



# Co-Creation Platforms For Rural Women

## Policy brief Finland

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# Co-creation platforms for rural women

*"Women have a strong desire for collaboration, volunteering and mutual assistance"*

*"Greater cooperation between people and encouragement leads to change"*

*"Support for intergenerational cooperation is needed for vital and healthy rural areas"*

## Executive Summary

Co-creation platforms offer support and facilitate exchange of information on alternatives, examples and good practices. In interviews and workshops, many women shared their desire for peer-to-peer support and collaboration between businesses.

A wide network would invigorate the self-esteem and morale of rural women. This stems from the difficult landscape for small businesses as expenses rise and many areas experience a decline in residents.

A national co-creation platform could consist of smaller local platforms working towards building successful collaborations and growing the bandwidth of small businesses.

## The Challenge

- 🏠 Small businesses have limited resources.
- 🏠 Women-led enterprises may have difficulties in accessing specific networks e.g. in policy and economic-technological domains.
- 🏠 Virtual networks or physical hubs for networking are rare in many rural areas despite that they are needed.

## Policy Solutions

- 🏠 Establish community engagement programmes.
- 🏠 Connect schools with local action groups.
- 🏠 Create connections between urban and rural areas.
- 🏠 Create cooperation hubs.
- 🏠 Strong involvement from municipality.

## Practical Tips

Use women's strengths to facilitate platforms for cooperation:

- 🏠 Appreciation of soft and social values
- 🏠 Extensive educational background
- 🏠 Organisation skills

## Supporting Evidence & Best Practices

FLIARA foresight activities included several steps to identify measures for promoting women's contributions to farm and rural sustainability innovations. The stakeholders proposed 333 measures for this end. These were analysed and categorised into 18 measures. The most efficient measures to increase women's contribution to sustainability innovations in the stakeholder view included organisations of platforms for co-creation and cooperation and provision of information about alternatives, examples and good practices.

Some differences could be observed within different rural contexts. Rural areas close to city needed adequate local services and facilities. Greatest need for cooperation platforms was found in rural villages. Rural villages can benefit most from information about alternatives, examples and good practices. (Source: FLIARA Deliverable 2.4)



## Conclusion & Call to Action

Networks are extremely important for any sustainability innovations, since hardly any single entrepreneur or innovator has all the ingredients of success at hand: finance, competences, facilities, access to markets, labour, advertising etc. Even if women were observed to have extensive networks as their special strength, they lacked access to specific kinds of networks. Provision of low threshold platforms for building networks can resolve many challenges that rural female innovators are facing in their work. Policy makers at different levels of action should facilitate, finance and organise establishment of these kinds of platforms.

## Further Reading

<https://zenodo.org/records/14045295/>

<https://fliara.eu/>

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## About FLIARA

The project is on a mission to create a more sustainable future by highlighting the role of women in agriculture and rural areas. FLIARA will boost understanding of the needs and challenges facing women leading innovative environmental and rural development practices in EU farming and rural areas.

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# Female-Led Innovation in Agriculture and Rural Areas

[www.fliara.eu](http://www.fliara.eu)



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