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Presentation of the common study guide and the methodology

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What is the Common Study Guide?



The Common Study Guide was designed to define many of the elements of the partner study reports – the core of the reports

It is a compilation of the ideas that the partners had at the beginning of the Theme and was meant to develop organically as the theme progressed

The Common Study Guide lead to the production of a Study Report Outline

How was the Common Study Guide produced?



- Initial ideas were debated by all partners
- Agreement on what the guide was to be like was reached through moderation and accord
- Each section of the guide addresses areas that the partners expressed as important
- Highland Council wrote up the guide and it was validated by all partners

The concept behind the Common Study Guide



- The guide outlined a basic format for the type of information to be collected and how to report it
- The the guide embraces both objective and subjective data (*the stats and the story*)
- Recognition of commonality and uniqueness of each project
- The guide is not a measurement tool but rather seeks to review policy, practice and socio-cultural impact on management methods for mountain landscapes

The Study Report Outline



From the Common study Guide the Report Outline was produced to simplify the report writing

It consists of a series of sections (in-line with the Common study guide) each asking mainly open questions.

Not all questions needed to be answered, they acted as a prompt to the type of information required

The Report Outline was not a straight Jacket, Partners were encouraged to use it to identify the information they might want to include

3 – Project description form

Context (in brief): organisation of the Stake Holders, Partners and the environment of the project

- ✘ Description of the **Project**:
 - Description of the activity/ service:
 - Scope of the project (in terms of area and topic):
 - Description of the method used and reasons for its selection:

- ✘ Description of the **organisation** that carries out the project:
 - Name of the organisation
 - Who are the Stake Holders and Partners (farmers, land owners, associations, public bodies, other...)
 - Constitution of the organisation (association, company...). Is it a commercial or a non-commercial organisation?
 - Date of creation
 - Purpose (mission, objectives of the organisation itself)
 - General annual budget of the organisation
 - Number of staff (inc. volunteers).

- ✘ Operational and strategic **history** of the project development:
 - Factors at the origin of the project:
 - Key milestones in the progress of the project
 - Any re-positioning or changes taken and the reason behind these
 - Has any enlargement or the inclusion of other land actors or communities taken place. How was this managed?

- ✘ **Which difficulties, linked to the context, are met by the holders?**
 - Conflict of interest with other beneficiaries
 - Lack of finances
 - Lack of common involvement of the local stakeholders (population, SMEs, tourism business....)
 - External pressure from businesses or public sector
 - Other

Are some of these difficulties linked to the mountainous location?

- ✘ **Assets met linked to the context**
 - Project (management of the resource) supported by the local population
 - Quality / specificity / originality of the resource
 - Specificity of defence and management methods
 - Fame / image of the area
 - Presence of a local market linked to tourist activity or urbanization
 - Other

Are some of these assets linked to mountainous location ?



The individual study projects



Each partner was asked to prepare a brief description of their proposed project or projects

The briefs were then discussed by the partners and in agreement with the proposer they were amended to better fit the needs of the project

Continued



The proposal briefs were not viewed and discussed in isolation, they were seen as a whole and adapted based on what else had been proposed to achieve the best possible range of studies.

In this way the process developed naturally rather than being constrained by a strict set of rules. The direction of the Theme was maintained by testing every step against our mission and objectives.

Summary

- **Each partner had a specific story to tell, the process was designed to capture each of these in the best way possible.**
- **The process was partner lead but allowed theme coordinators to plan and adapt.**
- **The importance and value of ‘soft data’ was recognised in coordination with ‘hard data’.**
- **At face value many of the study reports are hard to compare, however, by looking beyond straight forward statistics and considering the drivers, the motivation and the cultural needs it has been possible to find good comparators and extract some valuable evidence**