Can we join our efforts into a “Virtual Institute for Capacity Development of Actors in systems thinking, assessment and design for a sustainable transformation of agrifood systems”?

An Notenbaert, Katrien Descheemaeker, Santiago Lopez-Ridaura, Jacques Wery
The one CGIAR initiative on SI of Mixed Farming systems

My interpretation of WP5 in SI-MFS

Socio-technical SI packages for a variety of mixed farming systems

WP5 is one of two SUPPORTING Work Packages:

1. WP2 develops Tools and Methods
2. WP5 builds capacity

To apply and mainstream approaches for

3. Diagnosis/entry points (WP1)
2. Co-design (WP3)
3. Scaling (WP4)
Challenge and opportunity

Transforming Agri-food systems into more resilient, sustainable and climate smart systems requires developing the capacities of actors in systems thinking, assessment and design

- For a **wide range** of actors
  - beyond researchers and students
  - farmers, farm advisors, managers, students (bachelor to PhD), teachers, researchers, development agents, policy makers and donors: as well as private sectors actors (input, credit and digital services providers, traders, food processors...).

- **Operational** tools and methods

SI-MFS initiative will develop materials and approaches for capacity development of actors for its own needs

- Can we take advantage of this to **kick-start** an **Open Virtual Institute for Capacity Development of Actors in systems thinking, assessment and design for a sustainable transformation of agrifood systems** (VI).
Our current thinking

- **Scope**: Capacity Development of Actors in *systems thinking*, assessment and design for a sustainable transformation of agrifood systems.

- **Target audience**: VI will have specific features and products for each type of actor to be engaged in the transformation of agri-food systems (farmers, farm advisors, managers, students, teachers, researchers, development agents, policy makers and donors, as well as private sectors actors (input, credit and digital services providers, traders, food processors...)).

- **Virtual**: VI will work as an online platform – with direct access to a wide range of *knowledge products, analytical tools, organized courses* and *knowledge exchange platforms* - either hosted on the VI platform of through link to the universities and partners which are developing, updating and delivering the training.

- **Collective Intelligence**: Support *knowledge sharing and collective intelligence* among each type of actors and across these types: videos, chat, blogs, webinars, co-design or co-assessment exercises. In particular for students and teachers, VI will offer opportunities to support the « internationalization at home (I@H) ».
Our current thinking

• **On the ground application:** By its strong anchorage with R4D projects in the global south, VI will also strengthen the possibilities of exchanges of students and scientists in order to apply the systems methods and tools of VI with local actors.

• **Science-based and Action-oriented:** all content to be assessed for their scientific basis and tested for their operationality to support actors in the transformative pathways of agri-food systems (criteria to be defined).

• **Economic model:** aim is to produce public goods while ensuring financial sustainability, e.g.
  o all the contents developed and directly managed by VI will be free of charge except for the private sector and for courses directly provided by the universities
  o VI will support in the search for existing grants and dedicated funding by donors and foundation, especially for youth and women from the global south.
  o VI will have a cost to set it up and to manage and develop it. An economic model and a financial plan needs to be developed and potential donors to be approached when we have a first definition of the concept.
Step-wise: From researchers, students + farmers reached by SI-MFS to Global virtual institute with wide target public
Questions

- Would such VI be of interest to you? Would you be eager to explore involvement?

- What is new? What adds value to existing initiatives?

- How can we make it happen?
  - Content
  - Financially
  - ...

Thank You