



Identification, Dissemination and Exchange of good practice in
Local Employment development and promoting better governance

Consorzio LEADER Terre del Sosio - Italy

Background on leader organisation

Terre del Sosio Leader was created in 1991. The founding members are: National Federation of Craftsmanship – Sicily branch, Italian Agricultural Confederation – Palermo Province branch, CRESM (Economic and Social Research Centre for the Mezzogiorno).

For the purposes of achieving the objectives of the GAL LEADER II Terre del Sosio, the partnership was extended to: local municipalities, CRES (Research centre in electronics), the technical institute for agriculture Bisacquino, TRIPS (co-operative offering tourism-related services) and Co.Ser.Gest. (Co-operative offering services to enterprises).

Under LEADER+, the partnership has been further enlarged laying the foundation for the creation of a new entity, “Terre del Gattopardo”, to which both Terre del Sosio and GAL Terre Sicane participate along with 13 local public bodies and 27 other partners (primarily associations and non-commercial bodies).

Purpose of the project

The main objective of the Terre del Sosio Consortium is to operate in the field of local development.

Geographical focus

The area of reference is primarily inland Sicily and more particularly in a series of municipalities in the province of Palermo.

Project partnership

The Terre del Sosio GAL is a partnership-based project but above all a partnership of socio-economic actors.

During the design phase of projects, the potential beneficiaries of activities focusing on local development participate in the creation of the project and become fully involved in the socio-economic partnership.

Activities

Beyond GAL I and II, the consortium has also co-operated with the municipality of Bisacquino as far as the project Horizon Triona is concerned. Activities geared towards enhancing environmental awareness and protection have also been carried out in co-operation with a number of training institutes in Western Sicily.

The consortium is also a professional training body, at the moment it is working on 2 training courses: one for employees of local public sector bodies and one for the restoration of rural sites. Even after the end of Leader II, it has continued its consultancy activities focused on providing enterprise support, particularly through enhancing networks of local producers.

IN partnership with CRES and with GAL Rocca di Cerere (Enna), and building on the work carried out under Leader, a new web site is being developed to promote the area and opportunities for e-commerce (it is not live yet, but can be seen under construction at: <http://commercio.cres.it> Activities:

Target groups	Inhabitants of rural areas, local public bodies, enterprises.
Particular successes	<p>Under Leader I and II, activities to raise awareness and enhance the area, for the protection of the environment and to enhance the entrepreneurial context, have been carried out. More specifically, 5 thematic itineraries, an information system, a manual of restoration techniques for rural sites have been developed.</p> <p>Under the scheme “Laboratory for entrepreneurial management”, the project tried to identify organisational and management models to enhance entrepreneurship and cover the higher costs that enterprises in rural areas often have to bear. This scheme has led to the creation of a consortium of producers.</p>
Lessons learnt	<p>State aid and sporadic interventions in favour of enterprises in rural areas do not culminate in concrete and lasting processes. There is a need to intervene with a combination of measures that take into account the higher costs and managerial challenges that characterise enterprises in rural areas. More specifically, in the Italian Mezzogiorno, higher costs are due to: higher transport costs, higher interest rates, bureaucracy, lack of enterprise culture, labour costs, black market.</p> <p>It is essential to fully involve the project beneficiaries in the socio-economic partnership.</p>