

D1.5 Evaluation Methodology

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1 Executive Summary

The aim of this deliverable is twofold. On the one hand it provides the reader with basic definitions, concepts, and tools for evaluation work on the other hand it provides a definition of the policy evaluation process in PoliRural on general level.

In the first part of D1.5, first the question 'What is an Evaluation' is being discussed followed by a presentation of evaluation objectives and criteria. Then a brief overview on quality criteria for conducting evaluations and functions an evaluation might have is given. Furthermore, the differences between internal and external evaluations are discussed as is monitoring. Additionally, concepts such as participatory evaluation and the multi-method approach are introduced.

As tools for evaluation five concepts are presented: The Logic framework Approach, the Theory of Change, Outcome Mapping, Most Significant Change, and Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects (MAPP).

A further section of the deliverable provides basic guidance on how to do evaluations in the PoliRural pilot regions. Here the idea of using an ex-ante evaluation approach is discussed as well as are instruments for evaluation work.

A further part of the deliverable is devoted to a proposal of concrete steps in the evaluation process. Apart from a tentative presentation of activities and milestones for the next six months also general instructions are given for the identification and selection of relevant policy measures, the collection of data and qualitative information, the development of the logic framework analysis, and reporting. Finally, in the section on conclusions and next steps in particular an outlook on upcoming additional work on evaluation methodology is provided.

2 Introduction

The purpose of this deliverable is to provide guidelines for the evaluations to be carried out in the 12 PoliRural pilot regions. The goal is twofold. On the one hand the deliverable aims to provide a basic understanding of the evaluation work and concepts, on the other hand it will provide a toolbox and a conceptual framework for the evaluations in the pilot regions.

In chapter 2 basic concepts and definitions are provided. This is done in order to provide a common understanding of key concepts and approaches for evaluations among all PoliRural Partners.

In chapter 3 tools for evaluations are being presented in detail. These tools entail mainly qualitative methods that can be used by the PoliRural pilots to implement their regional evaluations.

Chapter 4 presents then the conceptual approach for the evaluations and introduces supporting methods to conduct the evaluation work.

Chapter 5 finally gives reference to sources and deliverables that can be supporting to the evaluation work.

3 Basic Concepts and Definitions

3.1 What is an Evaluation?

The term evaluation comes from the Latin word "valor", i.e. value, and the prefix e/ex, that is, off. Together, this means 'drawing a value from something', that is, a valuation ...on the case. In its broadest definition, evaluation means the assessment of the value of an object. This can be a product, a process or a project or program. In the scientific literal sense, systematic Methods and data-based evidence required to support an assessment. This is also the difference to everyday language use of the word. Already the morning view out of the window to examine the weather is a simple form of evaluation.

There is no single commonly agreed definition for evaluation. The following definitions offer good starting points:

“Evaluation goes beyond an assessment of what has happened; it considers why something has occurred (...) and, if possible, how much has changed as a consequence. It should look at the wider perspective and provide an independent and objective judgement of the situation based on the evidence available.

Evaluation looks for evidence of causality – i.e. did the intervention (help) bring about the expected changes or were there other unintended or unexpected changes? Beyond listing outputs and describing changes, evaluations should investigate any links between the observed changes and the [policy measure]. Generally, evaluations should be carried out only after sufficient time has passed to allow for changes to be identified and/or measured.

An evaluation should also assess the strength of the evidence obtained, and the implications for the robustness of the conclusions reached. Although there are many useful activities which may cover some of the elements of an evaluation (e.g. reports, implementing reports, monitoring exercises, audits, and studies including cumulative cost assessments) it is unlikely that any of these sources will on their own address all of necessary issues in order to qualify as an evaluation.”¹

“Evaluation is an objective process of understanding how a policy or other intervention was implemented, what effects it had, for whom, how and why. Evaluations need to be tailored to the type of policy being considered, and the types of questions it is hoped to answer. The earlier an evaluation is considered in the policy development cycle, the more likely it will be that the most appropriate type of evaluation can be identified and adopted.

Good-quality evaluations generate reliable results which can be used and quoted with confidence. They enable policies to be improved or can justify reinvestment or resource savings. They can show whether or not policies are delivering as planned and resources

¹ European Commission’s Better Regulation Toolbox, Chapter VI Evaluations and fitness checks, Tool #43 “What is an evaluation and when is it required?” (see p.3 of the pdf: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/better-regulation-guidelines-evaluation-fitness-checks.pdf>)

being effectively used. Good-quality evaluations can play important roles in setting and delivering on government priorities and objectives, demonstrating accountability, and providing defensible evidence to independent scrutiny processes. They also contribute valuable knowledge to the policy evidence base, feeding into future policy development and occupying a crucial role in the policy cycle. Not evaluating, or evaluating poorly, will mean that policy makers will not be able to provide meaningful evidence in support of any claims they might wish to make about a policy's effectiveness. Any such claims will be effectively unfounded.”²

3.2 Evaluation Objectives and Criteria

In general, evaluations can be aimed at four interrelated objectives:

1. the generation of knowledge
2. the exercise of control
3. the creation of transparency to allow dialogue
4. the documentation of the success (legitimation).

The Better Regulation toolbox of the European Commission (2017)³ defines the following evaluation criteria:

- Effectiveness: “Effectiveness analysis considers how successful [a policy measure] has been in achieving or progressing towards its objectives.”
- Efficiency: “Efficiency considers the relationship between the resources used by an intervention and the changes generated by the intervention (which may be positive or negative).”
- Relevance: “Relevance looks at the relationship between the needs and problems in society and the objectives of the intervention and hence touches on aspects of design.”
- Coherence: “The evaluation of coherence involves looking at a how well or not different [policy measures] work together. It may highlight areas where there are synergies which improve overall performance (...); or it may point to tensions e.g. objectives which are potentially contradictory, or approaches which are causing inefficiencies.”

3.3 Quality Criteria for Conducting Evaluations

The requirements for evaluations can be summarised in four guiding principles:

² UK Magenta Book (“recommended central government guidance on evaluation that sets out best practice for departments to follow”), chapter 1 “Key issues in policy evaluation” (see p.11 of pdf: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/220542/magenta_book_combined.pdf)

³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox/better-regulation-toolbox_en

1. **Usefulness:** An evaluation is high quality when it is designed to meet the needs of the many stakeholders involved.
2. **Credibility:** To be useful, evaluations need to be credible. This is often achieved through ensuring a degree of objectivity. Transparency is crucial.
3. **Robustness:** Although there are no objective criteria for quality, an evaluation should be well-designed, with an appropriate evaluation approach and methods, and well-executed.
4. **Proportionate:** Proportionality is a key concept in evaluation. Not all interventions will require the same level of scrutiny or have the same learning needs.

3.4 Functions of an Evaluation

One can not only pursue different objectives with evaluations, but also combine different tasks. Evaluations can be used to

- to improve the planning of a programme or measure (**ex-ante evaluation**)
- to observe the implementation processes (**on-going evaluation**) or
- to determine the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions ex-post (**ex-post evaluation**)

Accordingly, evaluations can be more **formative**, i.e. actively shaping, process-oriented, constructive and communication-promoting, or more **summative**, i.e. summarising, balancing and results-oriented. In principle, both evaluation perspectives can be adopted in all phases of a programme. However, since there are hardly any starting points for a summative evaluation in the planning and design phase of a programme, it can only have a formative character during implementation. During the implementation phase, both formative and summative evaluations are possible. Expost Analyses are usually summative evaluations, as the design aspect is not applicable. However, they can also gain formative significance through corresponding informational feedback loops for follow-up projects.

Table 1: Evaluation perspectives and concepts

Programme Phase	Analytical perspective	Cognitive Interest	Evaluation Concepts
Program formulation/ Planning phase	Ex-Ante	"analysis for policy", "science for action"	preformative/ formative: actively shaping, process- oriented, constructive
Implementation phase	On-Going	Both possible	formative/summative: both possible
Post- Implementation phase	Ex-Post	"analysis of policy", "science for knowledge"	summative: in summary, balancing, results-oriented

Source: Stockmann, 2004⁴

⁴ Stockmann, R. (2004). Was ist eine gute Evaluation? Einführung zu Funktionen und Methoden von Evaluationsverfahren. (CEval-Arbeitspapier, 9). Saarbrücken: Universität des Saarlandes, Fak. 05

3.5 Internal vs external Evaluations

In principle, evaluations can be carried out as internal or external evaluations. They are regarded as **internal** if they are carried out by the same organisation as the programme itself. Such an in-house evaluation has the advantage that it can be carried out quickly and with little effort, that the evaluators generally have a high level of expertise, and that the results can be implemented immediately. Weaknesses of the internal evaluation are mainly seen in the fact that the evaluators usually do not have sufficient methodological competence to be able to work independently and distance, and that they may be so busy with their program are arrested for not recognizing more promising alternatives.

External evaluations are carried out by persons who do not belong to the donor or the implementing organisation. As a rule, therefore, external evaluators have greater independence, profound methodological competence and professional evaluation knowledge and are familiar with the field in which the programme is located.

3.6 Monitoring

Internal evaluations can be extended to **continuous monitoring**. Monitoring can start at the level of the overall system, a policy field, a programme or individual intervention measures. Input, output and impact data can be recorded. A well-known example of a monitoring system at policy area level is environmental monitoring, which provides measurement data on the state of the environment.

At programme level, a monitoring system has the task of continuously providing management with data on programme progress and the achievement of objectives. Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999: 231) therefore define: "Program monitoring is a form of evaluation designed to describe how a program is operating and assess how well it performs its intended functions".⁵

3.7 Participatory Evaluation

The validity of evaluation results can be significantly improved if evaluations are participatory - i.e. **involving actively all relevant stakeholders**. On the one hand, a valid evaluation of measures and results is only possible on the basis of voluntary and proactive cooperation of all parties involved. And on the other hand, evaluation results can only be successfully integrated into development processes are fed in when the parties involved do not use the evaluators as external "controllers", but as partners with complementary tasks.

The practical application of the participatory approach can ideally mean that the evaluators, together with the evaluated persons, develop a proposal for the evaluation procedure, the evaluation criteria, the actors to be involved, etc. On the one hand, it is important to create a 'climate of trust' as a prerequisite for a well-functioning exchange of information between evaluators and those being evaluated; on the other hand, the content and implementation

EmpirischeHumanwissenschaften, CEval - Centrum für Evaluation. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-11801>

⁵ Rossi, P., Freeman, H., & Lipsey, M. (1999). Evaluation: A systematic approach (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

of the evaluation must be oriented as closely as possible to the interests and needs of the participants themselves. Such a procedure is open to continuous adaptation of the evaluation instruments used, so that changing contextual conditions in the valuation process can be taken into account.

3.8 Multi-method approach

Another central component of an evaluation concept is the selection of suitable evaluation methods and the precise development of instruments for data collection. Since an experimental or quasi-experimental survey design, which is usually necessary for impact studies, is often not applicable due to temporal and structural conditions, this can be avoided by a systematic compilation and application of different survey methods. As a rule, a combination of qualitative and quantitative instruments is useful for evaluations.

While the analysis of process-related data (programme control, programme process, etc.) are primarily qualitative survey methods, quantitative survey and evaluation procedures must be used to check the achievement of objectives, impact and causal considerations.

Methods frequently used in evaluations are

- secondary analyses of existing materials
- guided interviews
- standardized surveys
- case studies

Which methods are selected and used depends on the central questions of an evaluation dealt with here, i.e. which goals and tasks are pursued and who carries out the evaluation.

4 Tools for Evaluation

4.1 Logic Framework approach

4.1.1 Introduction

The Logical Framework Approach is a systematic, analytical planning process for the goal-oriented planning of a project (or programme) and its monitoring and evaluation system. Basic idea of the Logical Framework Approaches is, starting from a well-founded situation and problem analysis, the planned mode of operation of the project finally to a relatively simple, linear effect model (Logic Model) condense. This serves as the basis for planning the monitoring and evaluation system, in which the outputs and effects of the project are assessed quantitative or qualitative indicators should be recorded. Finally, the effectiveness of the project and the monitoring and Evaluation system in a standardised table (logframe) in summary. The Logical Framework Approach is therefore not per se an impact measurement method. Rather, it helps to evaluate projects and their to plan in a goal- and impact-oriented manner.

The term Logical Framework Approach (LFA) should be differentiated from the term Logical Framework Matrix (LFM), the so-called logframe. The Logical Framework Approach is the entire planning process. The logframe, however, is a product of it and one of the tools.

4.1.2 The Process

The exact procedure is described slightly differently depending on the source. According to the PCM Guidelines of the European Commission⁶, the Logical Framework includes the following steps:

- 1) **The stakeholder analysis** should clarify who the stakeholders (partners, target groups, beneficiaries, opponents, etc.) are, who might be involved in the project and/or be affected positively or negatively.
- 2) **The problem analysis** identifies the negative aspects of the existing situation. These are put into a cause-and-effect context and presented in a "problem tree". The development of the problem tree is preferably done in a participatory way with the stakeholders.

⁶ <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear-programme/documents/europeaid-project-cycle-management-guidelines>

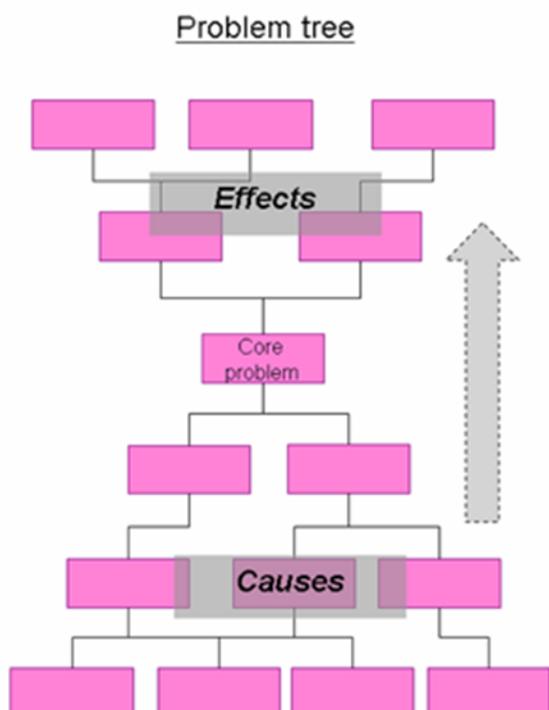


Figure 1: The problem tree, Source: SECO (2007)⁷

- 3) In **the analysis of objectives**, solutions for the identified problems are developed. The negative aspects in the problem tree are transferred into future desired, positive situations and are represented in a goal tree with a means-purpose logic. In the simplest case the objective tree has exactly the same structure as the problem tree.

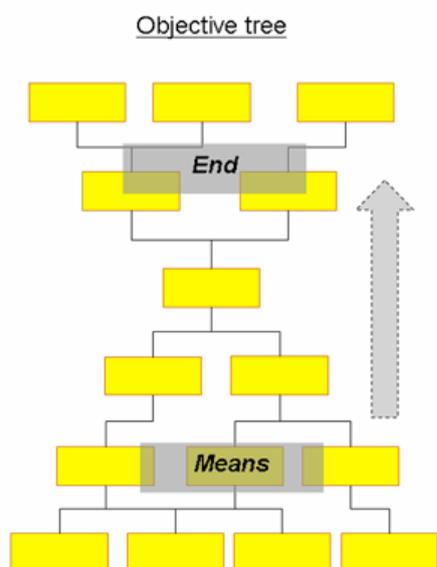


Figure 2: The objective tree, Source: SECO (2007)⁸

⁷ SECO (2007), The Logical Framework User Manual

⁸ Ibid.

- 4) The **strategy analysis** should clarify which of the (usually several) ways to the objective in the objective tree is most appropriate and feasible. Criteria to be considered are: already existing opportunities, probability of success, local ownership, costs, Resources, relevance, effectiveness, negative impacts, etc.

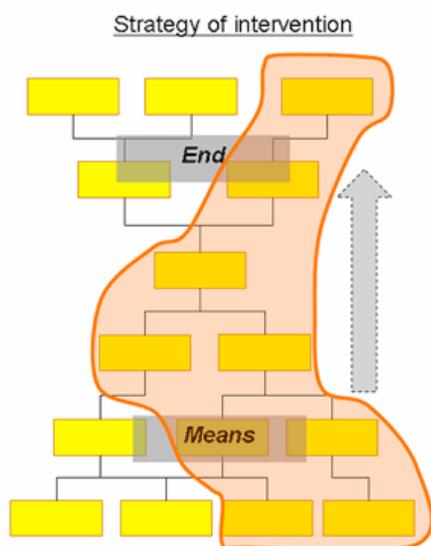


Figure 3: The strategy of intervention, Source: SECO (2007)⁹

4.1.3 Development of the Logical Framework Matrix

The results of the logical framework analysis (stakeholders, problems, goals, strategies) are presented in the Logical Framework Matrix (Logframe). This represents a summary of the project design. The simplest form of the Logframe is a matrix with 4 columns and 4 rows.

	Project Description	Indicator	Source	Assumption
Impact	Longer-term effects and contribution of the project to the overall objectives.	How (with what measures) is the impact measured, including planned quantity, quality and time?	How is the information collected, when and by whom?	
Outcome	Direct benefits and effects of the	How (with what measures) is the outcome	As above	If the outcome is achieved, what assumptions must

⁹ SECO (2007), The Logical Framework User Manual

	project for the target groups.	measured, including planned quantity, quality and time?		be met to contribute to the impact?
Output	Concrete products or services provided by the project.	How (with which metrics) is the output measured, including planned quantity, quality and time?	As above	If the outputs are produced, which assumptions must be fulfilled in order to contribute to the outcome?
Activities	Activities that must be undertaken in order for the project to produce the desired outputs.			If the activities are carried out, what assumptions must be met for the output to result?

Table 2: Schematic display of a logframe, Source: European Commission (2004)

The first column of the logframe summarizes what the project should do and shows the causal relationship of the target hierarchy. From bottom to top, it is based on a linear logic model. In the fourth column the so-called assumptions are entered. These are the external factors that possibly or certainly have an influence on the success of the project, but are not within the sphere of influence of the project managers. The first and fourth columns together form the "vertical logic" of the logframe:

- If the activities are performed and the assumptions (at this level) are correct, the outputs are produced.
- If the outputs are produced and the assumptions are correct, outcomes are achieved.
- If the outcomes are achieved and the assumptions are correct, the project will contribute to the overall goal (impact).

In the second column the indicators are entered with which the achievement of the objectives at the respective level can be measured. At the same time, the third column shows how and where these indicators can be collected (called sources or Means of Verification). The connection between objectives, indicators and their sources is called the "horizontal logic" of the logframe.

4.1.4 Resume

The Logical Framework Approach is undoubtedly a powerful tool to plan projects in an impact-oriented way. The process is designed to ensure that impacts are also measured, but no explicit method of measurement is proposed. The Logical Framework Approach can be well implemented:

- promote dialogue between all stakeholders

- contribute to the identification of problems and correct solutions
- contribute to clarifying and concretising the objectives and impacts of the project
- Enabling and planning evaluation and impact measurement

4.2 Theory of Change

4.2.1 Introduction

Theory of Change is an approach proposed and promoted by the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change, New York, and ActKnowledge, New York¹⁰. It should be noted that the term "Theory of Change" in other contexts may simply mean any kind of impact model. The Theory of Change in the sense used here actually refers to two things: firstly, a systematic project planning process (the Theory of Change process or method) and secondly, a specific form of impact model (the actual Theory of Change), which is the product of this process. The basic idea of the process is to determine, starting from the overall objective and project goal of the project, which preconditions the project must create in order to achieve these impact goals. Indicators for measuring the preconditions and objectives are then defined and it is planned which activities must be undertaken to create these preconditions. Finally, the whole process is graphically represented in a flow chart or impact model. This representation is the Theory of Change of the project. Similar to the Logical Framework Approach, the Theory of Change is therefore not an impact measurement method per se, but helps projects and their evaluation in impact-oriented planning.

4.2.2 The Process

The process consists of the following 5 steps:

1. Identify goals and assumptions
2. Backwards mapping and connecting outcomes
3. Developing indicators
4. Identifying interventions
5. Writing a narrative

¹⁰ <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/community-builders-approach-theory-change-practical-guide-theory-development/>

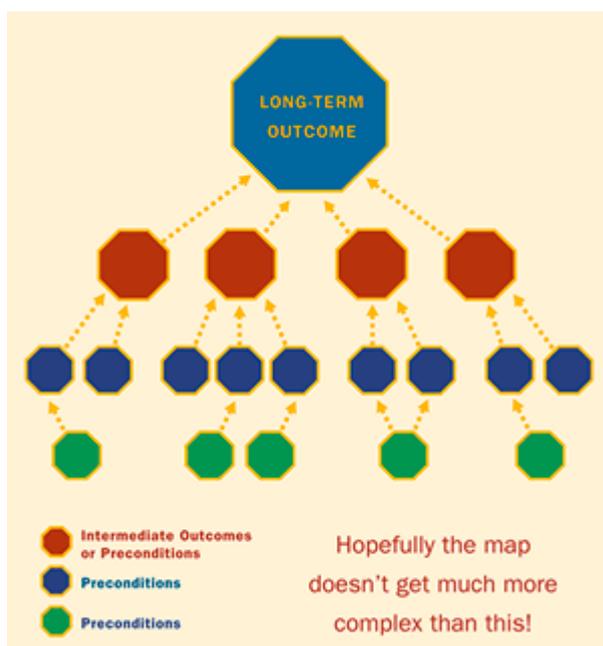


Figure 4: Theory of change - schematic presentation of causal links, Source: Stiftung Zewo

In a **first step**, the overall objective and the project objectives were to be elaborated in a participatory process. Special attention will be paid to determining at the same time which external assumptions have to be fulfilled in order to achieve these objectives at all.

In the **second step**, backward induction is used to find out which interim results (prerequisites) must be achieved in advance, both in terms of time and logic, so that the project objectives can follow. It should be noted that these preconditions should also be effects (changes, states, achieved results) and not activities. Also in this phase, great attention should be paid to the underlying assumptions.

In the **third step**, indicators should be found for all preconditions and outcomes so that the progress of the project can be continuously monitored during the implementation phase and finally a good database for impact measurement is available.



Figure 5: Theory of change - schematic presentation of interventions, Source: Stiftung Zewo

The **fourth step** is to determine where in this impact tree the project should unfold its activities. It is assumed that there are steps that will take place independently and others where intervention by the project will be necessary. The final result of the process is thus a drawn impact tree, in which indicators, assumptions and interventions are drawn in at the appropriate places.

In the **fifth and last step**, this graph should be explained in writing.

4.2.3 Resume

As a project planning process, Theory of Change should primarily facilitate dialogue between different stakeholders, help to identify correct solutions and to clarify and concretise the goals and effects of a project, and enable impact-oriented monitoring and evaluation.

Theory of Change is particularly suitable

- when complex projects and programmes are planned.
- when programme effects are to be (continuously) recorded with a close monitoring and evaluation system.

Theory of Change claims to implement a detailed impact model and monitoring system and is accordingly complex.

4.3 Outcome Mapping

4.3.1 Introduction

Outcome Mapping was developed at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), in Ottawa, Canada, and published in 2001 in the form of a manual¹¹. It is a system for recording the progress of projects/programmes and a structured process for planning them. The central concept of Outcome Mapping is that development is based on changing people's behaviour. In contrast to classical impact measurement methods, the focus is therefore not on (logically linked) project performance and its effects on the target groups. Instead, outcome mapping concentrates on behavioural changes ("outcomes") of direct partners with whom the project works (the so-called "boundary partners"). Outcome Mapping is a qualitative and participatory approach and focuses on the project's contribution to development. It was developed especially as a tool for learning and self-evaluation.

4.3.2 The Process

The Outcome Mapping planning process consists of three phases and twelve steps, which are ideally carried out in the planning phase of general project management. The following figure displays the three stages of the Outcome Mapping process.



Figure 6: The three stages of the outcome mapping process, Source: Earl, S. et al., 2001

¹¹ Sarah Earl, Fred Carden, and Terry Smutylo (2001). Outcome Mapping: Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs

Stage 1 – Intentional Design: Here it should be clarified (in a participatory way) and determined to which overarching changes the project should contribute and with which strategies this should be achieved. First of all, a "vision" (why?) and a "mission" (how?) for the project are put in writing. Central is the identification of the primary "Boundary Partners" on which the project wants to concentrate. These typically include the direct recipients of the project's services (e.g. a local partner organisation), but also other stakeholders. For each "Boundary Partner" the general desired change in behavior is described and several concrete changes in behavior (so-called "Progress Markers") are recorded. Finally, the activities with which these behavioral changes are influenced in the course of the project are determined.

Stage 2 – Outcome and Performance Monitoring: In the second phase, a system for ongoing monitoring will be developed. The basic idea here is not only to monitor the results achieved (changes in behaviour). In addition to these, data on the activities and the function of the project as an organisational unit will be collected. First of all, priorities for monitoring will be defined and three data collection instruments will be planned based on these priorities. By means of the "Outcome Journal" the progress of the "Boundary Partners" regarding "Progress Markers" is collected. The activities undertaken for the benefit of the partners and their results are continuously documented in the "Strategy Journal". Finally, internal processes are continuously monitored with the help of a "Performance Journal".

Stage 3 – Evaluation Planning: The final step is to clarify which aspects of the project (specific outcomes, activities or processes) are to be evaluated and to plan the resources required for this.

4.3.3 Resume

Outcome Mapping is well suited:

- To analyse the effects of development projects whose success cannot be measured by quantitative indicators alone.
- To analyse the effects of participatory projects which aim to improve the behaviour (e.g. interaction, action/reaction and participation) of specific actors in complex systems.
- To understand who the actors are with whom a project is working and what changes should be achieved with which strategies.
- to plausibilise the contribution of a project to a development (contribution).
- to learn.

In turn, this means that outcome mapping is less suitable for accountability purposes or for determining the project's direct contribution to development (attribution). Outcome mapping is also a planning and monitoring instrument, which is why it does not seem sensible to use outcome mapping for evaluations that are initiated only after the completion of a project.

4.4 Most Significant Change

4.4.1 Introduction

The Most Significant Change technique was developed in the 1990s by Rick Davies and published in a User Guide in 2005 (with Jess Dart)¹². It is a qualitative and participatory method for recording the impacts of a project or programme. Most Significant Change can be used as monitoring during a project. But the technique also contributes to the evaluation of a project by providing "data" on its outcomes and impacts. Most Significant Change is essentially based on collecting stories about significant changes, especially among the target groups of a project, and selecting the most significant ones in a systematic process over several stages. Most Significant Change is particularly suitable for complex and multi-layered projects with different impacts. Unexpected effects are also recorded. A successfully implemented Most Significant Change technique leads to whole teams focusing their attention on the effects of a project. Most Significant Change is therefore particularly suitable for learning.

4.4.2 The Process

The User Guide describes implementation of Most Significant Changes in 10 steps:

1. How to start and raise interest
2. Defining the domains of change
3. Defining the reporting period
4. Collecting Significant Change stories
5. Selecting the most significant of the stories
6. Feeding back the results of the selection process
7. Verification of the stories
8. Quantification
9. Secondary analysis and meta-monitoring
10. Revising the system

The first step is to involve different stakeholders and motivate them to participate (as the process is very participatory). The next step is for the stakeholders to determine in which areas or on which topics the Significant Changes should be collected. They also determine how often the stories are collected.

The stories are collected from those who are most directly involved, i.e. mostly beneficiaries or project staff in the field. The stories will be collected mainly with the following simple question: "What do you think was the most significant change for the beneficiaries of the project during the last three months?"

¹² https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/most_significant_change

The collected stories are filtered in the hierarchical structure of the project, programme or organisation. Specifically, at each level, the stories are analysed and discussed in groups and finally a single "Most Significant Story" is passed upwards in each defined thematic area. At the same time, the criteria for this selection are reported back to the interested stakeholders. At the highest organisational level, a document is created with the stories finally selected.

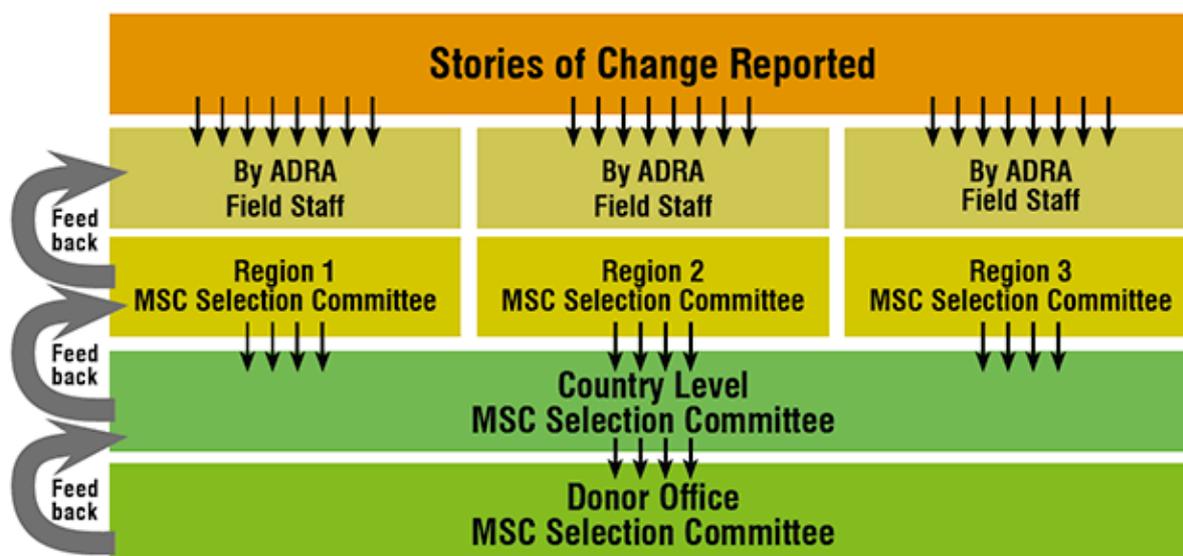


Figure 7: Example of the selection process (ADRA Laos), Source: MSC User Guide

In a next step, the selected stories can be verified with a field visit to ensure that they are correct and to obtain additional information about the important event. A further step can be to additionally quantify the qualitative information of the stories. For example, with information on how many people have experienced the same change.

The last two steps are a monitoring of the monitoring (e.g. who participated and with what influence on the results? Which types of changes were told and how often?) and monitoring the process itself (e.g. what was learned through the application?)

4.4.3 Resume

Most Significant Change is well suited

- when complex projects/programmes, multiple and different effects are produced.
- when unexpected changes are also to be recorded.
- to capture effects of large programmes with many organisational levels.
- to capture impacts of participatory projects/programmes with a focus on social change.
- to capture impacts that are difficult to capture using traditional methods.
- if there is no previous knowledge of monitoring and evaluation, it is easy to communicate.

- if a detailed picture of the changes is desired.
- to plausibilise the contribution of a project to a development (contribution).
- to learn.

Most Significant Change is relatively time-consuming and only takes effect after several rounds of selection and feedback. It therefore makes less sense to use Most Significant Change,

- if an expected change is to be confirmed.
- a completed project is to be evaluated retroactively.
- the average experience of the beneficiaries is to be determined.
- a quick and cheap evaluation for accountability purposes is to be prepared.

4.5 Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects (MAPP)

4.5.1 Introduction

MAPP was developed in 1999 by Dr Susanne Neubart at the German Development Institute (DIE)¹³. It is a participatory procedure for recording the effects of a project or programme. MAPP is based on group discussions in which changes and effects in the environment of a project or programme are recorded and evaluated retrospectively and with the help of logically sequential instruments. The group first analyses the impact of the project in general and in detail on the basis of several self-determined indicators. Then the relevant measures and activities of the project (and other actors) are listed and prioritised. Finally, also in the group, the contribution of the individual development measures to the identified developments is evaluated. According to the authors of the method, this allows the allocation gap to be bridged. MAPP is well suited to the assessment of multidimensional development projects. Unexpected effects are also recorded. The assessments are primarily qualitative in nature and are based on the subjective assessments of the group discussion participants.

4.5.2 The Process

The procedure consists of applying the following 6 instruments in a logical sequence:

- 1) Lifeline: The overall development of the project region from the perspective of the population over the period of the project to be evaluated is assessed on a five-point scale and recorded graphically.
- 2) Trend analysis: The development over this period is recorded in detail using several criteria and an overall trend is determined for each criterion. This step also includes the definition of the criteria (indicators) by the participants of the group discussion themselves.
- 3) Cross-checking: Statistics, monitoring data, observations, etc. can be used to verify the results of the trend analysis.

¹³ <http://www.ngo-ideas.net/mediaCache/MAPP/MAPP-Description.pdf>

- 4) List of measures: The activities of the project under consideration and any other actors (other projects, government, etc.) are listed and ranked according to their relevance to the beneficiaries. In addition, the contribution of the beneficiaries themselves in terms of work and finances is also evaluated.
- 5) Impact matrix: In the group discussion, the effect of the individual measures (4.) on the individual development criteria (2.) is now evaluated and recorded in a matrix. This matrix can be used to evaluate which measures had a high impact overall and which indicators developed well or poorly.
- 6) Development and impact profile: The most important information from the previous instruments is summarised in an overview. This shows whether overall development is robust or vulnerable (uneven), which main factors promote development and what role development measures of various organisations play.

4.5.3 Resume

MAPP is well suited

- for projects/programmes whose target groups are clearly identified and whose effects can be perceived by these target groups.
- for the evaluation of multidimensional target concepts (e.g. endogenous regional development, democratisation, etc.).

A certain culture of discussion in the region is a prerequisite for successful implementation. Only then can true consensus, as well as controversial perceptions, be identified in the group discussions.

5 How to do Evaluations in the PoliRural Pilot Regions

5.1 The Ex-ante perspective as main approach

5.1.1 What to evaluate?

The evaluation work should build upon the results of the needs-policy canvas (D.4.4). Subject to evaluation could be thereby either:

1. Policies addressing identified gaps in the needs-policy canvas
2. The policy mix identified in the needs policy canvas addressing the needs with the highest priority in the region.

In each case the main purpose of the evaluation work will be the ex-ante assessment of the effectiveness of the selected policy measures. In the first case this will help you identify the best policy option to fill the existing gap(s). In the second case this will help to understand whether the identified policy mix could need future changes to be more effective.

5.1.2 What stages to evaluate

Table 3 provides an overview on the conceptual approach for the evaluation. The first row displays hereby the different stages of the evaluation cycle. The following rows show the necessary activities, associated with key questions and necessary results for each step. In the last row also evaluation tools for each step are proposed.

Evaluations with the PoliRural pilots will focus mainly on the steps 1 (Define/structure Objectives) and 2 (Develop impact model). Possibly in some regions also step 3 (planning for impact assessment could be covered.

The steps 1 and 2 in the conceptual approach can be also referred to as ex-ante evaluation as they are mainly aiming on the one hand at the definition of the problem and the formulation of policy options to solve it, on the other hand clarifying objectives and expected impacts of the intervention will be carried out.

5.1.3 What evaluation tools to apply

Evaluation tools are presented in chapter 3 (for detailed information please consult the respective sections). The conceptual approach to the evaluations (Table 3) provides also information on what tools should be used for the different steps of the evaluation work.

In step 1 a situation analysis and the definition of the impact objectives will be developed as basis for a future impact measurement. Taking into account the environment and context, it must be clarified what the problems of the target group are, what the causes are and what the needs are. It has to be defined which change the project should bring about. Tools suitable for these tasks are:

- Logical Framework Approach: Stakeholder-, Problem- and objectives-analysis

- Outcome Mapping: Intentional Design
- Theory of Change: Identify Goals and Assumptions

In step 2 the impact model will be developed. It describes the explicit and implicit assumptions about the project's mode of operation. It shows by which means (input), measures (activities), products or services (output) and through which interim results the project objective is to be achieved. The impact model is central to understanding and analysing successes and failures. It should definitely be recorded graphically or in writing. Tools suitable for these tasks are:

- Logical Framework Approach: Problem- and objectives analysis
- Outcome Mapping: Intentional Design
- Theory of Change: Backwards Mapping, Identifying interventions

In step 3 It must be clarified what is to be answered to whom and for what purpose. From this it can be deduced what the results of the impact measurement will be compared with and who will later carry out the evaluation. The desired achievements and impacts must be translated into indicators, and target values for these indicators are needed. For each indicator, it must be planned which methods will be used to collect the necessary data.

Tools suitable for these tasks are:

- Logical Framework Approach: Logical Framework Matrix
- Outcome Mapping: Outcome & Performance Monitoring, Evaluation Planning
- Theory of Change: Developing Indicators

5.2 What methods to apply

5.2.1 Document analysis

Document analysis is a technique for the collection of historical data, which is collected, stored, managed and versioned in the form of documents. In the context of companies, historical data is understood to be information that was created and documented in earlier projects and developments. Document analysis - sometimes also referred to as source analysis - includes not only electronically stored documents, but also printed information that is not available on the intranet or internet. Document analysis will help to identify existing problems, needs and interventions. The following types of documents should be analysed:

- Regional strategy and policy concepts
- Regional development plans
- Existing Evaluation Studies

Furthermore The existing resources and deliverables of the PoliRural project should be consulted. These are in particular:

- The Needs-Policy Canvas (D4.4)
- The results from the textmining
- The results from the regional foresight activities

The results of the document analysis should be summarized in a slide show or brief paper and will inform participants in the workshops

5.2.2 Workshops

The workshops are a methodological corner stone of each of the three proposed evaluation tools. They will bring together relevant stakeholders including citizens (gender balance and age balance to be considered) and policy makers. They should use a participative approach, allowing for discussions and interactive learning. For going through the steps 1 to 3 a total of three working days will be needed, allowing for enough time to develop a shared understanding of the theory of change and intervention logic.

For each workshop the „3Ps“ (post-its, pens, and pinboards) will be needed as developing a shared understanding of intervention logics needs to be done graphically.

5.2.3 Interviews

Interviews could complement the workshops, if needed. They could involve for example stakeholders from outside the polit region to get an additional view on the results of the workshops. They should be carried out as semistructured interviews, using the documented results of the workshop (i.e. problem and objective trees, intervention charts etc.) to collect opinions of the interviewed stakeholders.

	Step 1: Define Objectives	Step 2: Develop impact model	Step 3: Planning for impact assessment	Step 4: Data collection	Step 5: Assess the impact
Activities	The impact of the project can only be measured and verified if it is clear what the planned project is intended to achieve. A situation analysis and the definition of the impact objectives form the basis for impact measurement. Taking into account the environment and context, it must be clarified what the problems of the target group are, what the causes are and what the needs are. It has to be defined which change the project should bring about.	The impact model describes the explicit and implicit assumptions about the project's mode of operation. It shows by which means (input), measures (activities), products or services (output) and through which interim results the project objective is to be achieved. The impact model is central to understanding and analysing successes and failures. It should definitely be recorded graphically or in writing.	It must be clarified what is to be answered to whom and for what purpose. From this it can be deduced what the results of the impact measurement will be compared with and who will later carry out the evaluation. The desired achievements and impacts must be translated into indicators, and target values for these indicators are needed. For each indicator, it must be planned which methods will be used to collect the necessary data.	The implementation of the activities is monitored as part of the monitoring process. At the same time, the necessary data for impact measurement is collected, checked and recorded.	The impact on the target group is now assessed in the same way as planned when impact evaluation was planned. This can be done by external experts (external evaluation) or by the project managers (self-evaluation). Mixed forms are also conceivable. In participatory procedures, the target group is included in this phase.
Key Questions	<p>What is the problem and its causes?</p> <p>What needs does the target group have and what do other stakeholders want?</p> <p>What do we want to change in the target group?</p> <p>What longer-term effects should this trigger?</p> <p>How do we thereby contribute to the overall objectives within and outside our organisation?</p> <p>What external factors and forces can counteract the goals?</p>	<p>How can we solve the problem and change the situation?</p> <p>What relationships between causes and effects (impact hypotheses) do we assume?</p> <p>What preconditions are necessary to achieve the goal?</p> <p>Which external forces counteract the goals?</p> <p>Which side effects are conceivable?</p> <p>What is the best strategy to achieve the project goal?</p>	<p>What do we want to find out? What are the results compared with?</p> <p>Who should carry out the impact measurement and who is responsible for it?</p> <p>Which indicators can we use to measure our outputs (services) and outcomes (effects)?</p> <p>From which sources can the data be obtained?</p> <p>How is the data collected and who is responsible for it?</p> <p>Has everything been thought of when formulating the mandate for impact measurement?</p>	<p>Are central activities in monitoring monitored for impact?</p> <p>Is the data relevant for impact measurement collected?</p> <p>Are responsibilities and interfaces clear?</p> <p>Does the data collected provide the desired information?</p> <p>Where are there deviations that endanger the achievement of the impact?</p> <p>What measures are necessary?</p>	<p>Is all necessary data available in a suitable form?</p> <p>What has been achieved or changed in the target group? What would have changed for the target group without the project?</p> <p>What are the reasons for any deviations from the project objectives?</p> <p>Which assumptions and hypotheses have proven to be correct, which were wrong? What intended and unintended side effects were there?</p> <p>Is it plausible that the project made a contribution to overall objectives?</p> <p>Which effects can be clearly attributed to the project?</p>

					What recommendations are needed?
Results	Project goals are defined. Overall objectives are clarified.	Graphical impact model appropriate to the complexity of the project (e.g. Logic Model)	Responsibilities have been defined. Indicators, data sources, survey methods, frequency and timing of measurement and benchmarks for comparisons are clear. The concept, plan and mandate for impact measurement are formulated.	Necessary data is collected, checked and recorded. Interim evaluations have been prepared. Where necessary, corrective measures have been initiated.	There is a report or presentation on the impact of the project or programme.
Tools	Logical Framework Approach: Stakeholder, Problem- and objectives analysis Outcome Mapping: Intentional Design Theory of Change: Identify Goals and Assumptions	Logical Framework Approach: Problem- and objectives analysis Outcome Mapping: Intentional Design Theory of Change: Backwards Mapping, Identifying interventions	Logical Framework Approach: Logical Framework Matrix Outcome Mapping: Outcome & Performance Monitoring, Evaluation Planning Theory of Change: Developing Indicators		Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects (MAPP) Most Significant Change

Table 3: Conceptual approach to the PoliRural evaluation process

6 The concrete steps of the evaluation process

6.1 Activities and Milestones

According to the workplan a total of six months is foreseen to complete this task. Below you will find a tentative list of necessary activities and milestones¹⁴:

Activity	Date - start	Date - end
Identification and selection of relevant policy measures	June, 11 th 2020	June, 30 th 2020
Collection and data and qualitative information	July, 1 st 2020	July, 31 st 2020
Development of the problem tree	August, 31 st 2020	September, 11 th 2020
Development of the objective tree	September, 14 th 2020	September, 26 th 2020
Development of the means-objectives tree	September, 28 th 2020	October, 9 th 2020
Development of the Logframe Matrix	October, 12 th 2020	October, 25 th 2020
Reporting	October, 26 th 2020	November, 20 th 2020

6.2 Identification and selection of relevant policy measures

The planned assessments cannot be compared to extensive programme evaluations in terms of time and resources devoted, and are not intended to replace them in their entirety. However, the aim is to develop relevant indicators for further development of policy interventions that can be used not only in the implementation of current policies but also, and above all, in the programming of future measures.

Based on the policy mapping conducted in the D4.4 Needs-Policy Canvas, the first step is to select the most relevant policy measures subject to the evaluation. There will be a maximum of three policy measures selected by pilot. PoliRural pilot regions are different in terms of size and rural characteristics. Also needs and barriers related to rural attractiveness vary. That's why there is variation between the level of which the policy mapping is made. Therefore the selection of relevant policies will be based on the following criteria.

¹⁴ Activities and Milestones could be still subject to change, in order to better match the needs of the pilots and the other work in WP4. Furthermore textmining and System Dynamics modelling might change the necessary actions.

Coordination	<p>Can the policy measure be considered as an example of good coordination? Is it involving/targeted to all necessary stakeholders?</p> <p>Are actions taken in transparent manner (diffusion and evaluation of results, monitoring data etc.)?</p> <p>Is the inclusion of social aspects and labor market considered?</p>
Budget allocation	<p>Amount of budget allocated to the relevant interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Contribution • National/regional Contribution • Private Found • Other funding sources
Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of beneficiaries (if available): • Type of beneficiaries (SME/farmer/NGO etc)
Status	<p>Policy /measure should be finished or on going but well-advanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dates: both start and end dates) • Finished/on going (well advanced)
Transferability	<p>Is the measure transferable to other areas or farms/rural business facing the same issue?</p> <p>Has it been already replicated elsewhere in your country or in Europe?</p>
Synergies with other EU policies	<p>Does the policy contribute to the objectives of other EU policies? (energy transition, digitalization,..)</p>

6.3 Collection of Data and qualitative Information

Since the beginning of Polirural, Pilots have put together a series of activities to identify needs and map existing policies. The policy evaluation will thus be based on the findings from these activities.

6.3.1 D1.3 “Needs Gathering & Policy Mapping Template”

D1.3 “Needs Gathering & Policy Mapping Template” provided the pilots with a selection of tools and suggestions for identifying needs and mapping existing policies.

The aim of this exercise was to collect data and qualitative information that would eventually be evaluated by each single pilot region. To ensure that pilots would gather information in a similar way (and consequently allowing comparisons), the deliverable offered templates (for the surveys, the interviews and for the policy mapping) to be adjusted to each reality.

For the identification of the needs, D1.3 encouraged Pilots to run surveys, targeting established rural populations and recent or potential newcomers, including a variety of different demographic groups. Deliverable D1.3 also offered the pilots a series of questions to be used while addressing the target group. For the survey replies, a Likert scale was suggested to be used (1-5 and 5-1), to ease the preparation of the results and make them

comparable among pilots. The outcomes of the survey were translated in a SWOT analysis and were included in D4.2.

Results from the needs gathering and policy mapping

6.3.2 D4.2 Grassroot Needs & Factors of Rural Attractiveness

D4.2 Grassroot Needs & Factors of Rural Attractiveness provides a deeper understanding on what are those aspects that makes rural areas attractive or unattractive with a view to their particular contexts (quality of life, cultural appeal, cultural capital and social capital), for established populations and recent or potential newcomers. Pilots used surveys and interactive workshops with the regional stakeholder's panels for updating their knowledge of rural reality.

6.3.3 Needs Policy Canvas

The policy evaluation will of course use the results of the Needs Policy canvas that aimed to match the rural needs of 12 PoliRural pilot regions against current policies and public or private strategies present in their region. Within this exercise pilots also had the opportunity to meet with policy makers and run workshops.

6.4 Development of the Logic Framework Analysis

As described in section 3 the logic framework analysis consists of four consecutive steps. Below instructions are given on how to implement these different steps in the pilot region.

6.4.1 The problem Tree

Motivation	To structure the identified needs from the needs analysis in a way to compare them in the next steps with the objectives and intended impacts of the selected policies
What to do?	The problem tree should be developed in a workshop. You can build upon the results of already conducted workshops in the framework of the needs analysis, in order not to duplicate work. Within the workshop the needs associated to the selected policy measures should be put in the problem tree structure. To be effective it will be best to do this in a small group of 8 to 12 persons.
How to organise?	You will need one half-day workshop to develop the problem tree accordingly. Organise a meeting room with walls that allow to stick large posters to them as it is recommended to craft the tree structure together in one big picture. Also you will need pens and post-its for your work.
Ressouces needed	Preparation of the Workshop: 3-5 working days Conducting the workshop: 1/2 working day Follow-up: 1 working day

6.4.2 The objectives Tree

Motivation	To map the objectives of the selected policies against the problems as identified in step 1
What to do?	The objectives-means tree should be developed in a workshop. You will build upon the results of already conducted workshops in the framework of the policy analysis, in order not to duplicate work. Within the workshop the objectives of the selected policy measures should be put in the objectives tree structure. To be effective it will be best to do this in a small group of 8 to 12 persons.
How to organise?	You will need one half-day workshop to develop the objectives tree accordingly. Organise a meeting room with walls that allow to stick large posters to them as it is recommended to craft the tree structure together in one big picture. Also you will need pens and post-its for your work.
Ressouces needed	Preparation of the Workshop: 3-5 working days Conducting the workshop: 1/2 working day Follow-up: 1 working day

6.4.3 The Objectives-Means Tree

Motivation	To synthesise the results from the development of the objectives tree analysis and problem tree analysis – to adjust means and activities to objectives
What to do?	The problem tree should be developed in a workshop. You can build upon the results of already conducted workshops in the framework of the needs analysis, in order not to duplicate work. Within the workshop the needs associated to the selected policy measures should be put in the problem tree structure. To be effective it will be best to do this in a small group of 8 to 12 persons.
How to organise?	You will need one half-day workshop to develop the objectives-means tree accordingly. Organise a meeting room with walls that allow to stick large posters to them as it is recommended to craft the tree structure together in one big picture. Also you will need pens and post-its for your work.
Ressouces needed	Preparation of the Workshop: 3-5 working days Conducting the workshop: 1/2 working day Follow-up: 1 working day

6.4.4 The Logframe Matrix

Motivation	The logframe matrix combines inputs, activities and impacts of the policy measures under scrutiny with indicators and assumptions
What to do?	The logframe matrix should be developed in a workshop. You will build upon the results of prior steps. Within the workshop the inputs and activities of the evaluated policy measures will be put into relation to each other. To be effective it will be best to do this in a small group of 6 to 8 persons.
How to organise?	You will need one half-day workshop to develop the matrix. Organise a meeting room with a big table to put the matrix in the centre of the working group. Pre-prepare a matrix with the required dimension (as shown in section 3). Also you will need pens and post-its for your work.
Ressouces needed	Preparation of the Workshop: 3 working days Conducting the workshop: 1/2 working day Follow-up: 1/2 working day

6.5 Reporting

6.5.1 The Reporting Template

The reporting template includes detailed instructions for the pilots on how to present the results of the evaluation carried out. The tentative draft structure of the reporting template is presented below. The tentative structure and content of the evaluation report, evaluation criteria and evaluation questions follow loosely the guidance provided by the European Commission (2017) Better Regulation Guidelines¹⁵. The objective is not however to carry-out a complete policy evaluation, but a “light” version tailored to the needs of Polirural Pilots. For instance, the evaluation criteria take into account only three dimensions: effectiveness, relevance and coherence, as suggested in the Task description of the Polirural Grant Agreement. This tentative structure is still subject to modifications and is complemented by more detailed guidance before launching the evaluation process.

Executive summary

1. Introduction (1-2 pp.)

1.1 Objectives of the evaluation

1.2 Context of the evaluation

1.3 Structure of the evaluation report

2. Background and state of the art of the policy measure (2-3 pp.)

Description of the background of the policy measure and the current status.
Including answers to the following questions:

- Why was the policy measure initiated? What was the background context?
- What were the objectives of the measure?
- What is the current status of implementation? How is the progress made?
- Have there been issues related to the implementation?

What is the current situation of the different stakeholders targeted by the measure?
How have they been affected by the measure?

3. Evaluation of the impacts of the policy measure (6-8 pp.)

3.1 Description of the logframe matrix

The logframe matrix describes the context, needs, objectives, inputs, outputs, outcomes, impacts of the policy measure in a structured manner, supporting and structuring the evaluation. It also allows assessing the different evaluation aspects.

3.2 Effectiveness of the policy measure

¹⁵ European Commission (2017) Better Regulation Guidelines, Chapter VI, Guidelines on evaluation (including fitness checks Available: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/better-regulation-guidelines-evaluation-fitness-checks.pdf>

The evaluation of effectiveness analyses the progress made towards achieving the objectives of the policy measure, looking for evidence of why, whether or how these changes are attributed to the policy measure. Evaluation questions to be answered in this section includes:

- To what extent the policy measure has achieved its objectives? Include an evidence-based judgement of the progress made.
- What were the key success factors in achieving the objectives?
- What were the key obstacles hindering the progress?

3.3 Relevance of the policy measure

The relevance refers to evaluation of whether the objectives of the policy measure are still relevant or there has been changes in the underlying problems and drivers. The evaluation looks at the relationship between the needs and problems and the objectives of the policy measure. Questions that should be answered in this section:

- To what extent the policy measure is still relevant?
- To what extent the objectives have been appropriate?
- How well do the original objectives correspond to the current needs?

3.4 Coherence of the policy measure

The evaluation of coherence assesses how well the policy measure is aligned with other local, regional, national or EU policy measures. The evaluation report should provide answers to following questions:

- To what extent the policy measure is coherent with other policy interventions which have similar objectives?
- To what extent is the policy measure aligned with other local and regional policy measures?
- To what extent is the policy measure aligned with relevant national policy measures?
- To what extent is the policy measure aligned with relevant EU policy measures?

4. Conclusions (1-2 pp.)

This chapter aims to conclude the findings of the evaluation.

6.5.2 How to summarise the Results from the Logframe Analysis

The objective of the logframe analysis is to map the basic elements of the evaluation and create links between objectives, inputs and activities, outputs, results and impacts. It also aims to reflect the evaluation criteria and defines the scope of the evaluation. The figure and table below provide a preliminary suggestion on how the results of the logframe analysis can be summarised and used as key structuring tool for the evaluation report.

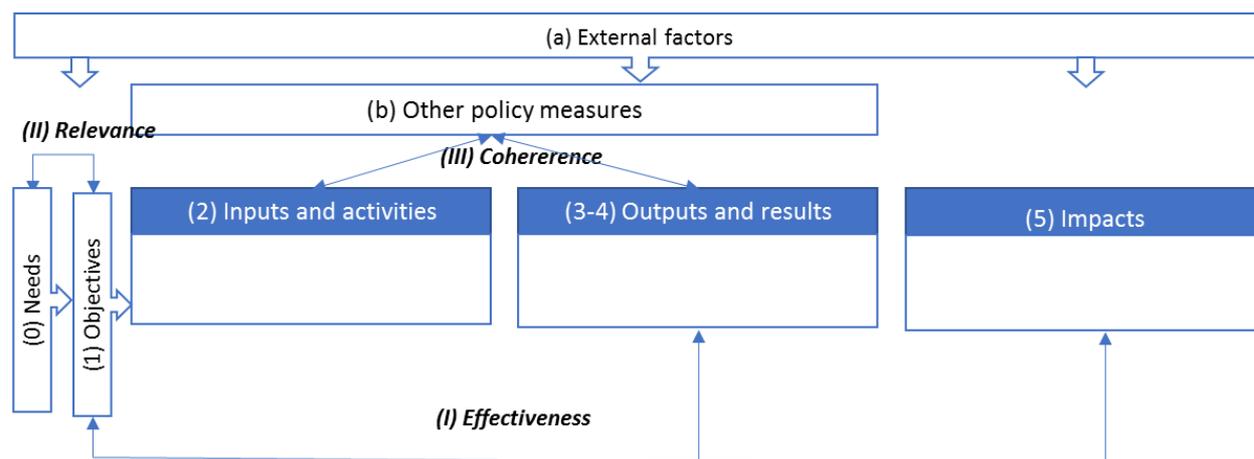


Figure 8: Logframe – graphical illustration.

Table 4: Logframe – summary table of the key elements.

Logframe: Summary matrix	
(0)	Include a description of needs for the policy measure.
(1)	Include a description of key objectives of the policy measure.
(2)	Include a description of inputs and actions of the policy measure.
(3)	Include a description of direct outputs i.e. short-term results of the activities.
(4)	Include a description of medium-term outcomes achieved.
(5)	Include a description of wider long-term economic, societal, and environmental impacts that have been achieved or are expected to be achieved.
(a)	Include a description of other external factors.
(b)	Include a description of other relevant policies (local, regional, national, EU).
(I)	Relevance – assessment of the relationship between the needs of society (i) and the objectives (1) of the intervention.
(II)	Effectiveness - assessment of how successful the action has been in terms of achieving or making progress (3) towards the objectives set (1).
(III)	Coherence – assessment of the initiative (0-4) compared to other initiatives and policies (a).

7 Conclusion and next Steps

The evaluation concept forms the initial basis for the evaluation work on a general level for WP4.5 and also for WP6. It provides on the one hand a basic introduction into concepts and main aspects of evaluation studies, on the other hand a toolbox with evaluation methods and general instruction for field work are provided.

Accordingly, this concept needs to be complemented with further practical support to the pilots. This support will be given in shape of an evaluation support facility (ESF) that will provide in course of the evaluation work guidance on bilateral basis. The ESF will help through the different steps of the evaluation process and provide further tools and practical support.

An important next step is to define the role of Text Mining (TM) in T4.5 Evaluation of Regional Policy Measures. As described in the Grant Agreement, T4.5 “involves two parallel tracks: one focused on big data analysis through text mining, another on the more traditional approach which involves survey research.” To ensure that TM is meaningfully represented in the final results, it is important to define early in the T4.5 process the different ways in which Semex can support evaluation. For example, Semex can:

- Identify additional issues/benefits linked to a specific policy that weren’t picked up by the survey, and so make the evaluation more complete
- Confirm/validate survey findings by revealing broadly positive or negative sentiment toward to the same policy
- Cast the same policy in a different light compared to survey, allowing pilots to reach a more balanced conclusion about policy’s performance
- Reveal important local/regional measures that weren’t identified by T4.4. Needs-Policy Mapping but which may merit attention

A special working group comprising pilots, evaluation experts, TM experts, foresight experts and System Dynamics experts will be set up in June 2020 to ensure that evaluation activities are fit for purpose and deliver actionable insights.