An active FLAG: Animation as the heart of FLAG work

see FARNET Guide #22: Fit for the future: A guide for effective FLAGs

Online capacity building meeting for Croatian FLAGs

14 December 2021

Adapting animation to the level and type of activity in your area

- **When little activity in the area**: « Wake up » the community – organise meetings, identify leaders, create opportunities for joint action
- **When area active but isolated organisations and businesses:** FlLAG focus has to be on facilitating exchange and cooperation – get them involved during strategy development, organise networking events, encourage joint projects to facilitate synergies

Adapting animation to the level and type of activity in your area

- **When good cooperation between some organisations, but significant part of the community remains passive:** build on the experience and contacts of more active stakeholders – targeted approach, matching interests, involving the active organisations to build the capacity of others

Adapting animation to the level and type of activity in your area

- **The importance of linkages:** Not only bringing stakeholders closer to the FLAG but also bring different local stakeholders closer to each other
  - A simple meeting is not enough: Better are **events where they undertake an activity together**: cooperation fairs, hackathons
  - **Proritising support to projects involving several stakeholders, ideally from different sectors**

Adapting animation to the level and type of activity in your area



Reflect

- Has the level of activity (of citizens, associations, and businesses) in your area changed over the years as a result of FLAG animation?
- Has the FLAG facilitated the creation of permanent forms of cooperation (for example, multi-stakeholder organisations or fishers' association)?

Adapting animation to different stakeholders (examples)

- Active fishers: Small meetings at convenient locations (for example, in the harbour); regular presence at places such as fishing ports or fish auctions; take fishers on study visits to other FLAG areas
- Business managers: One-to-one meetings; activities which offer tangible benefits; networking events

→Have you noticed an increased involvement of particular stakeholders over the years? Which animation activities helped to make this happen?

Adapting animation to different stakeholders

- TIP: Develop a simple animation plan, perhaps on an annual basis, that would identify, for each year, key stakeholders to focus on and the most suitable activities to reach them.

Adapting animation to the stage of the strategic process

Development of first local development strategy

Focus on getting as many actors involved as possible, with particular effort on key stakeholders, such as the fisheries or aquaculture sector.

*Different formats of **meetings**, large-scale as well as small, informal, one-to-one meetings will be essential here, as well as a good **communications campaign.***

When taking strategic decisions

When defining objectives, setting targets, developing project selection criteria etc., the FLAG should monitor the level of involvement of different stakeholders to ensure a key group concerned by the strategy is not left out of the process.

*Take **direct contact** with such groups to understand any barriers to their participation. Consider first, who is the **best person** to contact such stakeholders (e.g., the FLAG manager, or one of the members?). Some may be more willing to get involved if they are given a **specific function**, such as leading a specific working group.*

Adapting animation to the stage of the strategic process

Strategy implementation

Many animation activities will focus on animating potential project promoters. On top of broad communication about the support available, it is also important to identify people who have the potential to implement good projects and to encourage them to apply.

*Animation at this stage involves **informal exchanges** with fishers, SME managers and other potential beneficiaries, as well as creating **opportunities to develop creative ideas** for projects (brainstorms, hackathons, etc.)*

Towards the end of implementation

The FLAG should animate different groups of stakeholders to ***reflect on the successes and failures*** and share their views, in order to contribute to the evaluation and to help develop a better strategy and action plan in the next period.

*This might involve **focus groups** and/or **interviews with different stakeholders**, amongst others. See Chapter 5 for more ideas.*

Animation toolbox

- **Meetings**: a very flexible tool that can be used at all stages of implementation, but their format (size, location, timing etc.) needs to be adapted to specific stakeholders (e.g., village meetings for the wider public, small or one-to-one meetings with the business sector or to discuss project ideas, etc.).
- **Working groups**: usually involve a small group of stakeholders with relevant knowledge or expertise, who communicate regularly to work more in depth on a specific issue or theme and develop proposal for action.
- **Study visits**: taking a group of local stakeholders on a visit to another fisheries area (within your country or abroad) can provide learning, inspiration, and increased readiness to try new solutions. It can also help build trust between stakeholders participating in such a visit.
- **Events aiming to stimulate new ideas**, designed to broaden the participants' minds and challenge them to come up with new solutions (Hackathons, innovation camps, inspirational events, etc.).
- **Cooperation fairs and matchmaking events**, designed to help local stakeholders find partners for joint initiatives or projects.

The last two types of tools can be particularly helpful at the initial stages of developing project ideas. Further FLAG support to such potential projects is described in Chapter 2.

Communication activities *can also increase the involvement of stakeholders and are discussed in more detail in* Chapter 4.

Adapting animation to the stage of the strategic process



Reflect

- At which stage of the process were the animation activities most useful in your area? Did they lead to new ideas, committed partners, bringing onboard sceptics?

Thank you! Hvala!

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