

Impact assessment of the Leader Approach

Ian Baker, Defra

- Motivation for the study
 - Evidence gap
 - Added value of approach
 - Economic impact
 - “Green book” Evaluation gap
 - Good news stories
 - Post 2013 period

- Approach to study:
 - Assessment, *not* evaluation
 - Looking across 4 iterations of Leader
 - Green book compliance – IEF+
 - I.e., it will use an evaluation based methodology
 - Out-sourced (to Ekosgen)



defra

Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

Project Purpose

"To assess the impact of the Leader approach, with a particular focus on its economic impact, in order to provide Defra and partners with robust and reliable evidence on which to base future policy options"

Objectives and principles

- Review (economic) impact of the Leader approach over successive iterations to address identified evidence gap
- Focus on assessing quantifiable net economic impacts, applying Treasury and BIS guidelines for robustness
- Consultation with ‘end beneficiaries’ at heart of approach
- Identify good practice and ‘what works’ in implementing the Leader approach to inform post 2013 policy options
- Recognising the varying local contexts and the particular characteristics of the bottom-up Leader approach

Context and framework

Review documentation and management information (RiPs, previous evaluations etc)

Collate data on all Leader+ and 2007-13 projects

Categorise projects by intervention type

Beneficiary survey

- Collate contact details for 5000 beneficiaries
- Telephone consultations with 500 beneficiaries to understand impact and additionality
- Informs net impact assessment at regional and national level

Validating and testing findings

Strategic consultations

- Understanding context and best practice

Regional consultations

- RDAs, LAGs and Gos
- Understanding context and lessons

Devolved administration best practice

- Wales, NI, Scotland
- Lessons and best-practice in economic impact

EU best-practice

- Wales, NI, Scotland
- Lessons and best-practice in economic impact

Reporting and good practice

- Leader approach: context and evolution
- Impact analysis
- Mix of interventions that maximise impact
- Good practice – UK, devolved administrations and EU
- Benchmarks and lessons for the future

Progress to date

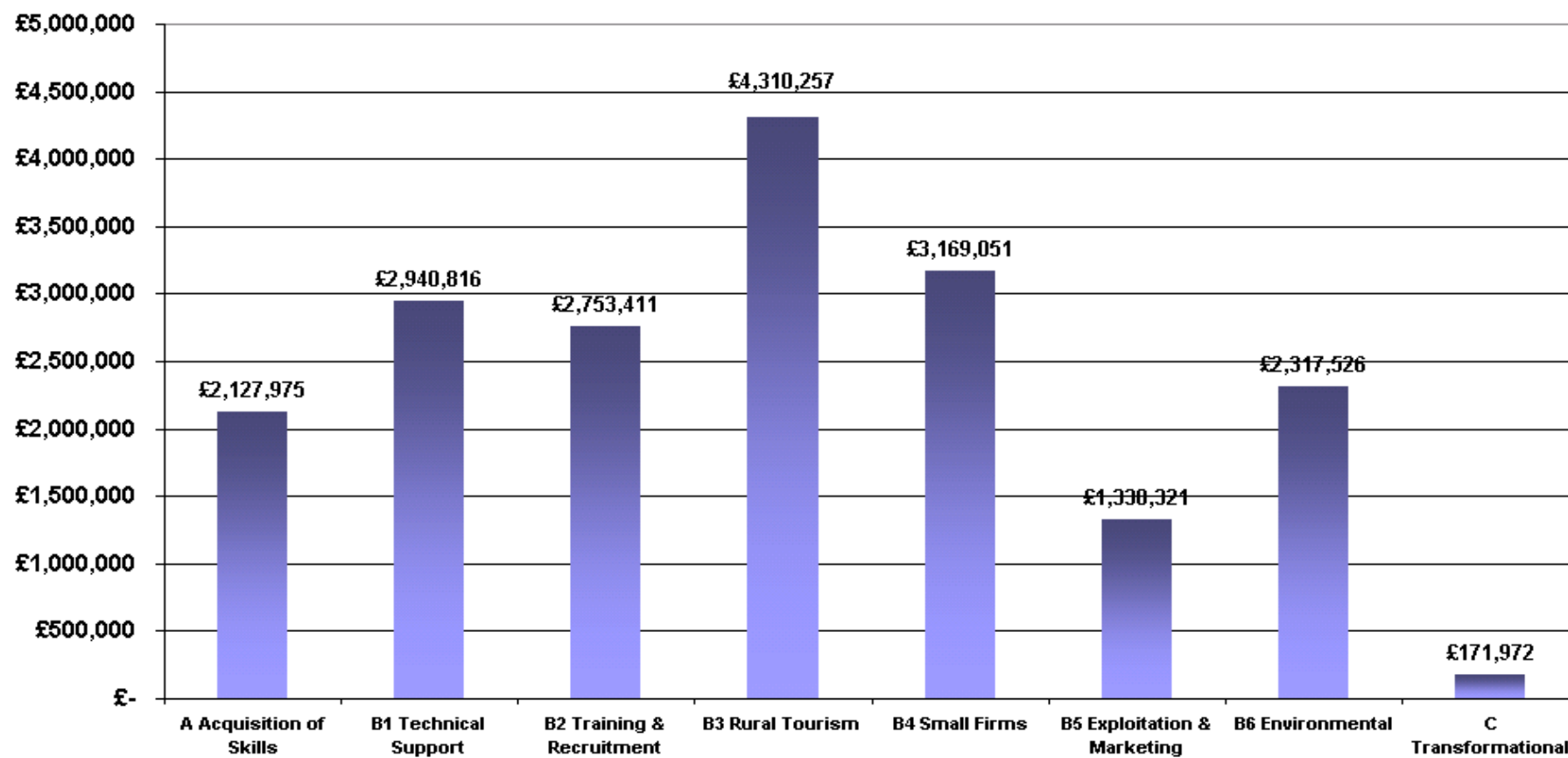
- Review of the 'story of Leader' since 1991
- Collating project data for Leader+ and RDPE Leader
- Consult stakeholders in Devolveds to augment review
- Contacting project managers re 'end beneficiary' data
- Develop survey tools for beneficiary survey, grouped around intervention logic chains

Change between Leader II and Leader +

- Measure organisation
- Level of funding
- Broadening scope & the place of agriculture
- Tourism and heritage – largest share
- Environment - declining share

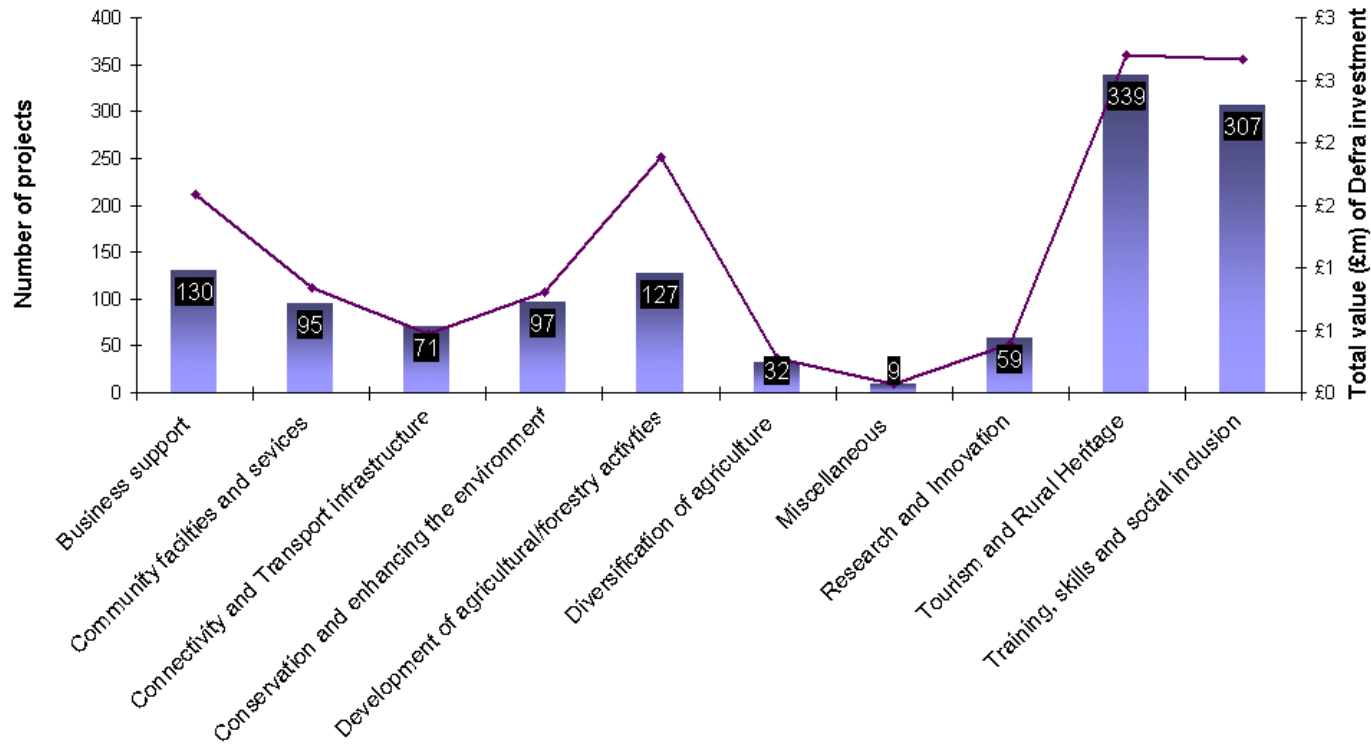
Leader II: Actual spend by sub-measure

Source: European Commission





Leader+ projects and spend by category



Next steps

- Undertake telephone survey of 500 end beneficiaries to assess impacts of Leader interventions
- Review existing impact evaluation of Leader approach and activity
- Selective ‘validation’ consultations with strategic stakeholders (RDPE Network, GOs, etc. suggestions?)
- Establish intervention logic chains
- Arrange consultations with regional and LAG contacts

Outcomes

- Draw out lessons and best-practice:
 - How interventions work in different circumstances?
 - How does the Leader approach compare to other rural development approaches?
- Inform the mid-term (& ex post) RDPE evaluation
- Inform post 2013 policy options

Overall timescales

Begin beneficiary survey in June

Draft report in late August