

Evaluation of the “Rural Development Synergies” program



The Swiss federal government has introduced a “Rural Development Synergies” program to help coordinate the work of regional policymakers and harmonize rural development policies. EBP was commissioned to evaluate the program and submit recommendations for its further development.

The Federal Rural Region Network, comprised of the Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE), the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), the Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), launched the “Rural Development Synergies” program in 2007. The aim of the program is to optimize the coordination of federal and cantonal policymakers in the area of rural development. The individual model projects initiated in the framework of the program have enabled the stakeholders involved to test innovative approaches to cross-regional cooperation.

EBP joined forces with the Evaluanda firm to assess the program on the basis of a special impact model. In the context of this work, the relevant program documents and all of the 13 model projects were evaluated and interviews were conducted with representatives of the four federal agencies in the federal network, as well as with other sponsors of the individual model projects.

The assessment encompasses an evaluation of the program concept, implementation and impact. The findings generated in the context of the assessment were discussed with the program participants and other stakeholders involved in the individual model projects. In addition to an overall evaluation of the model projects initiated in the framework of the “Rural Development

Client

Federal Rural Region Network

Facts

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Synergies” program, the assessment report contains recommendations for further development at both program and project level.