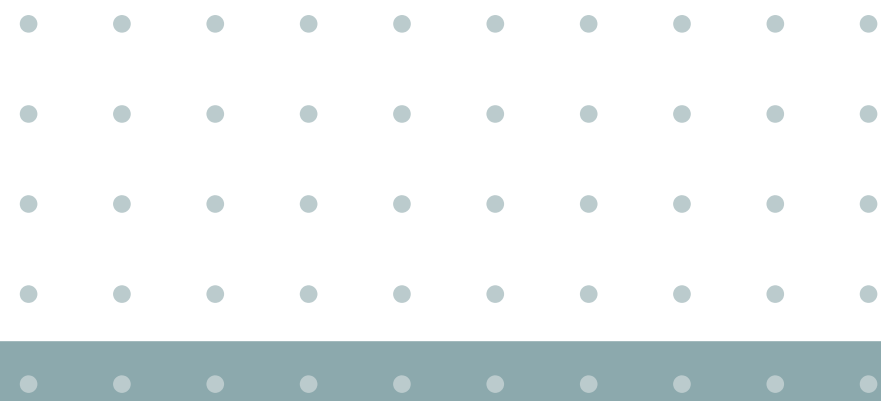
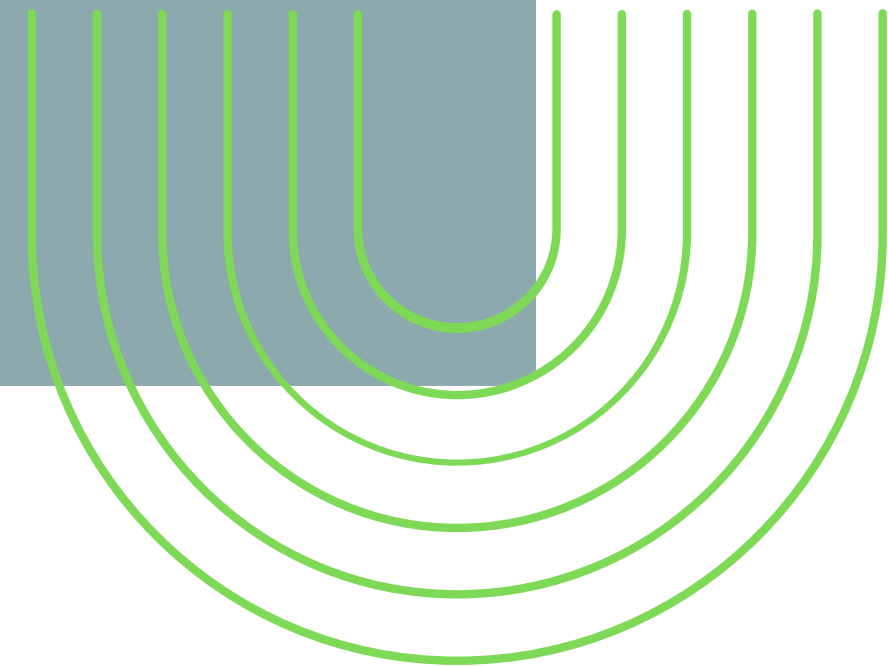




RURAL & LOCALIZED SOCIAL INNOVATION: IDENTIFYING, SHARING & SCALING

Train the trainers



The RESIST project is co-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund) under the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme.

01.

IDENTIFY RURAL INNOVATION

Where to look, what to spot

02.

METHODS AND TOOLS TO MAP

Selection of three methods

03.

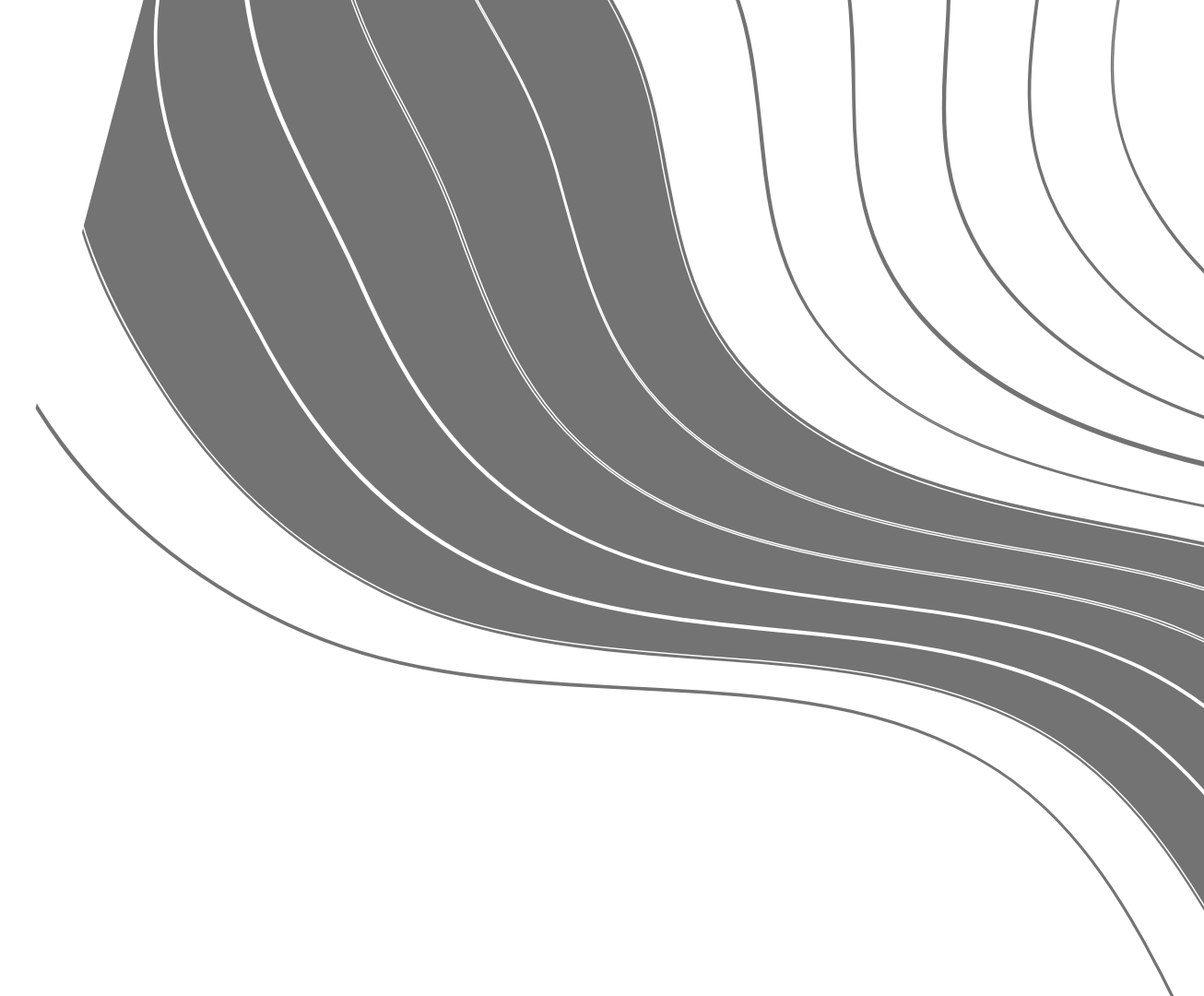
WHY SHARING MATTERS

Do not reinvent the wheel

04.

SCALING AND IMPACT

Methods and approaches



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CONTENT**

Why Rural & Local Innovation Matters?

Local challenges need local solutions.

Rural communities often create innovative, sustainable responses.

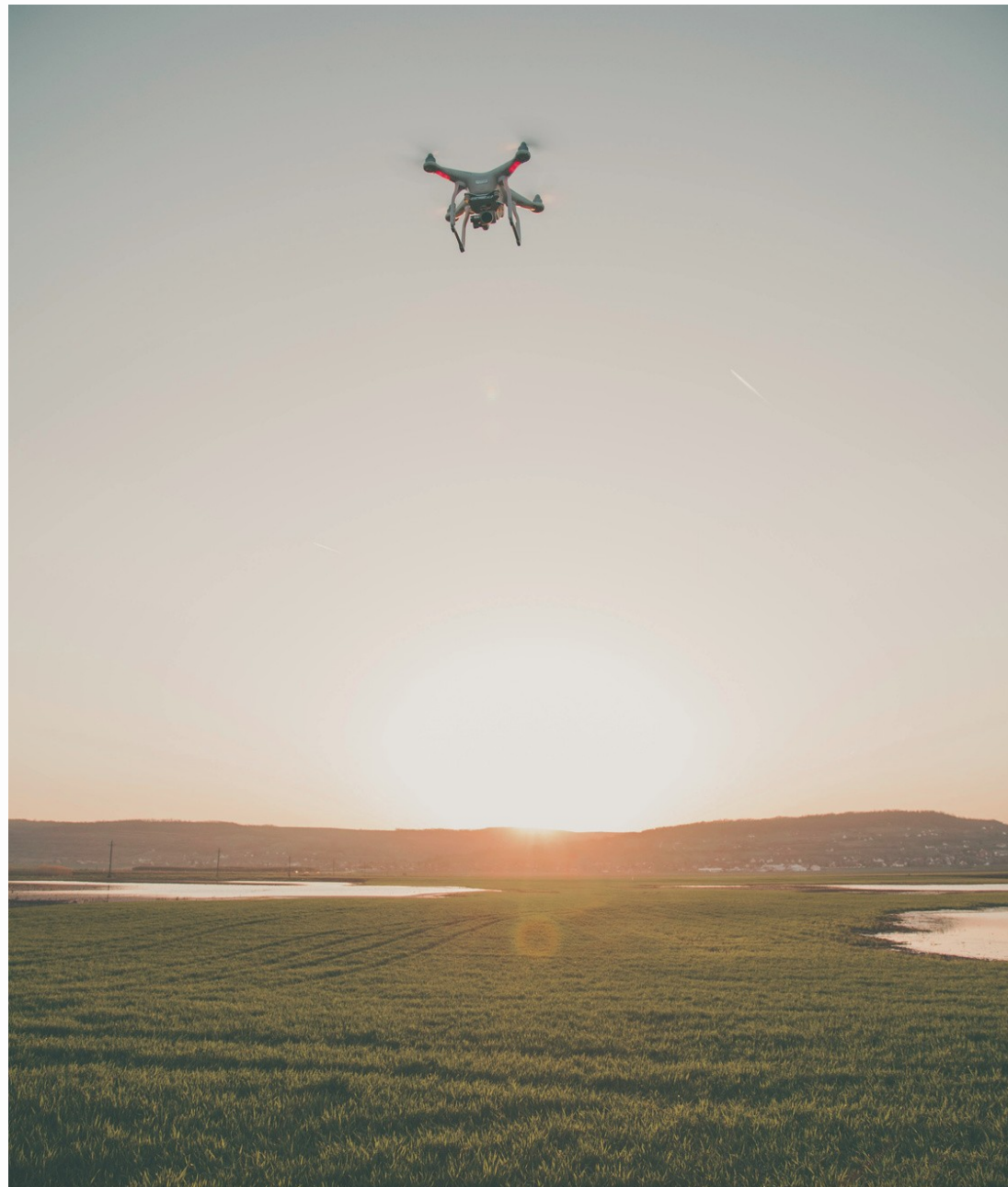
How can we identify, share, and scale these solutions?

What is Rural Social Innovation?

Definition: Locally driven solutions address challenges in sustainable & scalable ways.

Key Characteristics:

- Community-led
- Sustainable & resource-efficient
- Embedded in cultural & social realities
- Addresses systemic challenges



Identifying social innovation in rural context



Where to look?

- Traditional knowledge & practices
- Informal networks & grassroots leaders
- Community-driven problem-solving
- Survival innovations (necessity-based solutions)

How to Spot a Promising Innovation?

- Addresses a **real** community need
- Developed by or with the **community**
- **Scalable** to other rural settings



Local Solar Microgrids for Off-Grid Communities (Global example)

Challenge:

Millions of people in rural and remote areas lack access to reliable electricity.

The Innovation: Local

Solar Microgrids – Small, community-managed solar power systems that generate and distribute electricity to local households, schools, and businesses.

Why It Works –

Affordable & Sustainable;
Scalable & Replicable;
Empowers Local Communities



Tools & methods to map rural innovation



Community Innovation Mapping



What It Is

A participatory mapping exercise where community members collectively identify and document local social innovations within their environment.



How It Works

- **Engage** local stakeholders (villagers, NGOs).
- **Map** out social innovations on a physical or digital map.
- Assess **key factors** such as adoption,



Benefits

- **Identifies** hidden innovations within rural areas.
- Helps policymakers and funders support high-potential solutions.
- **Strengthens** community **knowledge-sharing** and



Storytelling & Oral History Interviews



What It Is

A method to **capture local knowledge, wisdom, and social innovations** by recording personal experiences and success stories.



How It Works

- **Conduct in-depth interviews** with community representatives.
- **Record and document stories** of past innovations, resilience, and creative problem-solving.
- Use materials to preserve and **share knowledge**.



Benefits

- Surfaces grassroots solutions.
- **Strengthens community identity** and ownership over solutions.
- **Builds trust** between social innovators and decision-makers.



Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)



What It Is

A community-based research approach that enables rural populations **to analyze their own challenges** and develop solutions.



How It Works

- **Facilitators use visual tools** like mapping, diagramming, and ranking exercises.
- **Community members actively participate** in identifying social issues and designing solutions.



Benefits

- **Empowers local people** to be active problem-solvers.
- Ensures that solutions are culturally appropriate and sustainable.
- Increases local adoption of social innovations.



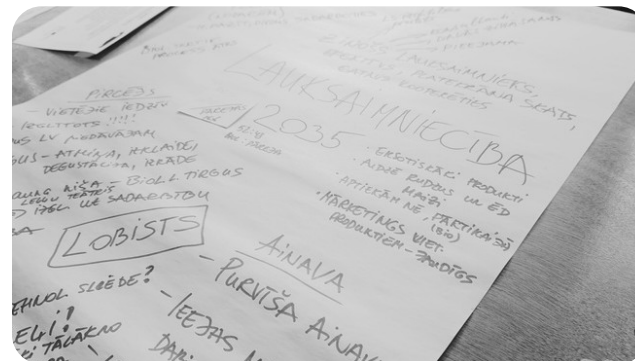


Why Sharing Matters?



Replicates Success & Prevents Re-Inventing the Wheel

Many communities face **similar social challenges**, from access to clean water to sustainable farming. When one group develops a solution, **sharing it helps others** avoid wasting time and resources on trial-and-error approaches.



Strengthens Rural Networks & Collaborations

When local innovations are shared, rural communities build stronger connections with neighboring villages, NGOs, and policymakers. Collaboration leads to funding opportunities, joint problem-solving, and a greater pool of expertise.

Best methods to share local innovation



Peer Learning Networks

What it is

A **structured way** to **bring** local innovators **together** to exchange ideas and best practices.

How It Works

- Local innovators **participate** in knowledge-sharing circles, workshops, and trainings.
- **Encourages mentorship**, where experienced changemakers guide new social entrepreneurs.
- Can be facilitated by NGOs, universities, or local government agencies.

Benefits

- **Encourages direct knowledge transfer** between practitioners.
- Strengthens local leadership and innovation capacity.
- Ensures that **knowledge is contextually relevant** to the community.

Community Innovation Hubs

What it is

Physical or digital spaces where local innovators gather, experiment, and share ideas.

How It Works

- Provides makerspaces, digital tools, and access to mentors.
- Facilitates collaborative problem-solving and partnership building.
- Supports prototyping and piloting of social innovations.

Benefits

- Provides a structured environment for idea exchange.
- Encourages cross-sector collaboration (e.g., tech + agriculture + sustainability).
- Helps turn prototypes into scalable solutions.

DIGITAL & OFFLINE STRATEGIES FOR SPREADING INNOVATION

DIGITAL

Social media groups (e.g.,
WhatsApp farmer networks)

Online open-source knowledge
platforms

OFFLINE

Rural Innovation Fairs

Hands-on Demonstration
Projects





Co-Creation & Community-Led Innovation



Why Co-Creation?

- Ensures relevance & sustainability
- Strengthens community ownership



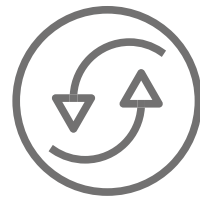
How to Foster Co-Creation?

Involve locals in problem-solving
Use participatory design methods
Ensure long-term stakeholder engagement

Training Rural Social Innovators

Who Are Local Change Agents?

Rural leaders, educators, community organizers



Peer-learning
workshops



Hands-on field projects



Long-term mentorship
programs



Scaling Rural Social Innovation – Growth Without Losing Identity

Challenges of Scaling:

- Many solutions are context-specific
- Risk of losing local ownership

How to Scale Without Losing Local Value:

- Adaptation, Not Copy-Pasting
- Train Local Change Agents
- Government & Policy Support



Evaluating Local Innovation for Impact

- Does it solve a pressing community challenge?
- Is it scalable beyond one village?
- Can it be sustained without external funding?
- Does it empower local leadership?



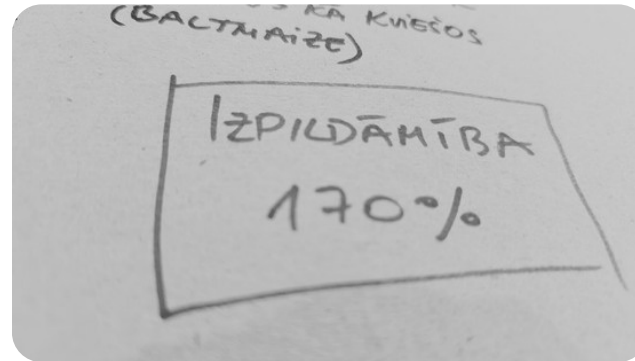


Measuring the Impact of Rural Social Innovation



Community adoption & engagement

- If a rural innovation is not widely adopted by the community, it is unlikely to create sustained impact.
- Measuring community engagement helps determine whether the solution is culturally relevant, accessible, and user-friendly.



Economic impact & livelihood improvement

- Rural social innovations should lead to better economic opportunities for local communities.
- A successful innovation helps people increase income, find stable jobs, or reduce living costs.

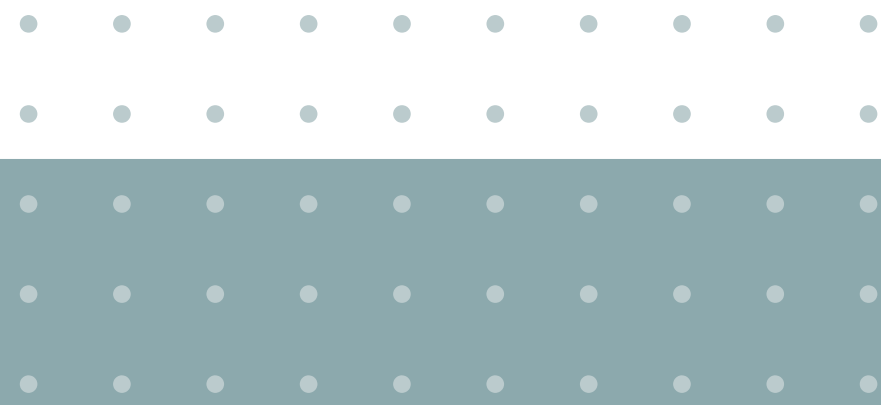


Measuring the Impact of Rural Social Innovation



Sustainability of the Solution

- If an innovation cannot sustain itself over time, it risks collapsing when external funding or support ends.
- Long-term impact depends on local ownership, financial sustainability, and adaptability.



THANK YOU

Have any question?

