

Social Innovation in FARMWELL



SCAR-AKIS meeting, Lugo

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What I'd like to share with you

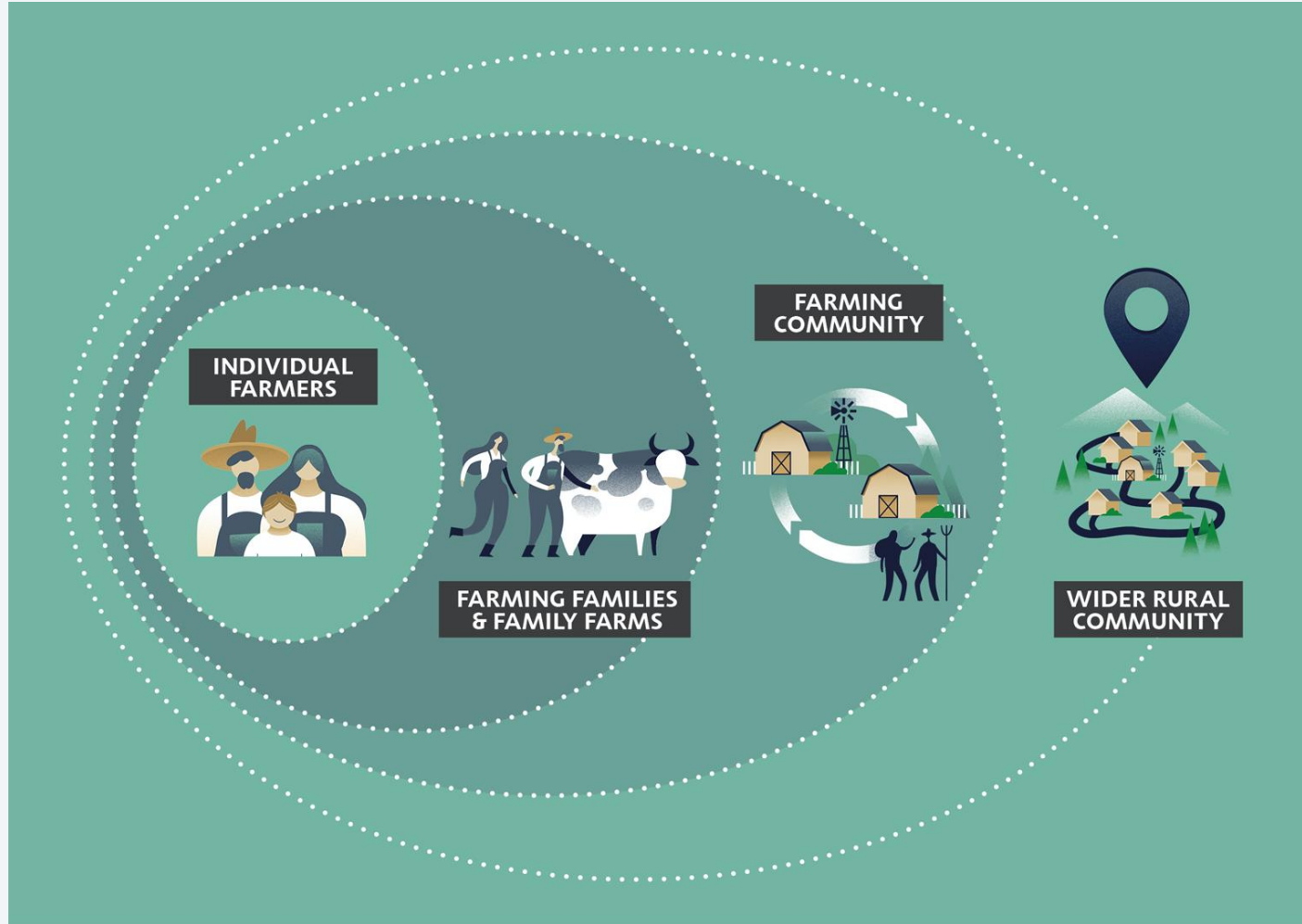
1. A bit about FARMWELL
2. How we define social innovations
3. Key areas of social innovation



FARMWELL



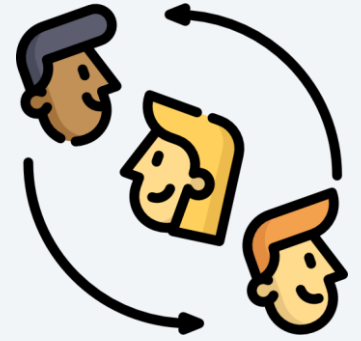
About FARMWELL (2020-2023)



A European Thematic Network that aims to improve farmers' mental, physical and social wellbeing through social innovation.



Partnership



- **Farming organisations & research organisations** in 6 countries: Belgium, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania
- **Specialist partners:** E40 - Coordinator, New Heroes – creative communication, UGLOS - SROI





FARMWELL

IMPROVING FARMERS' WELLBEING THROUGH SOCIAL INNOVATION

FARMWELL is a European Thematic Network that aims to

identify the **core problems that impact on farmers' wellbeing** (including their effects & root causes) based on existing research and practices.

identify **innovative solutions (social innovations)** and make these accessible to farmers to help improving their mental, physical and social wellbeing.

Improving farmers' mental, physical and social wellbeing

EFFECTS OF PROBLEMS

There are **serious economic and social consequences** (including high suicide rate among farmers) that not only impact on farmers' wellbeing but also on the wellbeing of our whole society.

PROBLEMS

Farmers are facing some **serious problems** (related to mental health, farm succession, isolation) that impact on their wellbeing.

ROOT CAUSES

It is crucial to understand the **root causes** in order to be able to tackle the problems effectively and sustainably.

IMPACT OF SOLUTIONS

Impact achieved in terms of improved mental, physical and social wellbeing of farmers and their families - through the engagement of farmers and organisations concerned.

GOALS

The main goal is to **improve the mental, physical and social wellbeing** of farmers and farming families.

SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

It is crucial to **identify innovative solutions (social innovations)** to address the root causes of problems.

FARMWELL DIRECTLY ACTS ON THE GROUND IN SIX COUNTRIES



Belgium



Italy



Greece



Poland



Hungary



Romania



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FARMWELL implementation

- **Stakeholder engagement:** Practice Groups, Pilots & European Thematic Meetings (involving directly farmers)
- **Mapping of challenges:** focus on a specific social challenge in each country (-> mapping reports)
- **Social innovations:** Inspiring examples to address social challenges – with an impact on farmers' wellbeing
- **Pilot social innovations:** to bring it directly closer to farmers
- **Assessing impact** (cost-benefit) of solutions
- **Creative communication** (animation/ film/ theatre)



Challenges – Short animation

Farm Well, a story about farm life today



The short film 'Farm Well – A story about farm life today' is a creative product of the FARMWELL project about some of the typical challenges that farmers are facing today, created by New Heroes together with Full Frame. While the film is based on the findings of the mapping of challenges and an additional large-scale survey with farmers in partner countries, it does not reflect the situation of all farmers in Europe.

The film is a tool that aims to generate discussion among farmers and other interested stakeholders about the challenges that impact on farmers' wellbeing, as well as possible solutions. If you are interested in how to facilitate a discussion using the animation, request the free guide here:

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XL9uvmEgMw>



Social innovations – FARMWELL Database

The screenshot displays the FARMWELL Database interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, ABOUT, WORK STRANDS, PARTNER COUNTRIES, and EUROPEAN NETWORK. The FARMWELL logo is centered in the header. The main content area features two entries:

- Tzoumakers Open Lab:** Includes a logo with the Greek text "ΟΙ ΤΖΟΥΜΕΪΚΕΡΣ" and "ΚΟΙΝΟΤΙΚΟΝ ΕΡΓΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ", "EST. 2018", and a description: "Tzoumakers is an open lab for communities to design and manufacture tools for small-scale agricultural production. Country: Greece. Challenge addressed: The social challenge is the democratization of the digital commons and manufacturing technologies." A "Discover" button is present.
- Szimpla Farmers's Market:** Includes a photo of a market stall and a description: "The Szimpla Farmers' Market provides a special environment, mood, community and cultural experience in Budapest. Country: Hungary."

On the right side, there are search and filter options:

- Search ...
- Sort by: Sort Results By
- Country: All Countries
- Challenges: All Challenges
- Farmer's Wellbeing: All Types

Source: <https://farmwell-h2020.eu/social-innovations/>



WHAT IS SOCIAL INNOVATION IN FARMWELL?



Innovative responses to social challenges

“If you don’t feel that you have a challenge, I’m sorry to say, you will innovate nothing.”

(Professor Henrique Leitão, a historian of science)



“...and then, completely out of the blue, and just a week before Christmas, we received a call that our neighbouring farmer and long-term family friend had taken his own life. Sitting here in our kitchen, late at night in the dark, numb with shock and deep sadness, and with all kinds of thoughts and memories running through my mind, I feel there’s nothing else I can write about now.”

Social challenge in FARMWELL: mental wellbeing, stress, physical wellbeing, generational renewal, intra-family conflicts, workload – income, access to services ... -> **ageing of the farming sector**



Review of relevant social innovations elsewhere

Table 1: FARMWELL review of existing social innovation definitions

Key innovation dimension	Main findings of existing literature
a) Social goals/ends	<p>Meeting social needs in general or unmet/ poorly met social needs (EC, 2013; Young Foundation, 2012; Conseil Supérieur, 2011; Mulgan, 2007)</p> <p>Responding to pressing social demands and societal challenges (SIMRA, 2017; BEPA, 2011; Phillips, 2008)</p> <p>Improving human wellbeing (EC, 2013; BEPA, 2011)</p> <p>To meet social concerns (Bock, 2012)</p>
b) What outcomes are expected?	<p>Individuals' capacity to act (BEPA, 2011)</p> <p>Inclusion of excluded groups and individuals; empowering and reengaging vulnerable groups (Rehfeld et al., 2015; Moulart et al. 2005)</p> <p>Outcomes on societal well-being (SIMRA, 2017)</p> <p>New forms of interactions and partnerships (Baker et al., 2015; EC, 2013)</p>

c) What kind of innovation?	<p>New ideas, products, services, models (EC, 2013; Young Foundation, 2012; BEPA, 2011)</p> <p>Reconfiguring of social practices (SIMRA, 2017; Howaldt and Kopp, 2012)</p> <p>A novel solution that is more effective, sustainable, or just than existing solutions (Howaldt and Kopp, 2012; Phillips, 2008;)</p> <p>System innovations: change the context, manner and meaning of how something is done (Bock, 2012); Significant, creative and sustainable shift in way a given society deals with a problem (Baker et al., 2015)</p> <p>Distinct forms of collaboration that transcend established institutional contexts (Rehfeld, 2015)</p> <p>Changes of attitudes, behavior or perception of a group of people joined in a network of aligned interests (Neumeir, 2016)</p>
d) Through what process?	<p>Create new social relationships or collaborations (BEPA, 2011)</p> <p>SI involves interaction among actors concerned/ social mechanics</p> <p>(SIMRA, 2017; Bock, 2012; Conseil Supérieur, 2011)</p> <p>Necessarily includes the engagement of civil society actors (SIMRA, 2017)</p> <p>Demand-led / arising from shock (SIMRA, 2017)</p>
e) For whom?	<p>For society as a whole rather than individuals (EC, 2013; Phillips, 2008)</p>
f) By whom?	<p>Organisations whose primary purpose are social (Mulgan, 2007)</p> <p>Designed by society (EC, 2013); Processes of co-design or co-construction and collaboration with society (Bock, 2012)</p> <p>Give voice to socially deprived groups (Bock, 2012)</p>

Social innovation in FARMWELL

Key innovation dimension	Relevant aspects in the context of FARMWELL
Main goal	Improving the social, physical and mental wellbeing of farmers and farming families
What kind of action?	Improved capacity of individual farmers, farming families to act: diagnose problems (such as mental health) and take actions Improved social environment and services Improved linkages and partnerships between farmers and other societal actors Improved sustainability of the farm business
Through what process?	Mostly collaboration, partnerships and better farmer-to-farmer linkages, as well as linkages between farmers and relevant (social) services, or farmers and the wider society
For whom?	Directly: Farmers and farming families Indirectly: Society as a whole (rural communities in particular)
By whom?	With active involvement of farmers, farmers organisations/ advisory bodies and social service providers



Working definition

FARMWELL Working Definition: Social innovation for improving social wellbeing of farmers and farming families

Social innovations are innovative practices with the purpose of **improving the social, physical and mental wellbeing** of farmers and farming families resulting in particular in (1) improved capacity of farmers and their family members to recognise and act upon social challenges and/or (2) improved social environment and services for farmers & farming families and/or (3) improved linkages between farmers and other (local) societal actors.



What is social innovation in FARMWELL?

Societal change (impact) is expected as a result of *innovation*.

- Hard to define. Danger to soften up too much. Need to **sharpen**.
- Several initiatives, projects, policies came up with their own definitions:
 - ✓ **Social** (goal/objective, outcome or process?)
 - ✓ **Innovation** ('technologically' innovative and/or in its own context)



Improving farmers' *mental, physical & social* wellbeing through social innovation: **farmers' wellbeing (goal)** & **new practice in its own context**



THEMATIC AREAS



Irregular employment in agriculture

- Migrants and other disadvantaged farm workers
- Challenge in Italy and beyond
- Social innovations to address
- Transferability from one context to another



Basic services in rural areas

- Specific challenges of farming families to access basic services
- Comparing experiences of Poland, Romania & Hungary
- Social innovations, especially in education & health



New entrants to farming

- No previous farming background
- Specific stress & challenges
- Linkages between old & new farmers
- New ways of communication about farming



Mental health

- Barriers in accessing mental health support
- Led by Belgian partners
- Social innovations to help farmers better deal with the issue
- Improving crucial social services



Energy community & beyond

- Strengthening cooperation of farmers
- How economic cooperation leads to more social cohesion
- Energy communities, open farms and beyond



Thank you!

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