



modern  
**AKIS**

Together for  
Systems' Innovation

# AKIS assessment: functionalist and transformative perspectives

Simona Cristiano,  
*CREA - Council for Agricultural Research and Economics*



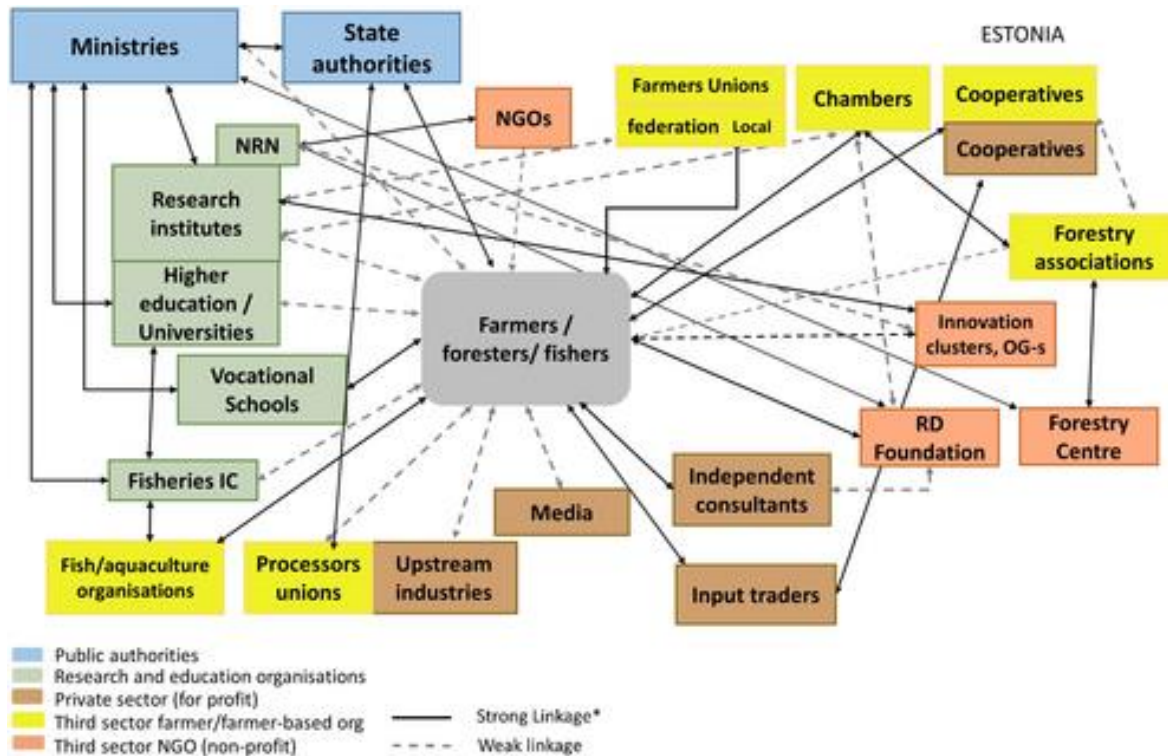
Funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the European Commission can be held responsible for them.

20<sup>th</sup> March 2025

# Functionalist Assessment

*AKIS*: based on knowledge flows and interactions

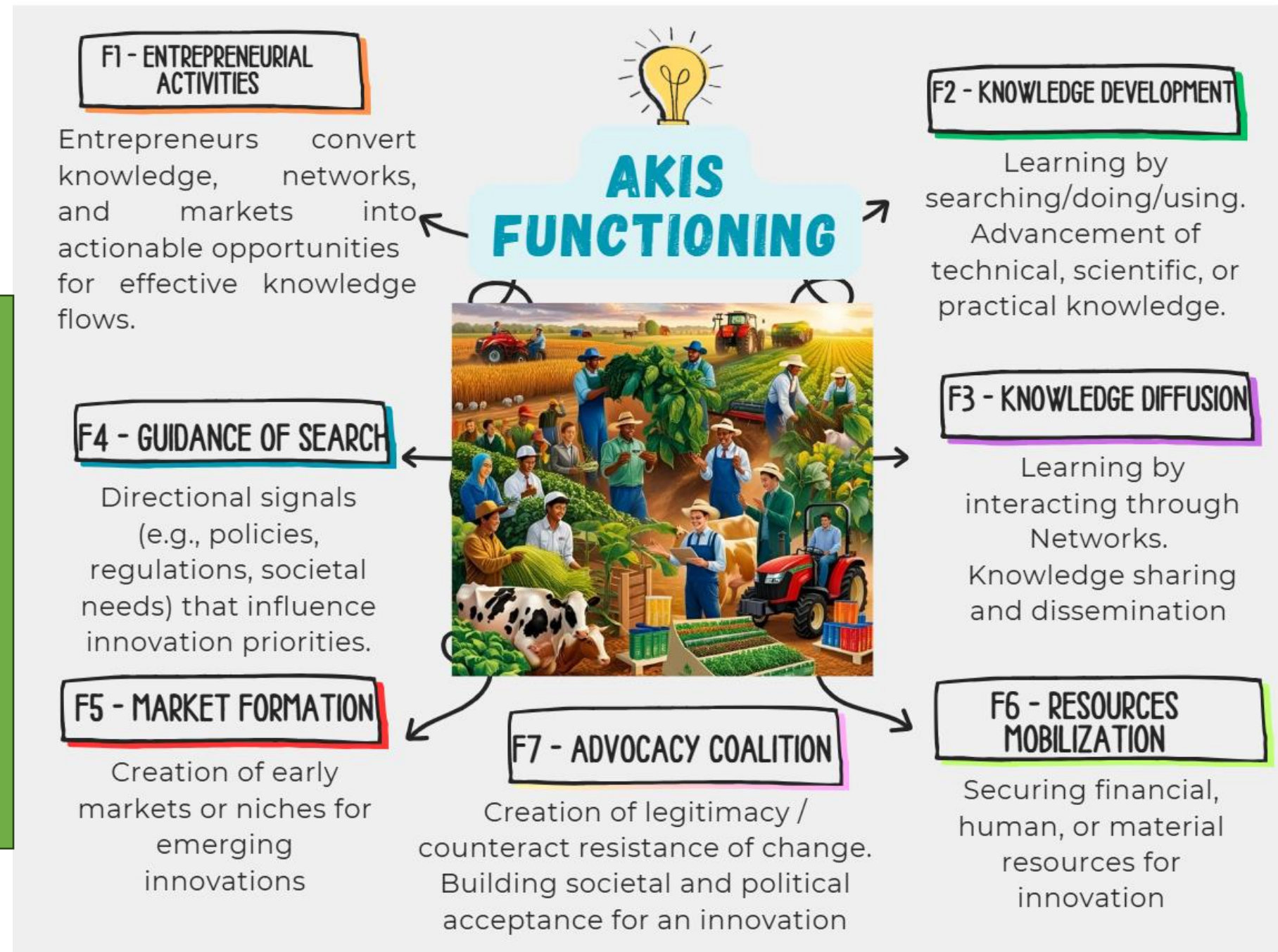


*System dynamics* of AKIS

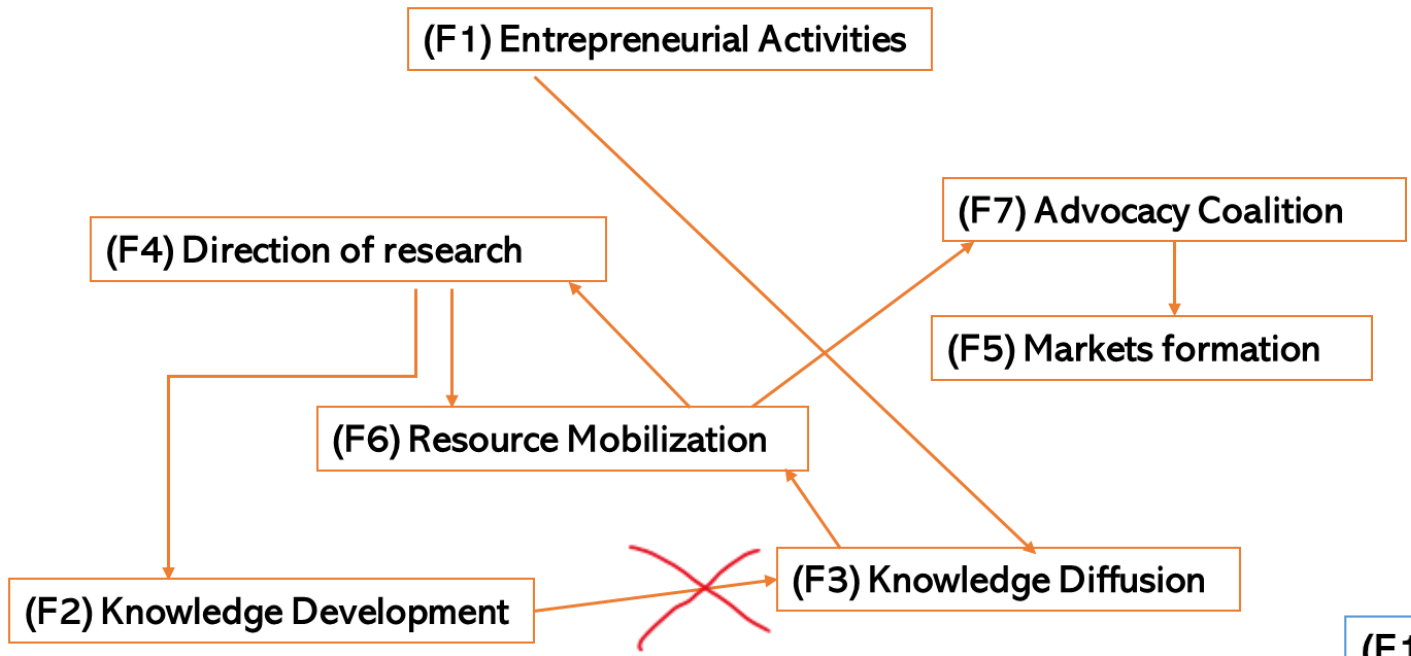
- Understanding innovation *system dynamics* beyond structural elements
- *Seven* Functions of Innovation Systems influence overall performance at the system achieves
- Providing evidence on *how* key processes *work* and *what* the system achieves
- Related to the capacities and interaction of components
- Seven key functions *must be fulfilled*.

# System functions

Which are the key functions/processes that enable the knowledge flows and innovations within the AKIS?

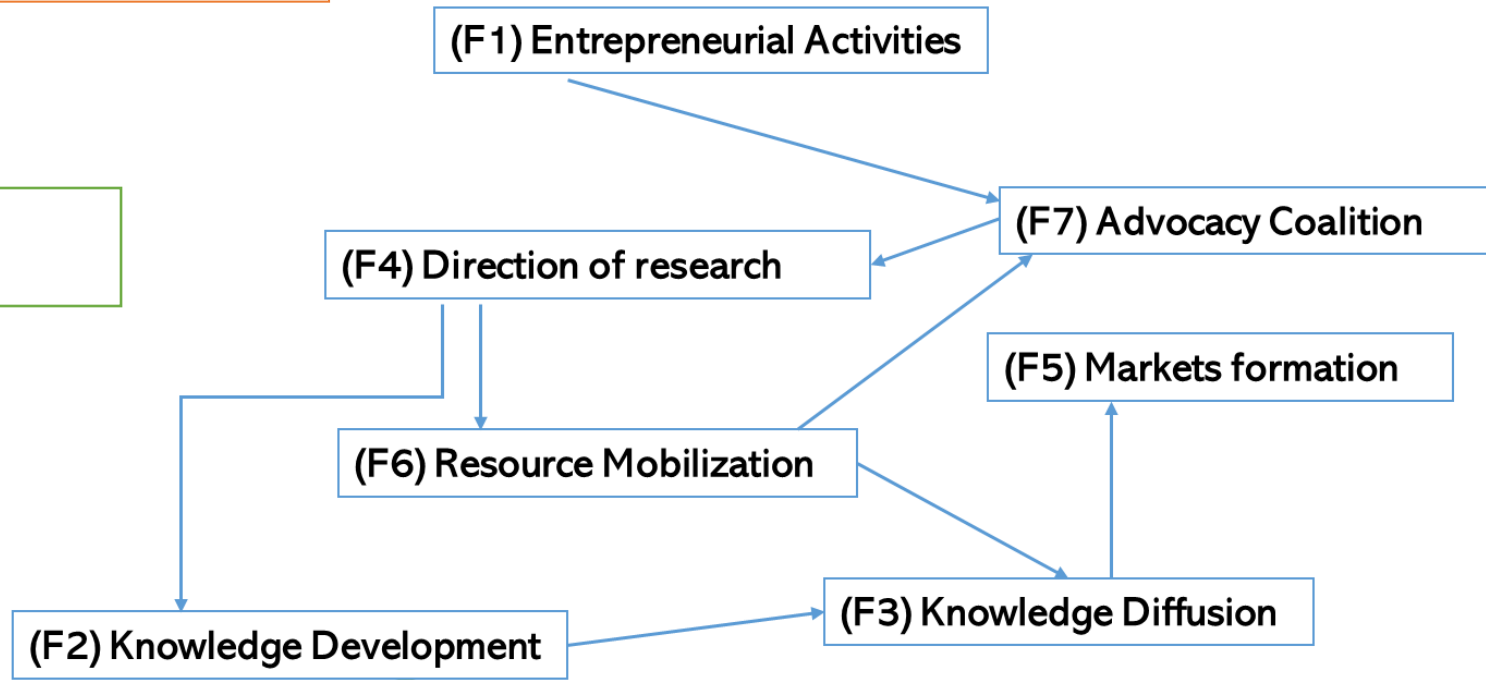


# Plurality of Virtuous/Vicious circuits of functions



*Barriers* X

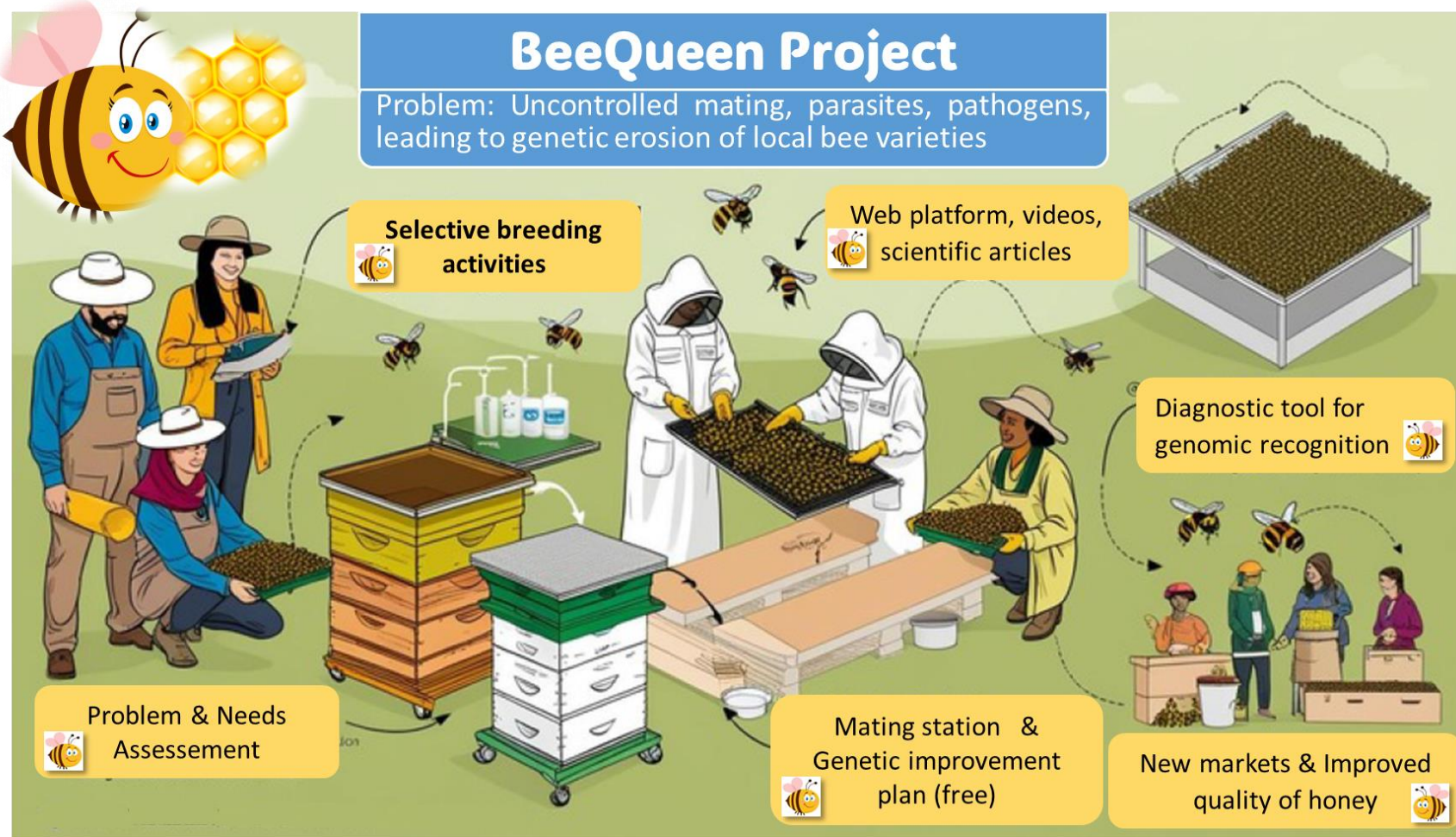
*System Failures*



# BeeQueen EIP-Project: an example of an innovation system functioning

**Problem:** Beekeepers face challenges related to uncontrolled mating, leading to genetic erosion, along with climate change, parasites and pathogens that threaten local bee varieties.

**Solution:** selection of families that maximize honey production relative to brood size, promotes longer-lived bees, and those with extended winter pauses in laying eggs, reducing Varroa mite treatments >> (1) **selective maternal and paternal breeding activities**; (2) prototype of a **mating station** open to all beekeepers for queen fertilization; (3) A **diagnostic tool for genetic recognition** of *Apis mellifera* varieties; (4) texting a **Sex Determination Locus**.



## F1 - ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES

- Investment in the OG
- Use of a DSS
- Site-specific treatments
- Change of bee varieties



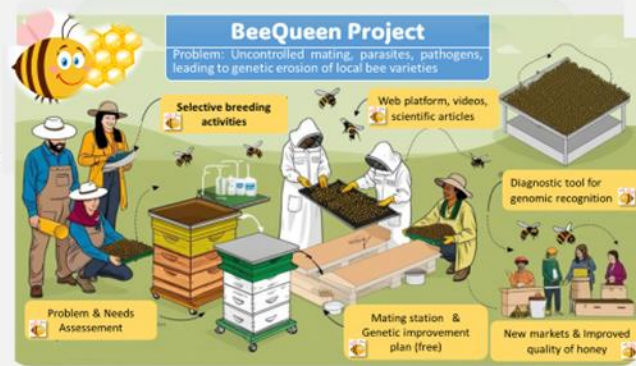
**OG**  
**Functioning**

## F2 - KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

- Problem assessemnt
- Genetic testing
- Prototype of Mating site
- Data collection on mating
- Indeces for genetic analyses ...

## F4 - GUIDANCE OF SEARCH

- Societal needs
- Biodiversity conservation
- Climate change mitigation



## F3 - KNOWLEDGE DIFFUSION

- Free service on genetic improvement plan
- Project Website
- Events, including P2P
- Publications & PA

## F5 - MARKET FORMATION

Improved honey products based on local bee varieties

## F7 - ADVOCACY COALITION

Free services and biodiversity-friendly practices created major awarness on biodiversity loss that brought to counteract reluctant and innovation scaling

## F6 - RESOURCES MOBILIZATION

RDP resourcers

# How long BeeQueen applied the system functions?



# What & How to assess AKIS Functioning

*Which criteria and methods?*

Functions' Analysis

Gaps of functions

Presence by actors & infrastructures

Actors & infrastructures playing functions

Social Network Analysis

Constraints/Barriers to for each function

Virtuous & Vicious circuits of functions

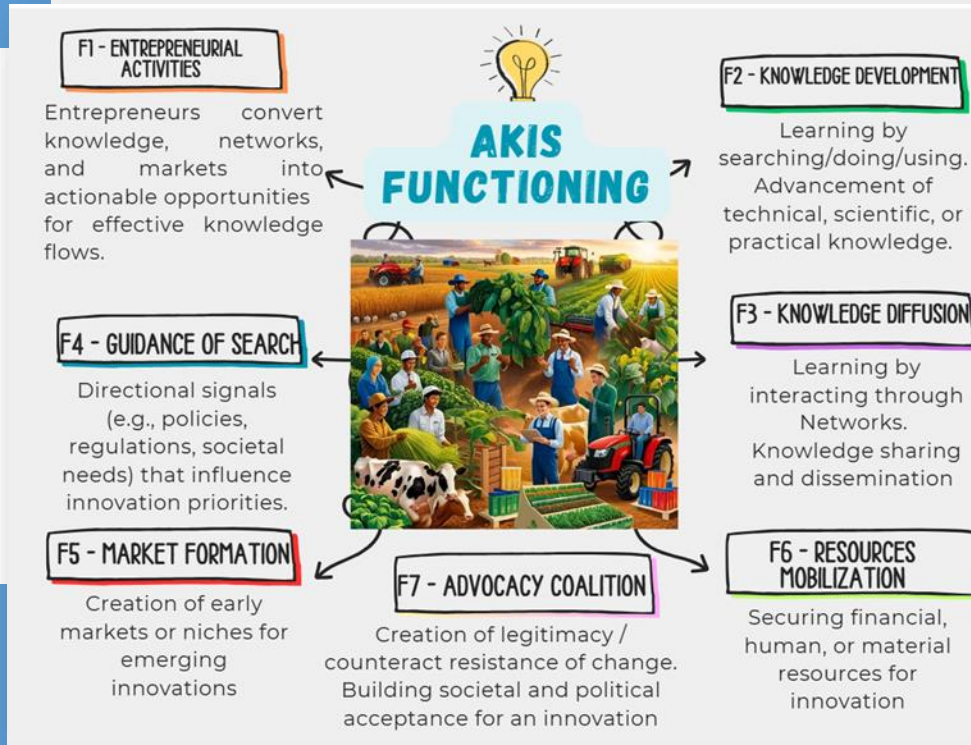
Nodes & Ties of processes

Process mapping

Functions & Actors by value chains/over time

Satisfaction of functions played by type of actors (e.g. advisors)

System analysis



# AKIS Capacities, assessment Questions & Criteria

Which capacities are relevant to REALIZE THE POTENTIAL OF INNOVATION?

## TO NAVIGATE THE COMPLEXITY

Applying an *holistic perspective* to comprehend relationships, feedback loops, and adaptability within the system

## TO COLLABORATE

Understanding *others' perspectives*, building partnerships, collaboration, and effective internal and external communication.

## TO REFLECT & LEARN

Facilitate stakeholder collaboration through *reflective learning*, fostering trust, adaptability, and iterative action *for systemic change*.

## TO ENGAGE IN STRATEGIC & POLITICAL PROCESSES

Understanding and shaping the politics and *power relations* to create *new ways for stakeholders to interact*

## Has a common vision & strategy been developed by stakeholders?

- AKIS Strategy
- Resources: Availability, Mobilization
- Decision-making valuing local knowledge
- System Failure/Barriers adjustments
- Mechanisms for innovation scaling
- Mechanisms of collective visioning

## Has a common vision & strategy been developed by stakeholders?

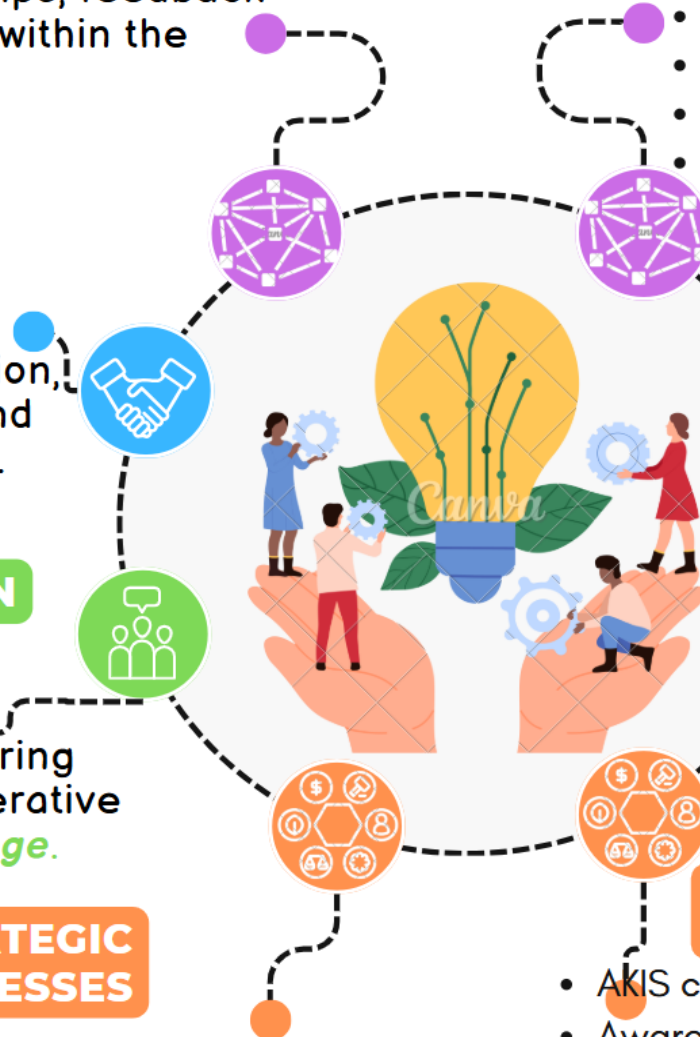
- Successfull OGs
- Innovation support services
- Incentives for networking, MA

## Mechanisms of M&E in place?

- M&E processes, joint learning & follow-ups
- Understanding of knowledge flows
- Methods and tools for facilitation

## Stakeholders aware of major challenges of agriculture?

- AKIS coordination body: role, functions, attitudes
- Awareness of opportunities for policy change
- Guidance of research
- Strategic decision-making influenced by stakehold
- Up-to-Date Skills



# What & How to assess Capacities

Are system capacities satisfactory to make the AKIS well-functioning >> knowledge flows leading to innovation & change?

Availability of capacities at relevant levels

Relevance Assessment & Funding Alignment

Policy Review and Adjustment

S.W.O.T. analysis

System analysis

Scenario planning

Gap Analysis

Outcome mapping  
Impact assessment

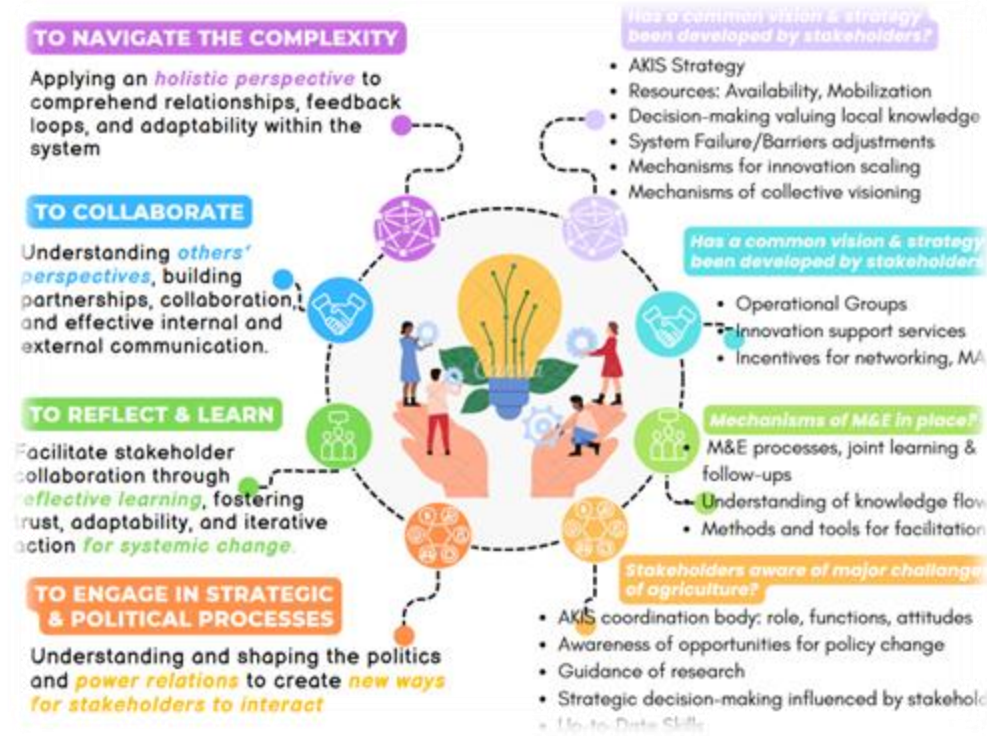
Capacity assesement

Degree of satisfaction

Quality of performance

Compliance

Participatory  
Rapid  
Appraisal





Proudly say  
**Thank you**



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the European Commission can be held responsible for them.