

An action-orientated methodology to assess agricultural innovation systems in LMICs (low and medium income countries)

Food for Thoughts for AKIS evaluation in Europe



Dr Aurélie Toillier Scientist in innovation management

Office of Innovation Research & extension unit

A four-step AIS assessment methodology for taking action at country-level





FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

HOW DOES AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION ACTUALLY HAPPEN?

a. Innovation case studies

- Analysis of functions that make innovation happens
- · Enabling and hindering factors

b. Functions profile

- · Clustering of functions across case studies
- Challenges and opportunities for strengthening functions

OUTPUTS

- Key AIS functions identified and clustered
 List of enabling and hindering factors for innovators
- Preliminary entry points for strengthening functions





ANALYSIS OF UNDERLYING CAUSES

WHY ARE THE AIS FUNCTIONS PERFORMING WELL OR NOT?

Structural analysis

- · Stakeholder analysis related to key functions
- · Network analysis of innovation actors
- Participatory identification of structural/network problems and weaknesses

is

Capacity analysis

- Rapid analysis of organizational capacities of main actors related to key functions
- Technical and functional capacities

En

• Insights on underlying causes of performance of AIS

• Key challenges and constraints to AIS performance

· Opportunities and entry points for improving

performance of the AIS

Enabling environment analysis

- Enabling and hindering factors in the external environment, related to key functions
- Policy analysis: major milestones for agricultural and innovation policies
- Institutional assessment, including cultural features





CONSOLIDATED ANALYSIS

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS TO ADDRESS IN THE SYSTEM?

a. Grouping the problems

- Reviewing and organising the challenges and constraints in the national AIS identified so far
- Considering their importance and urgency in the light of national priorities and broader context

b. Capacity gap analysis

 Assess systemic capacities for addressing the problems, developing AIS governance and conducting changes in the AIS when needed

OUTPUTS

- Evidence regarding challenges and opportunities for strengthening the AIS
- · Priorities and entry points for AIS improvement
- Information on the needed systemic capacities for strengthening the AIS



OUTPUTS



DEVELOPING AN AGENDA FOR ACTION

WHAT ACTION TO TAKE TO STRENGTHEN THE AIS?

a. Matching problems and solutions

 Analysis of priority problems and capacity gaps against options for addressing them

b. Developing an agenda for action

- · Consolidate evidence-based information
- Validation of agenda for action with key stakeholders
- Agenda for TAP-AIS project policy dialogue process and organisational capacity development



OUTPUTS

- Awareness of AIS challenges at policy level and among key stakeholders
- Recommendations and action plans for strengthening AIS (in TAP-AIS project and by government, development projects, research, private sector actors)

Available at: https://www.fao.org/3/cb8143en/cb8143en.pdf

1-What is the assessment framework?

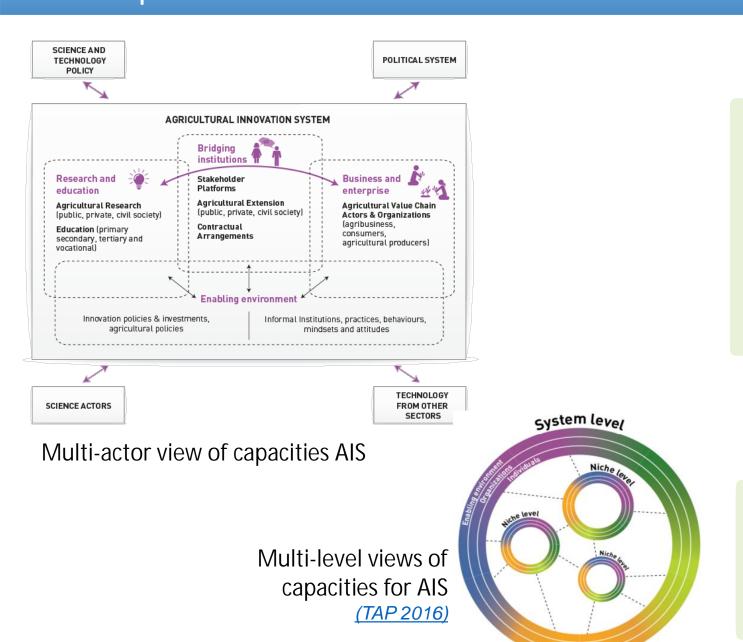
2-How did we design and test it?

3- What are the outputs and outcomes?

4-What are the lessons learnt and pending challenges to consider in the future for AIS evaluation?

5-Available resources

1-Conceptual frameworks - combined assessment models



A multi-perspective analysis of Agricultural Innovation Systems

Functional view

AIS mission(s) and functions



Structural view
Actors,
interactions,
networks and
infrastructures

Capacity view

Needed capacities at the level of individuals, organisations, networks and system



Innovation phases, trajectories of change, support mechanisms and enabling environments at country level (Policies, investments, public institutions)

1-Analytical framework





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Capacity analysis

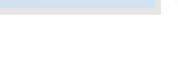
- · Rapid analysis of organizational capacities of main actors related to key functions
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- · Insights on underlying causes of performance of AIS
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- national AIS identified so far · Considering their importance and urgency in the light of national
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Some Guiding principles for implementors:

- Adapt scoping assessment questions and entry points in the AIS to the country context/expectations
- Innovation case studies are used as proxy of the functioning of the national AIS and as pedagogic support material
- analytical tools involving diverse degrees of consultation, participation and inclusion of the AIS 'actors of change'
- Use indicators for communication, advocacy and future M&F of AIS transformation
- Develop graphic tools for easy visualization of results
- Good balance between internal (country-led -owned) and external (technically supported by partners) assessment
- Enable AIS key actors to participate (not only the government)





1-Operational framework

A country-owned "fit-for-purpose" approach (utilization-focused)

Generating evidence on conditions for innovation

PRE-ASSESSMENT

- Scoping study
- Ad hoc assessment team
- Trainings and methodological adjustments



PHASE **2.**ASSESSMENT



- Step 2: Analysis of underlying causes
- Step 3: Consolidated analysis
- Step 4: Levels of action



PHASE **3.**POST-ASSESSMENT

Using the results for:

- · Feeding policy dialogues
- Designing capacity development interventions
- Advocating for investments

....while developing capacities for AIS governance: Raise
expectations and
build the demand
toward the
assessment – at
policy and
strategic levels



Engage & empower AIS actors

- Adapt the scope of the assessment;
- Generate evidence ;
- Develop a joint vision;
- Trigger a capacity development process



Take Action

2-How we designed and tested it



 Research-led framework design - a consultation process using the DELPHI technic an expert dialogue format with an initial online survey (180 experts) and six rounds of enriched controlled feedback (30 experts)

> STEP 2 (2019-2022)

 FAO-led tests in pilot countries

> STEP 3 (2022-2024)

 Enriching the framework with country tools and practical guidance

2-How we designed and tested it

OUR SPECIFICITIES COMPARED TO OTHER AIS ASSESSMENT METHOGOLOGIES

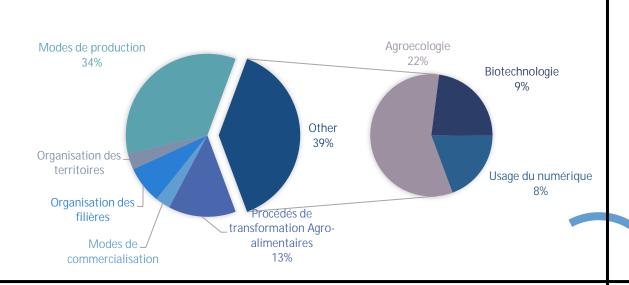
Type of assessment	Type 1 Performance-oriented	Type 2 Failure-oriented	Type 3 Capacity-oriented
AIS transformation challenges	Improving the performance of the existing working of the AIS ('Simple')	Changing the way parts of the AIS interact, addressing systemic failures ('Complicated')	Creating new possibilities/new types of AIS, by developing the AIS actors' capacities ('Complex')
Areas of improvements	Innovation policies for economic growthAIS sub-domains	Innovation policies for governing actors' interactionsAIS sub-systems	 Innovation policies for governing transitions toward sustainability AIS
AIS assessment			
process	Informative		Formative
Assessment use	Ex-post character To allow comparison across countries and decide on investments	Ex-post character To provide visibility to conditions for successful innovation and highlight system failures	Ex-ante character To provide evidence and learning opportunities, embedded with long- term capacity-development interventions
Examples	Spielman and Birner 2008; Rajalahti et al. 2008; OECD 2013; Dutta et al. 2015	Klerkx et al. 2013; Lampidorou et al. 2014; Minh 2019; Mathé et al. 2020	Schut et al. 2015; Toillier et al. 2020; Sartas et al. 2020

Toillier Aurélie, Mathe Syndhia, Saley Moussa Abdoulaye, Faure Guy. 2021. How to assess agricultural innovation systems in a transformation perspective: A Delphi consensus study. Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension, 23p. https://doi.org/10.1080/1389224X.2021.1953548

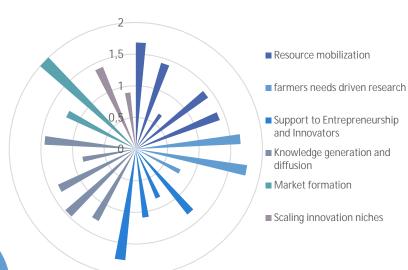
3-Outputs and outcomes of the assessment – some examples

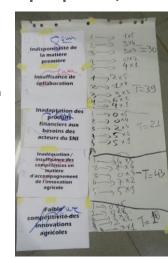
VISUAL TOOLS TO INFORM POLICY AND DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

Typologies of innovation domains and promotors



Scoring of the AIS functions (for M&E purposes)





Timeline of 'innovation institutions and policies' (St&I ownership)

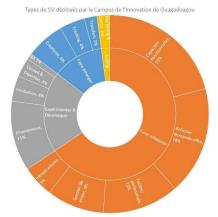


Phase 2 Politique de

Politique économique



Mapping of innovation support service providers in some priority innovation domains





4-Lessons learnt: pitfalls; tips and tops

Work in Progress

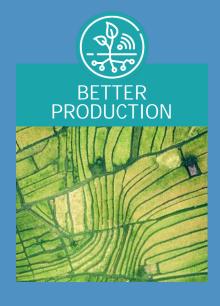
Major limitations of the methodology across the nine countries:

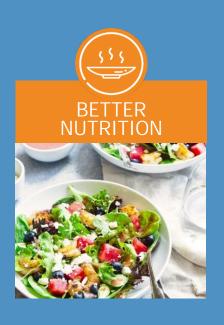
- Risk of being too descriptive and failure-oriented (gaps, weaknesses, etc.), lacking the AIS transformation perspective
- Long, complex
- Uneven efforts in the different steps of the assessment
- Value of method packages to develop capacities not demonstrated yet

4-Lessons learnt: pitfalls; tips and tops

Work in Progress Pitfalls in some countries – tips& tops in others

	Pitfalls	Tips and tops
Analytical framework	 No good case studies selected Lack of technics and methods to make sense of results and use them in a decision-making process – outputs remain very descriptive Results are too much failure-oriented (weaknesses, gaps, etc.) – lack of emphasis on enablers, triggering factors and "success stories" that could serve as basis for policy-making Process view (enabling environments) poorly used – lack of managerial perspective (how innovation happens) 	 Research-driven customization by a national organization, with the support of international backstopping Limit the scoping assessment questions (1 or 2) – provide some examples Include a baseline situation analysis in the preassessment phase Provide more concrete guidance with examples
Operational framework	 Expectations were difficult to raise when the 'AIS terminologies' were too far away from reality; (expectations raised at the end of the assessment process that acted as a training / new knowledge exposure) Composition of the AIS assessment teams: lack of skills; dominated by governmental actors; lack of legitimacy (independant consultants) Participatory process takes time and may be jeopardized by time-bounded project Limited embeddedness of the AIS assessment in on-going policy making 	 Ad-hoc Coaching rather than Trainings Diversify profiles in the assessment team: facilitators, researchers, policy makers Anchor the assessment process in short-term expectations –make it useful for certain key actors; Selection and engagement of AIS actors as important as data collection and analysis Make each analytical step participatory to ensure progressive refinement of expected outputs and ownership Make available toolboxes with practical guidance









Thank you