Networking and innovation

2 day workshop in Ghent, Belgium
18-19th of March

Nele Vanslembrouck

Personal review

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In numbers

- 76 participants

- 23 nationalities

- NSU, MA, ngo's, farmers organisations, paying agencies, advisory groups, other public bodies

- Also: DG AGRI, ENRD Contact Point, EIP Service Point

$\Rightarrow$ Nice atmosphere, good cooperation, good participation

- Plenary presentations, World Café, 3 workshops, plenary feedback, Open Space

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Aims ?

- Detect the playing field of innovation / EIP and NSU:
  - What do we have to do?
  - How do we have to do it?
  - When do we have to do it?
  - Who has to do it?
- ° Common understanding of how RN can promote a culture of innovation between the rural stakeholders: clarification of our role(s)
- Find out the added value of cooperation between ENRD CP, EIP SP, RN (and EC)
- Get inspired by relevant practices
- Identify activities that can be put in the real action plans of the RN

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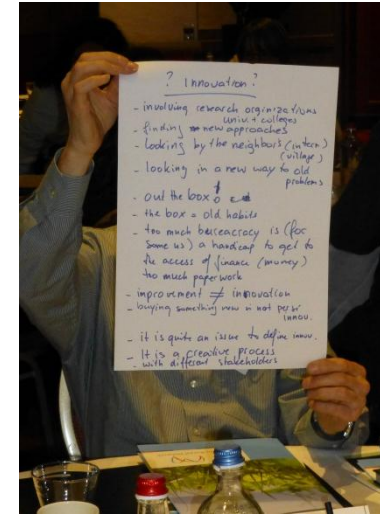
Playing field

- 1 structure at EU-level to strengthen each other

- EIP works like: Problem > solution? > find partners via network > further design > find funding > develop idea & spread results (a.o. by network)

- EIP AGRI SP: web-based platform, databasesn, incl. Horizon 2020

- LAGS = part of strategy that covers time frame >< EIP OG: 1 problem, 1 task/solution, 1 group, limited in time

- Task RN to "foster innovation" on EIP=
    - collect information
    - have an EIP OG-network (structure free)
    - organise training & networking activities for advisors, innovation support services, researchers
    - Optional: cross-border, innovation support service

- EIP SP asks RN to: take part in focus groups, propose experts, disseminate calls and information, motivate public, disseminate results e.g. by publishing in newsletters

Flemish example: call, selection criteria, 10% own financing, °EIP "network" part of Flemish Rural Network as sub-group together with MA and Platform for Agricultural Research in Flanders

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What can RN do? Tools?

- First: understand the context: needs assessment (know who & what, needs, gaps, objectives, …) => identify where RN can bring added value (e.g. by focus groups) + put it in planning

- Build inventories, lists & databases, make information available and comprehensive

- Provide information, share experience, raise awareness

- Connect and engage stakeholders, actors, … on defined topics

- Demonstrate: demo, events, …

Keep in mind:

- Work on different levels (local, regional, national, EU)

- Language is important, also the farmers' language

- Trust from the MA, trust from the farmers

- Keep it open to all innovation in rural areas (not EIP only)

- And: try to explain it without using the word innovation!

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