

# Meeting of the SWG SCAR AKIS Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems

## ‘Broadening’ the **AKIS** to include Social Innovation and other **Rural** Development issues

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Standing Committee  
on Agricultural Research



**hcc**  
highclere consulting

# Setting the Scene

Social innovation was first discussed in this Working Group (previously a ‘Collaborative Working Group’) some **10 years ago!**

<http://dx.doi.org/10.7896/j.1209>

Studies in Agricultural Economics 114 (2012) 57-63

**Bettina B. BOCK\***

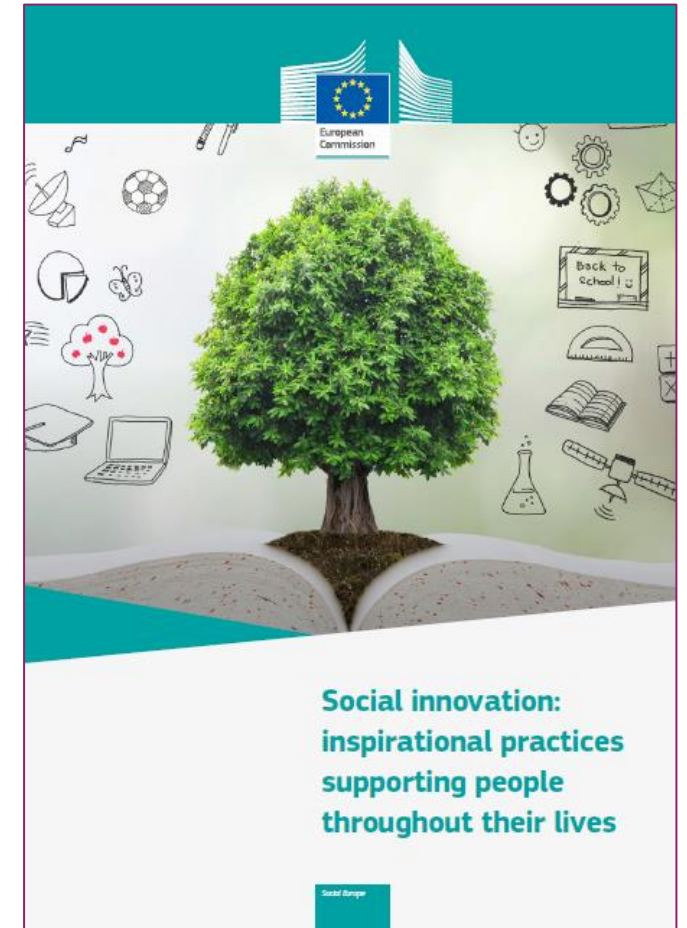
**Social innovation and sustainability; how to disentangle the buzzword and its application in the field of agriculture and rural development**

# Setting the Scene

*“Social innovation is about **generating positive societal change**. It can play a large role in advancing the EU’s political agenda ... [it is] a **transversal concept** that is relevant to a wide range of policy fields ... The European Commission is therefore keen to promote social innovation across a **wide spectrum of policy areas**, so that we can all reap the benefits”*

Nicolas Schmit

Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights (2019 - 2024)



# Setting the Scene

European Commission's general definition (November 2020):

*“Social innovation is the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services and models) to **meet social needs** and **create new social relationships or collaborations**. It represents new responses to pressing social demands, aimed at improving human well-being. Social innovations are innovations that are **social in both their ends and their means**. They are new solutions that are not only good for society, but also **enhance individuals’ capacity to act**”*



# Setting the Scene

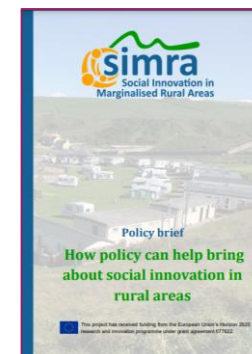
A wealth of completed and on-going EU projects / initiatives!



# Setting the Scene

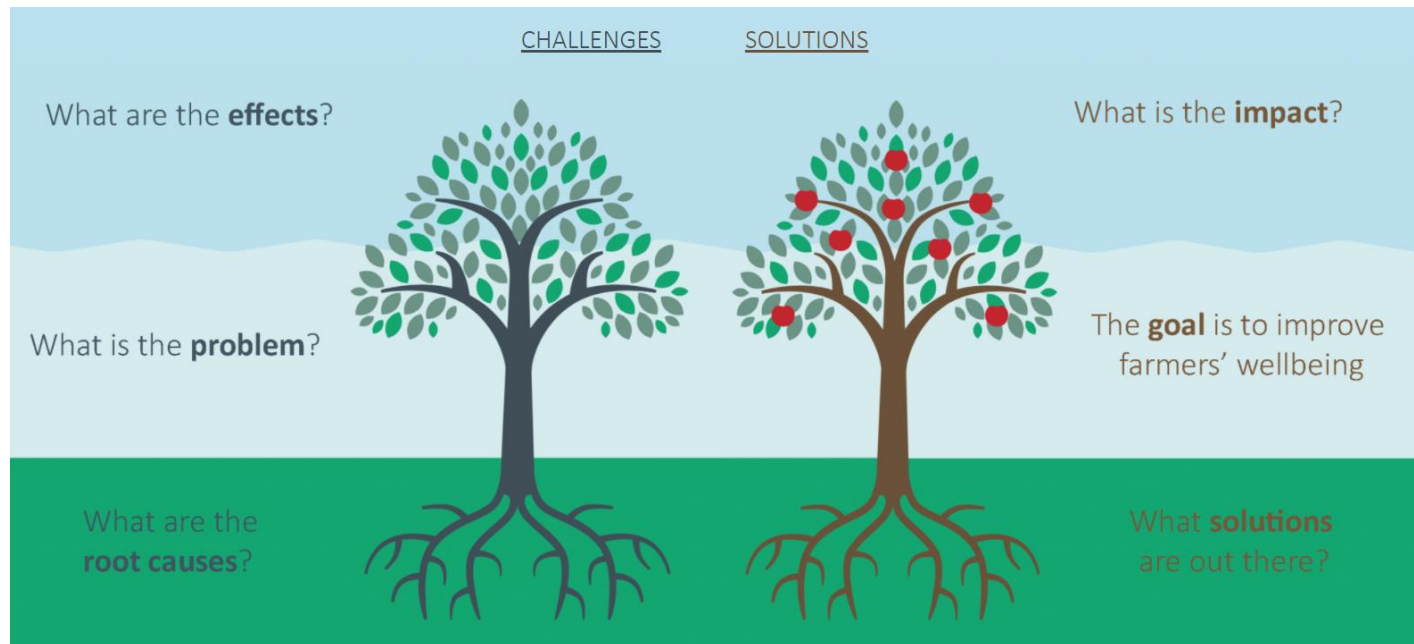
Useful focus on **social innovation in rural context** provided by H2020 **SIMRA** (Social innovation in marginalised rural areas) project (2016-2020):

*“...the **reconfiguring of social practices** in response to **societal challenges** which seeks to enhance **outcomes on societal well-being** and necessarily includes the **engagement of civil society actors**”*



# Setting the Scene

H2020 Thematic Network **FARMWELL** (2021-2023) - aims at improving the mental, physical and social wellbeing of farmers by **making social innovations more accessible in various national and local contexts** (BE, EL, HU, IT, PL, RO)



# Setting the Scene

Several other H2020 projects have offered various perspectives on social innovation (*and the broader social dimensions of farming and rural development*)





# Setting the Scene

Gathering further evidence on social innovation and broader social issues in rural areas is increasingly important in Horizon Europe (2021-2022):



More calls coming in 2023-2024 (e.g. vulnerable groups)

# Setting the Scene

## Specific relevance to CAP 2023-2027



### Specific 'social' objectives:

- Support generational renewal
- Vibrant rural areas
- Protect food & health quality

### Economics with 'social' dimension:

- Ensure fair farm income
- Increase competitiveness
- Rebalance power in food chain

### Important 'social' challenges:

- Climate change action
- Environmental care
- Preserve landscapes and biodiversity

NEW! **Social conditionality** under the CAP -> transparent and predictable working conditions

# Setting the Scene

Within the Cross Cutting Objective (CCO):

## Art 13 and 72: Farm advice organised within the AKIS structures in CAP Strategic plans

✓ *Advising farmers and other beneficiaries of CAP support to be included in the CAP plans*

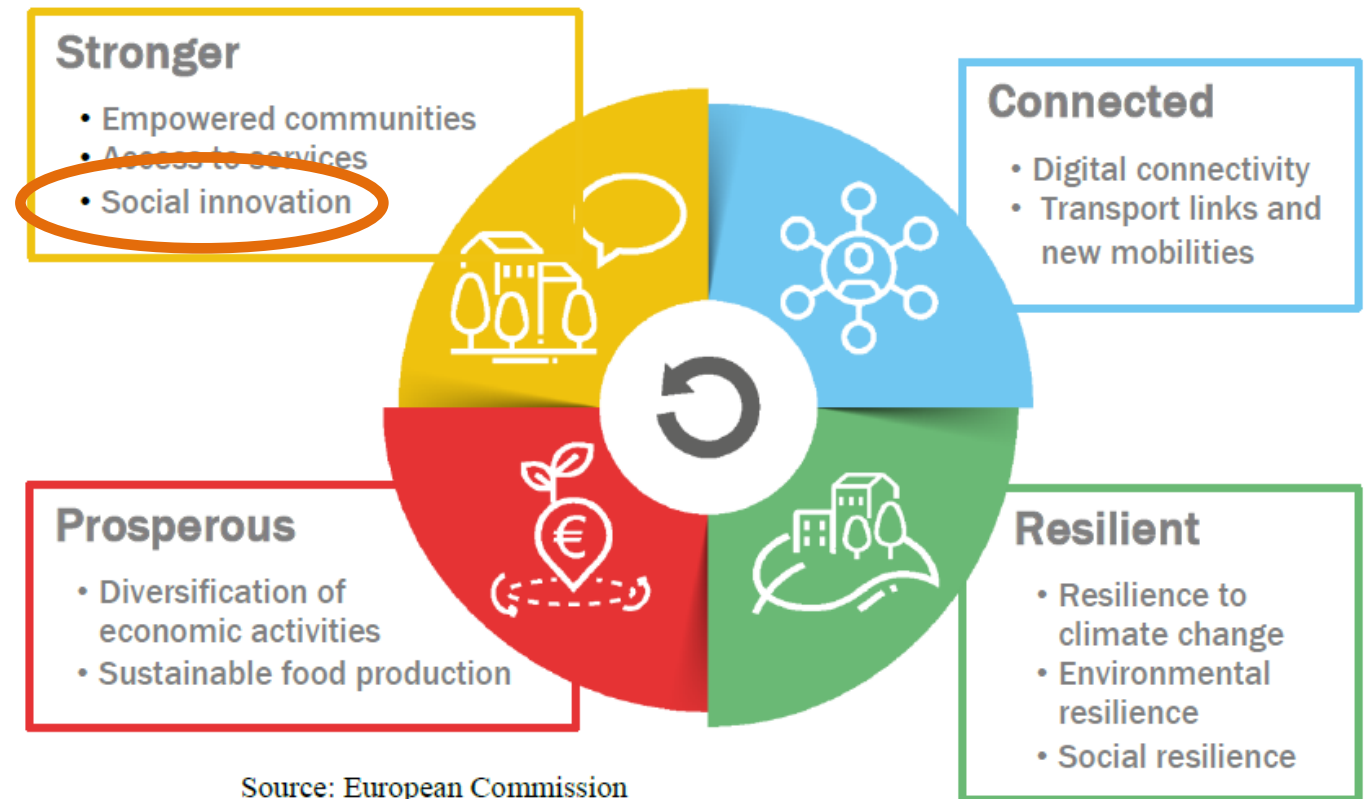
✓ **All advisors shall be integrated within the AKIS in an inclusive way, to be able to cover economic, environmental and social dimensions and to deliver up-to-date technological and scientific information** developed by R&I

✓ *Advisors must be impartial and be able to provide Innovation support, in particular for preparing and implementing Operational Group projects of the EIP AGRI*

# Setting the Scene

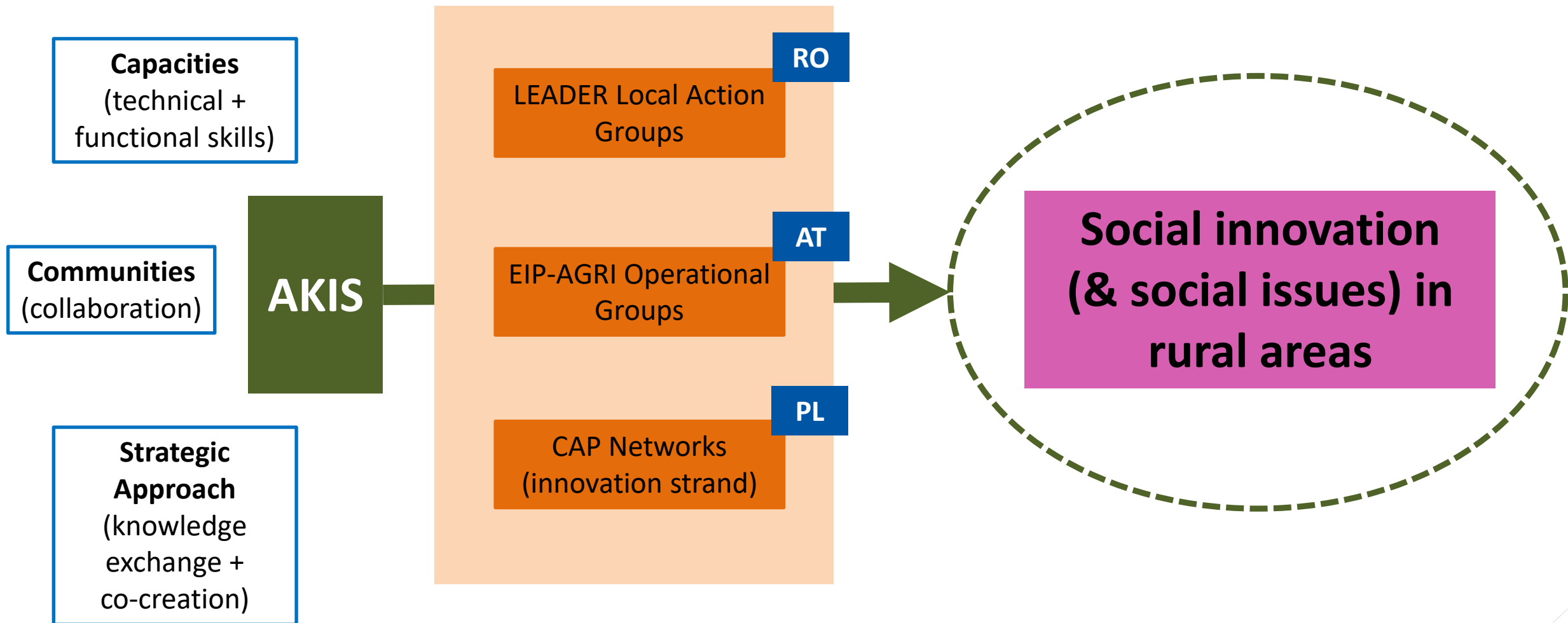
## Specific relevance to the Long-term Vision for Rural Areas (2040)

4 areas of work and 10 shared goals to achieve by 2040 -> **social innovation** highlighted as a specific element of “stronger” rural areas





# Few very brief observations





But how to **embed** social innovation in the **‘real world’** of agriculture, forestry and rural development?

How can the **fostering** of social innovation be **integrated** within the AKIS?

Are Member States **already** taking account of social innovation in their **strategic AKIS approach** for 2023-2027?

**Some questions to the  
Member States**

## A) Context & Need

- Is social innovation **recognized and acknowledged** in your Member State as a real need in agriculture, forestry and rural development?
- In your expert opinion, what are the **main rural sectors / contexts** in which social innovation is needed in your Member State?
- What are the **main obstacles** that currently exist in your Member States for **fostering** social innovation in these rural sectors / contexts?

## B) Existing good practice for fostering social innovation

- Is it possible to identify **existing good practices** for the **fostering** of social innovation in your Member State?
- **What** are these existing good practices? **How** are they supported? **Who** is implementing them?
- To **what extent** have these existing good practices for **fostering** social innovation been **supported to-date by the CAP** (notably rural development measures)?



## C) Strengthening the AKIS for social innovation

- Is the **need** for fostering social innovation identified in your draft CAP Strategic Plan?
- If a need for fostering social innovation **has been identified**, is it being **addressed** in your (Section 8) strategic AKIS approach?
- What **concrete AKIS interventions** (if any) are proposed for strengthening the fostering of social innovation in your Member State?

**Thank you for your  
attention!**

