

# Supporting innovation at scale through capacity strengthening for improved Agricultural Innovation System

Syndhia Mathé

*Boosting agrifood research and innovation  
cooperation for impact at scale*



March 11-13, 2025

Brussels, Belgium

# Introduction

- “Capacity strengthening” is the process of providing individuals, organisations and systems with the **methods, tools and resources** they need to improve their performance and achieve their goals. It includes a variety of activities such as **training, coaching, mentoring, technical assistance**, or even **funding**



# Lesson 1: Invest in strengthening functional capacity

- **New paradigm** to support innovation at scale : broadening the scope from technical capacities to functional capacities
- Functional capacities are “*capacities that enable AIS actors to i) facilitate, reflect and learn, ii) manage knowledge resources, iii) navigate complexity and iii) participate in strategic and political processes. These four capacities should form the core of an overarching capacity to adapt and respond in order to realise the potential of innovation*”

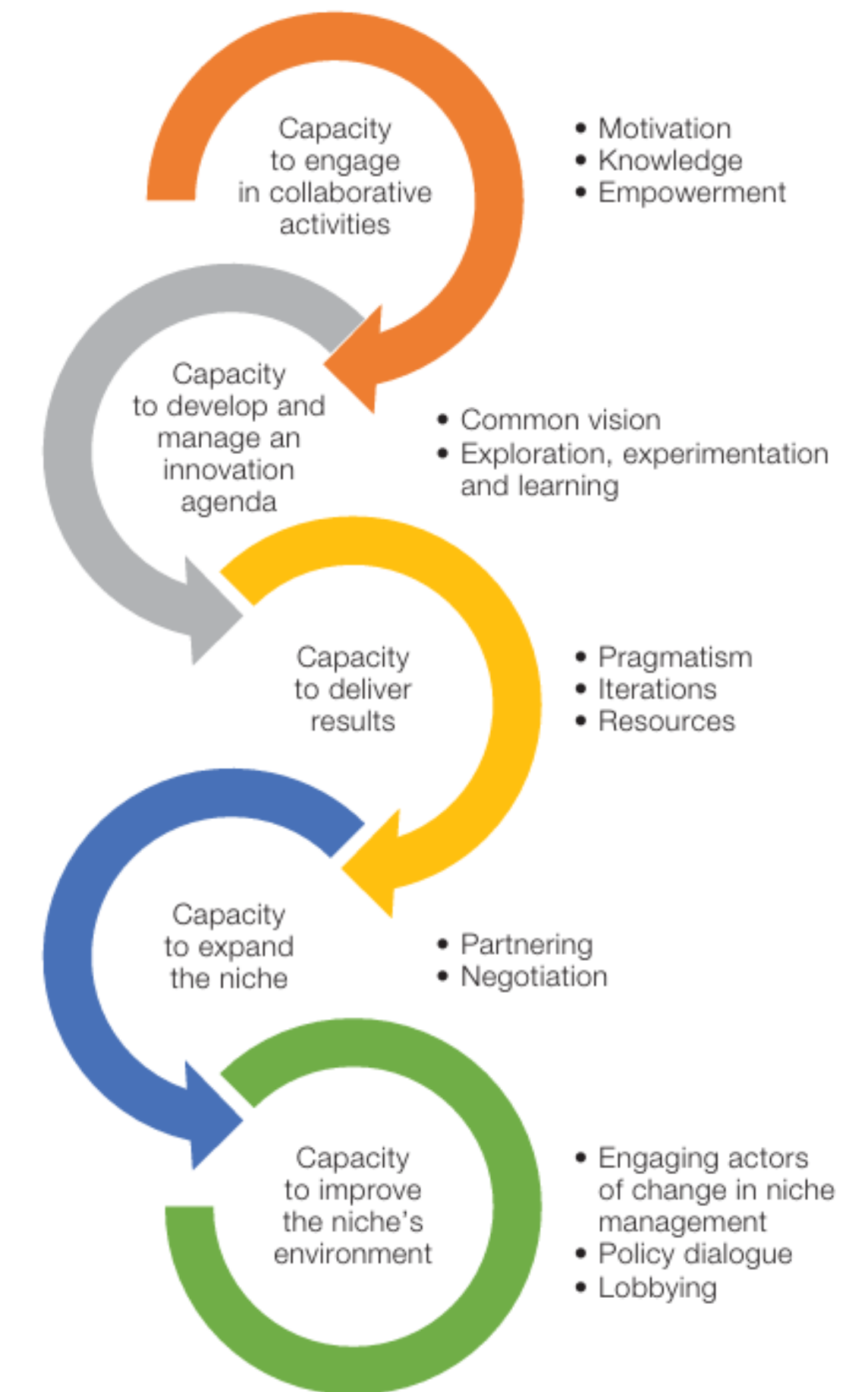
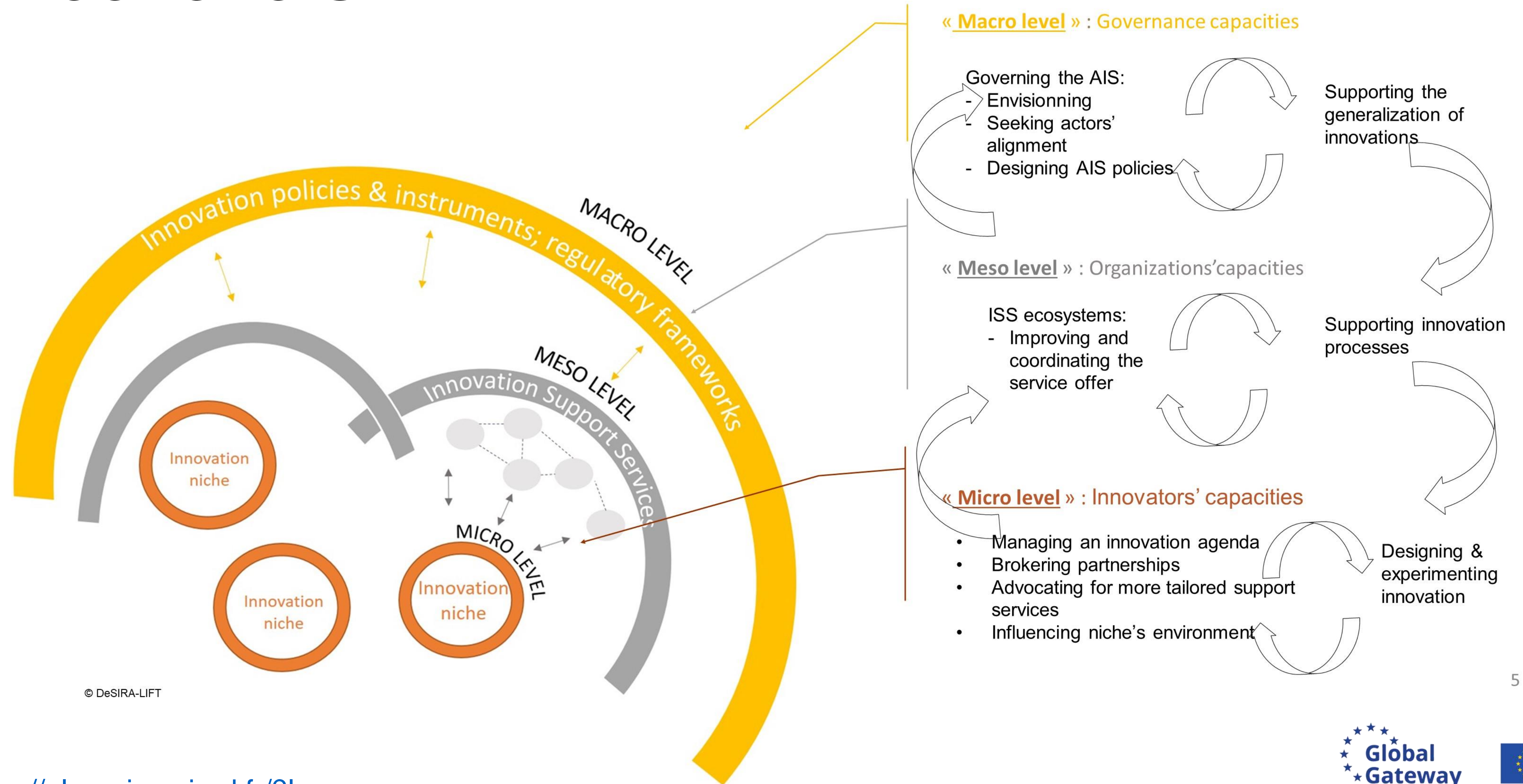


Figure : Capacities for joint innovation: the key common functional capacities for innovation, across niches and countries



# Lesson 2: Strengthening functional capacity at three levels



© DeSIRA-LIFT

5



# Lesson 3: R&I projects play a key role in strengthening functional capacity (3 examples)



## Example 1

Strengthening capacity of farmer community to demand articulation during the innovation marketplace  
**(DeSIRA ReSI-NoC)**



## Example 2

Strengthening the organisational capacity of FOs and ONGs to better define their innovation support service (ISS) offer and improve ISS delivery  
**(DeSIRA MAKIS)**



## Example 3

Strengthen the capacity of decision makers to navigate in the new paradigm of innovation and formulate adequate policies for improved AIS  
**(DeSIRA AcceSS)**

Need to transfer this functional capacity strengthening to formal organisations such as universities or vocational training organisations



# Questions to be discussed

- Which functional capacities should be strengthened for which type of actors?
- How to address the 3 levels of capacity strengthening (innovators, organisations, system) : which mechanisms? Which actors should be targeted ? What coordination?



# Thank you!

[Syndhia.mathe@cirad.fr](mailto:Syndhia.mathe@cirad.fr)

