

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES – PORTUGAL

LOCAL ACTION GROUPS / LEADER ASSOCIATIONS

REPORT ON MEETING WITH FEDERATION MINHA TERRA – PT LAGS FEDERATION. JUNE 28, 2023

As part of the exchange meetings held weekly by the Federation Minha Terra for supporting Local Actions Groups (LAGs) in preparing the Local Development Strategies (LDS), on June 28th, Magda Porta, the national expert for the Smart Rural 27 project, delivered a presentation on the Smart Villages concept and possible approaches to implement it.

Following the presentation, a discussion succeeded regarding the prospect and possibility of integrating measures to support Smart Villages at the national level within Local Development Strategies, taking into account the PT context.

Recognizing an immediate need for guidance in integrating Smart Village support into these strategies, the SR27 National Expert offered a comprehensive document titled "Contribution/Proposal for Integrating the Smart Villages Concept into Local Development Strategies of LEADER/CLLD."

This five-page document, along with the PowerPoint presentation and the Guidebook on How to Become a Smart Village (Smart Rural 21, PT version), were distributed to all Portuguese LAGs subsequent to the meeting held on June 28th.

To understand the results from this activity supported by the Smart Rural 27 Project, it was distributed an online feedback form (Typeform), sent on two occasions (October 3rd and October 30th). In a total of 43 participating Local Action Groups (LAGs), 26 responses were received.

Purpose of the meeting (presentation followed by discussion)
<p>Expectation to discuss the possible integration of support for Smart Village strategies within the Local Development Strategies of the PT Local Action Groups LEADER/CLLD.</p> <p>Aspects covered by the presentation (PPT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding the Smart Villages concept ▪ Work developed by Smart Rural Projects 21 and 27 ▪ How the concept of Smart Villages is programmed in the CAP Strategic Plan ▪ Smart Villages and CAP Strategic Plan - Portugal ▪ Key elements of a Smart Village strategy ▪ Challenges of integrating the support to Smart Villages
Date of the meeting
28/06/2023 (15h - 18h)
Location
Online (Zoom platform)
Participation
<p>Number of participants: 90</p> <p>Organizations that participated and their role: Representatives of the Federation Minha Terra, PT Local Action Groups (Coordinators and respective teams – included representatives of 43 LAGs)</p>
Main outcomes and lessons learnt
<p>Main outcomes of the discussion that followed the presentation / results in the light of the objectives of the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is considered that the introduction and development of the Smart Villages concept within the Local Development Strategies ensures an alignment and leverages the role of LEADER / CLLD in rural territories. SV strategies can represent a relevant instrument to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better mobilize the potential at the micro scale and to strengthen and facilitate the implementation of the LEADER / CLLD approach, by considering local needs and potentialities and socio-cultural characteristics, as well as responses to promote structural changes, • strengthen the empowerment of rural communities and encourage innovation, privileging the involvement of local actors - promoting collective intelligence and collaborative processes to achieve a joint prospective vision regarding sustainable development at the micro scale. ▪ In short, it is considered that there is a clear convergence with the LEADER approach and the possibility, through the Smart Village concept, to amplify the results of the projects supported by the LDSs and to structure and strengthen the capillarity and amplify the effects of the implementation of the LEADER approach in terms of improving governance systems and increasing social capital, that is, to strengthen and highlight the added value of the LEADER approach.
Main findings/ lessons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is indeed a growing interest around SV and it would be favorable to gather the necessary conditions to stimulate their emergence in the national context, as well as to support promoters in their implementation. ▪ In this sense, it is envisaged to: structure a support framework for Smart Villages; and integrate this support framework in a cross-cutting way in the LDSs.
The Smart Rural 27 contribution

The SR 27 contributed with a document organized in the following way:

Taking into account

- the framework of the LDSs under the CAP SP; with pre-defined and sectorally limited areas of intervention;
- the financial resources foreseen; which are clearly insufficient in view of the needs of rural territories and the implementation of development processes in which improvements and benefits for rural communities are evident; and
- the incompatibility with the role of LAGs (polarization of support to a small number of villages/communities in their territories).

It may make sense to structure an intervention to support activities related to the preparation of Smart Villages strategies which could include:

- ➔ Operations that include support to capacity building (e.g., development of training actions for local "leaders", events); to preparatory activities (e.g., development of guidance documents); to cooperation projects / activities in the context of the Smart Villages theme.
- ➔ Specific intervention dedicated to financing / supporting the elaboration of Smart Villages strategies. In this case, the idea is to design an intervention with a support granted in the form of a non-refundable flat-rate aid (with an amount yet to be defined).

Given the importance of emphasizing the relevance and pertinence of mobilizing partners/actors at a micro scale and their concrete and relevant role in sustainable development processes, this support would be paid upon submission of a report describing the process of mobilizing actors + a strategy and action plan for the Smart Village concerned.

In terms of operationalization and implementation itself, it would be desirable to build Smart Villages strategies that are flexible and properly adjusted to local contexts, and that favour the mobilization of funding, not only in the context of the LDC of the respective LAG, but above all from the instruments provided for in the regional / national regulatory framework to support their implementation.

Follow-up actions - possible support to LAGs through the SR 27 project

Next steps (still to be discussed and approved by the SR 27 Coordination)

In a first phase (until August, 14, 2023 – when the LDSs have to be submitted), contributions to:

- Integrate the definition of Smart Villages in the relevant strategic documents.
- Define synthetically (or more concretely) what is meant by a SV strategy (conceptual model, scale, criteria, ...).
- Raise awareness of the importance of integrating the SV concept in a cross-cutting way in the LDSs.

In a 2nd phase (period still to be defined), contributions to:

- Elaborate the Smart Villages strategy model.
- Define analysis criteria for the prioritization and selection and consequent approval of support requests (articulation with LDCs, level of innovation, ...).
- Work, in conjunction with the Federation Minha Terra and the LAGs, with the CAP SP MA (raising awareness of the importance of adopting this concept in the CAP SP and its implementation through the LEADER / CLLDS LDSs, preparation of specific guidelines for the national context, ...).
- Work with other Managing Authorities on the flexibility to use the concept in mobilizing funding from various sources in different regional/local contexts.
- Other activities still to be defined that are considered to be useful.

Supporting documents

PPT presentation

A document called *Contribution to the proposal for integrating the Smart Villages concept into Local Development Strategies of LEADER / CLLD* was produced. This 5-page document, together with the PPT presentation and the *Guidebook on how to become a Smart Village* (Smart Rural 21, PT version), were sent to all Portuguese LAGs following the meeting held on June 28th.

Sent to the SR27 Coordination on the July 18th (supporting documents produced by the SR 27 National Expert, in Portuguese)

- *PPT – presentation for the meeting with the Federation Minha Terra and all PT LAGs*
- *Contribution to the proposal for integrating the Smart Villages concept into Local Development Strategies of LEADER / CLLD*

Update regarding the feedback and results of the work developed between the SR27 national expert, the PT LAGs Federation and the LAGs.

Annexes:

1. **PPT - presentation for the meeting with the Federation Minha Terra and all PT LAGs**
(The full PPT was sent by email. The content is in PT.)



2. **Picture of the zoom meeting**



3. **Contribution to the proposal for integrating the Smart Villages concept into Local Development Strategies of LEADER / CLLD**
(The complete file in docx was sent by e-mail. The content is in PT but may be translated)

CONTRIBUTO PARA A PROPOSTA DE INTEGRAÇÃO DO CONCEITO SMART VILLAGES NO ÂMBITO DAS ESTRATÉGIAS DE DESENVOLVIMENTO LOCAL

QUADRO CONCEPTUAL DAS SMART VILLAGES (ALDEIAS INTELIGENTES) – ENQUADRAMENTO

Tendo em conta a atuação da abordagem LEADER / DLBC, assente na promoção de estratégias centradas no desenvolvimento sustentável, com base numa perspetiva integradora, participativa, focada no território e valorizadora do conhecimento e dos processos de aprendizagem coletiva geradores de inovação, considera-se que a introdução e o desenvolvimento do conceito Smart Villages no âmbito das Estratégias de Desenvolvimento Local assegura um alinhamento ideal e, aliás, alavanca esse papel do LEADER / DLBC nos territórios rurais.

Com efeito, o [Relatório Análise Prospectiva dos Resultados da Avaliação Intercalar das Estratégias de Desenvolvimento Local – Contributo para o processo de definição da Estratégia Portugal 2030](#) indica este tipo de intervenção como potencialmente mobilizável pelos Grupos de Ação Local para as suas EDL, por se enquadrar quer nas tendências da política de desenvolvimento rural/local, bem como nas expectativas quanto ao seu potencial para contribuir para o desenvolvimento sustentável dos territórios rurais (página 39).

Definição de Smart Villages (Aldeias Inteligentes)

Smart Villages são comunidades em áreas rurais que desenvolvem soluções inteligentes para responder aos desafios do contexto local. Estas comunidades rurais baseiam-se no potencial e oportunidades locais existentes para iniciar um processo de desenvolvimento sustentável dos seus territórios. Utilizam uma abordagem participativa para desenvolver e implementar estratégias no sentido de melhorar as suas condições económicas, sociais e ambientais e utilizam soluções inovadoras, em particular, através da mobilização de soluções oferecidas pelas tecnologias digitais. As Smart Villages beneficiam de cooperação e alianças com outras comunidades e atores nas áreas rurais e urbanas. O início e a implementação das estratégias de Smart Villages podem basear-se em iniciativas já existentes e podem beneficiar de diversas fontes de financiamento públicas e privadas.

Fonte: European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, Pilot project: smart eco-social villages: executive summary, Publications Office, 2020, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2762/90133>.

Considera-se, assim, que as estratégias de Smart Villages podem representar um instrumento relevante para melhor mobilizar o potencial à escala micro e para reforçar e facilitar a implementação da abordagem LEADER / DLBC, ao considerar as necessidades e as potencialidades locais e as características socioculturais, bem como ser previstas respostas no sentido de promover mudanças estruturais, de reforçar a capacitação das comunidades rurais e de incentivar a inovação, privilegiando o envolvimento dos atores locais – promover a inteligência coletiva e os processos colaborativos para a obtenção de uma visão prospetiva conjunta no que se refere ao desenvolvimento sustentável à escala micro.

Em suma, considera-se haver uma clara convergência com a abordagem LEADER e a possibilidade de, através do conceito Smart Village, ampliar os resultados dos projetos apoiados pelas EDL e estruturar e reforçar a capilaridade e ampliar os efeitos da implementação da abordagem LEADER em termos de melhoria dos sistemas de governança e de aumento do capital social, ou seja, reforçar e evidenciar o valor acrescentado da abordagem LEADER.

4. Feedback and results of the work developed between the SR27 national expert, the PT LAGs Federation and the LAGs.

The key questions and results were as follows.

1. Usefulness of the Smart Villages Presentation

1+ Qual foi a utilidade da apresentação realizada pelo Projeto Smart Rural 27 para entender melhor o conceito Smart Villages?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

OK ✓

Question: How useful was the presentation given by the Smart Rural 17 Project to better understand the Smart Villages concept?

➔ Average score: 8.1 out of 10.

2. Integration of Smart Villages in Local Development Strategies

2+ Na proposta de Estratégia de Desenvolvimento Local submetida à Autoridade de Gestão do Plano Estratégico da PAC, incluiu o apoio à elaboração de estratégias de Smart Villages?

☒ Yes

☐ No

OK ✓

Question: In the Local Development Strategy proposal submitted to the CAP Strategic Plan Management Authority, did you include support for the development of Smart Villages strategies?

➔ 19 out of the 26 LAGs responded yes, corresponding to (73%).

3. Assessment of Supporting Document

3+ Se sim, por favor, avalie de que forma o documento "Contributo para a proposta de integração do conceito e apoio à elaboração de estratégias de Smart Villages no âmbito das Estratégias de Desenvolvimento Local" ajudou a incluir esse apoio?

Drag and drop to rank options

Ajudou muito

Ajudou satisfatoriamente

Não ajudou

OK ✓ press Enter +1

Question: If yes, please assess how the document "Contribution to the proposal to integrate the concept and support the development of Smart Villages strategies within the Local Development Strategies" helped to include this support?

- ➔ 13 LAGs replied that it helped a lot, and 6 replied that it helped satisfactorily.

4. Suggestions for future meetings and activities

4+ Tem alguma sugestão para futuras reuniões e/ou atividades a desenvolver com os Grupos de Ação Local com apoio do Projeto Smart Rural 27?

Type your answer here...

Shift + Enter to make a line break

Submit

press Cmd + Enter

Question: Do you have any suggestions for future meetings and/or activities to be developed with the Local Action Groups with the support of the Smart Rural 27 Project?

- ➔ Various suggestions were provided, reflecting the diverse needs and expectations of the participating LAGs. It is possible to find the direct translation in the next table

Subject	Answers
Organize visits to Smart Villages (3 answers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit concrete examples. ▪ Organize visits (face-to-face or virtual) to concrete cases of Smart Village projects. ▪ Organizing visits to Smart Villages.
Concrete case examples: exchange of experiences and results (2 answers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sharing experiences and their results. ▪ Exemplification with real cases and their results.
Further guidance and information needs (6 answers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take the opportunity, at the next face-to-face meeting of the Federation members, to organize a working session on the subject, with the participation of Magda Porta. Working on specific issues - how we can support Smart Villages strategies within the CLLD. ▪ Although we haven't made any specific plans for this topic, we are very interested in it as it is easily applicable to our area. This is why we are interested in taking part in a meeting to delve into this topic in greater depth and to have concrete guidance to be able to work on this subject in the next community support framework. ▪ Meetings to work on next steps and challenges, plus the sharing of cases. ▪ As part of the next phase of defining the LDS, it would be useful to have further information on what the actions could be and how to assess them (indicators to quantify the supported operations and to evaluate them, and amount of funds to allocate them). ▪ Guidance on how to build a LEADER inter-territorial (or transnational) cooperation project on the subject. ▪ Guidance to define a basic format for approaching the issue.



Overall, the feedback indicates a positive reception of the Smart Villages presentation, with a substantial number of LAGs incorporating support for Smart Villages strategies in their LDS. The document provided by the Smart Rural 27 Project played a significant role in facilitating this integration. The suggestions for future activities could likely guide the development of further collaborative efforts between the LAGs and the Smart Rural 27 Project.