



Added Value of Networking

Success Story

Success Story title

Regional Futures Workshops 2012

Theme

Knowledge exchange; Training.Cooperation

NRN

Rural Network Unit of Finland

Coordinator

Rural Network Unit of Finland

Partners

Finland's Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Rural Development Unit; Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Rural Policy Committee; Agency for Rural Affairs; Finnish National Fund for Research and Development (Sitra)

Period

1.1.2012 ->

Resources

EUR 120,000

Geo-location

Where did it happen?

Beneficiaries

Who participated in the activities?

Background

The focus of the Mainland Finland Rural Development Programme in 2012 is on innovation: new ideas, products or ways of working that respond to some of the challenges of our time. The aim during the theme year is to draw attention to new local ideas on which to build rural regions in the future, and to remind people that "There is Room for the Future in the Countryside." New solutions are both required and contributed by climate change, bioenergy, new technologies and population trends. New kinds of rural industries may fulfil some of the needs and demands arising from changes in today's world.

The regional futures workshops form a part of the 2012 theme year of the Mainland Finland Rural Development Programme. The futures workshops also act as initiators of local and regional rural strategy development work carried out around Finland with a view to the next programme period. The aim of the futures workshops is to support regional and local strategy work and to ensure regional and local needs are taken into account in national efforts. Another objective is to discuss the rural development issues that different regions have in common.

Main activities

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- The Rural Network Unit held a rural developers' strategy event in February, where alignments were drafted for the future of Finland's rural areas and for related strategies.
- The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment and the regional councils are working with the Rural Network Unit, the Rural Policy Committee and Sitra to hold 15 regional futures workshops.
- The objective of the workshops is to identify local needs and to come up with new local ideas for future development of rural areas, for planning the next programme period and for increasing the impact of development schemes during the ongoing programme period.
- The implementation of the futures workshops is coordinated by Capful Oy, whose representatives will attend each workshop and compile together their outcomes. The final reports of the futures workshops will be published on maaseutu.fi.



- The plan involves asking the officials in charge of running national and EU-funded rural development programmes for comments and statements on the workshops' final reports. Hopefully this will create links between regional and national programme efforts.

Contribution of the NSU

The Rural Network Unit of Finland coordinates the regional futures workshops. It carried out the planning and monitoring of the workshops' implementation with the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the regional councils, the Rural Development Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Agency for Rural Affairs and the practical organiser of the workshops, Capful Oy.

Contribution of the partners

The team involved in the planning and implementation included representatives from many different organisations: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Agency for Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Finnish National Fund for Research and Development (Sitra), the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the regional councils, the LEADER Local Action Groups, and the regional information officers of the Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland.

Success factors

- The futures workshops will create links between local, regional and national efforts within rural strategy.
- The futures workshops will communicate local needs to those in charge of planning the national Rural Development Programmes.
- The futures workshops will facilitate discussions on issues related to rural development common to many different areas, on the local, regional and national levels.

Additional information

http://www.maaseutu.fi/fi/index/jaljet_tulevaisuuteen/tulavaisuustyopajat.html (in Finnish)

