The Importance of the Evaluation of the LAG Local Development Strategies

Slovenian LAGs Festival
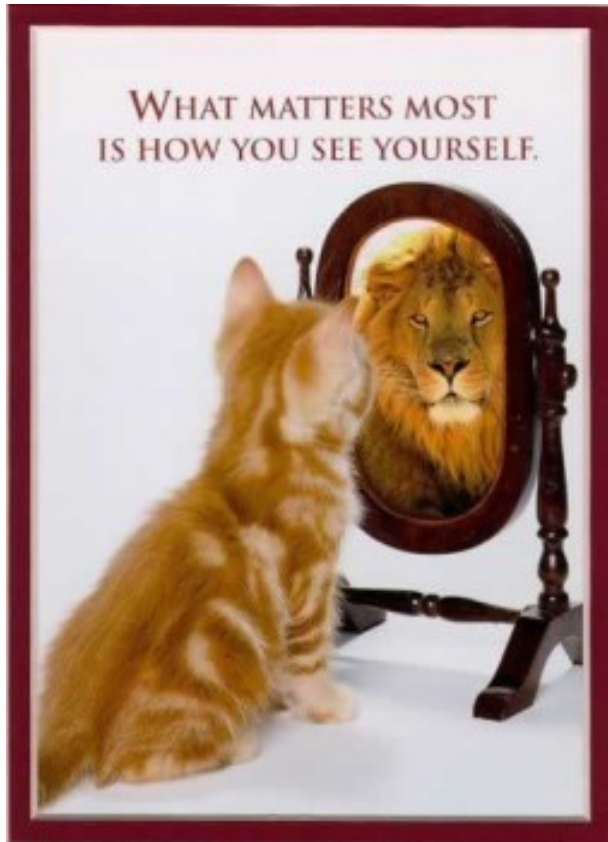
Kamnik, Sept. 7, 2018

Robert Lukesch

Why evaluate?

WHAT MATTERS MOST IS HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF.

- *Checking whether the LDS objectives are still relevant*

- *Knowing if the LAG has achieved its original aims and objectives*

- *Helping to critically reflect on how to improve the LAG's activities and processes*

- *Obtaining knowledge to demonstrate achievements*

- *Learning to make it better*

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A pleasant stroll through the fantasy world of concepts

Perspectives

The Use
of Models

Innovation
and Learning

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Perceptual positions (psychology)

3rd Position
"Outside" both
bodies.
"Objective" Position

1st Position
In your body
"Self" Position

2nd Position
In other person's
body.
"Other" Position

- *First position*
  Looking at the world through one's own eyes.
  Thoughts and emotions are totally associated.

- *Second position*

  Looking at the world through another one's eyes. The „significant other's" point of view. Thoughts and emotions are partly associated (through empathy), and partly dissociated.

- *Third position*

  Seeing the world from an outside point of view. Observing the first and second position from a dissociated position. Meta-position of a „friendly visitor from outer space"
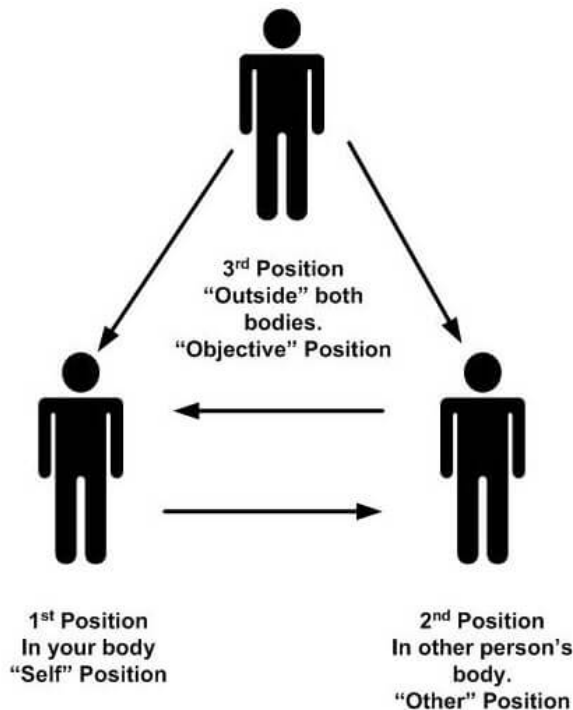
All three positions are equally important for evaluation.
You just have to be aware in which one you dwell in a given moment.

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Collective perception

- *Attention: INDIVIDUAL perception („Me") is not the same thing as COLLECTIVE perception („We")*

- *However, a well-balanced local partnership, focus group or sounding board can be regarded as an approximate impersonation of the local people, the „collective ego"*

- *A focus group discussion can therefore be seen as an „internal dialogue" of the „collective ego". This is also true when an external facilitator is involved, provided s/he is purely process oriented*

- *The more substantially external advisers/evaluators are contributing the more the action slips into the second position*

No method is strictly representing one position only, but they have their strong point in one position.
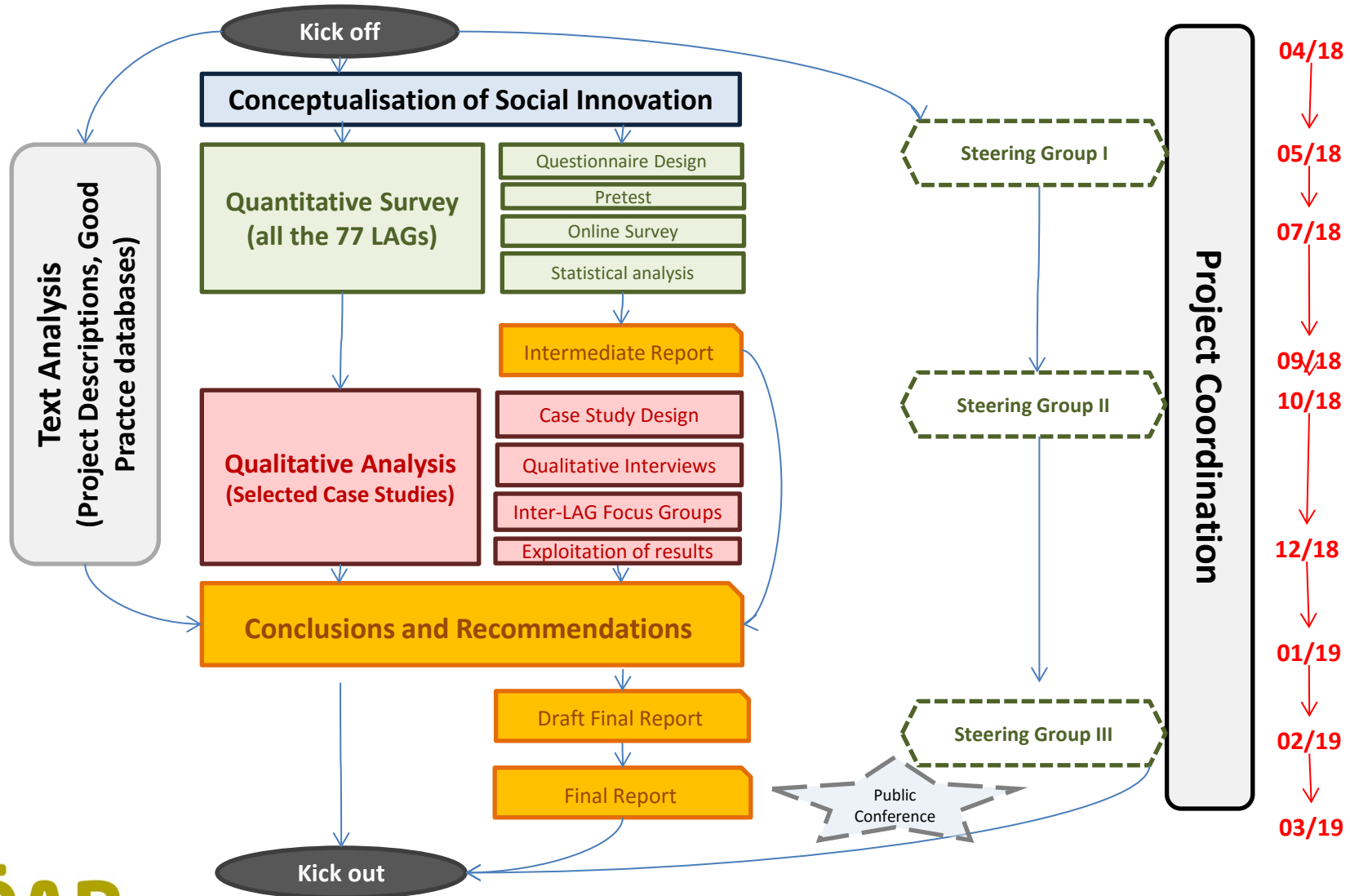
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Different methods activate different perspectives

- *First position*

  Focus Group
  Story Telling
  Most significant change
  Transverbal methods (imaging)

- *Second position*

  In-depth interview
  Case study
  Participant observation
  Social network analysis
  Peer review/audit

- *Third position*

  Quantitative survey
  Text/image interpretation
  Quantitative analysis/modelling
  Big data processing

The balanced mix of methods is a guarantor for a sound mix of perceptual positions

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Study Design on „Social Innovation in LEADER 2014-2020"
## (ÖAR/ZSI, on behalf of the Austrian MA)

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Models

- *A model is „a usually miniature representation of something"*

- *A model helps to*
  - *Describe the essential features and functions of a complex thing in simple ways*
  - *Identify what a (inchoate or deficient) system needs to grow into its idealtypical (desired) form*
  - *Simulate possible responses to interventions from outside*

- *A model works best if it is fairly correct on its proportions rather than on its components*

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Models are less about components than about proportions
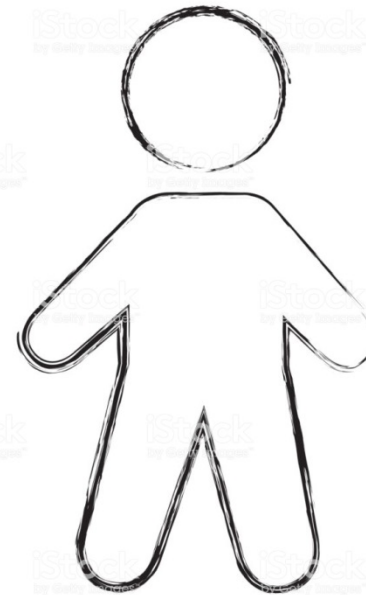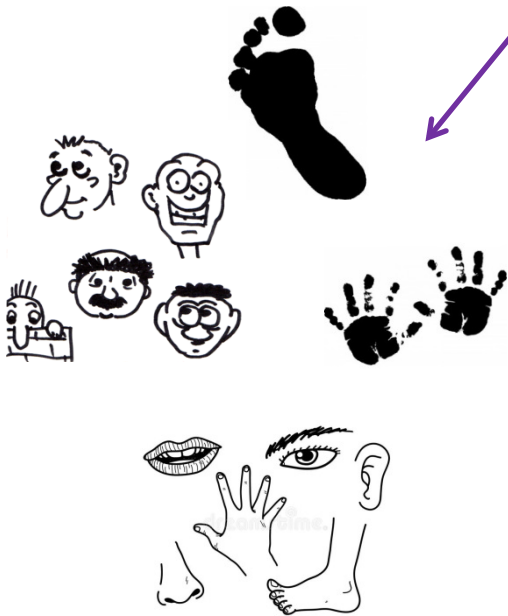
It is easier to identify the right drawing as a human figure than the left one

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Models

- *There is no such thing as a „true or false models". Models are always mental constructs and therefore NOT real.*

- *But there are **MORE or LESS USEFUL MODELS**. The more useful our models are, the more informed we will be able to act.*

- *For example: The whole set of objective indicators of the LES should have model-like features, as they ought to represent a non-contradictory desired future state of a LAG area.*

- *Models used for evaluation should be **comprehensive and balanced**. Only then they help us to identify gaps, imbalances and inconsistencies in the real world*
  - → *Only good maps will tell us if we've gone astray*

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Models used in evaluation

Basically models are used in evaluation (explicitly or implicitly) appear in **three forms***:*

- *Check lists*
  - *Sets of indicators*
  - *Survey questions*
  - *Observation data points*

- *Process rules*
  - *Moderation techniques: Dynamic facilitation, Bohm dialogue...*
  - *Holacratic/sociocratic/agile deliberation techniques*
  - *Case study designs*
  - *Structured interviews*

- *Visualisation*
  - *Systems diagrams*
  - *Mind maps*
  - *Constellation work*
  - *Social Network Analysis*
  - *Scoreboards*
  - *Photographs, videos, drawings, comics*

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The balanced mix of models is a guarantor for requisite triangulation

# Regio BSC: Working with 4 perspectives

LEADER Austria 2007-13
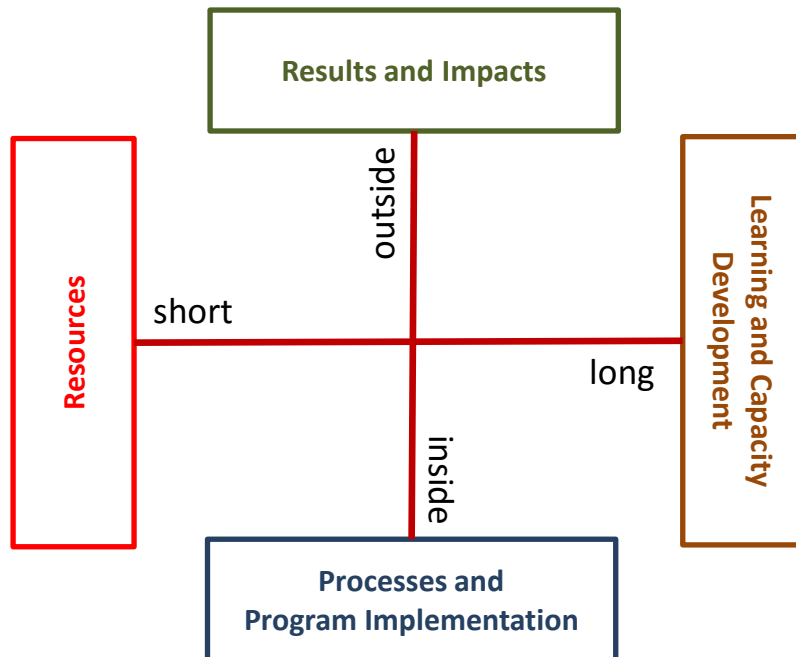
- *Each LAG chooses its own set of indicators (out of a common pool, but also proper ones)*

- *Periodic review of indicators by the LAG board (target value vs. actual value)*

- *LAGs have invited peers (managers of other LAGs) to facilitate the review sessions*

- *Adaptive measures*

- *The same set of indicators can be used for evaluation (coherence of monitoring and evaluation)*

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Measuring changes in social capital in LEADER I
(LAG Prealpi & Dolomiti together with Laura Secco, Elena Pisani e.a. on the University of Padova)

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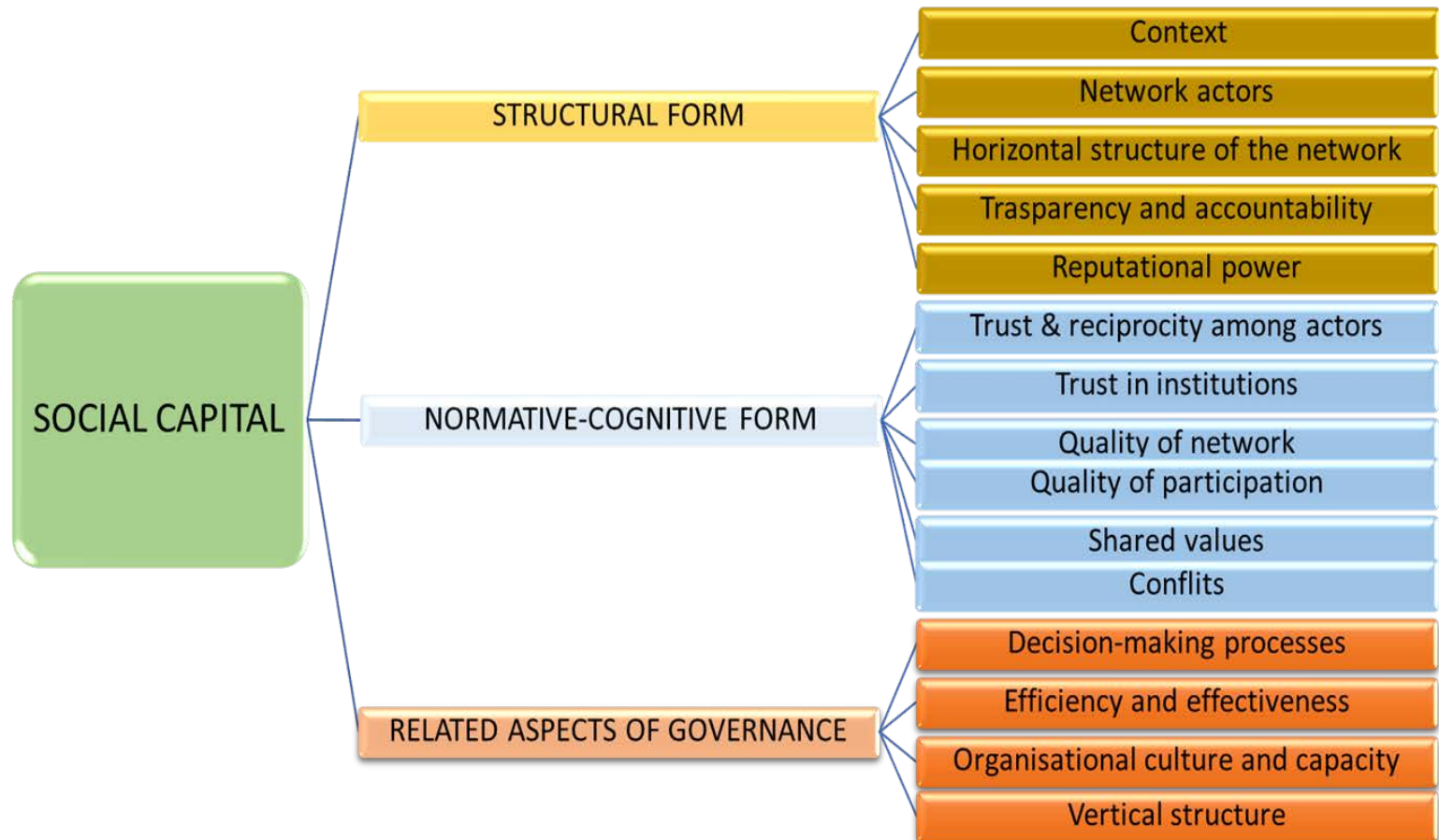
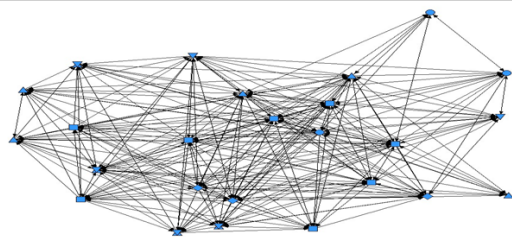# Measuring changes in social capital in LEADER II
(LAG Prealpi & Dolomiti together with Laura Secco, Elena Pisani e.a. on the University of Padova)

The network approach to assess the social capital in LEADER-CLLD: using networks to measure and to represent
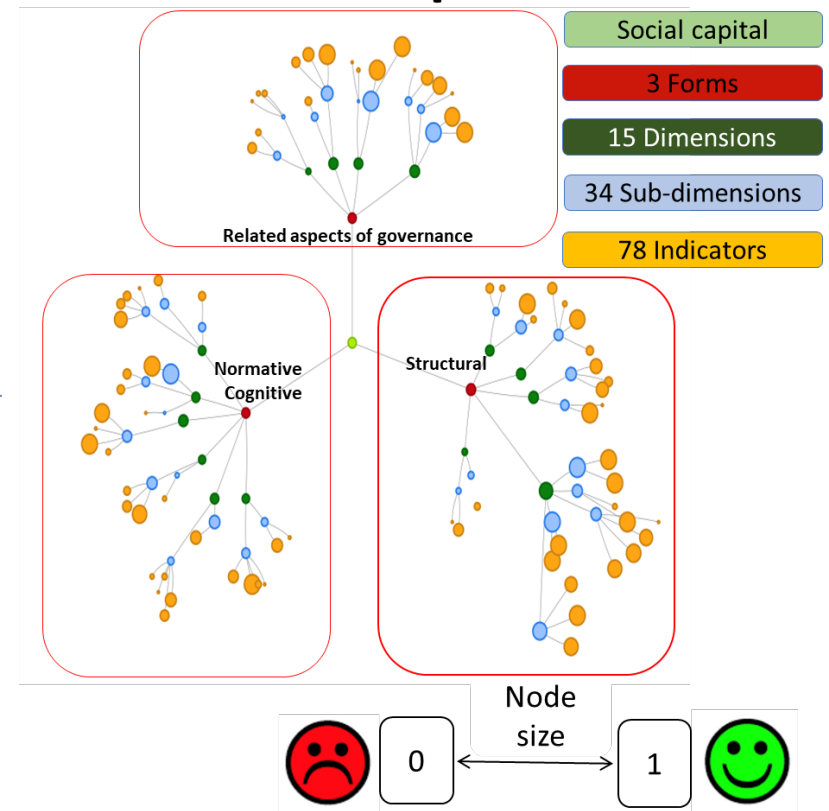
Indicators based on questions to director, members and a representative sample of beneficiaries

+

Indicators based on SNA indexes of specific relationships among LAG members (information sharing, collaboration and trust relationship)
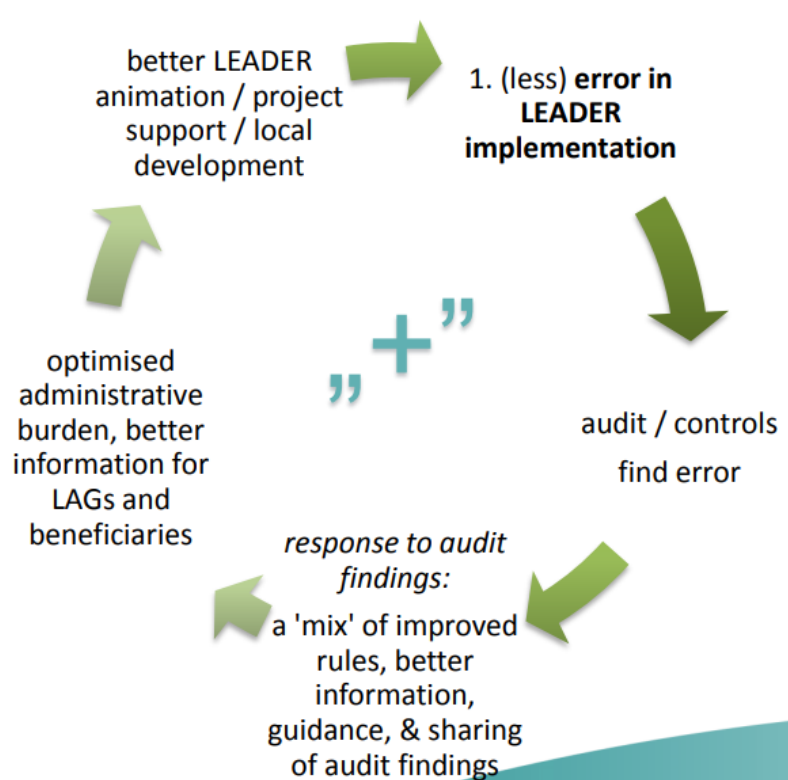
Information sharing among LAG members

Related aspects of governance

Normative Cognitive

Structural

Social capital

3 Forms

15 Dimensions

34 Sub-dimensions

78 Indicators

Node size

0 ↔ 1

Two possible feedback loops
(Source: ENRD/Innovation PWG discussion group)

Learning resulting in less options to act **Learning resulting in more options to**

Left loop ("–"):
less (resources for) LEADER animation / local development → 1. error in LEADER implementation → audit / controls find error → response to audit findings: more rules and control for LAGs/beneficiaries → more administrative burden for LAGs and beneficiaries →

Right loop ("+"):
better LEADER animation / project support / local development → 1. (less) error in LEADER implementation → audit / controls find error → response to audit findings: a 'mix' of improved rules, better information, guidance, & sharing of audit findings → optimised administrative burden, better information for LAGs and beneficiaries →
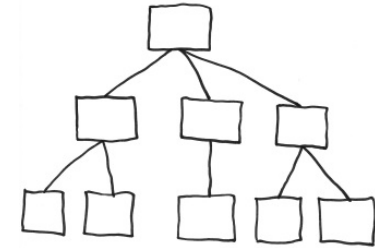
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Learning = Capacity Development*

Consider four dimensions of CD ...

Human capacity development
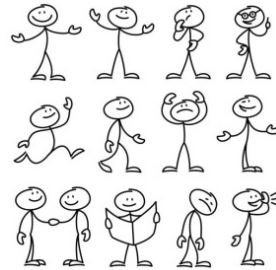
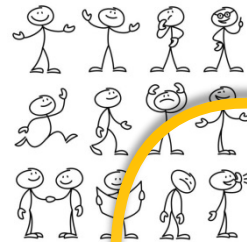Organisational development

Development of cooperation systems

Development of the regulatory and cultural context

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The concept has been coined by the German International Cooperation (GIZ)
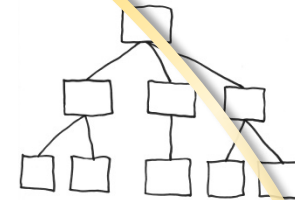
Learning = Capacity Development

... and their interactions

Human capacity development

Organisational development
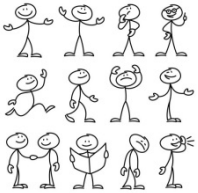
Development of cooperation systems

Development of the regulatory and cultural context

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Evaluation as a building block in a local capacity development strategy

- *Training people in facilitation and (self-)evaluation techniques*
- *Training and fostering dynamic networks of individuals from different parts of the society who use to think forward on behalf of the area*
- *Encourage people with innovative ideas*
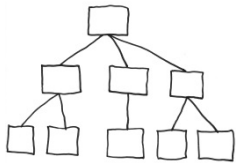
- *Strengthen the capacities of key organisations, e.g. the LAG management and other entities whose agency is crucial for local governance and development*

- *Monitor, assess and improve the quality and variety of cooperation in partnerships, clusters, networks (within and outside the area)*

- *Examine and adapt the (written and unwritten) rules which govern local development and the implementation of programs*
- *Give the prevailing culture (of decision making, of development preferences, of inclusion and exclusion) a critical look and think about the driving and hampering factors for its further evolution*
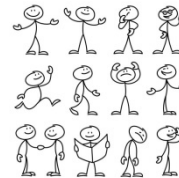
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Quality assurance in Finnish LAGs

- *Based on the initiative of one LAG which was in a sort of crisis and drew up a Quality Manual to check on its own performance.*

- *Other LAGs followed in drawing up Quality Manuals with which they started a process of peer auditing.*
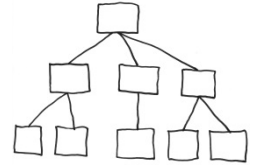
- *NRN provided training for auditing.*

- *A Quality Manual for LAGs has been produced under the guidance of the MA/PA, but with the contribution of many LAGs and the NRN.*
- *Every LAG chose an audit partner among the other LAGs.*
- *By spring 2018, the first audit round has been completed.*
- *In the semestrial meeting of LAGs, the gallery of good practices and experiences from peer auditing has been discussed.*
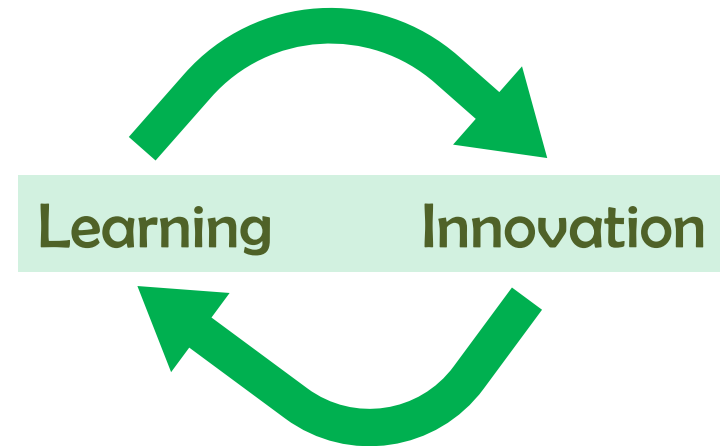
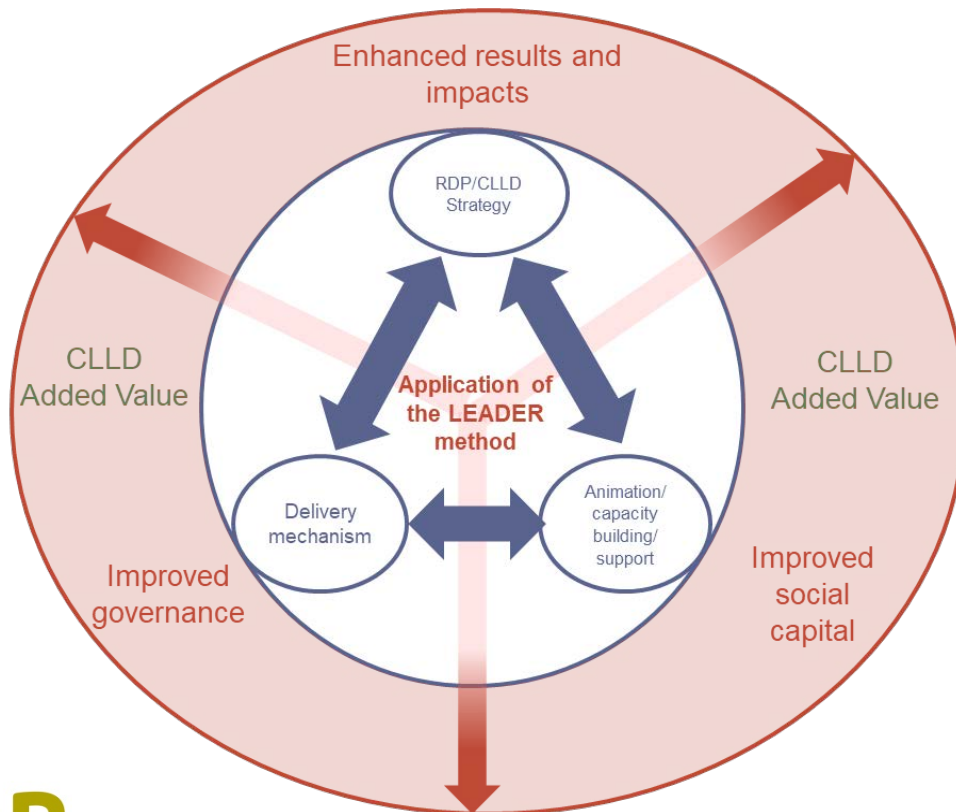- *The MA now extends this practice to the whole LEADER delivery chain and to draw up a Quality Manual to improve all relevant components (legislation, implementation, monitoring, evaluating, auditing etc.).*
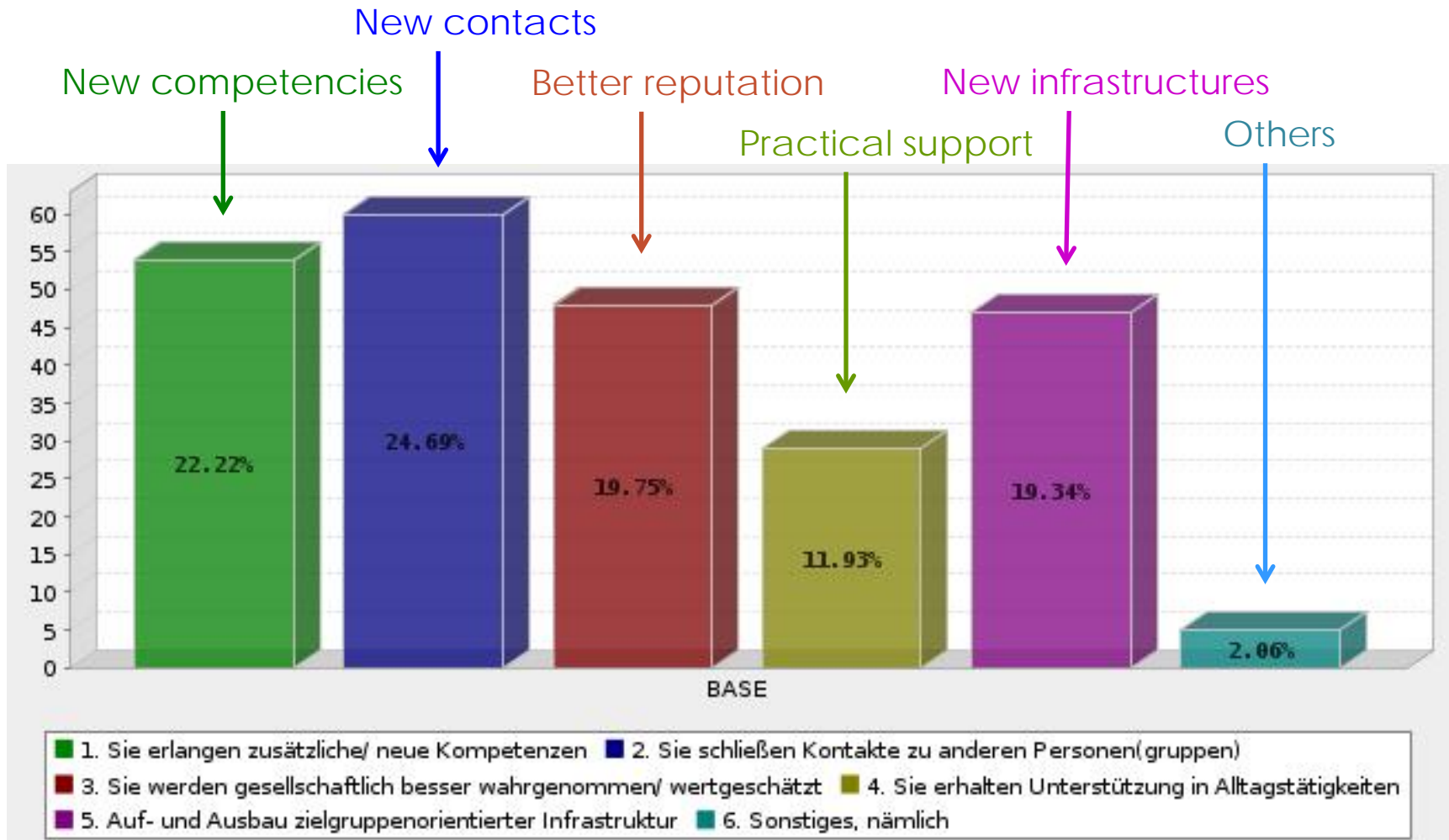
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Evaluation as an act of social innovation
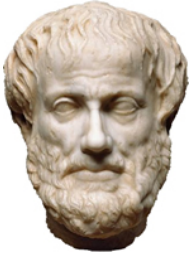
.... It makes no difference whether the activities themselves are the ends of the actions, or something else apart from the activities....

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„Whereby have projects of social innovation generally affected the wellbeing of local people?"

New competencies **New contacts** **Better reputation** **Practical support** **New infrastructures** **Others**

22.22% 24.69% 19.75% 11.93% 19.34% 2.06%

BASE

1. Sie erlangen zusätzliche/ neue Kompetenzen ■ 2. Sie schließen Kontakte zu anderen Personen(gruppen)
3. Sie werden gesellschaftlich besser wahrgenommen/ wertgeschätzt ■ 4. Sie erhalten Unterstützung in Alltagstätigkeiten
5. Auf- und Ausbau zielgruppenorientierter Infrastruktur ■ 6. Sonstiges, nämlich

ŌAR **Study on social innovation in LEADER 07-13 (Austria)**

Find out what works, and do more of that.

Steve de Shazer

quotefancy

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