



HOW TO BETTER ENGAGE AND SUPPORT WOMEN AS PART OF THE AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE INNOVATION SYSTEM (AKIS)

PRACTICE ABSTRACT 16

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FLIARA evidence shows the current and future potential of women-led innovation in farming. Better inclusion of women in Agricultural Knowledge Innovation Systems (AKIS) can help build on the untapped potential.

Increase awareness among women of what AKIS offers: Many women interviewed for FLIARA case studies were not familiar with AKIS. It should be more visible to women, particularly, training programmes, access to networks and knowledge transfer, all of which can be a huge advantage to women innovators. **Gender balance within AKIS actors:** A well-functioning AKIS should have gender balance among the actors involved. Women are under-represented in farming, meaning there is also a knock-on gender imbalance in the AKIS. Other areas include better representation of women in AKIS governance spaces as well as wider AKIS actors.

More network-based knowledge flows: FLIARA evidence shows that networks are part of women innovator's strengths and are key to how they gain necessary knowledge to support their innovation. Creating more types of network-based knowledge exchange spaces appears important, such as peer-to-peer learning, mentoring, practice-based learning and wider support networks.

Recognise distinct needs, but do not create silos: Women in farming can have specific knowledge needs, such as for technical training (e.g. new technology, digital applications, robotics, and farm safety). How AKIS operates should also match the work-life demands facing women, such as balancing caring and farm responsibilities. This calls for flexibility and a bottom-up approach to how, for example, advisory services are delivered. Women-only-groups, such as for knowledge transfer, can play an important role, but must not create silos in the AKIS.



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Useful links:

- FLIARA Highlights Women-Led Innovation with ModernAKIS: <https://fliara.eu/fliara-highlights-women-led-innovation-with-modernakis/>
- AKIS In Action: Strengthening AKIS Through Women-led Innovation: <https://modernakis.eu/wp-content/uploads/FLIARA-cases-Ireland-and-Spain-Maura-Farrell-Victor-Martinez.pdf>



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