

## INNOVATION – SHAPING THE FUTURE

Skills development: education & training, advice, peer to peer exchange and networking

### BACKGROUND

The workshop aimed at taking a closer look at the policy tools that are currently available, and at gathering ideas for improving policy support to skills development and knowledge exchange in the future. The objective was to discuss how the policy tools that are currently available (e.g. under RDPs until 2020) can be better implemented. At the same time, the workshop explored potential new avenues for future support (e.g. under the CAP post-2020).



### PRESENTATIONS

#### Future of advisory services and education systems in an evolving AKIS

Anikó Juhász

Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) face the challenge of bridging many gaps among different actors. Advisory services can help bridge this gap if we enhance their role as enablers of a more interconnected AKIS, better connected to education and research, and better supported with hard and soft infrastructure.



#### Peer to Peer Learning in stimulating innovations – The AgriSpin discovery journey

Eelke Wielinga

The AgriSpin project worked on how to stimulate innovation by improving the quality of interaction between major actors involved. Innovation support services appeared as important intermediaries who create pathways for key actors to connect. Innovation process facilitation requires a new generation of skills and tools. "Cross-visits" and the "innovation spiral" were presented as two important methods to improve interaction.

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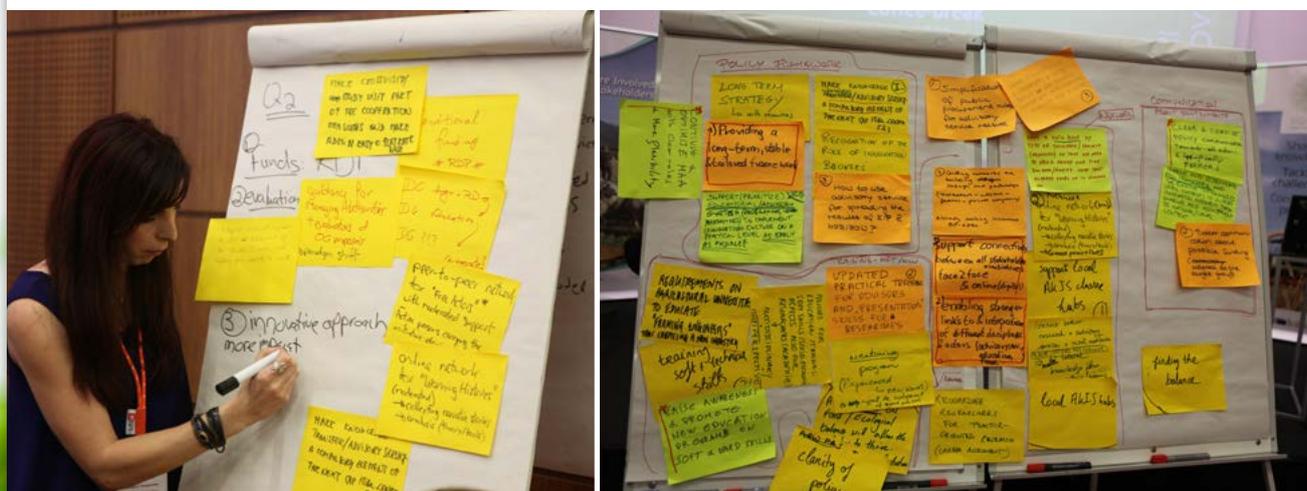
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### MAIN OUTCOMES FROM THE DISCUSSIONS

- ▶ A long-term policy framework is needed, which truly recognises and supports the central role of advisers and innovation brokers in making innovation happen in reality, and in circulating knowledge more efficiently. In addition, the support that is available for skills development should be communicated better to all stakeholders and in particular to farmers.
- ▶ Building trust between different AKIS actors, in particular between farmers and advisers and inside multi-actor project groups is challenging: it takes time and energy. It is important to get the 'warm process' right (people, ambition, connection, energy). This requires an investment in education and training (of students, engineers, farmers, advisers, researchers, etc.) with much greater attention to soft skills (i.e. how to get your ideas across / how to interact with others), multi-disciplinarity, socio-economic aspects, etc. The idea of a mentoring programme for advisers was mentioned.
- ▶ Innovation is messy: we cannot expect innovative projects to fully master their trajectory and plan everything ahead. Support instruments need to be flexible enough to allow it.
- ▶ Exchange (not transfer) of knowledge and experience should be supported by networks, databases or other linkages, together providing a back-office for high-quality advisory services, including information on projects but also "learning histories". Those connections should cover local (local / regional AKIS hubs), national and EU levels, and mix face-to-face with online interaction.



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