

A glowing lightbulb is held in a hand on the left, and a small green plant with two leaves is growing from soil held in a hand on the right. The background is a soft-focus green bokeh.

**Subgroup on Innovation &
Knowledge Exchange (SolKE)
7th meeting**

12 November 2024



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A glowing lightbulb and a small green seedling growing from soil, held in two hands. The background is a soft-focus green bokeh.

Key discussion points from the conference workshops

Elisabeth Klingbacher
Co-TM for the EU CAP Network Conference 'EIP-AGRI Operational Groups: Innovation in Practice'





**EU CAP Network Conference findings on
how to support the follow-up of EIP-AGRI OG
project outcomes**

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Conference 'EIP-AGRI Operational Groups: Innovation in practice'

- › 6-8 May 2024, Estoril, Portugal
- › More than 500 participants
- › 2,5-day event: conference, field visits, award ceremony, exhibition
- › 7 workshops focusing on various topics relevant to OGs
 - › Workshop 'SHARE': Sharing results for better uptake by practice, during and beyond the lifespan of the project' – statements from participants





Communication and dissemination of activities and results

- › Communication and dissemination are crucial from the start
- › Strategy for structured and continuous outreach during and after the project
- › Different target groups need different outputs – relevant to practice
- › Sufficient budget for communication and dissemination activities
- › Support of OGs in developing communication strategies
- › Dedicated contact person for ongoing support
- › Designated communication partner in the OG to present outcomes effectively



Communication and dissemination methods

- Significant variation across MSs and projects
- Diverse mix of communication and networking channels (online and offline)
- (social) media, websites, newsletters, and local press
- Direct communication is key
- Creative formats tailored to the target group: Peer-to-peer learning, field days, on-job training, farm demonstrations, open days, interactive workshops, thematic events, and regional/national exhibitions





Continuity of communication activities

- Dissemination occurs throughout the project, intensifying in the final year
- After completion, communication typically stops unless supported by the lead partner's resources, voluntary contributions from OG members, or remaining/other project funds
- Several OG projects have established stable regional networks, still attracting media attention, conference recognition, and ongoing interest from producers (DE, AT, IT, ES)
- While information remains accessible, ongoing consultation depends on the availability and willingness of advisors/project coordinators
- Most OG websites disappear when licenses expire. EU FarmBook may help close this gap.





Uptake of results

- › Incorporating OG outcomes and good practices into agricultural training and advisory initiatives is effective in several MSs, but there is room for improvement
- › Integration into education system: involvement of students from agricultural schools/universities (e.g. agroforestry school in Italy)
- › A larger budget would support dissemination, knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning, tackling wider topics, and involving more OGs as beneficiaries (e.g. cross visits)
- › Project durations are sometimes too short to fully develop outcomes. It's easier with partners with consistent funding and established farmer networks (e.g. Chambers of Agriculture).
- › It is crucial that farmers maintain access to knowledgeable contacts after projects conclude
- › Greater emphasise on inter-regional collaboration could help to increase market impact
- › Scaling up OGs innovations is often lacking; a structure is needed to mainstream and scale up successful innovations



Support from other entities

> Status quo:

- > The EU CAP Network and National CAP Networks help to connect OG projects, and facilitate EU-wide collaborations (e.g. webinars, capacity-building events). Some National Rural CAP Networks also promote thematic groups with OGs.
 - > Farmers' cooperatives and associations promote events and support dissemination activities (e.g. Agricultural Advisory Service in Lithuania).
 - > There is support from Horizon projects, regional initiatives, and national entities
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- > More support from Managing Authorities and National CAP Networks needed to disseminate results, share good practices and foster knowledge exchange, easing the (financial) expenditure on individual OGs
 - > A dissemination network through AKIS could reduce individual OG communication costs and link different actors, with Managing Authorities taking an active role.
 - > Improvement of post-project support (also new funding tools) to ensure sustainability and further innovation adoption
 - > Fostering the network between Member States to share experiences between Managing Authorities

Post-project collaboration

- › Important to develop long-lasting collaborative networks
- › If OG members stay in touch, it's due to personal commitment of partners - there are no external efforts to encourage the network's continuity.
- › Project outcomes go beyond results; the networks and relationships built are valuable assets that foster ongoing collaboration as well as the uptake and mainstreaming of innovations
- › Learning networks often persist, especially when an advisor helps maintain the group. Even WhatsApp groups can be effective (BE, AT)
- › In some MSs collaboration has increased, sparking new ideas and projects. OG projects have become platforms for building lasting networks (LT, FR, AT, FI, IT)
- › Successful OG projects with tangible results that wish to continue collaboration should receive ongoing (financial) support
- › Personal connections are key for long-term collaboration and the creation of new OG projects



Thank you!



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All results and presentations are available on the event webpage:
[Subgroup on Innovation and Knowledge Exchange \(SolKE\) - 7th meeting | EU CAP Network](#)

