



PRACTICE ABSTRACT NR. 44

How to make a Living Lab work in an agricultural advisory service

Living Labs (LL) are a set of organisational practices involving a number of people, firms, agencies or organisations to collectively solve or moderate a problem or to develop an opportunity that is present. Based on our experiences from Norway and a Norwegian LL in the project AgriLink, we have identified some important conditions that must be present or that must be established at an early stage to make a LL a fruitful process. • First, the participants must recognise that something is a problem, or there is an opportunity to exploit. Without such a recognition there is no basis for establishing a LL-process. • Second, participants must recognise that there is a potential for improvement and a new solution can be developed by co-operation between various partners. If problem owners consider it is unnecessary to involve multiple actors, a LL with a broad partnership is not necessary. • Third, key participants must take ownership of the process and possible solutions. Without ownership, it will be difficult to co-operate and make progress. • Fourth, a facilitator for the process may be an important support. The facilitator must have the necessary competence and independence to assist in a positive way for the participants and those who have ownership of the work. Mutual trust is needed. If these four conditions are not met, the progress of the LL may be slow or even also fail to initialise the processes. When assessing, establishing and running a LL to be effective, the organisers need to assess whether these mentioned conditions are present or whether they need to be developed. Other conditions may also be important and must be considered in every single LL. AgriLink develops both knowledge and training to improve the competence for running LLs.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The work is concentrated on developing a model on how advisors can motivate farmers for crop rotation, and follow up with service that can help farmers to cooperate and improve their production by crop rotation.

Crop rotation across the farms' borders are challenging and need a strong trust between the farmers. For advisors there is a challenge to develop competence and relevant tasks to facilitate cooperation.

The work from AgriLink includes an analysis on what conditions are needed to and what factors are important to stimulate cooperation.

The work is integrated in a project on crop rotation more in general managed by Norwegian Agricultural Extension Service Trøndelag.



ABOUT AGRILINK

AgriLink is a multi-actor project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. It brings together 16 partners from 13 countries, including universities, applied research institutes, advisors and consultants from public organisations, private SMEs, a farmer-based organisation and specialists in communication and distance learning.

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All the Practice Abstracts prepared by the AgriLink project in the EIP-AGRI common format can be found here: <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/find-connect/projects/agrilink-agricultural-knowledge-linking-farmers>