



SOLINSA
Support of Learning and Innovation
Networks for Sustainable Agriculture

Agricultural Knowledge Systems In Transition:
Towards a more effective and efficient support of Learning
and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture

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The SOLINSA project

Experiences with Learning and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture

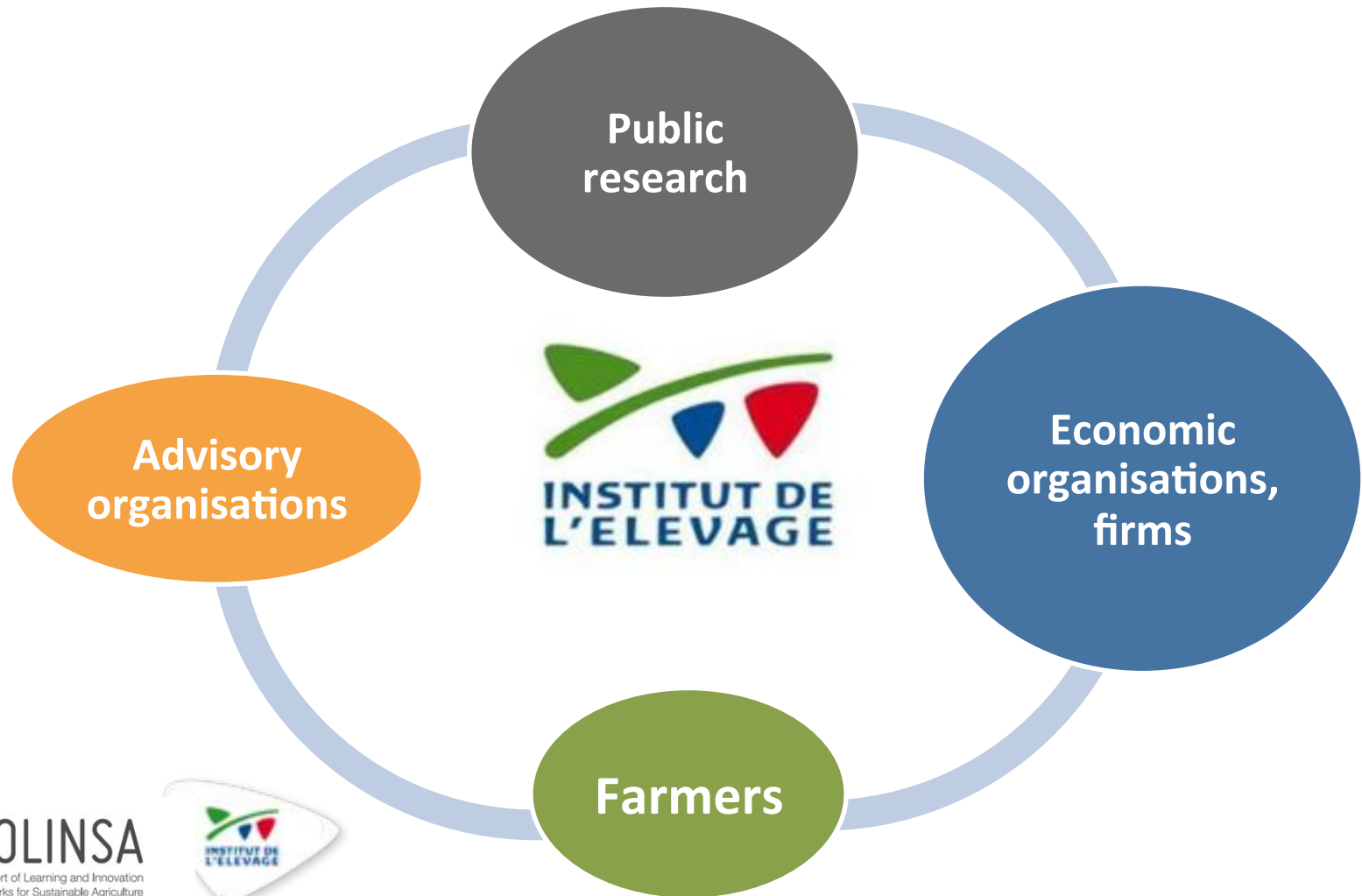
Delphine Neumeister & Anne-Charlotte Dockès
The French Livestock Institute
Heidrun Moschitz - FiBL



The French Livestock Institute

A boundary R&D farmer organisation :

Networking for knowledge and innovation



Innovations need networking



There are already creative and innovative approaches!

- How did they develop? How do they function?
- How do they learn and produce innovations?
- How can such groups and networks be supported?

Solinsa : Main Objectives

AKS
Agricultural
Knowledge
System

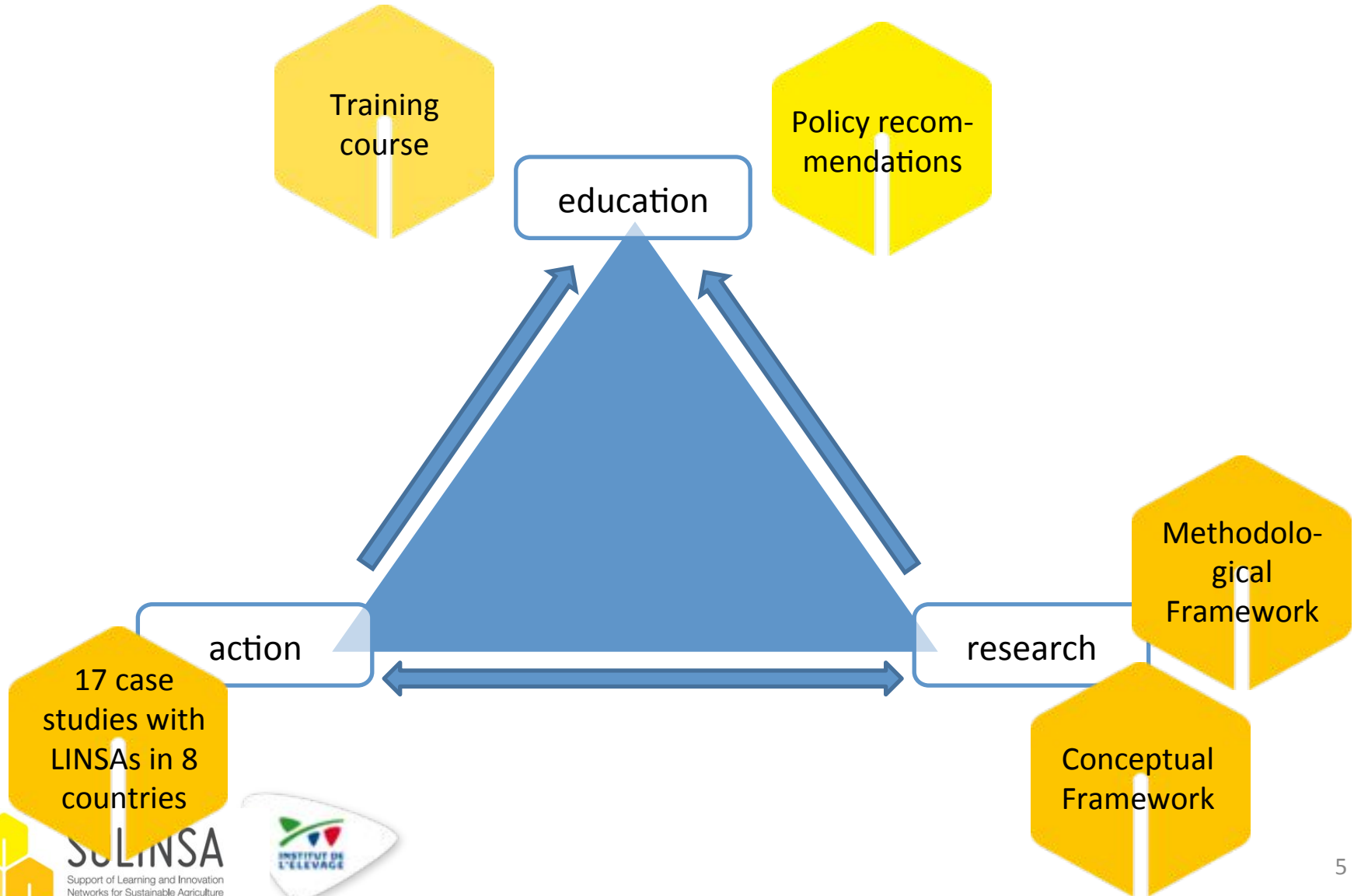
LINSA
Learning and
Innovation
Networks for
Sustainable
Agriculture

Ideas to make AKS
more supportive to
Linsas and more
innovative

To **understand** what
they are and how they
work : ***Linsas as drivers
to new models***

To identify barriers to
their development and
how to **support** them

SOLINSA and action research



Co-innovation within the LINSAs

- LINSAs: a result of a perceived need for change, shared in a group of people
- LINSAs often create space for interactive discussion
- Stakeholders may have developed some links with the AKS or other organisations and work together on sustainability

2 networks (LINSAs) ... 2 practices of co-innovation



- ▶ Shared challenge : rebuild trust after the mad cow disease

100 000 farmers involved, to :

- ❖ Promote the quality of the profession and practices of cattle farmers
- ❖ Fulfill the general society expectations/ communicate
- ❖ Facilitate **incremental changes** in the practices of **most of the French farmers** through a set of requirements



- ▶ Shared challenge : find ecological alternative to mainstream farming models

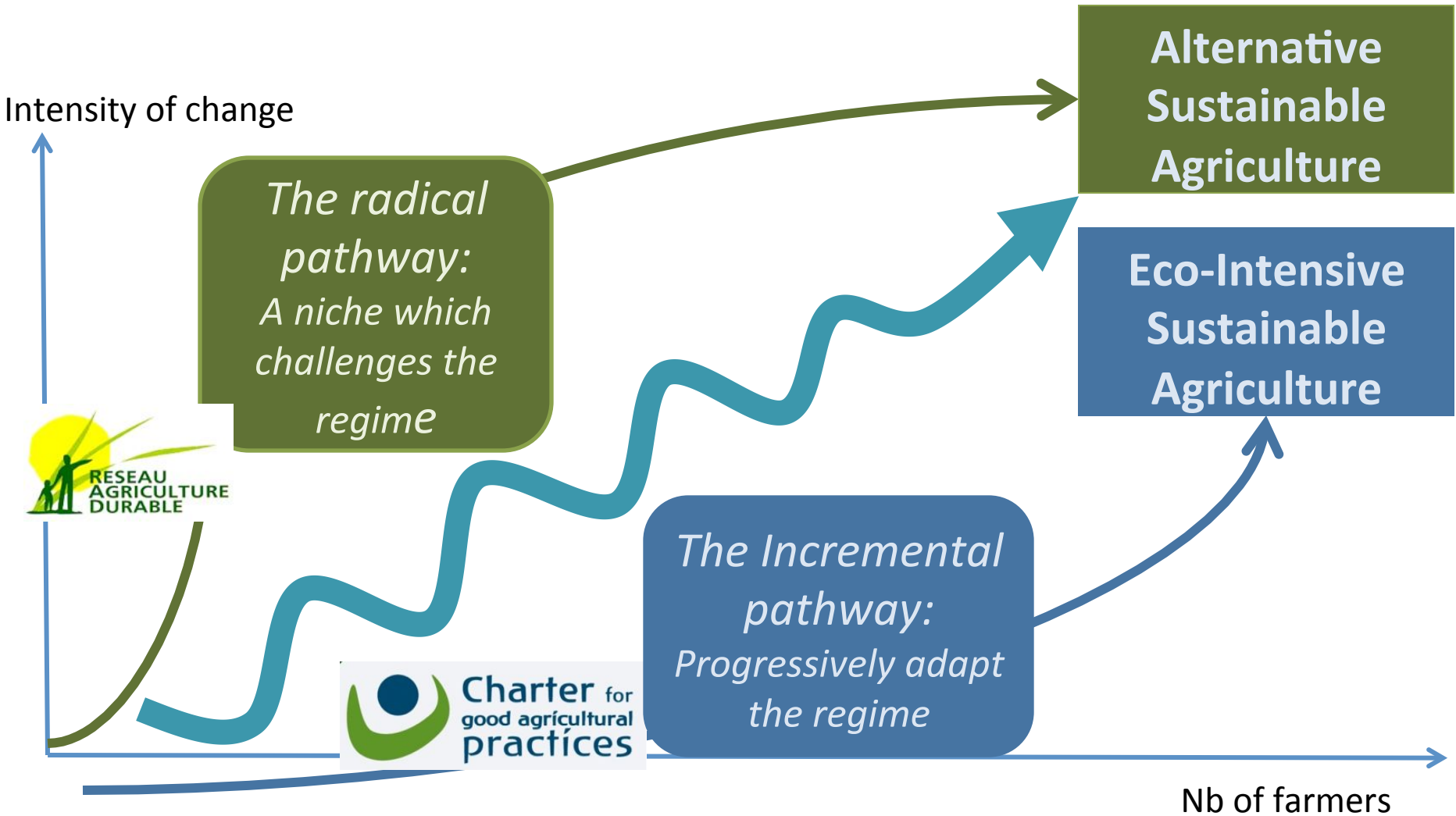
2000 farmers in 32 groups

Each group builds its program to :

- ❖ Promote *alternative economic and ecological farming (and food chain) systems*
- ❖ Share knowledge and experience
- ❖ Maintain the balance between social equity, economic efficiency and protection of the environment

Two co innovative networks ...

Two pathways towards “Sustainable Agriculture”



Co-innovation throughout the project

- Close collaboration between science and practice: crossing boundaries
- Experimentation of new methodologies and approaches



Co-working steps with the LINSAs

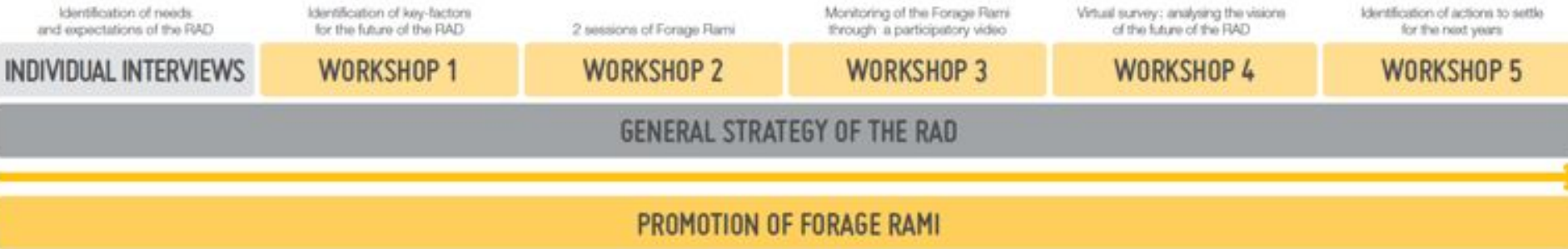
- Choice of the LINSAs and joint analysis of the LINSAs' needs
- Co-design of the supporting process
- Organisation of 5 workshops with the LINSAs, in order to answer some specific questions
 - Forecast approach
 - Reflection on a global strategy
 - Communication actions
 - ...
- Presentation of the results (international dissemination workshop in Riga last September)

Role of the Workshop

- There are many good examples across Europe!
- A lot can be learned by exchanging experiences of innovators
- There is no 'one size fits all' solution so we need the creative variety and perspectives of LINSA to achieve sustainable agriculture and rural development

Examples of research process

- Sustainable agriculture Network



Examples of research process

- Latvian Fruit growing LINSA



Situations in fruit-growing cannot be standardised; a creative approach is needed; our knowledge accumulates alongside with the life-cycle of the tree.



Examples of research process

- Charter for Good Agricultural Practices



The leading farmer quality assurance scheme in France and Europe.



Examples of research process

- Rural Women Group

CONTACT,
WORKPLAN

"TEAMWORK"
INTERACTIVE SESSION

TWO DAY CONCLAVE

STRATEGIC
1 DAY MEETING

ANNUAL CONFERENCE
- DISSEMINATION

FINAL
1 DAY MEETING

REVISION & REFLECTION OF THE LINSAS ACTIVITIES

REGULAR VISITS OF THE STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S MONTHLY MEETINGS



Strenghts and weaknesses of the Solinsa approach

Strenghts

- Co-building and co-working during the whole process
- Test of new participatory approaches
- Elaboration of an Innovation brokers training related to the « Solinsa approach » (to support LINSAs)
- Elaboration of a set of policy recommendations

Weaknesses

- Double goal to be followed: LINSAs and researchers don't have the same objectives
- Difficult to define exactly what is a LINSAs
- Sometimes availability of LINSAs' stakeholders
- Question of the end of the project: how to leave the group

Needs expressed by LINSAs to co-innovate

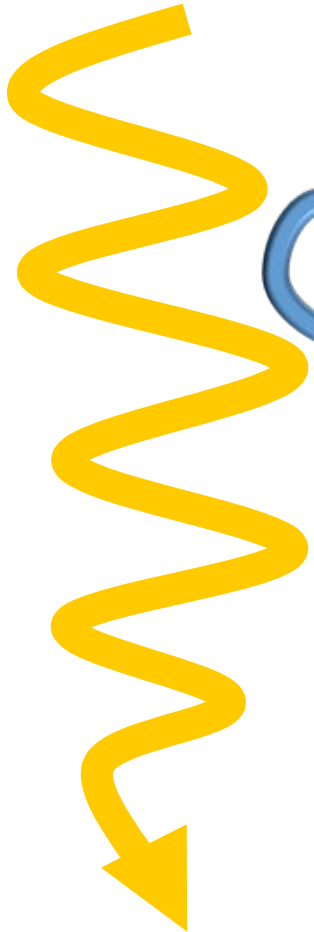
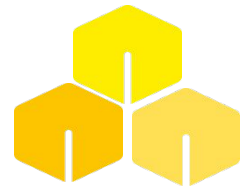


- Soft-skills training (e.g. management & communication)
- Seed money for experimentation and opening spaces for reflection and innovation
- Funding of volunteer work
- Exchange across different networks to stimulate learning
- Linking to AKIS
- Innovation brokers and facilitators

How can co-innovation be successful ?

- The context can facilitate co-innovation:
 - Changing world and new issues to be answered
 - Institutional openness to new approaches and non mainstream oriented approaches
- The LINSAs can be open to co innovation
 - The willingness to involve different stakeholders
 - A shared view on sustainable agriculture
 - Confidence and openness

Supportive persons can facilitate co-innovation?



First step :
Understanding the LINSAs

Second step
Joint analysis of
needs
Support contract

Third Step :
Nurturing
Supporting

Fourth Step :
Evaluation

Use
participatory
approaches
to

Sustainable
Agriculture

Thank you for your attention!



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