



# LEADER RELOADED



## MP 1: LEADER/CLLD advocacy and the objective of “Europe closer to citizens”

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***LAG/FLAG - LESVOS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY S.A. - [ ETAL S.A. ]***

***Island of Lesbos – GREECE***

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## LESVOS island, our area, our “TOPOS”

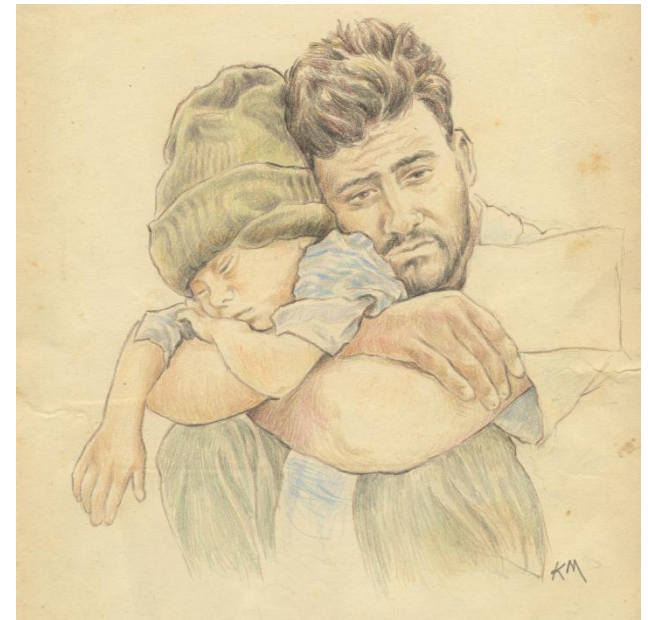


- ❑ Lesvos is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest Greek Island, situated in the North East part of the Aegean Sea, Mytilini is the Capital.
- ❑ One Island, One Municipality, A rural Economy, insular, remote, unemployment (app. 27%, youth 43%), outmigration, transportation difficulties, not well advanced infrastructure...

- ❑ An island of un-spoilt rural-agricultural environment
- ❑ An Island of Culture, poets, musicians, artists
- ❑ An island with the largest olive grove in Greece and excellent quality of olive oil
- ❑ The origin of world famous OUZOU, and Kalloni sardines
- ❑ Quite pace in the rhythms of everyday life, emphasis in family, neighbour and community ties



# AN ISLAND IN THE FRONTLINE OF THE REFUGEES-MIGRATION CRISIS





LEADER from the Initiative era up to this period -LEADER/CLLD, has become the most emblematic Local Development Approach – a brand- in our rural areas.

The L.A.G./F.L.A.G is a “Swiss-knife tool”.

- ✓ Listen-recognise-understand Local needs,
- ✓ Close interaction with local communities – citizens,
- ✓ Give the chance to make visible the true needs-the true nature of the area,
- ✓ Territorial approach-unique identity-diversity,
- ✓ Strengthen local capacity, give voice to local communities to speak up,
- ✓ Plan a future, give the chance to have a vision for the future.
- ✓ Interactive approach, Leader is not in the area just in the time of planning but also steps in during implementation and goes beyond. It’s Family
- ✓ LEADER can be flexible, should be left to be adaptive and open to change

LAGs plan & implement LDS with EU and National Funds in small areas-communities, under EU commonly accepted policies and investment priorities , under the bottom-up approach

How true is that?

- ✓ The systems are rigid, actually leading to a top-down approach
- ✓ The MSs, do they trust the areas or LAGs?, you cannot go far on a short leash,
- ✓ Do the MSs, the MAs, the PAs actually understand the areas – particularities, is there enough training in order to sync with the local communities?
- ✓ CLLD multi-fund, gets stuck in a variety of over lapping delivery mechanisms
- ✓ Lack of vision, simplicity, efficiency, we just crunch numbers...
- ✓ Loss of historic memory, need to get in touch with the roots of LEADER I EUI
- ✓ Intense and voluminous bureaucracy in the name of Accountability.
- ✓ Legal Framework – interpretations - a crazy melting pot of rules!
- ✓ Financial Problems – sources of Funds –Banking system



How come we discuss the issue Europe closer to citizens, isn't it the essence of EU to be close to citizens, we have to discover this now?

- ✓ We need to get again in touch with real bottom up
- ✓ Keep Communicating, keep the funds planning together
- ✓ In 2014-2020, it has become apparent that we lost the chance to have multifund – one disciplined implementation, become more integrated
- ✓ How can we as a LAG work on the issue of Refugees when there is such a sense of isolation in each fund that actually makes it so rigid to apply complementary policies...

**EARDF** – Entrepreneurial motivation based on local resources-Diversification

**ERDF** – Small infrastructure as leverage to local activities-improving community life

**EMFF** – Protecting marine resources and environment-blue growth

**ESF** –Improving social capital-training-social integration-employability-vulnerability

- ✓ We must learn and give more degrees of freedom to LAGS – people will be surprised once you give LAGs the responsibility and tools to operate.

# Proposals to improve implementation. SIMPLIFICATION!

- ✓ Ensure **availability of multiple funds** to LAGs to create better cohesion and multi-sectoral integration.
- ✓ Harmonisation of Regulations, from EU, National, Local levels. Coordination.
- ✓ **Space for Innovation**. Cannot happen in closed boundaries, LAGs should be able to adjust and fine tune innovative projects to help them deliver successfully.
- ✓ LDS, avoid **unrealistic expectations**, apply realistic indicators and evaluation.
- ✓ Set a deadline for the **operationalisation of LAGs**, shorter than the previous periods, avoid time gaps, continuation.
- ✓ Ensure that **tasks and role** of the LAGs are **clarified** and are consistent with LEADER method and left free to adopt a wider local development perspective.
- ✓ Defining **selection criteria - LAGs responsibility**, it will contribute reducing gold plating.
- ✓ **Quality of partnership** principle, LAGs should be trusted to set up partnerships that are strong and viable.
- ✓ **Decentralised management**, avoid ineffective communication in delivery chain.
- ✓ **Control effort is disproportional** to the risk of non-compliance – this has made LEADER a `heavy tool`
- ✓ **Administration vs Animation**, How much time do we spent on each?
- ✓ **Administration vs Cooperation and Networking**, one hour of Cooperation and Networking equals 3 Hours of administration procedures...



- ✓ closer cooperation & linkages between urban & rural areas
- ✓ all funds to contribute to one stop-shop like LEADER II
- ✓ More participatory methods to work with local population
- ✓ Innovative actions & small projects (budget) that they have not be conducted according to the main priorities & interventions of the ‘donator’ Funds or the mainstreaming priorities of the sectoral policies
- ✓ More involvement of farmers in local development

# The LAG/FLAG asks questions

## Bottom-Up feature -

*Are LAGS/FLAGs really allowed to implement LEADER as a principle?*

## Local Public – Private Partnerships

*The problem is the conflict of interest? Too many make a partnership less flexible?, What is the right mix? what is “public” against “private” ?*

## Territorial Approach

How can you have a good LDS for an area when national regulations divide the areas according to just measurable criteria or lines on a map?

## Accountability-Simplification.

*There must be clearly defined simple rules, the LDS must show the way, what happens when we have Subjective vs Objective?*

## Evaluating Performance.

*How can we implement evaluation tools in order to learn from problems and even take corrective actions in time. Common feeling, how “invasive” and “pervasive” the program is in peoples lives?*

**We have to work to coordinate from the bottom up.  
Animation, mentoring, open doors, trust.**

Finally, it all starts from the place “topos”, the needs of people, the changing conditions



It is imperative for all to act locally thinking globally, care for real needs of people, keep in mind changing conditions

Thank you,  
Anastasios M. Perimenis