



Circular No: 2 - 2021

From: LEADER Policy and Operations Unit

To: All LAGs and Implementing Partners, Article 48 Checking Body

Date Issued: 15 January 2021

**Subject: 1. Amended Standard Project Assessment Report
2. Amended LAG Minutes and Amended Evaluation Committee Minutes
Templates**

This Circular is being issued to amend, the current Standard Project Assessment Report, the current LAG Minutes Template (Appendix 9 of the LEADER 2014 – 2020 Operating Rules) and the current Evaluation Committee Minutes Template (Appendix 10 of the LEADER 2014 – 2020 Operating Rules).

1. Standard Project Assessment Report

Two new questions (Question 18 & Question 19) have been added to the Standard Project Assessment Report.

Question 18

Question 18 of this amended report must be completed for **all** projects being assessed. Where the project is seeking funding under the Transitional LEADER Programme, the Development Officer is required to identify the particular aims and priorities of this programme that are satisfied by the project being assessed.

In completing this assessment, the Development Officer must refer to Section 2 and Section 3 of the Transitional LEADER Programme Guidelines issued on 16th December 2020.

If the project is **not** being funded under the Transitional LEADER Programme, the Development Officer should insert “N/A” in the Question Box with the text *“This Project will not be funded under the Transitional LEADER Programme”*.



Question 19

Question 19 of this amended report must be completed for **all** projects being assessed. This question requires the Development Officer to assess the project for the creation of artificial conditions to receive the aid.

Background for introduction of this Question

Per Section 6.5 of the LEADER 2014 – 2020 Operating Rules, the deliberate artificial fragmentation of projects to avoid exceeding any prescribed thresholds is prohibited. A project must be stand-alone and operable in its own right to be deemed eligible as a ‘phase’ of another project. For example, the LAG must ensure that projects are not fragmented to avoid procurement thresholds that might apply.

There is a requirement to provide evidence that this Key Control component namely, *the Implementation of appropriate procedures to detect and deal with the creation of artificial situations to receive the aid (Article. 60 of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013)* is in place for the programme.

Guidance Document for assessment of creation of artificial conditions to receive the aid

A Guidance document has been prepared to assist the Development Officer in answering this question. This document is attached to the e-mail accompanying this Circular. This Guidance document also outlines the procedure to be followed where the Development Officers assessment is that conditions were created to receive the aid.

Note

Changes to the Standard Project Assessment Report are highlighted using red text and strikethrough.

This amended Standard Project Assessment Report incorporating Question 18 and Question 19 as set out above comes into operation from the date of issue of this Circular for **all** Standard Project Assessments completed on or after that date.



2. Amended Appendix 9 - LAG Minutes and Appendix 10 - Evaluation Committee Minute Templates

These templates have been amended to take account of the requirement to demonstrate that the particular aims and priorities of the Transitional LEADER Programme are satisfied by the particular project being funded under this programme (refer to Section 2 and Section 3 of the Transitional LEADER Programme Guidelines issued on 16th December 2020).

Where the project is seeking funding under the Transitional LEADER Programme, the Evaluation Committee and the LAG are required to identify the particular aims and priorities of this programme that are satisfied by the project being assessed.

Therefore, both the LAG minutes and the Evaluation Committee minutes must identify the particular aims and priorities of the Transitional LEADER Programme that are satisfied by the particular project (refer to Section 2 and Section 3 of the Transitional LEADER Programme Guidelines issued on 16th December 2020).

The amended text is in red. Appendix 9- LAG Minutes Template and Appendix 10 – Evaluation Committee Template have been amended to reflect this requirement.

Where the project being assessed is **not** being funded under the Transitional LEADER Programme, the minutes of the meeting must reflect this to be the case.

These amended templates come into operation from the date of issue of this Circular for **all** for Evaluation Committee minutes and LAG minutes for meetings held on or after this date.

Your cooperation with the introduction of the above is appreciated

If you have any queries regarding the Transitional LEADER Programme or assessment regarding the creation of artificial conditions to receive grant aid, please feel free to submit them to the or1420@drcd.gov.ie e-mail address.

LEADER Policy & Operations Unit