



Medgovernance
Activity 3.2

Benchmarking methodology on governance
for the Med Programme capitalisation

Methodological paper

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1. Introduction: defining some key concepts for the benchmarking analysis

The theoretical and empirical analysis on glocalisation stresses how the local is more and more interconnected with global dynamics. But it is not overhauled by the global. The local has a say in transforming the global. An interactive and iterative relation links territories and flows. Interdependence shapes distant and nearby territories through different kinds of flows. Borders are porous. Transnational flows are disentangling supposed territorial cohesion and new coalitions between external and internal actors are emerging.

National and territorial sovereignty is rearticulating in regional blocks and multilateral organisations. The European Union is a clear manifestation of this dynamic. The EU regional policy, for example, builds multi-level partnerships and promotes Cross-Border-Cooperation (CBC), transnational and interregional cooperation that are opening and involving relations also with “external” territories through enlargement and neighbouring policies.

This analytical framework sustains the elaboration of **the new concept of trans-territorial capital** with the relative need of multi-level governance or better **trans-territorial multi-level governance**, where the multi-level governance structures concern not only specific national territories but also the linkages with nearby and distant territories. This is the kind of governance that the activity 3.2 intends to analyse in the Mediterranean context.

To better understand the concept of trans-territorial governance we can start from the definition of territorial governance given by an ESPON project: “territorial governance is **an organisational mode of collective action** based on partnerships and coalition building amongst public and private partnerships, oriented towards a commonly defined objective. The territory is a dynamic and active context, as well as an arena of action in itself, particularly stressing the role of proximity, sense of place and territorial identity to promote the collective action of local coalitions, **and their capacity to organise relations with other territories**”¹.

This definition is strictly linked with **the concept of territorial capital**, identified as “a localised set of common goods, producing non-divisible collective assets that are not privately owned: immovable goods, that are constant part of specific places: place specific, that is they are almost impossible to find elsewhere with the same features; and heritage goods, that is they are produced and stored over a long period and cannot be produced easily in a short time”. Some examples of territorial capital are the following: Intellectual capital (socially constructed knowledge resources); Social capital (nature of relations among actors); Political capital (power relations and the capacity to mobilise other resources to take action); Material capital (financial and other tangible resources, including fixed assets and infrastructures); Cultural capital (material and immaterial heritage); Geographical capital (natural features, constraints/opportunities...).

This definition of territorial governance and territorial capital may be adapted for the purpose of the Medgovernance project: **Trans-territorial multi-level governance** represents a particular mode of collective actions based on partnerships and coalitions involving public and private actors of different territories being part of a particular geographical zone (in our case the Mediterranean). In **trans-territorial multi-level governance** different actors from different regions and countries decide to build up a **network/organisation and implement projects** in order to tackle common problems, sharing, and seeking jointly for resources and opportunities; to promote common visions; to set up, interconnect, use and develop territorial capitals (trans-territorial capital). In this sense, trans-national territorial capital should not be conceived as a closed box but as a set of localised goods that is open and interconnected with other territorial capitals and trans-national flows (ideas, human mobility, goods, services and financial flows as well as environment and pollution flows).

¹“ESPON project 2.3.2 Governance of Territorial and Urban Policies from EU to Local Level. Final Report (2006), p. http://www.espon.eu/mmp/online/website/content/projects/243/374/file_2186/fr-2.3.2_final_feb2007.pdf

Through a benchmarking analysis, the Medgovernance project aims to understand the added value that projects and networks may give to trans-territorial governance in the Mediterranean. Considering that governance is a very broad concept, the activity 3.2 will focus on the analysis on 5 specific dimensions: vertical cooperation; horizontal cooperation; coherence, coordination and complementarity at vertical and horizontal level; participation; innovation and trans-territorial actions.

In particular, the activity 3.2 will individuate and analyse good practises of projects and networks promoting trans-territorial governance:

- (***Vertical cooperation***) by improving the interaction with other level of government (vertical governance). A project may involve other levels of governments (superior or inferior levels). It may have a direct link with top-down governance systems: e.g. by performing certain tasks according to specific subdivision of competences (vertical subsidiarity); by beneficiating of incentives (e.g. financial resources). Moreover, a project or network may influence the top-down level with actions aiming at promoting the integration or at strengthening the role of regional and local authorities in the governance framework as well as at obtaining more incentives;
- (***Horizontal cooperation***) by improving or strengthening the horizontal cooperation among territorial actors and among territorial policies of different countries. The first aspect has to do with partnership and the contribution of a project/ network in creating or strengthening relationships (social capital and political capital) among territorial actors (e.g. through the creation of periodical meetings, the signing of political agreements, the implementation of public-private partnerships in delivering services). The second aspect concerns the contribution of a project/ network in facilitating horizontal relations among territories promoting the coordination and/ or harmonisation of territorially based policies, multi-sectoral or integrated policies approach and common visions;
- (***Coherence, coordination and complementarity***) by strengthening vertical and horizontal governance assuring coherence, complementarity and coordination with other projects/ networks implemented/ created at vertical (by the international, European or national level) or horizontal level (preferably by other regional authorities or territorial actors) in the same geographical and thematic area;

Box n.1 Definitions of coherence, complementarity and coordination²

Coherence pertains to the absence of contradictions and existence of convergences between the objectives of the different projects/networks in vertical and horizontal levels;

Complementarity concerns the absence of duplications between the activities of the projects/networks;

Coordination is about the active collaboration between actors/projects/networks.

- (***Participation***) by supporting an active participation of the different stakeholders, taking into account the application of horizontal subsidiarity principle, they create public and private partnership, and involve or influence key actors (multinational enterprises, relevant civil society organisations, media, etc);

² On definitions see European Commission, DG External Relations, DG Development, EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Joint Evaluation Unit (2006), *Evaluation Methods for the European Union's External Assistance*, Methodological bases for evaluation, Vol.1, pag. 51.

- (**Innovation**) by introducing innovative practices, tools and governance mechanisms. Projects could play the role of laboratories through which trans-national ideas on governance can be channelled and tested;
- (**Trans-territorial actions**) by promoting the valorisation of territorial capital potentialities in all the territories partners involved in the projects/ networks (Trans-Territorial capital), with particular regard to intellectual capital (socially constructed knowledge resources), material capital (financial and other tangible resources, including fixed assets and infrastructures), cultural capital (material and immaterial heritage); geographical capital (natural features, constraints/opportunities...).

This methodological paper is composed of two parts. The first will clarify the concept of benchmarking in the framework of the new capitalisation function in territorial cooperation. The second part explains in more operational terms the benchmarking methodology and how to carry out the analysis.

2. Benchmarking, Good Practices and Capitalisation

What is Benchmarking?

Different definitions of benchmarking exist. In particular, for the purpose of the activity 3.2 of the Medgovernance project, two definitions seem to be the most appropriate. They allow drawing the attention on some key concepts.

The first definition considers benchmarking as a “process that allows organizations to improve upon existing ideas. (...) **Benchmarking is basically learning from others.** It is using the knowledge and the experience of others to improve the organization. It is analyzing the performance and noting the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and assessing what must be done to improve (...) Information is there for organizations and it should be evaluated, used, and shared. This is one of the primary goals of benchmarking. **It is the process of using all of the knowledge and experience of others to develop new and fresh ideas**”³.

The second definition defines, more specifically, benchmarking as “the process of identifying "**best practice**" in relation to both products (including) and the processes by which those products are created and delivered. (...) The objective of benchmarking is to understand and evaluate the current position of a business or organization (i.e. territorial cooperation) in relation to "best practice", and to identify areas and means of performance improvement. (...) Benchmarking involves **looking outward** (outside a particular business, organisation, industry, region or country) to examine how others achieve their performance levels and to understand the processes they use. In this way benchmarking helps explain the processes behind excellent performance. When the **lessons learnt** from a benchmarking exercise are applied appropriately, they facilitate improved performance **in critical functions** within an organisation or in key areas of the business environment”⁴.

According to these definitions, benchmarking is a method:

- to identify and compare practices about products or processes (i.e. governance);
- to set the best or good practises;
- to apply the lessons learnt for improving the performance of the organisation (i.e. territorial cooperation programmes and region’s role in the Mediterranean) and innovate (i.e. new ideas on the multi-level and trans-territorial governance in the Mediterranean)

³ Source: “Benchmarking: Understanding The Basics” by William M. Lankford, State University of West Georgia.

⁴ Source: <http://tutor2u.net/business/strategy/benchmarking.htm>).

What is a good practice?

The “Interreg IIC Good Practice Survey”⁵ defines the concept of good practice as “any project outcome (e.g. new policy, service, method or instrument etc.), which was facilitated by the Interreg IIC Programme, with confirmed **success** (as demonstrated by result indicators) and which has the potential to be **transferred** to a different geographic or thematic area”.

This definition corresponds to similar definitions used by other institutions⁶. Among them, UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund) indicates **good practices** as “well documented and assessed programming practices that provide **evidence of success/impact** and which are **valuable for replication, scaling up and further study**. They are generally based on **similar experiences** from different countries and contexts”⁷.

UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) adds more interesting points better clarifying the **criteria** that constitute a good practice, according to its principles. So, according to UNIFEM a practice can be considered as “good” when:

1. “Led to **an actual change** that contributes to gender equality or breaks new ground in non-traditional areas for women, including a link between the ‘good practice’ and some visible or measurable change in gender relations, gender balance, or women's options and opportunities;
2. Had an **impact on the policy environment**, to create a more conducive or enabling environment for gender equality. This could include impact on legislation, the regulatory environment, or resource allocation. It should include an assessment of the degree of institutionalization of the identified good practice;
3. Demonstrated an **innovative and replicable approach**. In the context of this set of good practices, this implies the capacity to demonstrate what is new or unique about the initiative -- either its product or process -- and offer opportunities for the initiative to be replicated in other countries and contexts;
4. **Demonstrate sustainability**. In this context, the commitment of mainstream or institutional sponsors or participants in the initiative -- whether Government, academia, media, the UN, NGOs, etc. -- needs to be a component of the best practice.”⁸

Moreover, UNIFEM expresses special interest in good practices that:

- **“Emerge from a participatory process**, involving a range of actors (civil society, private sector, Government, etc.);

⁵ The problem was that indicators of cross-border-cooperation were commonly limited to output and that “most of the operations that did use result indicators, did not quantify their baselines, which is the situation at the beginning of the operation, and targets, which are the results to be achieved”. Consequently the survey should not be considered properly as good practice but simply as practice analysis. Source: North East South West Interreg IIC - Interact, “Interreg IIC. Good Practice Survey”, European Union.

⁶ For example UN Habitat manages the “Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme (BLP)” that is a global network of institutions dedicated to the identification and exchange of successful solutions for sustainable development. It nurtures a searchable database as a tool for: Analyzing current trends and emerging issues; Networking with the people and organisations involved in implementation; Capacity-building including new knowledge management tools and methods; Technical Cooperation through the matching of supply with demand for proven expertise and experience; Policy development based on what works. The database “contains over 3,800 proven solutions from more than 140 countries to the common social, economic and environmental problems of an urbanizing world. It demonstrates the practical ways in which public, private and civil society sectors are working together to improve governance, eradicate poverty, provide access to shelter, land and basic services, protect the environment and support economic development”. Source: <http://www.bestpractices.org/>

⁷ Source: http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_goodpractices.html.

⁸ Source: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/resources/goodpractices/guideline.html>

- **Have significant scale or 'reach'**;
- Involve inter-agency **collaboration**;
- **Address discrimination and inequalities** from the life cycle perspective;
- Demonstrate **Government commitment** to further action and resources.”

These definitions and criteria are useful suggestions to better identify good practises in territorial cooperation and specifically in transnational governance.

Taking into consideration these definitions, **the following definition is proposed**: good practices on transnational governance are innovative projects, having led to an actual change (effectiveness) on decision-making; they are transferable and replicable as well as sustainable and they have an impact on the policy environment⁹.

Benchmarking and best practices are currently underlined by the territorial cooperation stakeholders (mainly by the European Commission) as a **methodology for capitalisation**.

Why and what is capitalisation?

EU debate on the **next programming** period 2013-2020 of the cohesion policy focuses on **results and impacts** to help regions dealing with future challenges. The same problem holds for the Neighbourhood policy due to the un-satisfaction on the euro-med partnerships and to the new challenges emerging in East Europe.

The problem is that the stakeholders **do not learn** from previous experience and (citizens and taxpayers) **do not know if and how** territorial cooperation is really improving territorial development. The added value of territorial cooperation is not known.

“Many INTERREG III projects are of exceptional quality but: our knowledge of these examples is limited there is no overview available; projects seem often to be repeats of what has gone before; projects seem often to operate in isolation from mainstream policy; projects developed do not sufficiently reflect regional situations and needs. There is not a mechanism for capturing and comparing projects’ information”¹⁰. In this situation there is urgently the need for capitalisation.

Capitalisation activities consist in the **collection, analysis and dissemination of good practices** in the policy area in question. Capitalisation may be defined as the specific transfer (dissemination), application and sustainability of the results (*good practices*) of programmes and projects to all relevant policies in a certain region.

Capitalisation is managing in a systematic way the knowledge created in a programme. In this sense **capitalisation is part of the knowledge management/system of territorial cooperation programmes**. It is not an auxiliary function any longer. It should be integrated in the territorial cooperation programme institution architecture. But so far very few territorial cooperation programmes integrate capitalisation in the management.

⁹ In the case of structural projects the significant scale or ‘reach’ criteria applies: projects are structural because they have a significant scale and a reach effect in promoting territorial development.

¹⁰ Source: Power Point Presentation of Mauro Novello, Interact Point Vienna, KEEP Knowledge and Expertise in European Programmes, Knowledge Management and Capitalisation, Territorial Cooperation Programmes; 25 November 2008. See also the Power Point Presentaiton of Veronica Gaffey, Head of Evaluation DG for Regional Policy, European Commission, on Evaluation and Interreg, 23 March 2009.

What Quality and the Governance Question

The quality of territorial cooperation programmes lies in its nature of networking territorial actors separated by borders to share common visions and actions. Working together is what defines territorial cooperation through the 4J: joint development, joint implementation, joint financing and joint staffing.

According to the Interact programme “INTERREG added value has to be referred to in terms of its rooted and essential characteristics: the presence of different actors from different regions and countries that decide to build up a network in order to tackle a common problem, sharing, and seeking jointly for, resources and opportunities; networking in its different declinations is the core issue of INTERREG and represents its added value.

To measure this added value means to analyse, in its various shapes, networking generated by the implementation of INTERREG programmes.

INTERREG Added Value can be defined as ‘*networking production*’, creation of ‘*networks of cooperation*’ which have been set up to achieve a common objective. INTERREG projects/programmes do not guarantee only physical outputs, results and impacts but also networks and networking (= all the effects conveyed by networks) at different levels aimed at accessing resources in order to tackle a problem (= that can be money, new competences, new technological instruments or whatever). In this sense networking is related to the **concept of social capital**: it refers to the networks of social relations that provide access to needed resources and support”¹¹.

In this framework the **governance function emerges as a basic factor for assuring the added value and quality of territorial cooperation**. Networking succeeds if and only if the governance function works, inside the projects, among the projects, in the territorial cooperation programme and in relation to the multi level policies.

What knowledge

Capitalisation emerges from **tacit** (know how and reflection on experiences) and **explicit knowledge** (projects documents, operative programmes, strategy paper, etc). Generally tacit knowledge is more relevant to understand the efficacy of projects. Territorial cooperation documents are rarely dedicated to reflect on good (and bad) practices. The awareness about the real impact of territorial cooperation programmes remains in the minds of the different stakeholders. The evaluations are concentrated only in the analysis of the actual spending of the funds.

The enhancing of tacit knowledge is called **experience capitalisation, that is, transition from experiences to shareable knowledge**.

It is a collective exercise that generates **good/bad practices, lessons learnt and innovations** (positive changes at project and programme level). The analysis involves experts and the different stakeholders of territorial cooperation programmes and projects. Experts should operate as facilitators to extract tacit knowledge from the stakeholders, stimulating debate and reflections.

The knowledge must be **formalised, available, accessible, disseminated**. Experts and operators of territorial cooperation programmes (Managing Authorities with Technical Secretariats) should formalise the main findings of the capitalisation in documents as well as in different and innovative media products (DVD, web sites, etc). This material should be available and accessible to all the interested parties and to the general public. It may be written and communicated in clear way and easily downloadable. A pro-active strategy of dissemination should be envisaged considering different targets and modalities.

¹¹ Source: Interact, Study on Indicators for monitoring Transnational and Interregional Cooperation Programmes, June 2006.

What methodologies and tools

Experience capitalisation applies on clusters of territorial cooperation projects in relation to diverse issues/questions per priorities and themes and/or per territories. It is not a project evaluation but it resembles to **cluster evaluation**. “The primary purpose for grouping similar projects together in “clusters” is to bring about more policy or systemic change than would be possible in a single project or in a series of unrelated projects. Cluster evaluation is a means of determining how well the collection of projects fulfills the **objectives of systemic change**. Cluster evaluation focuses on progress made toward achieving the broad goals of a programming initiative. In short, cluster evaluation looks across a group of projects to identify common threads and themes that, having cross-confirmation, take on greater significance”¹².

The benchmarking is a methodology that fits in this capitalisation and cluster evaluation framework. The tools of the benchmarking are surveys through interviews and study visits. **Other tools for the socialisation and formalisation of tacit knowledge are available and they consist of:**

- Peer assist, after action review, mentoring, coaching;
- Communities of practices, forums and meetings, trainings and seminars, knowledge fairs;
- Extranets, expertise locator systems, electronic databases, magazine and newsletters.

Medgovernance contribution to the capitalisation of territorial cooperation programmes

Capitalisation should be integrated in all territorial cooperation programmes. In particular, the Medgovernance project could contribute to this task promoting the adoption of capitalisation in the Med Programme 2007 -2013 of the European Territorial Cooperation (Med Programme)¹³. Capitalisation through benchmarking in Medgovernance identifies and benchmarks good practice on the issue of governance. It will produce policy recommendations directed to the Mediterranean multi level system, from the regional and territorial level, to territorial cooperation programmes and to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. There are very few experiences of this kind¹⁴ and Medgovernance activities could give a particular added value to this ongoing exercise.

Medgovernance could produce also recommendations to integrate in a more structural way capitalisation in the Med Programme. In this programme reference to capitalisation is limited. The glossary defines it as the “Organisation of data concerning the implementation of programmes, projects, concerning their impacts, the methods used in order to make the accumulated experience usable for other programmes or projects” (pg.104 in the Operation programme). Capitalisation is

¹² Source: http://www.evaluationwiki.org/index.php/Cluster_Evaluation

¹³ European Union, “Med operation programme 2007 -2013”, European Territorial Cooperation, European Regional Development Fund, version adopted by the European Commission, 20th December 2007.

¹⁴ Interreg IIIC (transnational cooperation) tried to bring together projects working on similar themes, make results available and promote transfers of good practices into mainstream programmes. A section on the Interreg IIIC web site was created to summarise results achieved, lessons learnt and recommendations of operations/projects, organised by themes. The new Interreg IVC programme is launching a specific call for capitalisation projects by the end of 2009, aimed at preparing the transfer of good practices into regional operational programmes.

The Baltic Sea Region programme foresees a specific line of capitalisation and fast track projects. Networks of partners grouped together on different themes should identify good practices and transfer the lesson learnt in convergence and competitiveness programmes. In this way capitalisation builds bridges among programmes. In turn, the action plan 2008-2010 of the Baltic Metropolises Network has a specific focus on capitalisation activities, promoting cooperation and exchange of best practices among the city administrators, facilitating mobility of city professionals, academic institutions and enterprises (BaltMet Exchange), and information (BaltMet InfoForum).

cited as a suggestion to project partners: “To achieve continuity in projects, partners should work on capitalisation and dissemination in order to be able to pass on experience and results to others (management methods, good practice, networks that have been built, new activities generated...)” (pg.42) and it is indicated as a possible action (pg.66).

The Joint Technical Secretariat has a function in “Tracking and implementing the capitalisation work (experiences, implementation of projects, impacts) through activities and events established by the Monitoring Committee” (pg.80), while the liaison offices in Valencia and Thessalonica should contribute to capitalisation in coordination with the ENPI CBC Mediterranean programme and programmes of IPA countries (pg.81). But no mechanism is foreseen. A capitalisation plan is elaborated in the Communication plan to improve governance (pg.45 and pg. 96).

In effect the Communication plan¹⁵ indicates capitalisation as a specific phase (2013-2015) during which “a common core of some types of communication tools can be developed in collaboration with the funded project operator (project case studies, mini video, report, etc.” (pg.11). Particularly, capitalisation seminars are foreseen in the various Med area countries for providing information about programme results, capitalising resources and methods, demonstrating the programmes’ added value and the involvement of the EU in the Med area regions. One seminar per priority and a general seminar shall be organised (pg 15-16).

Notwithstanding these references, the **Med programme does not organise the capitalisation function**. Medgovernance can help in filling part of this void. It put forwards the method of benchmarking as a tool for collecting and analysing information on good practices and lessons learnt in order to improve programming and new projects.

Finally, Medgovernance could participate in the **Keep Initiative** of the Interact programme. The Keep Initiative idea is “to put together all capitalisation initiatives to create synergies and reflect together on this crucial task for programmes and projects. KEEP should provide for an important mass of information to be used for the capitalisation of results, synergies and collective reflection. Thematic events and networks, as well as studies and handbooks are foreseen as the “capitalisation package” to be delivered by INTERACT”¹⁶.

3. Benchmarking Methodology

The benchmarking analysis is the second step of the analysis on the euromed governance framework, started with the activity 3.1. It has the objective of setting new proposals for the euromed governance by comparing (through a benchmark approach) governance structures and visions generated by projects and networks, having involved regional and local authorities and being implemented at Mediterranean level.

The proposed methodology for the task is a collaborative enquiry with benchmarking common tool to analyse governance structures and visions. Through the elaboration of indicators and the collection of criticisms and suggestions by the different actors involved in the implementation of the projects/ networks, the analysis will make it possible to identify benchmarks, strength and weakness elements and to make proposals for the elaboration of the common vision and governance for the Mediterranean sustainable development.

¹⁵ Managing Authority: Provence Alpes Côte d’Azur Region, Communication Plan Med Programme n° CCI 2007 CB 163 PO 045, April 2008, European Regional Development Fund.

¹⁶ Interact Sharing Expertise, KEEP ‘Knowledge and Expertise in EU Programmes’. A Capitalisation tool for EU-wide promotion of Territorial Cooperation, Power Point Presentation in the Third meeting of INFORM, Community network of Regional Policy communication officers, 15-16 June 2009, Brussels.

Relation with the activity 3.1

The activity 3.2 complements the activity 3.1 whose conclusions should led to better understanding of the governance, generated and implemented through programmes, policies or projects promoted at top down level (by international organisations, European Union or national authorities) having a clear transnational, Mediterranean and multilevel dimension. The role of regional authorities should be taken into consideration, although not representing the main focus of the analysis.

The benchmarking analysis concentrates on the role of regions in creating new governance systems and practises and in contributing to existing systems and practises established at top down level. For this reason, the benchmarking analysis focuses on projects and networks promoted at **bottom up level**, that is by regional and local authorities. On a case by case basis, projects promoted by other territorial actors (civil society and private organisations) might also be taken into account.

The benchmarking process: a 4 steps approach

The benchmarking process is composed by the following four steps:

1. planning (selection of projects and networks to be analysed with the benchmarking methodology and creation of a database of projects and networks);
2. benchmarking analysis;
3. elaboration of the main findings (good practices);
4. identification of policy recommendations (lessons learnt).

Step 1 – Planning phase: identification and selection of projects/ networks, and creation of a database

This phase aims at identifying what is to be benchmarked. Criteria to identify and select projects and networks will be implemented. The projects/networks identified will be inserted in a database.

Each Medgovernance partner should select at least **5 projects** and/ or networks (**25 in total**¹⁷), of which:

- **at least 2** projects and network to be analysed according to the **benchmarking** methodology;
- **at least 3** other projects and networks which will not be part of the analysis but will be inserted in the **database**.

The selection of projects and networks should respect the following instructions:

Projects could be of two kind:

- **Decentralised cooperation:** Cooperation initiatives in the Mediterranean area supported directly and indirectly (only financing) by local authorities with NGOs and other public and private partners; financed by the regional budget and by programmes promoted at top down level (European and international programmes);
- **Territorial cooperation:** financed in the framework of European Transnational and Interregional cooperation programmes implemented in the Mediterranean area.

¹⁷ During this phase a special attention will be dedicated **to capitalise** on the previous Interreg experiences such as: AMAT; C2M I2C; PIC RM; STRATMED MEDISDEC, EUROMEDSYS.

Networks should have the following characteristics:

- They are composed by homogeneous partners of Mediterranean countries (such as local authorities – e.g. Arc latin - or NGOs, Chambers of Commerce, Natural Parks, Innovation Centers, Universities, etc) or mix of them (e.g. Local authorities with NGOs, etc);
- They should have a stable duration since at least 5 years;
- They should involve a significant number of partner of different Med countries;
- They have been supported with different sources of financing but with a significative quota coming from the members;
- They have produced policy oriented documents.

Criteria for choosing projects/ networks are the following:

- Projects should be concluded;
- Networks should be still running;
- The project/ network should have preferably **been promoted/ implemented by regions and/or local authorities**, but it could have as leader also other kind of territorial actors (e.g. networks of NGOs, chambers of commerce, natural parks, multi-utilities companies, etc). **At least 1 project/network** selected by each Medgovernance partner for the benchmarking activity should concern **territorial actors other than regional and local authorities**;
- The project/ network should **have a strong interregional dimension**: more than four regions or stakeholders of different countries;
- The project/ network should **have a Mediterranean dimension**, both in partnership (mainly Mediterranean actors) and in scope: Mediterranean partners are mainly involved; project addresses problems/issues topical for the Mediterranean regions. Topics should converge, as far as possible, with the themes analysed in activity 3.1;
- The project/ network should have **contributed to the governance** in the Mediterranean (see the dimensions of governance in the introduction);
- The project/ network should present **some elements that could be conceived as good practices**, bearing this definition in mind: best practises are innovative projects, having led to an actual change (effectiveness); are transferable and replicable as well as sustainable and which had an impact on the policy environment.

Deliverables

- A list of 25 (5 per each institute) projects and networks are identified, including a brief description and a preliminary evaluation according to the above criteria (see the Format in the Annex 1)
- A list of at least 10 out of 25 project/ network (2 per each institute) are selected for the benchmarking analysis with a preliminary list of stakeholders to be interviewed;
- CeSPI will create a database composed by the 25 identified projects.

Schedule

- **Mid October 2009**: a list of 25 projects and networks with brief descriptions and selection of 10 project/network (2 per each institute) for the benchmarking analysis is realised
- **End of October 2009**: database on governance projects/network is implemented

Step 2 – Benchmarking analysis

The analysis should be guided by the following question: **to what extent has the selected project/network contributed to the governance in the Mediterranean in a specific thematic priority?**

In order to answer to this general question, the chosen projects and networks should be analysed according to a set of specific questions and indicators (see the reference grid below), individuated by taking into account the 5 dimensions of trans-territorial governance and by incorporating some standard evaluation criteria, such as: efficacy; sustainability and relevance. The analysis, instead, does not incorporate other evaluation criteria, such as: efficiency and impact.

Box. n. 2 Standard evaluation criteria¹⁸

Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of the project/ network are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners', EC's and International policies.

Effectiveness: The extent to which the project's/ networks objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

Efficiency: The extent to which outputs and/or the desired effects are achieved with the lowest possible use of resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, administrative costs, etc.)

Sustainability: The continuation of benefits from a project/ network after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

Impact: Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a project/network, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

The analysis should be carried out through documentation analysis, interviews and/or focus groups with projects/ networks partners and stakeholders in order to gather information and perceptions. The interviews should involve the different partners of the project/network and some stakeholders (e.g. institutions and territorial actors involved directly or indirectly as well as beneficiaries). At least 15 different entities should be interviewed per each project/network. At this aim a **standard questionnaire** has been prepared (see Annex 2) on the basis of the questions and indicators indicated in the reference grid.

¹⁸ See: European Commission (2006), "Evaluation Methods for the European Union's External assistance methodological bases for evaluation. Volume 1".

Reference grid for the analysis of projects and networks

The following reference grid is based on the 5 dimensions of governance described in the introduction. It is worth noting that the dimension “innovation” has been considered as a cross-cutting issue.

Multi-level (vertical) governance		
Questions	Indicators	Sources
To what extent has the project/network allow the interaction with other level of government?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and description of activities participated by different levels of government • Existence (yes/no) of integration of different levels of governments in the organization of the project /network, and description of the bodies and decision making chart • Degree (High/Medium/Low/No) of participation of superior (central) level (perception analysis) • Degree (H/M/L/N) of participation of inferior level (local authorities) (perception analysis) 	Existing documents Interviews
To what extent has the project/network connected with top-down governance systems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree (H/M/L/N) of centrality or marginality of the project/ network in the top-down-governance system (drawing of the project/network position in the governance system and perception analysis) • Number and description of the actions implemented to influence the political agenda of the top-down governance • Amount of funding from top-down institutions and quota on own resources of the project/network 	Existing documents Interviews

Horizontal (cooperation) governance		
Questions	Indicators	Sources
To what extent has the project/network encouraged transnational collaborations at horizontal level, among actors and territorial policies and action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of agreements signed among the actors and description indicating the degree (H/M/L/N) of elaboration and innovative elements of those agreements • Number and description of horizontal political initiatives • Existence (yes/no) and description of modalities to support the political dialogue among actors (e.g. periodical meetings; round tables; etc.) 	Existing documents Interviews

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence (yes/no) of permanent structures and degree (H/M/L/N) of satisfaction by the participants (perception analysis) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence (yes/no) of definition of common visions and coordinated strategies, description indicating the degree of elaboration (H/M/L/N) and innovative elements • Existence (yes/no) of policies, rules and procedures harmonisation between the transnational and territorial level (e.g. inter-regional cooperation), at sectoral level, description indicating the degree of harmonisation (H/M/L/N) and innovative elements • Number and description of exchanging practices to produce common policies on public-private partnerships, degree (H/M/L/N) of satisfaction by the participants (perception analysis) • Number and description of new projects elaborated and shared by the actors indicating the degree of elaboration (H/M/L/N) and innovative elements • Amount of funding shared by the different actors 	

Coherence, Complementarity and Coordination		
Question	Indicators	Sources
To what extent, does the project/network assure the coherence, complementarity and coordination with similar or synergic policies/programmes/projects/networks implemented at vertical level (national, European, international) and horizontal (regional or local) level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of coherence between the project/network with national/European and international policy frameworks (perception analysis and description of commonalities and differences) • Degree of coherence between the project/network with other horizontal actor's policy frameworks (perception analysis and description of commonalities and differences) • Existence (yes/no) of complementary and/or coordinated activities with other projects/networks 	<p>Existing documents</p> <p>Interviews</p>

Participation		
Question	Indicators	Sources

<p>To what extent, has the project/network mobilised other territorial actors?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and different typologies of actors involved • Number and description of key actors involved • Description of the kind of involvement (e.g. Formal agreement; Informal agreement; consultation, decision-making involvement, etc.) • Degree of mobilisation (perception analysis and SWOT analysis) 	<p>Existing documents</p> <p>Interviews</p>

Trans-territorial capital valorisation		
Question	Indicators	Sources
<p>To what extent has the project/network contributed to the valorisation of trans-territorial capital potentialities?</p> <p>(see the definition of trans-territorial capitals in the introduction)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence (yes/no) and description of activities dedicated to promote and support capacity building in create and exchange practices on trans-territorial capitals (SWOT analysis) • Existence (yes/no) and description of activities dedicated to transfer territorial capitals (SWOT analysis) • Degree of satisfaction in the contribution to the enhancement of trans-territorial capitals (perception analysis) 	<p>Existing documents</p> <p>Interviews</p>

Deliverables

- At least 10 projects/ networks (2 per each institute) are analysed according to the standard questionnaire (see Annex 2);
- 300 total interviews (individual and through focus groups) (30 per each institute) to partners and relevant stakeholders of the projects/networks selected are realised.

Schedule

- **January 2010:** interviews have been implemented with the standard questionnaire and projects/networks are analysed

Step 3 - Elaboration of the main findings of the analysis (good practices)

Each of the 5 institutes prepares a **thematic priority paper** including the main results of the interviews and documentation analysis. Good practices are identified.

The contents should focus on governance structures and visions on the Mediterranean development generated by the projects/networks, according to the governance dimensions identified, and

specifying strength and weakness elements on each dimension. The analysis should produce lessons learnt useful for improving the performance and for innovating the governance structure. A final chapter dedicated to make proposals for the elaboration of the common vision and governance for the Mediterranean sustainable development should be part of the paper.

Each of the 5 institutes will organise, with the logistical support of their Regions, **one day thematic seminar with stakeholders and institutional representatives** involved in the benchmarking analysis as well as institutions interested in the Mediterranean governance related issues (e.g. ministries of the national government, members of the parliament, European Commission and members of European parliament, associations of local authorities, civil society and private organizations).

During the thematic seminar a draft of the thematic priority paper will be presented. The main findings of the benchmarking analysis will be discussed and debated and new suggestions on governance and vision will be collected.

Following the results of the seminars, the institutes will finalise the thematic priority paper. Criticisms and suggestions discussed in the seminars will be inserted in the paper and final proposals will be put forward.

Deliverables

- 5 thematic priority papers are elaborated;
- 5 thematic seminars have been implemented.

Schedule

- **February 2010:** draft of the 5 thematic priority papers are ready to be discussed
- **March 2010:** 5 thematic seminars are implemented
- **April 2010:** 5 thematic paper are finalised

Step 4 - Identification of policy recommendations (lessons learnt)

IMED and CeSPI (as 3.1 & 3.2 responsible) will elaborate a Policy paper collecting the results of the thematic priority papers prepared under the activity 3.1 and 3.2, with proposals for the harmonisation of the different systems of governance to build a shared vision on the Mediterranean sustainable development.

A draft of the policy paper will be circulated among the institutes as well as to the Regions in order to gather suggestions and new ideas. IMED and CeSPI will revise the draft and elaborate the final document.

Deliverables

- The Policy paper is elaborated

Schedule

- **May 2010:** finalisation of the policy paper

Timing

	2009				2010				
Phases/ months	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May
Step 1	■	■							
Step 2			■	■	■				
Step 3						■	■	■	
Step 4								■	■

Annex 1 Format of the projects/networks

Please describe the chosen projects and networks filling in the table below

Name of the project/ Network	
Start/ End	
Typology (e.g. decentralised or territorial cooperation project)	
Lead partner	
Partners	
Resources (specify the sources)	
Objectives	
Activities	
Short description of the governance structure (creation of permanent bodies for coordination, exchange of information and practices, assemblies, joint secretariat, thematic commissions,)	
Has the project/network elaborated policy recommendations and/or vision on the Mediterranean development? (if yes, please specify main policy recommendations)	
Why should this project be considered a good practise and represent an added value to trans-territorial governance in the Mediterranean? <i>(when filling this part, please consider the dimensions of governance identified in the introductory part and the criteria for the identification of best practises specified in the second part of this methodological paper)</i>	

Annex 2 Questionnaire for the analysis

The perception should be fixed according to this scale:

High - 4	Medium - 3	Low - 2	None - 1
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Multi-level (vertical) governance
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1. To what extent has the project/ network allow the interaction with other level of government?

- ✓ Has the project/ network involved other levels of government?

Yes Not I do not know

If yes:

- Give evidence of their involvement by drawing a decision making chart;
- Which kind of activities have they implemented?

- ✓ How is the degree of the involvement of the superior (central) level perceived?

4	3	2	1
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- ✓ How is the degree of the involvement of the inferior (local authorities) level perceived?

4	3	2	1
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- ✓ Identification of strength and weakness points of the activities carried out (SWOT analysis). (If the project/network should start again, what changes would they introduce in activities directed to involve other level of government?)

2. To what extent has the project/ network been connected with top-down governance systems?

- ✓ Was the project/ network connected with a top-down governance system?

Yes Not I do not know

If yes,

- Please, describe the kind of connection between the project/ network and the top down governance system
- Give evidence of the role played by the project/network in the top-down governance system
- How is the degree of integration perceived?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

- ✓ Has the project/ network aimed to influence the political agenda of the top-down governance system?

Yes Not I do not know

If yes, explain how:

✓ Has the project/ network received financial resources from top-down institutions (national, European, international levels)?

Yes Not I do not know

If yes, indicate how much and the % with other funding sources on the budget total

Horizontal collaboration

3. To what extent has the project/ network encouraged transnational collaborations at horizontal level, among actors and territorial policies and actions?

✓ Has the project led to the conclusion of cooperation agreements among the partners?

Yes Not I do not know

If yes,

○ Please describe the main contents of this agreement:

○ To what extent are these agreements perceived as an actual change?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

○ To what extent are these agreements perceived as innovative?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments

✓ Has the project/ network led to the launch of new political initiatives with other regional authorities?

Yes Not I do not know

If yes, please describe the main contents of these initiatives:

○ To what extent are these initiatives perceived as an actual change?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

- To what extent are these initiatives perceived as an innovative?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

✓ Identification of strength and weakness points of the political initiatives carried out. If the project/network should start again, what changes would they introduce?

✓ To which degree has the project/ network supported the political dialogue among actors?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

✓ Identification of strength and weakness points of the political dialogue activities (SWOT analysis) (If the project/network should start again, what changes would they introduce?)

Have permanent structures of cooperation been created among the partners?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please specify

- To what extent are partners satisfied with these structures?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

✓ Identification of strength and weakness points of the cooperation structures (SWOT analysis). (If the project/network should start again, what changes would they introduce?)

✓ Has the project/network led to the definition of common and coordinated strategies?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please specify

- To what extent are these visions and strategies perceived as innovative?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments

- ✓ Has the project/ network led to an harmonisation of policies, rules and procedures between the transnational and territorial level (e.g. inter-regional cooperation), at sectoral level?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please specify

- To what extent are these harmonisation processes perceived as innovative?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments

- ✓ Has the project/ network led to exchange of practices to produce common policies on public-private partnerships?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please specify

- To what extent are these processes perceived as innovative?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments

- ✓ Has the project/ network led to new projects elaborated and shared by the actors?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please specify

- To what extent are these projects perceived as innovative?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments:

- ✓ Have the partners participated to the financing of the project/ network with own resources?

Yes Not I do not know

If yes, indicate how much and how the funding is distributed among the partner

Coherence, complementarity coordination
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- 4. To what extent, does the project/network assure the coherence, complementarity and coordination with similar or synergic policies/programmes/projects/networks implemented at vertical level (national, European, international) and horizontal (regional or local) level?**

- ✓ To what extent are the activities of the project/ network coherent with national, European and international policy frameworks?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

Please, describe:

- ✓ To what extent are the activities of the project/ network complementary and/ or coordinated with national, European and international policy frameworks?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

Please, describe:

- ✓ Has the project/ network been complementary and/or coordinated with other projects/network implemented by the partners?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please describe

- ✓ Identification of strength and weakness points on coherence/ complementarity/ coordination of the project/ network with similar or synergic policies/programmes/projects/networks implemented at vertical level (national, European, international) and horizontal (regional or

local) level (SWOT analysis). (If the project/network should start again, what changes would they introduce?)

Participation

5. To what extent, has the project/network mobilised other territorial actors?

✓ Has the project/ network mobilised other territorial actors?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please indicate the number of actors involved and describe them briefly

If yes, how many? And how were they involved (e.g. Formal agreement; Informal agreement; consultation, participation in the decision-making, etc.)?

✓ How is the degree of mobilisation perceived?

4	3	2	1
----------	----------	----------	----------

Comments :

✓ Identification of strength and weakness points of the capacity of project/ network to mobilise other territorial actors (SWOT analysis). (If the project/network should start again, what changes would they introduce?)

Trans-territorial dimension

6. To what extent has the project/network contributed to the valorisation of trans-territorial capital potentialities? *(see the definition of trans-territorial capitals in the introduction)*

✓ Has the project/ network made direct reference on the valorisation of trans-territorial capital among its objectives?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please describe

✓ Has the project/ network promoted and supported capacity building in transferring/exchanging territorial capitals?

Yes Not I do not know

If Yes, please describe which kind of activities have been implemented, their objectives and whether or not these activities aimed at exchanging and transferring territorial capitals to partners.

✓ Are you satisfied with the contribution given by the project/ network to the enhancement of trans-territorial capitals?

Yes Not

Why?

✓ Identification of strength and weakness points of the capacity of project/ network to enhance trans-territorial capitals (SWOT analysis). (If the project/network should start again, what changes would they introduce?)