the method each measure of the programme is assessed for its contribution to realising the objectives (at measure and at programme level), based on the EU Common Evaluation Questions. The assessment is made using several criteria: priority (to what extent is the measure meant to contribute to a certain objective); causality (link between instrument and objective); implementation (good execution of measure by government and beneficiaries); participation (sufficient beneficiaries to reach the targets); and targeting (which beneficiaries, areas, conditions, et cetera).

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

In the method only those measures and themes with a significant expected impact were selected for an evaluation of the contribution to the general objectives (impact indicators). With measures the rural development measures from the RDP are meant, the themes (and subthemes) are the themes that are identified by the evaluators within the three axes of the RDP (examples of subthemes are soil and water, within the theme environment, nature and landscape). The evaluation approach has three steps:

1. mapping the potential impact of the measures;
2. translate the potential impact into expected impact on the basis of implementation elements (budget, coverage of beneficiaries, et cetera);
3. choice of themes and measures for the evaluation (achievement of objectives).

Three categories of themes/measures were identified:

1. themes/measures with a high potential impact and a high expected impact;
2. themes/measures with a high potential impact but a low expected impact;
3. themes/measures with a low potential impact.

For each measure an analysis is made of the targeting, participation and implementation. Only for measures in category 1 and 2 the contribution of all relevant measures to the impact indicators is assessed (has the objective of the measure been achieved?).

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact of the measures in category 1 is assessed through an in-depth evaluation on the basis of primary data collection and analysis (questionnaires, interviews, crossing of data). The measures in category 2 are evaluated on the basis of existing information (in some cases completed with interviews). The explanations behind the low expected impact of measures in category 3 were also assessed.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

The method considers direct and indirect results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

The method uses primary and secondary data sources at different levels: targeted data collection at coordinating institutions, collection of extra (public) context information and collection of additional information through questionnaires, workshops and interviews.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Secondary data availability is quite good, since at the level of management authorities there were many information sources. However, it is time consuming to collect to right data. For some measures there is a large discrepancy between the data of the monitoring tables for the European Commission and the data from dossiers and government (management) agencies. Furthermore, not all data are available, e.g. information to estimate the environmental effects of certain investments.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

- The strength of the method is that not only the effectiveness of the measures is assessed, but also the effectiveness of the (sub)themes.
- The method also searches for explanations behind low (expected) impact.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

- Use of data: not all relevant data are available; therefore not all conclusions of certain sample surveys can be generalised to the whole group of participants.
- The method does not show the criteria for potential and expected low/high impact.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

The method is already applied to all rural development measures.

3.5.4 Mixed-method case study

1. *Name of the method*

Mixed-method case study based on analysis of documentary evidence and representative in-depth interviews.

2. *Source*

Midmore, P., L. Langstaff, S. Lowman and A. Vaughan (2008)
Evaluating Pillar 2 employment impacts: case study methodology and results for East Wales; Ghent, Paper for the 12th Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists, August 26-29.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

RPD 2000-2006 for East Wales.

4. *Evaluated location*

East Wales. The case study is part of the CARERA project, funded under EU Framework Programme (FP 6), which includes a set of six case studies in different EU countries.

5. *Period*

2000-2006.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. describe the overall design of the method

The method seeks to explain how Pillar 2 interacts with the structure and performance of the local rural economy, other policy impacts and the governance framework which delivers support. The method consist of two stages: an analysis of secondary data of the case study region, providing a contextual framework; and in-depth interviews of representatives of different interest groups (policy makers, policy implementers, large and small business managers, regional NGO officers and LEADER group managers). In the case study of East Wales, 21 interviews were conducted between November 2006 and January 2007. Interviews were

structured along a set of common questions, of which the most important are:

- How would you describe the rural economy and the problems that require policy intervention?
- What is your impression of ways that CAP rural development reforms have impacted specially on rural employment?
- In what way have the CAP rural development reforms related to other structural and regional policies?
- How has employment for farm families and farm workers been affected by CAP rural development reforms?
- What has been your impression of how the CAP rural development reforms have affected rural labour market issues for non-farm households and workers in other sectors?

By combining evidence of secondary data and the answers in the interviews, it was tried to find exploring patterns, which provide support for explanations for causal relationships and which assess relative strengths of each effect.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The method does not describe explicitly an intervention logic between the RD measures and the impact on employment. The overall idea of the method is to explore the employment impact of the RDP, taking into account the complexity of the context in which it is applied.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The method does not count the absolute number of jobs created, but rather discusses how measures positively or negatively interact with underlying features of the rural economy.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

The method considers direct and indirect results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Secondary data of the case study region and primary data on the local rural economy.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Secondary data can be obtained from existing national and regional statistics and primary data on the local rural economy by means of in-depth interviews of representatives of different interest groups.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*
 - The method is easy to apply and transparent.
 - The method takes account of local key actors' knowledge of the rural economy.
 - The method shows how RD measures interact with the features of the local rural economy and whether the RD measures generate a positive or negative employment impact.
 - The method also reveals unintended impacts of RD policy.
 - The method shows how RD measures interact/do not interact with other policy measures and indicates in which field policy delivery can be improved.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The method does not measure absolute impacts.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, case studies can be conducted everywhere in the EU.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

The method covers the whole RDP, but it can also be applied to individual RD measures.

3.5.5 Inter-regional Social Accounting Matrix (SAM)

1. *Name of the method*

Inter-regional Social Accounting Matrix (SAM).

2. *Source*

Psaltopoulos, D., E. Balamou and K.J. Thomson (2006)
'Rural-urban impacts of CAP measures in Greece: An inter-regional SAM approach'. In: *Journal of Agricultural Economics* 57-3, pp. 441-458.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

The method is applied to explore the impact of three types of policies, which together constitute a 'programme':

 - a. farm income support from the EAGGF (olive oil subsidy, sheep and goat premium, LFA payments and Direct Payments);

- b. aids to increase farm productivity (farm improvement plans, young farmers, early retirement and technical support);
- c. support to diversification of economic activities (agro-tourism, small firms, food processing & marketing, environment).

4. *Evaluated location*

The Greek rural municipality of Archanes, its neighbouring rural area of Nikos and the adjacent urban centre of Heraklion.

5. *Period*

1988-1998.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex ante evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. *describe the overall design of the method*

A Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) represents flows of all economic transactions that take place within an economy. A SAM is an extended version of an input-output (I-O) table and belongs to the group of Leontief multiplier models (Roberts, 2009). A SAM distinguishes four groups of economic actors: firms, households, government (these are inside the studied region) and actors in the rest of the world (these are outside the studied region). The inter-regional SAM applied by Psaltopoulos et al. (2006) captures the economic relationships between three areas. A SAM can be used to analyse the economy wide impacts of policies. For doing so, policies are transmitted into monetary injections into the final expenditure of the different sectors in the economy (Roberts, 2009). In fact, policies are treated as an external shock to the economy. For doing so, information is needed on the amounts of funds allocated to the policy instrument(s) and on how these funds are distributed over the different users within the economy (Esposti, 2008). With help of multipliers, the change in the variables in the rows and columns of the SAM due to the external shock can be analysed: i.e. what happens with output, firm and household income and employment in the economy and which benefits leak outside the economy.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

Policies are transmitted as a monetary injection into the matrix representing the economy, and then the diffusion pattern of this injection in terms of generated output, firm and household income and employment - inside and outside the economy - is evaluated.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact is measured by using a SAM. For constructing a SAM, a huge amount of data is needed. For the SAM of Archanes-Nikos-Heraklion, data from the national I-O table, secondary sources, a.o. the Development Agency of Heraklion, Chambers of Commerce, National Household Income and Expenditure Survey and Regional Accounts on Government Flows, and primary sources through face-to-face structured surveys among firms and households in the three studied areas.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Indirect results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Data on all economic transactions in the studied areas, data on the amounts of funds allocated to the policy instrument(s) and its distribution over the different users within the economy.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data can be derived from the national I-O table, secondary sources, and primary sources through face-to-face structured surveys among firms and households in the studied areas.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

- Its conceptual simplicity and the transparency of the results.
- It can capture the distributional effects of external injections into a regional economy.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method? (Roberts, 2009)*

- The fixed input-output proportions and fixed expenditure propensities mean that Leontief models (I-O tables and SAMs) have an inherent tendency to overestimate positive feedback effects from a policy shock, and vice versa, overestimate the negative impacts associated with a decline in support.
- The model is static: the model is based on a single 'snapshot' view of the transactions that take place in a single year.

- Farmers use intermediate inputs and produce intermediate goods for further processing. As such, they form part of a network of inter-industry dependencies within the economy. Leontief models provide detailed and transparent insights into these vertical linkages in the agrofood chain. Due to changes in the nature of the rural economy (shrinking agricultural sector and growing industry and services sector) and the CAP (increasing emphasis on non-agricultural activities), Leontief models are becoming less suitable for rural development policy analysis. Services business have few upstream linkages with other rural businesses. Rural households are becoming more divers in the spatial distribution of income and spending patterns.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Would be possible; however, data requirements are demanding and are likely prohibitive.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

Yes, as far as rural development measures can be transmitted in monetary injections to some users in the economy.

3.5.6 Regional Social Accounting Matrix (SAM)

1. *Name of the method*

Regional Social Accounting Matrix (SAM).

2. *Source*

Psaltopoulos, D., K.J. Thomson, S. Efstratoglou, J. Kola and A. Daouli (2004)

'Regional social accounting matrices for structural policy analysis in lagging EU rural regions'. In: *European Review of Agricultural Economics* 31-2, pp. 149-178.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

CAP and EU Structural Policy financed by EFRD and ESF.

4. *Evaluated location*
Two lagging rural regions in Scotland (Western Isles and Wigtown-Stewartry), Finland (North Karelia and South Ostrobothnia) and Greece (Evrytania and Aitolokarnania).
 5. *Period*
1989-1993.
 6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*
Ex ante evaluation.
- 7.-11.
See description of Inter-regional SAM (section 3.5.5).

3.5.7 LEITAP

1. *Name of the method*
LEITAP (CGE model).
2. *Source*
Nowicki, P., K. Heart, H. van Meijl, D. Baldock, M. Banse, J. Bartley, K. van Bommel, J. Helming, K. Jansson, T. Jansson, I. Terluin, H. van Veen, P. Verburg, D. Verhoog and G. Woltjer (2009)
Study on the economic, social and environmental impact of the modulation provided for in Article 10 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003;
Brussels, DG Agriculture and Rural Development.
3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*
First and Second Pillar of the CAP.
4. *Evaluated location*
EU-15.
5. *Period*
2007-2013.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex ante evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. *describe the overall design of the method*

LEITAP is a computable general equilibrium (CGE) model that covers the whole economy including factor markets. It is often used in WTO and CAP analysis. LEITAP is a modified version of the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) model. In the modulation study by Nowicki et al. (2009), LEITAP was for the first time used for ex ante assessment of the impact of rural development measures.

In order to reduce the number of rural development measures, they have been brought together into six groups:

1. Human capital investments;
2. Physical capital investments;
3. LFA land use support;
4. Natura 2000 support;
5. Agri-environmental measures;
6. Investment support for non-agricultural activities that increase productivity.

Budget expenditure for the measures in these six groups are injected as a payment at various places in the model. Human and physical capital investments are assumed to result in a technological change, reducing all inputs per unit of output (increase in productivity). The rate of returns on these investments (i.e. ratio of investment and percentage increase in productivity) are derived from literature. LFA and Natura 2000 payments are treated as a payment to land. Agri-environmental payments are linked to the land and to a yield and labour productivity loss. Investment support for non-agricultural activities is treated as payments that increase productivity.

b. *describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)*

First, for each rural development measure, the global, intermediate, specific and operational objective - derived from the CMEF handbook (EC, 2006) - were listed. Second, causality between the objectives of each ru-

ral development measure and a set of economic drivers was established. This set of economic drivers includes total factor productivity, labour productivity, capital productivity, land productivity in agriculture, income payment (general), income payment (labour), income payment (capital), income payment (land), product quality, human capital, fixed assets and land available for agriculture. Finally, the link between these economic drivers and indicators showing the situation before and after the policy change was created. These indicators are GVA, gross output, number of farms, average farm size, farm income, agricultural labour force and total employment.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact is measured by running the model with the budget expenditure for the second pillar measures as monetary injection.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Indirect results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Many economic variables, in order to describe the whole world economy.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data for the LEITAP model is collected and stored by the LEITAP consortium. Members of the LEITAP consortium can use these data.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The method is able to deal with the complex transmission activated by a policy change and to present the economy wide impacts of this policy change.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

- CGE models provide comparative static findings by comparing the levels of key variables before and after the policy shock, and thus miss the long term cumulative effects of a change in the regional economy (Roberts, 2009). This implies that issues related to the Lisbon strategy, such as human capital, R&D and knowledge, whose aim is to induce technological progress, and therefore to increase factors' productivity, are not taken into account (Esposti, 2008).
- Public goods produced by the agricultural sector are not included in LEITAP, although they are an important part of the Second Pillar.
- LEITAP provides results at the national level, whereas a CGE model at regional level would be more appropriate for evaluation of rural develop-

ment policies. However, data for the construction of regional CGE models are often not available (Roberts, 2009).

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

The method is already applied at EU level.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

The method already refers to all rural development measures.

3.6 Other (EU) policies and programmes

3.6.1 Evaluation of the set-aside measure

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of the set-aside measure 2000 to 2006.

2. *Source*

Areté srl and University of Bologna (2008)

Evaluation of the set-aside measure 2000-2006; Bologna, Areté Research and Consulting in Economics.

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eval/reports/setaside/index_en.htm

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

The evaluation refers to a measure: the set-aside measure from pillar 1 of the CAP.

4. *Evaluated location*

EU-25.

5. *Period*

2000-2006.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. Description of the methodology

a. describe the overall design of the method

First, an in-depth description of the arable crops sector and of the implementation of the set-aside measure in the EU Member States is provided. Then, case studies were carried out in 7 regions. These elements, together with the study of the intervention logic of the set-aside measure and of the direct payment scheme, formed the basis for answering 13 evaluation questions (EQs) focusing on the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and relevance of the set-aside measure.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The intervention logic has been developed by the European Commission (DG Budget). In this intervention logic a distinction is made between two different categories of objectives:

- specific objectives: set in relation to the short-term results occurring at the level of direct beneficiaries of the measures;
- global objectives: set in relation to longer term and more diffuse effects (or global impacts).

Each evaluation question is answered in the same way (equal to the method used for the evaluation of the RDPs):

- identification of the relevant issues posed by the evaluation question;
- elaboration of the judgment criteria needed to address the relevant issues;
- definition of the set of indicators associated to the judgment criteria.

The intervention logic of the set-aside measure is provided in Figure 3.12.

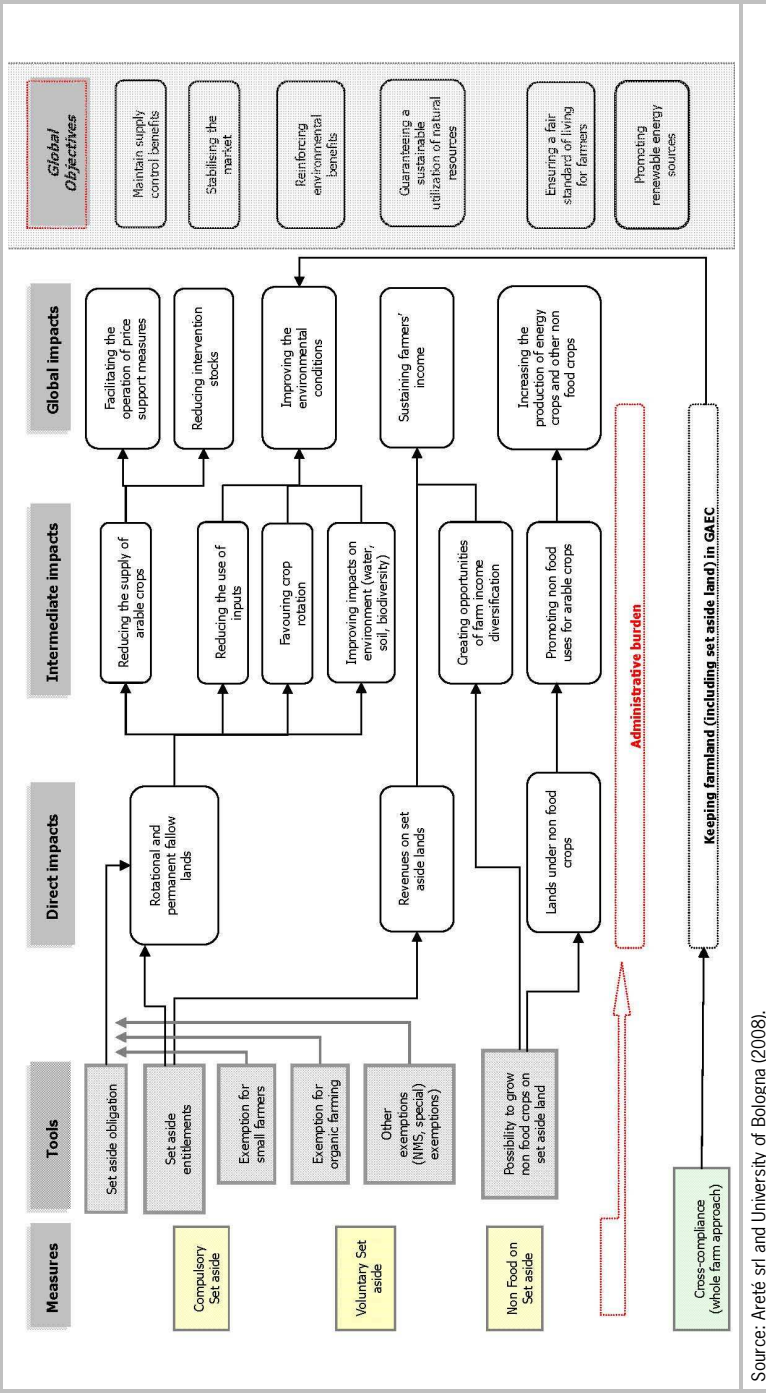
c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact of the set-aside measure is measured with 13 evaluation questions, with corresponding criteria and (mostly) quantitative indicators.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

The evaluation considers both direct and indirect results.

Figure 3.12 Intervention logic for the set-aside measure



Source: Arête srl and University of Bologna (2008).

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Data needed for the evaluation are sourced from case studies. Additionally, data and information from the EU, international organisations, stakeholders, independent experts and secondary/bibliographic sources are used. In some cases answers to evaluation questions are based on estimates by the evaluation.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

For some of the 13 evaluation questions, data collection proved to be difficult, because data were not available. In some cases interviews were needed to collect data.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

Methodological limitations on the validity results are clearly and carefully explained for each evaluation question, where relevant.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

Quantitative measurement of agro-environmental indicators proved to be difficult, although the alternative (a more qualitative measurement) proved to be adequate.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

It is already applied at EU level.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, since the evaluation is clearly linked to the set-aside measure.

3.6.2 Evaluation of Cohesion policy programmes in Objective 1 and 2 regions

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of Cohesion policy programmes 2000-2006 co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in rural areas.

2. *Source*

Tödting-Schönhofer, H., E. Dallhammer, I. Naylor and B. Schuh (2009a)
Ex post evaluation of Cohesion policy programmes 2000-2006 co-financed by the European Fund for Regional Development (Objective 1 and 2); Final Report Work Package 9: Rural Development; Vienna.

Tödting-Schönhofer, H., E. Dallhammer, I. Naylor and B. Schuh (2009b)
Ex post evaluation of Cohesion policy programmes 2000-2006 co-financed by the European Fund for Regional Development (Objective 1 and 2); Interim Report Volume 1 - Task 1 Work Package 9: Rural Development; Vienna.

Online source: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/expost2006/wp9_en.htm

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

Programme.

4. *Evaluated location*

Objective 1 and 2 regions in France, Germany, Poland, Spain and Sweden.

5. *Period*

2000-2006.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. *describe the overall design of the method*

The method consists of several steps:

1) A typology of fields of intervention funded by the EFRD is made by classifying the measures defined by Commission Regulation (EC)

No 438/2001 into six groups:

- Support of business with growth potential;
- Enhancing accessibility/infrastructure;
- Support to R&D and innovation;
- Fostering (business) networks;
- Supporting vocational training and other measures to strengthen entrepreneurship;

- Improving (the use of) regional resources - endogenous development.
- 2) Based on empirical observations, four drivers of development in rural areas are distinguished:
 - Population (density, demographic change and regional brain drain);
 - Economy (productivity, GDP, shift from primary to other sectors and technological change);
 - Accessibility;
 - Natural resources and environment.
 - 3) Based on an overview of theories on regional and rural development and the empirical observations on the four drivers of development of rural areas in the EU within the programming period 2000 - 2006, seven hypotheses are formulated on how ERDF policy programmes produce effects on development at the regional level. These are:
 - ERDF support for businesses with growth potential helps rural areas face economic challenges;
 - ERDF support for the improvement of technical infrastructure increases the accessibility of rural areas;
 - ERDF support for R&D projects fosters innovation, increases the innovative potential and creates an innovative milieu in rural areas;
 - ERDF support for vocational training and other measures to strengthen entrepreneurship increases the entrepreneurial potential of the regional actors;
 - ERDF support for the establishment and improvement of (business) links strengthens endogenous regional networks;
 - ERDF support for improving (the use of) regional resources and endogenous regional development increases regional productivity, growth and quality of life;
 - ERDF support for regional governance structures increases the use of regional resources and strengthens regional self-confidence.
 - 4) Each hypothesis is linked to 1-5 evaluation questions on the cause-effect relations between the drivers of development and the policy funded by EFRD projects. In total, there are 18 evaluation questions. The evaluation questions for hypothesis 4 are, for example:

- Has the use of EFRD measures lead to an increase in education and training activities in the regions and contributed to human capacity building in the region?
 - Has the use of EFRD measures lead to a development of the entrepreneurial spirit in the region? In which way?
- 5) Finally, each evaluation question is translated into measurable items which can be captured by empirical evidence. These items refer both to quantitative and qualitative indicators. In total, there are 53 indicators. The indicators for the first evaluation question of hypothesis 4 are, for example:
- Mio. € EFRD contributions to projects supporting vocational training;
 - No. of projects supporting vocational training;
 - Extent of regional innovation and capacity building which has been directly/indirectly initiated by EFRD measures in the field of education and training activities (judgment of interviewed experts vis-à-vis the real developments in the region);
 - Assessment through judgments of interviewed experts (vis-à-vis the real developments in the region) and analysis of evaluation reports of EFRD programmes.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The intervention logic of the method is presented in Figure 3.13. It is assumed that the policy intervention by EFRD affects the drivers of rural development.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact is measured by using 53 input, output, result and impact indicators and by answering the evaluation questions.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct and indirect results are considered.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

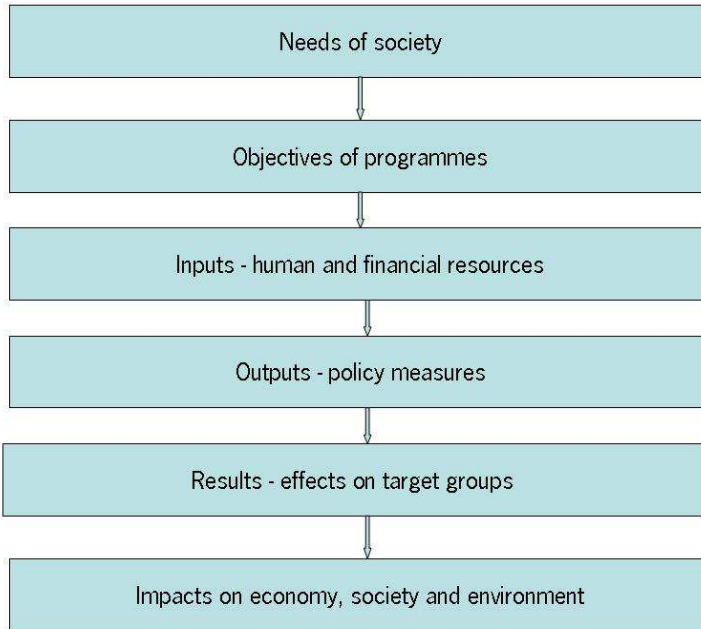
Data for both quantitative and qualitative indicators is needed.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

These data can be derived from the input, output and result indicators gathered via the monitoring schemes of the Structural Funds, via additional sources (national/regional studies and statistics) and expert judgements.

Figure 3.13

Intervention logic for the evaluation of Cohesion policy programmes co-financed by the ERDF in rural areas



Source: Tödting-Schönhofer et al. (2009a).

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The use of fields of intervention, drivers of rural development, theories on rural development and hypotheses gives a sound and transparent base to the interplay of EFRD policy measures and development in rural areas.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

According to Tödting-Schönhofer *et al.* (2009a), the weaknesses of the method refer amongst others to:

- the effects of EFRD policies on rural development cannot be isolated from effects of other policies on rural development;
- the time span of six years for potential effects to unfold is rather too short for such effects to be manifest.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, the method can also be applied in other Member States.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, the method is especially developed for interventions in the scope of the Cohesion policy. However, if this approach should be adapted to interventions supported by the European Fund for Rural Development (EFRD), then it could be used for the evaluation of the Rural Development Programmes of the second pillar of the CAP.

3.6.3 Evaluation of the Nordic aid schemes

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of the impact of Nordic aid schemes in Northern Finland and Sweden.

2. *Source*

MTT and SLI (2007)

An evaluation of the impact of Nordic aid schemes in Northern Finland and Sweden; Report for DG Agriculture and Rural Development and DG Economic Analyses and Evaluation, Jokioninen/Lund, Agrifood Research Finland (MTT)/ Swedish Institute for Food and Agricultural Economics (SLI).

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eval/reports/nordic/index_en.htm

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

The evaluation refers to the Nordic aid schemes, which aim to support agricultural production in certain regions in Finland and Sweden, where climatic and topological conditions and low population density pose special problems for the agricultural economy.

4. *Evaluated location*

Northern Finland and Sweden.

5. *Period*

1995-2005.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. describe the overall design of the method

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to analyse to what extent the objectives of the scheme have been met, if the aid scheme has led to any side effects, and whether the instruments applied under the scheme are still appropriate and justified. The evaluation is structured around ten evaluation questions which fall under five broader evaluation themes (maintenance of agricultural activity and improvement of agricultural structures; effects on the processing and marketing of agricultural produce; impacts on the environment; coherence and complementarities with other policies; and administrative impacts). The evaluation includes both quantitative and qualitative analyses.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The intervention logic has been developed by the European Commission and is equal to the intervention logic used in the CMEF.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

The evaluation considers both direct and indirect effects.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

In addition to the data sources from DG AGRI (European Commission) the method uses information obtained from official national registers in each country, complemented by data generated by a survey conducted specifically for this study as well as case studies (one for each Nordic aid sub-region).

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data collection through the survey was quite intensive, since about 1,200 farmers and about 100 other actors were selected in Finland and about 600 farmers and about 130 other actors were selected in Sweden.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*
 - The method uses a large amount of primary data from surveys.
 - The indicators used in the evaluation address the evaluation questions adequately.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*
 - The case studies have only marginally contributed to underpin the findings and to overcome methodological limitations.
 - The outcomes of the questionnaires are generally referred to without a critical interpretation of the information collected.
 - The modelling approach followed by the evaluators, by using modelling tools of separate design, has limited the comparability of results in the two concerned countries.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*
Yes, it is developed to make evaluations at EU level.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*
Yes, since the intervention logic is similar to the intervention logic used for the evaluation of EU rural development measures/programmes.

3.6.4 Programme Assessment Rating Tool (PART)

1. *Name of the method*
Programme Assessment Rating Tool (PART)
2. *Source*
OECD (2009b)
Methods to monitor and evaluate the impacts of agricultural policies on rural development; Paris, Working Party on Agricultural Policies and Markets, TAD/CA/APM/WP(2009)2/FINAL
3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*
Federal policy programmes.
4. *Evaluated location*
United States.

5. *Period*

Continuous (annual assessments early in every calendar year).

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

The method refers to annual assessment of programme performance (ongoing evaluation).

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. *describe the overall design of the method*

The Programme Assessment Rating Tool (PART) is a tool used for the evaluation of the effectiveness of Federal programmes in the US. The tool can also be used to inform management actions, budget requests and legislative proposals directed at achieving results. The programme performance is assessed using a standard questionnaire of approximately 25 questions that has four sections:

- a. Programme purpose and design: to assess whether the programme's purpose and design are clear and sound;
- b. Strategic planning: to assess whether the programme has valid long-term and annual indicators and targets;
- c. Programme management: to rate a programme's management, including financial oversight and programme improvement efforts;
- d. Programme results and accountability: to rate programme performance on indicators and targets reviewed in the strategic planning section and through other evaluations.

Each question requires a detailed explanation of the answer (yes/no) with supporting evidence, such as agency performance information, independent evaluations, and financial information. A programme must satisfy all the requirements of a question to earn a *Yes*; compliance with the letter of the law is insufficient. The answers to questions in each of the four sections result in a numeric score from 0 to 100, which are then weighted to generate an overall score. These numeric scores are translated into qualitative ratings: programmes that are performing can be effective (85-100%), moderately effective (70-84%) or adequate (50-56%). Programmes that are not performing can be ineffective (0-49%) or the rating can be 'results not demonstrated'.

Performance measures are grouped into three categories: outcome, output and efficiency measures.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

There is no clear intervention logic.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

Through quantitative analysis.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Data are needed with regard to the four sections mentioned under a, including financial data and management data for section 3 and performance data on indicators and targets for section 4.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

It does not become clear how much effort it takes to collect the data for the different sections. The main exercise is to fill in the questionnaire and give a detailed explanation of the answer with secondary data. In most cases data from independent evaluations already carried out, are used.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

- The programme gives a quick overview of which programmes are effective.
- The method contributes to the improvement of accountability and programme performance through its transparency of the process (results are published on a website: www.expectmore.gov).

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

- The method uses a standard questionnaire which cannot be adjusted for specific questions.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

The method is designed for the specific (governmental) situation in the United States and needs adaptation before it can be used in the EU.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

The method is already applied for various policy measures.

3.6.5 Evaluation of the Dutch greenhouse horticulture policy 1990-1994

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of the Dutch greenhouse horticulture policy 1990-1994: realisation of policy objectives, by using secondary sources.

2. *Source*

Algemene Rekenkamer (1996)

Beleid voor de glastuinbouw 1990-1994 (Policy for the greenhouse horticulture 1990-1994); Report 1174 R for the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries; The Hague, Court of Audit.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

Policy for greenhouse horticulture, more specific: realisation of the policy objectives regarding the use of pesticides, the decrease of dependency on pesticides, the decrease of emission of pesticides, the decrease of the emission of fertilisers and the improvement of energy efficiency.

4. *Evaluated location*

The Netherlands.

5. *Period*

1990-1994.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

7. *Description of the methodology*

a. describe the overall design of the method

There is no clear design. 1) The method has taken into account the 11 policy objectives of the greenhouse horticulture policy, of which 5 were quantified. These 5 objectives were evaluated. 2) Also the effectiveness of the used policy instruments was evaluated. There were 5 subsidy schemes, of which only 1 was testable and 4 other policy instruments, of which 2 were testable.

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

There is no real intervention logic. The method considers both the realisation of quantified policy objectives (direct) and the effectiveness of several policy instruments in reaching these objectives. Only for some policy instruments there is a link with the policy objectives. Therefore most policy objectives are evaluated without taking the contribution of instruments into account.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

By using secondary quantitative data to evaluate whether the policy objectives have been achieved.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct results.

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

The method uses secondary sources (existing figures of CBS, LEI, et cetera) to evaluate whether the policy objectives have been reached.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

These data are publicly available and no data processing is needed.

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

It is a simple method which does not require much data effort, but still gives a good idea whether policy objectives have been achieved.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

The policy cannot be evaluated in a proper way due to a lack of a proper policy theory (there is no clear relation between quantified policy objectives, measures and instruments). For most policy instruments the contribution to the policy objectives could not be measured.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

No, since the method is clearly linked to the greenhouse horticulture policy.

3.6.6 Evaluation of the area-based environmental policy in the Netherlands

1. *Name of the method*

Evaluation of area-based environmental policy ('gebiedsgericht milieubeleid').

2. *Source*

Dutch Ministry of VROM (2003)

Gebieden op de schop. Evaluatie gebiedsgericht milieubeleid. De methodiek, de multiplier en het milieueffect (Evaluation area-based environmental policy. The methodology, the multiplier and the environmental impact); The Hague, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment.

3. *Does the evaluation refer to a measure or a programme?*

The evaluation refers to a subsidy scheme (area-based environmental policy). The subsidy scheme provides financial support to the environmental policy of provinces in mostly rural areas.

4. *Evaluated location*

The Netherlands.

5. *Period*

1996-2000.

6. *Does the method refer to ex ante, mid-term or ex post evaluation?*

Ex post evaluation.

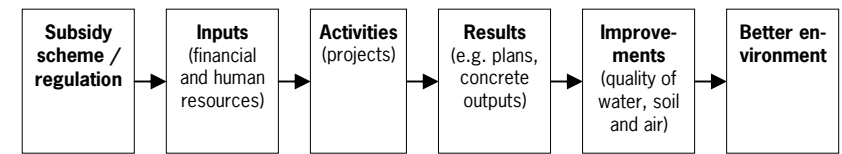
7. *Description of the methodology*

a. describe the overall design of the method

The evaluation consists of four steps:

- description of the subsidy scheme and its implementation;
- quantitative information about the activities in the programme in the period 1996-2000;
- analysis of the implementation of the scheme in 7 case study areas;
- evaluation/monitoring (what have been the effects of the subsidy scheme in terms of improvement of environmental quality) in particular areas as well as the whole country? These effects are assessed at project level, territorial level and national level.

Figure 3.14 Policy impact chain



Source: VROM (2003).

b. describe the intervention logic of the method (link between measure and impact)

The evaluation method uses a 'policy impact chain': the subsidy scheme/regulation leads to efforts at the side of the provinces (inputs: financial and human resources) (Figure 3.14). These efforts result in activities (projects) that have different results (plans, adjusted management system or concrete outputs such as a sewer system). These project results lead to improvements in the quality of water, soil and air. And these improvements contribute to a better environment for nature and human health. It is most easy to assess the impact at project level.

c. how is the impact of the measure measured?

The impact is measured using data from (provincial) data sources and measurement systems.

d. indicate whether direct or indirect results are considered

Direct results (outcome of projects) and indirect results (environmental impacts, but also multipliers: e.g. did the subsidy scheme lead to more cooperation between different administrative parties/levels).

e. discuss which data are needed for the method

Secondary data from data sources and measurement systems, mostly at project level.

f. discuss how easy these data can be collected

Data at area/regional and national level are difficult to collect, due to the absence of good monitoring systems (low priority at provincial level).

8. *What are the strengths of the method?*

The method succeeds in assessing the impact at project level and delivers useful results.

9. *What are the weaknesses of the method?*

- It is difficult to show the whole policy impact chain of policy efforts towards environmental impact (especially from project result to environmental impact).
- There is no general approach for monitoring/evaluation for all provinces.
- Other factors are also influencing the environmental quality (cause and effect).
- The method does not succeed in sufficiently assessing the impact at territorial and national level.

10. *Can the method easily be applied at EU level?*

Yes, the method (policy impact chain) can be used at EU level as well.

11. *Can the method easily be applied to other rural development measures as well?*

Yes, the policy impact chain is quite similar to the intervention logic used for the evaluation of rural development programmes, although not elaborated.

4 Comparative analysis of evaluation methods

4.1 Introduction

In chapter 3 we discussed 22 evaluation methods. These refer to individual rural development measures under axis 1, 2 and 4 of the second pillar of the CAP, to Rural Development Programmes, to other rural development measures or other policy programmes. According to their approach, we can broadly classify these 22 evaluation methods into five groups (Table 4.1). The first group includes methods that employ a hierarchy of indicators combined with evaluation questions, often used for EU-wide policy programmes. The second group refers to methods that simply measure by means of tally whether a quantified objective has been achieved. The third group uses econometric methods in the policy evaluation, whereas the fourth group uses models. The last group is the most diverse group, and refers to broad quantitative and qualitative analyses of direct and indirect results of the policy intervention, usually based on case studies.

In this chapter, a comparative analysis is made of these 22 evaluation methods. In this analysis, we use the items of the assessment scheme specified in Figure 2.3.

4.2 Comparative analysis

Covered measures by the evaluation methods

The studied evaluation methods in chapter 3 refer to individual measures of axis 1, 2, and 4 of the EU rural development policy or to Rural Development Programmes. Evaluation of axis 3 measures is usually part of the evaluation of the whole Rural Development Programme. In addition, evaluation methods cover the CAP, EU Structural Policy, the Nordic Aid Scheme, Federal Policy Programmes in the US and national environmental and nature management measures.

Table 4.1		Classification of evaluation methods according to their methodological approach
Approach	Method	
1. CMEF type approach (indicators and evaluation questions) (9)	Evaluation of the EU Rural Development Programmes 2007-2013	
	Evaluation of the Rural Development Programme 2000-2006 (the Netherlands)	
	Evaluation of the Rural Development Programme 2000-2006 (Flanders)	
	Ex-post evaluation of LEADER II programmes 1994-1999	
	Mid-term evaluation LEADER+ (2000-2006) in the Netherlands	
	Evaluation of Cohesion policy programmes in Objective 1 and 2 regions	
	Evaluation of the Less Favoured Area measure in the EU-25	
	Evaluation of the set-aside measure	
2. Tally approach (5)	Evaluation of the Nordic Aid schemes	
	Evaluation of the LFA policy in Austria	
	Evaluation of the Dutch national policy for management of wintering goose populations	
	Evaluation of the nature management measures in the Netherlands	
	Evaluation of the greenhouse horticulture policy in the Netherlands	
3. Econometric approach (2)	Programme Assessment Rating Tool (PART)	
	Non-parametric propensity score matching approach for evaluating agri-environmental and LFA measures	
4. Modelling approach (3)	Regression model on farm meadow birds	
	Inter-regional Social Accounting Matrix (SAM)	
	Regional Social Accounting Matrix (SAM)	
5. Mixed case study approach (3)	LEITAP	
	Mixed-method case study	
	Evaluation of the measure for setting up of young farmers in the Netherlands	
	Evaluation of the territorial environmental policy in the Netherlands	

Time period and location

The methods are usually applied for a time period varying from two to seven years. However, the PART evaluation of the US Federal Policy Programmes is a continuous assessment in each calendar year, whereas the evaluation of the farm meadow bird policy in the Netherlands covered a 12 year period and that

of the EU-wide evaluation of the LFA policy about a 30 year period. The evaluated location refers to the EU in five studied methods and to the Netherlands in eight methods. Individual EU15 Member States or groups of Member States constitute the evaluated location in the other methods.

Ex ante, mid-term and ex post evaluation

The three evaluation methods with a modelling approach were used for ex ante evaluation whereas the US PART method was used to support ongoing evaluation. Fourteen evaluation methods were used for ex post evaluation and three for mid-term evaluation. However, like the CMEF framework for the evaluation of the RDP 2007-2013, these methods can be applied for all types of evaluation during the policy cycle: ex ante, mid-term and ex post evaluation.

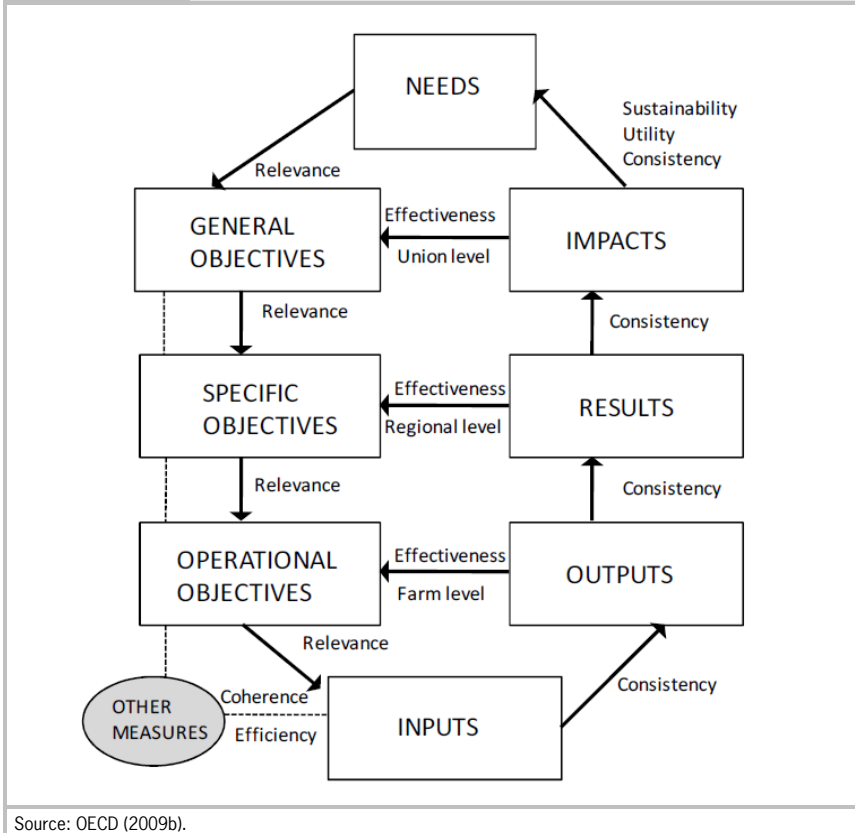
Overall design of the evaluation methods

The classification of evaluation methods (Table 4.1) reflects the various types of designs of the evaluation methods. A CMEF type approach, consisting of a combination of a hierarchy of indicators and preponderating qualitative evaluation questions, is nowadays the officially prescribed approach for the evaluation of common EU policies like the CAP and the Cohesion Policy. A pure quantitative approach for analysing whether quantitative objectives have been achieved is applied in the evaluation methods using tally, econometrics and modelling. A combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis is applied in the mixed case-study approach, which aims to assess both direct and indirect results of the policy intervention, often in case study areas. Although there is some similarity between the methods in the CMEF type approach and the mixed case-study approach, the methods in the latter group show much more flexibility in the selection of indicators and questions than the CMEF type approach methods, which uses a prescribed list of indicators and common questions.

Intervention logic

The intervention logic describes the logical link between the policy intervention and its results. Evaluation methods grouped in the CMEF type approach broadly use small variations of the intervention logic used in the evaluation of the EU Rural Development Policy 2007-2013 (Figure 4.1). The intervention logic starts with identifying the needs, which describe the socio-economic or environmental requirements to which the measure or programme should respond. Then the policy response is developed through a 'hierarchy of objectives', from general to specific to operational objectives. The operational objectives constitute the

Figure 4.1 Intervention logic of the Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF)



Source: OECD (2009b).

relevant goals and determine the rules of implementation, i.e. the input (financial resources) at farm or firm level. These inputs will generate a chain of outputs, results (immediate effects) and impacts (contribution to the achievement of the overall objectives of the programme).

The methods classified in the tally approach do not explicitly describe an intervention logic, but they assume implicitly that the policy intervention contributes to the achievement of the policy objective(s). Sometimes, it is acknowledged that external influences might affect the objective as well. Methods in the econometric approach do also not employ an intervention logic; they rather aim

to explore the impact of participating in a measure by comparing the development of indicators of participants and non-participants.

In the Social Accounting Matrices, belonging to the modelling approach, policy interventions are transmitted as a monetary injection into the matrix representing the economy. As a next step, the diffusion pattern of this injection in terms of generated output, firm and household income and employment is analysed. The intervention logic in LEITAP operates in a similar way: in this model, the objective of each measure is linked to a driving variable of the model. The impact is determined by comparing the value of the driving variable before and after the policy intervention.

Two of the methods classified in the mixed case-study approach do not explicitly describe an intervention logic between the policy intervention and its impact. The overall idea of these methods is rather to explore the impact of the intervention, taking into account the complexity of the context in which it is applied. The evaluation method applied on the territorial environmental policy, the third method in the mixed case-study approach employs a policy impact chain as intervention logic, in which the financial input of the policy measure results in projects contributing to the improvement of the environmental quality.

Measurement of the impact

For assessing whether the policy objectives have been achieved, the methods in the CMEF type approach analyse data and answer the evaluation questions. In the methods grouped into the tally approach and the econometric approach, the impact of the policy intervention is measured by data analysis, whereas in the methods in the modelling approach the models were used. Methods in the mixed case-study approach follow different ways for measuring the impact: quantitative and qualitative analysis of how the policy intervention interacts with the underlying features of the rural economy (mixed-method case study), interviews and surveys (evaluation of the setting up of young farmers) and data analysis (evaluation of the territorial environmental policy).

Direct and indirect results of the policy intervention

Evaluation methods can be directed at either assessing direct results of the policy intervention or can also use a more comprehensive approach by considering indirect results of the intervention as well. It appears that evaluation methods in the CMEF type approach consider both direct and indirect results of the policy intervention, whereas evaluation methods in the tally and econometric approach only focus at direct results. Methods in the modelling approach take only ac-

count of the indirect results, as the models are not able to calculate direct results. Two methods in the mixed case-study approach look at both direct and indirect results, whereas the evaluation method of the setting up of young farmers takes direct results into account.

Data needed for the evaluation methods

Evaluation methods in the CMEF type approach need data for the used indicators and additional qualitative information for answering those evaluation questions which cannot be addressed by the indicators. Evaluation methods in the tally and econometric approach use farm accounting, farm structure and environmental data, and sometimes data from monitoring databases. Evaluation methods in the modelling approach are the most data demanding: the Social Accounting Matrices need data on all economic transactions in the studied areas, data on the amounts of funds allocated to the policy instrument(s) and its distribution over the different users within the economy, whereas LEITAP needs data on many economic variables in order to describe the whole world economy. Data needs for the evaluation methods in the mixed case-study approach vary: the mixed-method case study needs data on the case study region and data and qualitative information on the local economy, the evaluation method for setting up young farmers needs farm accounting and farm structure data and information on investment behaviour, whereas the evaluation method of the territorial environmental policy needs environmental data and data from the monitoring system.

On the whole, most data for the evaluation methods could be derived from existing data sources and monitoring systems. For the evaluation methods in the CMEF type approach, the mixed-method case study and the evaluation method for setting up young farmers, additional data collection by means of surveys, interviews and workshops is needed, especially for answering the more qualitative evaluation questions. In the evaluation method of nature management measures field work in a sample of meadows is needed. The evaluation method of the territorial environmental policy is the only method discussed in this report which - according to our interpretation - experienced difficulties due to lack of data.

Strengths and weaknesses

For assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation methods, we have listed main properties of evaluation methods and explored whether these properties are applicable to the five groups of methods (Table 4.2). It appears

that a striking difference can be revealed between the evaluation methods in the CMEF type, tally, econometric and modelling approach on the one hand, and those in the mixed case-study approach on the other hand: methods in the first four groups in particular identify absolute effects of the policy intervention, whereas the mixed case-study approach tends to focus on the relative effects and features in the context of the policy intervention.

On the whole, the impact of the policy intervention is measured at the appropriate territorial level for the methods in the tally, econometric and mixed case-study approach. This is only partly the case for methods in the CMEF type and modelling approach. Methods in the CMEF type approach tend to measure the impact at regional or national level, which might be satisfying as far as territorial policies are evaluated. However, when sectoral policies are evaluated, it should be preferred to measure the impact at farm or local level, as the impact of such measures is often only felt locally, and fades away in the total amount of actions at the regional or national level. Within the modelling approach, SAMs are able to capture the impact at the right level, whereas LEITAP is only able to identify impacts at the relatively high national level. Methods in the CMEF type, tally and econometric approach and LEITAP can be applied to the whole EU territory, whereas SAMs and methods in the mixed case-study approach are restricted to case study areas.

Considering the amount of needed data for the evaluation method and the way in which these data have to be processed and analysed, it could be noted that the methods in the tally and mixed case-study approach are rather easy to apply for evaluators, whereas methods in the econometric and modelling approach require specific skills of the evaluator and methods in the CMEF type approach are rather time consuming due to its huge number of indicators and evaluation questions.

	CMEF type approach	Tally approach	Econometric approach	Modelling approach	Mixed case study approach
Diagnosis of cause and effect:					
- description of what has happened (in quantitative terms)	x	x	x	x	
- description of what has happened (in qualitative terms)					x
- description of how and why it has happened in interaction with the local context and other policies					x
- impact is measured at the right territorial level	partly	x	x	partly	x
Indirect results of policy intervention are taken into account	x		x	x	x
Unintended effects of the policy intervention are taken into account					x
Reveals reasons why actors participate in a policy measure					x
Covers the whole territory in which measure is applied	x	x	x	partly	
Easy to apply for evaluator		x			x

Extension to EU and Rural Development Programme level

The evaluation methods in the CMEF type approach and LEITAP are designed for use at EU level. All other discussed evaluation methods are designed for use at national level or for a group of countries, but the use of these methods can also be extended to other EU Member States. Some of the evaluation methods are designed for the evaluation of programmes, whereas others are designed for individual measures. It appears that the evaluation methods designed for individual policy measures cannot be applied for other rural development measures, as these methods tend to be measure-specific. There are a few exceptions: the method of interviews and a survey in the evaluation of the setting up of young farmers could be extended to other rural development measures if the

questions in the interviews and survey are adapted; the non-parametric propensity score matching approach for evaluating agri-environmental and LFA measures can also be applied to rural development measures, which try to affect input use at individual farms, such as measures under axis 1 directed at improving human and physical capital.

5 Concluding remarks

For the evaluation of the EU Rural Development Policy in the programming period 2007-2013, the European Commission has designed a Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF). The CMEF distinguishes four types of evaluations: ex ante, on-going, mid-term and ex post evaluations. These evaluations aim to improve decision-making, resource allocation and accountability of rural development policy. As such, evaluations can help policy makers in the formulation and reorientation of policies. The CMEF forms a rather comprehensive approach of rural development policy evaluation: data for about 160 indicators have to be collected and analysed and nearly 140 common evaluation questions (CEQs) have to be answered. Concerns on the CMEF refer amongst others to the large amount of indicators and evaluation questions, indicators and questions that bear little relevance to the circumstances of particular Member States or regions, and the emphasis on quantifiable indicators, which describe what has happened and detract attention from the more qualitative diagnosis of how and why it happened. A last concern refers to the detailed approach of monitoring which is required within CMEF.

Objective of this study

Given these concerns on the CMEF, the question arises whether alternative evaluation approaches for the evaluation of EU rural development policy exist. In this study, we have made a comparative analysis of evaluation methods on the effectiveness of rural development policy at measure and programme level in order to explore whether these methods give rise to recommendations for improvement and adaptation of the CMEF.

22 Evaluation methods of rural development measures

In this study we analysed a set of 22 evaluation methods of rural development policy measures. It has to be noted that this set is no extensive overview of all possible evaluation methods of rural development policy; we rather intended to provide a global overview of recently used evaluation methods that reflect the most commonly used approaches to evaluation of rural development policy. Our overview of evaluation methods refers to individual measures of axis 1, 2, and 4 of the EU rural development policy or to Rural Development Programmes, the

CAP, EU Structural Policy, the Nordic Aid scheme, Federal Policy Programmes in the US and national environmental and nature management measures.

Five groups of evaluation methods

According to their approach, we can broadly classify the set of 22 evaluation methods into five groups:

- the CMEF type approach: this group includes evaluation methods that employ a hierarchy of indicators combined with evaluation questions, often used for EU-wide policy programmes;
- the tally approach: this group refers to methods that simply measure by means of counting whether a quantified objective has been achieved;
- the econometric approach: this group uses econometric methods in the policy evaluation;
- the modelling approach: this group employs models for policy evaluation;
- the mixed case-study approach: this rather diverse group uses broad quantitative and qualitative analyses of direct and indirect results of the policy intervention, usually based on case studies.

Pros and cons of the evaluation methods

On the whole, all evaluation methods are able to capture the impact of the policy intervention in quantitative terms, except for the group of the mixed case-study approach (Table 5.1). The methods in this group rather discuss the impact of the intervention in qualitative terms. i.e. whether it has a positive or negative contribution. On the other hand, methods in the mixed case-study approach are the only ones that analyse how the policy intervention interacts with the structure and performance of the local rural economy. As such, they provide insight in how and why the impact happens.

Apart from the direct impact of the policy intervention, untargeted or unintended consequences might arise (indirect results), which may reinforce or work against the direct impact. Any evaluation, which only focuses on direct targets, gives a one-sided picture of the policy intervention, as other potentially important causal pathways would be missed. From this viewpoint, an evaluation method taking into account both direct and indirect results might be preferred. Methods in the group of the tally approach only focus on direct results; all other evaluation methods also consider indirect results.

Methods in the CMEF type, tally and econometric approach and LEITAP from the modelling approach can be applied to the whole EU territory, whereas Social Accounting Matrices and methods in the mixed case-study approach are

	CMEF type approach	Tally approach	Econometric approach	Modelling approach	Mixed case study approach
Diagnosis of cause and effect: description of what has happened (in quantitative terms)	x	x	x	x	
Diagnosis of cause and effect: description of how and why it has happened in interaction with the local context and other policies					x
Indirect results of policy intervention are taken into account	x		x	x	x
Covers the whole territory in which measure is applied	x	x	x	partly	
Huge data load	x		x	x	

restricted to case study areas. Considering the amount of data required for the evaluation method, these are rather moderate for the methods in the tally and mixed case-study approach, whereas the methods in the other groups need a huge amount of data. In addition, data analysis in the econometric and modelling approach requires specific skills of the evaluator.

Do evaluation methods give rise to recommendations for adaptation of the CMEF?

The pros and cons in Table 5.1 serve as starting point for assessing whether evaluation methods in the tally, econometric, modelling and mixed case-study approach give rise to recommendations for improvement and adaptation of the CMEF. It seems that the methods in the tally approach do not result in suggestions for adaptations of the CMEF, as counting whether the objective has been achieved is already included in the hierarchy of indicators in the CMEF. Pros and cons in the group of the econometric and modelling approach are quite similar to those in the CMEF type approach. Although the method for measuring the impact of the policy intervention differs, substitution of the hierarchy of indica-

tors in the CMEF by econometrics or models like in the econometric and modeling approach would increase the complexity of the CMEF.

Considering the rather different pros and cons of the CMEF type and the mixed case-study approach, it could be wondered whether the mixed case-study approach could provide recommendations for improvement and adaptation of the CMEF. Whereas CMEF could be described in terms of a global analysis of the impact of rural development policy, applicable to the whole EU territory, the mixed case-study approach is rather an in-depth analysis of the impact of rural development policy in a specific case study region. Although it could be argued that the mixed case-study approach provides very useful insights in the impact of rural development policy in a specific region, and explains why and how this impact is generated, while the workload for a few case studies is not too high, application of this approach to all EU regions would likely result in an unbearable workload. However, if it would be politically feasible to apply an approach to monitoring and evaluation of the EU rural development policy in which monitoring is conducted for the whole EU territory and in which evaluation is restricted to a number of case study regions, then the mixed case-study approach would be a useful addition.

Recommendations for improvement and adaptation of the CMEF

Given the findings above, it is recommended to consider an approach to monitoring and evaluation of the EU rural development policy, in which monitoring is conducted for the whole EU territory and in which evaluation is restricted to a number of case study regions. Such an adapted CMEF could operate as follows:

- monitoring the continuous progress of input and output indicators in all EU regions;
- evaluating whether the objectives of the rural development policy have been achieved in a few case study regions in each Member State. In the case study analysis, the baseline, result and impact indicators could be replaced by a set of location-specific indicators describing the rural economy whereas the common evaluation questions could be replaced by questions addressing not only what has happened, but also why and how the effect has happened.

Test case studies

In order to explore the perspectives of such an evaluation of EU rural development policy in case study regions, it could be considered to conduct a few 'test' case studies in addition to the regular mid-term evaluation by means of the CMEF. For conducting these test case studies, first a protocol with an overview of indicators and evaluation questions should be designed. Second, this protocol can be applied and tested in a number of case study regions. Finally, the results of the case studies can be compared with those of the CMEF evaluation. If the results of the case studies are promising, then it could be considered to look for sufficient political support in the EU in favour of an adaptation of the CMEF in this direction.

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