

Adrien GUICHAOUA - ACTA

With support of Eelke Wielinga, Alex Koutsouris, Andrea Knierim

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STIMULATING INNOVATIONS: BUILDING BRIDGES AND GENERATING SPACES



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 652642



INTRODUCTION

Concerns

- Research insufficiently related to practice – science-driven innovations on the shelf
- Farmers' needs not sufficiently addressed
- Innovative ideas from practice not recognized, captured, spread
- Institutional, methodological and behavioral changes for innovation-driven research not explored



PURPOSE

- We wish to learn from each other and with each other about ways to effectively assist entrepreneurs in agriculture in their efforts to innovate.
- The central question is: **What can support services do to stimulate innovations at farm level?**
- Multi-Actor Consortium coordinated by SEGES (DK)
- Various farmer-based organisations, research bodies, GO & NGOs
- EU Horizon 2020 project from 03/15 – 08/18 with 2 Mio €

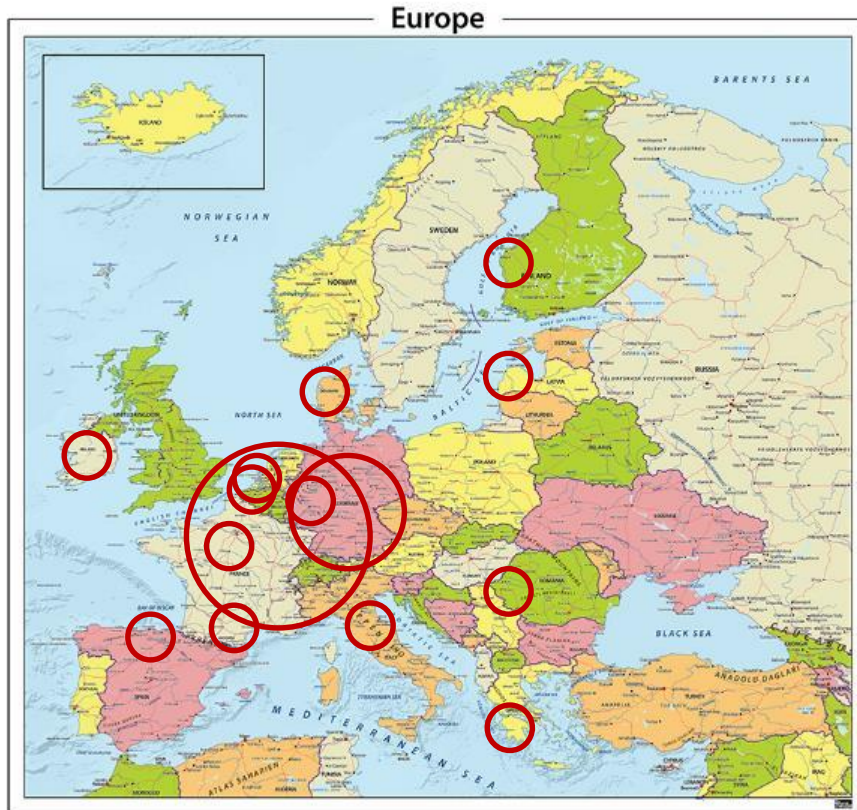


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THE PARTNERS

Various farmer-based organisations, research bodies, governmental and non-governmental organisations



15 partners
in 12 countries ○

- Seges – Denmark
- UHOH - Germany
- UHA – Greece
- ACTA - France
- CIRAD - France
- Teagasc- Ireland
- Hazi- Spain
- Tuscany Region- Italy
- LLKC- Latvia
- VLK- Germany
- Adept- Romania
- ProAgria- Finland
- ZLTO- Netherlands
- Innovatiesteunpunt -Belgium
- IFOAM EU group- Belgium



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INNOVATION SUPPORT SERVICES - CONCEPTS

- We consider innovations in agriculture emerging from interaction in networks
- We focus on intermediaries, brokers and free actors, and their activities to support innovation in terms of:
 - Bridging between knowledge needs and knowledge supply
 - Facilitating co-learning and shared understanding
 - Generating space for joint reflexivity and new rules and norms
 - Stimulating change and the development of solutions.

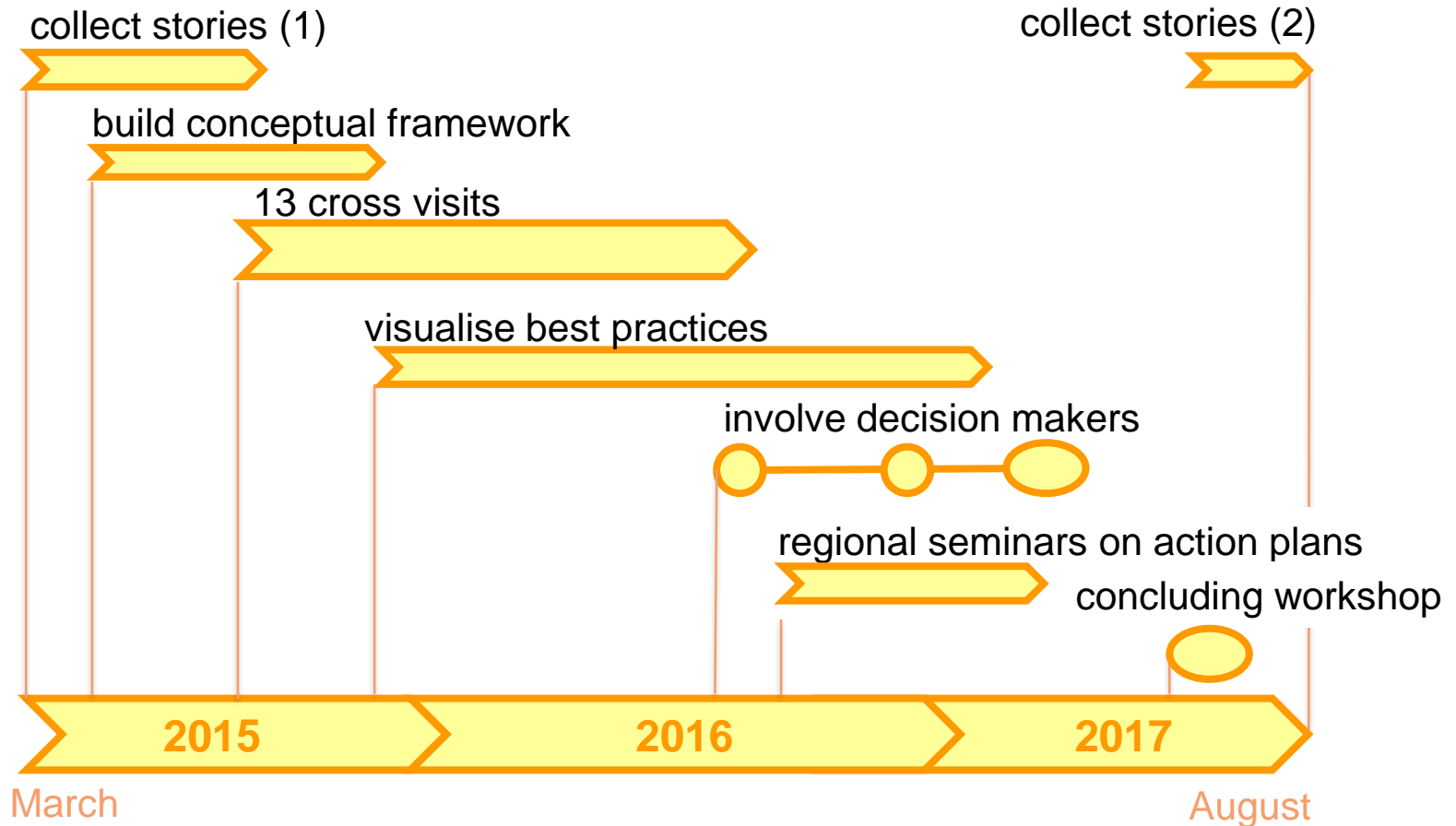


OUR APPROACH

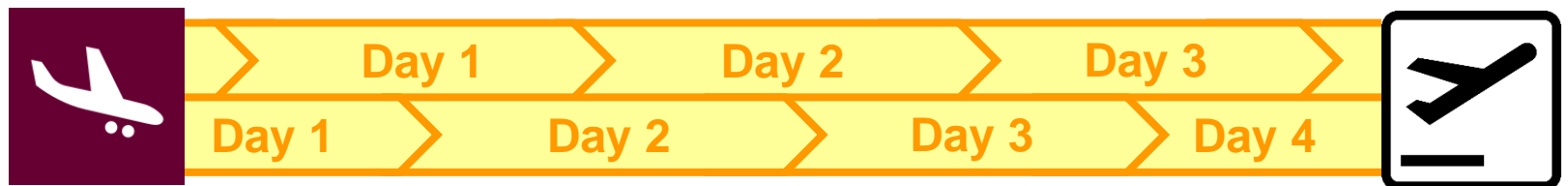
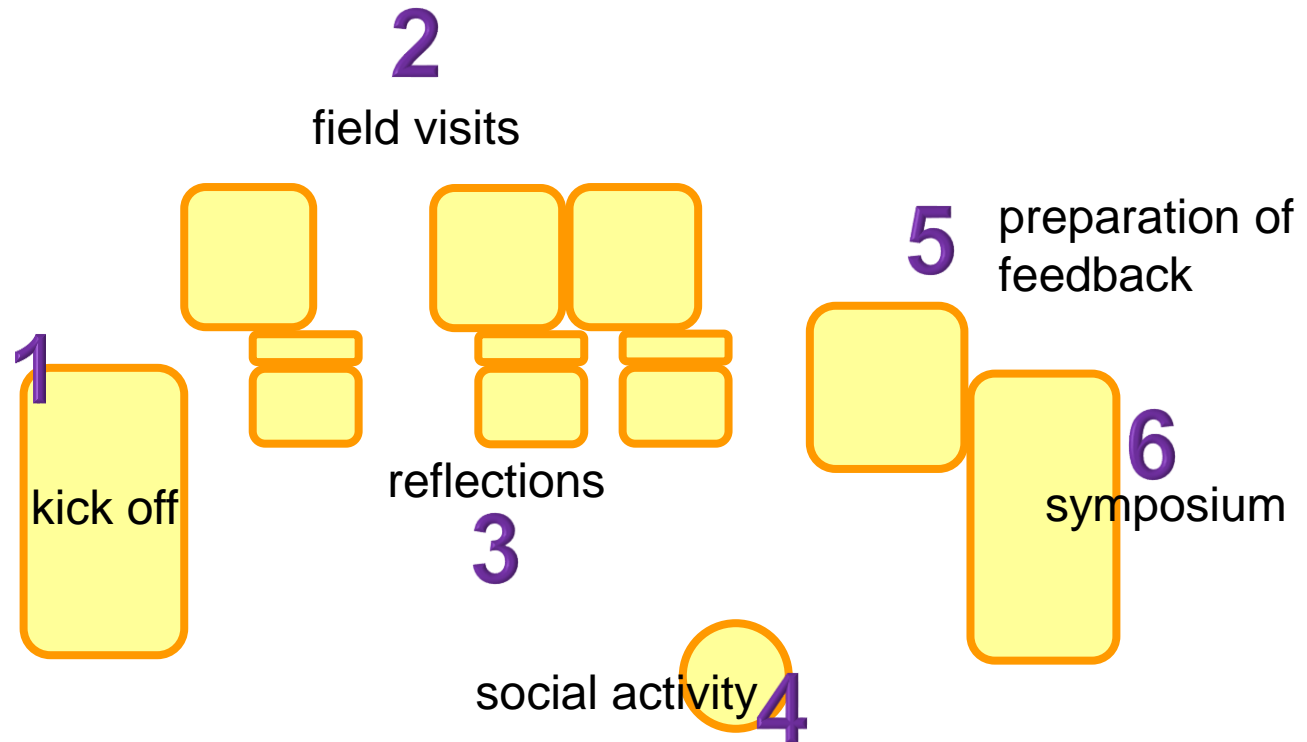
- We build upon existing experiences with agricultural and rural innovations -> *stories from all corners*
- We practice an interactive, exploration-oriented research in multi-actor teams that takes place as *Cross Visits* in various EU regions
- **Exploration, observation and fact-finding alternate with steps of reviewing, reflection and the drawing of conclusions**



ACTIVITIES



CROSS VISITS



innovation

What is new?
For whom is it new?

What problem does it solve?
What is the benefit?
Who benefits?
Does it affect the interests of other actors?
Are there any side effects (positive / negative)?

innovation process

What was the first spark?
Who took initiative?

What stages can be recognised in this process?
How far is it now?
What are the current obstacles?
What do key actors expect from the near future?

innovation support

What is the contribution from the host partner?
What would not have happened without this support?
What is the potential for the near future?
Do the key actors have wishes regarding the support they can obtain?

actors and networks

Which actors play a key role in this innovation process?
Who are the main drivers?
Are there any actors who actively resist the changes?
Which networks are important for this innovation process?
What is their importance?
Who keeps these networks healthy?

environment

Which external factors play a role here?

Which changes in the environment influenced the actors to take initiative?

What external factors were helpful?

What external factors were obstacles?

critical incidents

Have there been any crisis in this process?

What was the cause?

Who did what to overcome this crisis?

Have there been big surprises in this process?

What have been the consequences?

Has there been a turning point in this process?

How did it change the course of the process?

dissemination

What is the influence of this innovation on the environment?

Do others show interest in what is happening here?

Do others change their practices because of what they see here?

Is dissemination being actively promoted? By whom?

future perspectives

Suppose all their dreams come true, what will be the situation after a few years?

What will be the main challenges to overcome, for realising this dream?

What will be their strategy to do so?



Timeline: German Case 1 Hofgut Oberfeld Socio-economic innovation

FARMING WITH RELATION
TO THE COMMUNITY - FARMING
TOGETHER WITH OTHERS
SHAREHOLDERS FINANCE
THE FARM

Verband der
Landwirtschafts-
kammern

Heimgengenbach (LLH)
THE FOUNDATION

THOMAS CREATED HIS OWN NETWORK
AND ENGAGED IN EXISTING NETWORKS

CITIZENS OF DARMSTADT
WITH DIVERSE BACKGROUND
INFLUENCE, COMPETENCES →
GOVERNMENT
OF HESSEN

USED ON THE FARM
SHAREHOLDERS
(120)

KEYPERSONS ACTIVE
ON FARM
SURVEY BOARD (6)

KATHRIN +
3 FARMER
EMPLOYEES (30)
310 CITIZENS
WITH GARDENS

SOCIAL INITIATIVE
PÆDAGOGIC INITIATIVE
BANK SCHOOL CLASSES



UNIVERSITY IN
KASSEL-ORG.
FARMING

KEY PERSONS
WITH HANDICAPPED
CHILDREN WHO WANTED
TO DO SOMETHING FOR THEM

DARMSTADT
WITH YOUNGER
EDUCATED
PEOPLE
LLH IS PUBLIC

RUDOLPH STEINER
ANTHROPOSOPIC
APPROACH
THOMAS WAS
AN EXPERIENCED
ADVISOR

LIMITED CONTRACT (5y)
LIMITED FINANCIAL RISK
- SHARED RISK WITH
THE SHAREHOLDERS

TAKE HOME:

- MATCHING FARM & CITY INVESTORS
- CATCH MONEY FROM PATIENT INVESTORS
- VALUE ADDED - FARMING EXPERIENCE
- FINANCE GIVES FREEDOM TO THE FARMER + NEW IDEAS. LOWERS THE THRESHOLD FOR STEPPING IN
- TRANSPARENCY CREATES TRUST.

• Embedded in Warm network to learn from and get support from

12 students
with a
dream

Citizen initiative
looking for farmers
2003

5 friends
interested
→ 2 friends
signed
2006

Shared garden
initiative
2010

Stables for cows
2012-13



2016

FUTURE

Innovation type, Milestones, support, critical Momentes, environment, Actors and Networks



COMPETITION
BETWEEN CITY
AND AGRICULTURE

FRIENDS
BACKED
OUT

THOMAS + KATHRIN
DECIDED TO GO ON
WITH THE FARM

MINISTER INTER-
ESTED IN FARMING
WITH SOCIAL ASPECT

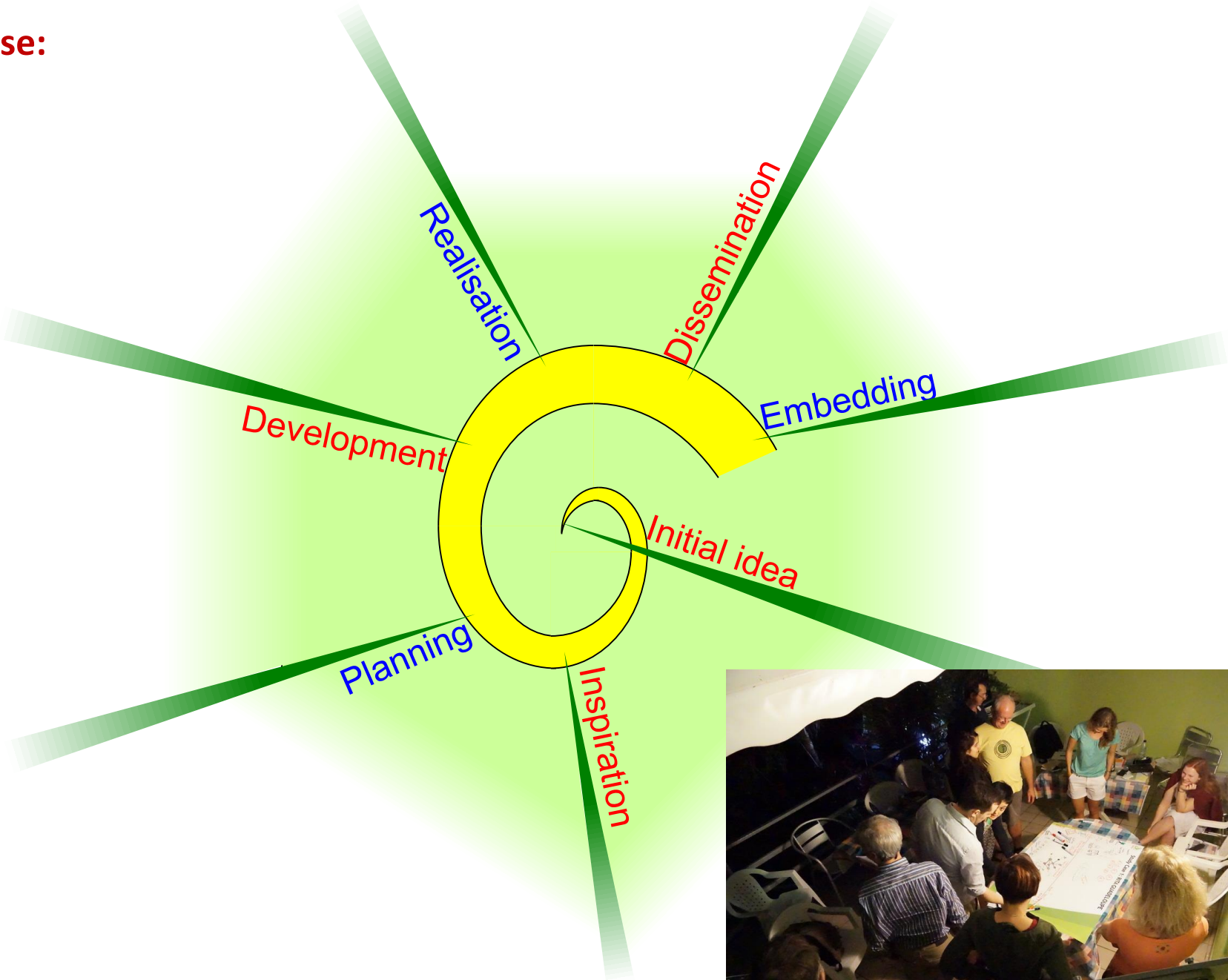
ENVIRONMENTAL
CHALLENGES

CONSOLIDATION
PERIOD AND
NEW TASK.

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Case:



Case: Anca & Charlie

Casa de pe Deal

wholistic approach to lifestyle

- integrating rural tourism
- food produce

small, independent, professional

Small = beautiful values

being an example

does this fit in an
typology?

Social innovation:
mobilising small
local network

Adept still
promotes them ← products
way of life

= offer services to groups

people come
to visit and
are curious.

Realisation
still planning for
competency
2 more guestrooms

Dissemination

Charlie member
of community council

Adept is enabling
environment
rather than active promoter
for whom else?

Embedding

Anca → Charlie Erasmus
program

well embedded
in local community

language skills
self skills
grandfather
organisations
recycle

increase
rural
tourism

Two cultures
in the couple:

Tourism event (slow food)
ambition to produce multi pickles

No formal support
- funding
- Adept

Initial idea
in the framework of Adept: ideas
impatience

ambition to
show that
something is possible
and doable

Adept is too
slow
(toward to)

Inspiration

mobilise → christophe (F)
Neighbors house
much help - markets
Family Centre
Family Anca.

Planning

clear vision
decision to do
it on their own
energy
this created the optimal
space for them
not calculating too
properly

application for
tourism experience

heavy bureaucracy

Development

- step by step
- keep focus
- diversity
- cooperating with
others

developing awareness about
economy. Time investments

active involvement
in local community
- member of council
(Charlie)
- development of mountain
bike trail

Adept

Self awareness
of the couple

ability to deal with
uncertainty about legislation
+ creative attitude
loan in the bank (11%)
loan to be repaid next year.

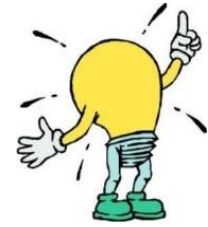




Pearls



Puzzlings



Proposals

Where do new ideas come from?

Problem

Greece: rural poverty

Diaspora

Guadeloupe: Strikes

**French
Government**

Opportunity

Tuscany: niche for old
wheat varieties

Entrepreneurs

Romania: community enterprise
for processing and marketing

NGO

Invention

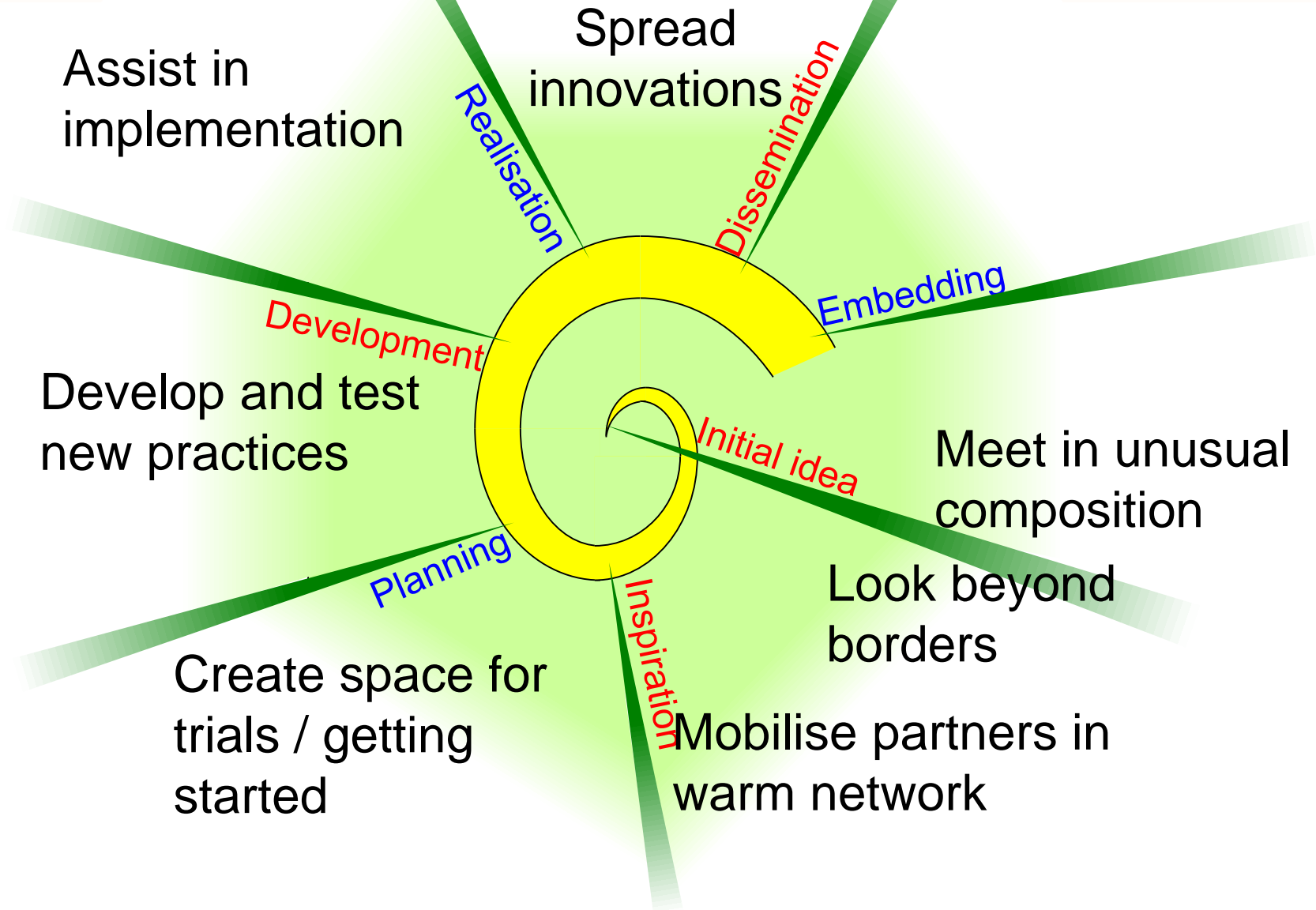
NL: new technology for
Precision Farming

IRL: Economic Breeding Index
(Cows)

**Public Agency /
Research**

Young farmer

What do support agents do?





Pearls

Innovation is not only technical

Support agents are bridge builders

Networks appear as crucial vehicles

Passion is an essential driver



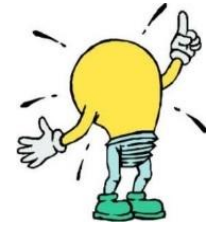
Puzzlings

Too little structure
means high thresholds
for innovators

Too much structure
can hamper
responsive capacity as
well

Strict rules on
accountability leaves
little room for
innovation

EIP approach not yet
recognised



Proposals

Intermediate role
deserves more
recognition

Include whole system
in innovation
processes

Think out of the box,
get exposed to
different systems

Take “warm
processes” seriously

Invest in facilitation
skills of advisors

FINDINGS

- Innovations can be technical, organisational, social
 - Initiators can be anywhere
 - Innovation support is building bridges
- ? Reflection on the dynamics of innovations is needed
- ? What if bridge building actors or structures lack
- ? How to deepen the explorative analysis in *cross visits*



REFLECTIONS HALF WAY

- Successful synergy of three dimensions / combination of technologies and practices
- An innovation can arise anywhere in the knowledge system; there are multiple triggers of change
- Networks are spaces for purpose-driven learning, allow for creation of synergies and encourage (social) learning and innovation
- There is a need for facilitation



PENDING QUESTIONS

- a) Why some innovations become successful while others get stuck?
- b) What did support service providers actually do to help farmers realising an innovation?
- c) Can particular phases of an innovation process be identified and what is needed and helpful in each phase?
- We explored partners' theories-in-use before the project. Will the interaction within the project lead to a change in concepts and approaches?



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OUTLOOK

- *Until here with our work in progress*



شكرا vă mulțumesc

go-raibh-maith-agat

salamat

ありがとう

dank u

danke schön

kamsa hamnida

kiitos

děkuji vám

спасибо

paldies

obrigado

Aitäh

thank you

AČIŪ

gracias

grazie merci

ДЯКУЮ

tak takk tack

ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΟΥΕ

Hvala na pažnji

Tesekkürler ederim

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谢谢