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Deliverable 5.3

First set of monitoring reports on carrying out effective demo activities on- farm



NEFERTITI

Networking European Farms to Enhance Cross Fertilisation and Innovation Uptake
through Demonstration

(D5.3 First set of monitoring reports on carrying out effective demo activities on-farm)



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Abstract

NEFERTITI Programme promotes the creation of interactive thematic networks related to the agriculture sector to promote knowledge, learning and the adoption of innovative techniques through the exchange of information between different actors and live demonstrations.



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Introduction

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Introduction

This Deliverable describes the first results about carrying out effective demo activities on-farm. These results are based on an analysis of the Hub Monitoring and Evaluation Journals, which all 45 NEFERTITI hubs filled in during the first NEFERTITI demo year. In Deliverable 5.2 (Training manual for self-monitoring of demo-activities and monitoring of collective learning), we have introduced the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools used in NEFERTITI by hub coaches and monitors.

The aim of NEFERTITI is to improve peer-to-peer learning and on-farm demonstrations. The results of Task 5.3 and Task 5.4, as well as other projects and initiatives, will help to inform Task 5.5, to provide recommendations for a better use of demo-activities in the AKIS. The M&E tools assist monitors and hubs in monitoring and evaluation their activities within the NEFERTITI project. In this Deliverable, we present the first results based on an analysis of the filled in Hub M&E Journals from the first NEFERTITI demo year (2019).

We structured our analysis using the 6 steps to design an on-farm demo event, following recommendations in the Demo Design guide for on-farm demonstrations by FarmDemo¹:

- Objectives & target group
- Demonstration farm
- Demo set-up
- Promotion
- Learning & facilitating
- Evaluation & follow-up

Using these steps, we formulated lessons learned and emerging questions. Tentative results were also presented during the 2020 (virtual) Annual Meeting, where we presented overall lessons learned, but also analysed lessons and emerging questions per network. This deliverable also takes into account any questions/demands that were formulated by the networks during the Annual Meeting (as recorded in the minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting), making this deliverable a demand-driven document.

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus early 2019, the hubs in NEFERTITI have resorted to organising virtual demo events as a way to respect social distancing and/or lock-down protocols, while still remaining active within the hubs and continue organising demo events. These extraordinary circumstances have forced the NEFERTITI project to quickly adapt and learn about organising virtual demos. To assist hub coaches in organising virtual demos, NEFERTITI organised training sessions on virtual demonstrations and a webinar (the webinar was recorded and can be found on the NEFERTITI website). Based on these training sessions and the webinar, WP5 has developed a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) about organising virtual demonstrations². Additionally, we did a preliminary analysis of monitoring and evaluation forms about virtual demonstrations that we added to the hub M&E Journal, also elaborated upon in the last chapter of this deliverable.

In the following chapters, we will first describe general lessons learned about the 6 steps to design an on-farm demo event. These general lessons are separated in wins, hurdles and emerging questions. The wins and hurdles are based on the analysis of the Hub M&E Journals, the emerging questions are based on learning questions as posed by the hub coaches in the Hub M&E Journal and additional questions that arose during

¹ The Demo Design guide for on-farm demonstrations is publicly available in the FarmDemo training kit: <https://trainingkit.farmdemo.eu/demo-design-guide/>

² The FAQ on virtual demonstrations is publicly available in the FarmDemo training kit: https://trainingkit.farmdemo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FAQ-virtual-demonstrations_200716.pdf

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the Annual Meeting. We conclude each chapter with testimonies from the Hub M&E Journals. In Annex A, the emerging questions are further elaborated upon, providing practical tips and/or examples of how you can use the emerging questions to formulate objectives. The practical tips are either extracted from good practices as described in the Hub M&E Journals or the minutes of the 2020 virtual annual meeting, complemented with some tips from the authors of this deliverable. Additionally to the 6 steps for organising demonstration events as recommended by FarmDemo, we added a final chapter on virtual demonstrations.

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Lessons: Objectives and target group

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Lessons are formulated based on the analysis of the filled-in Hub M&E Journals (demo year 2019). We describe wins (success factors) and hurdles (difficulties that still remain) as well as emerging questions that arose that can serve as inspiration for formulating objectives for the next demo year. We conclude the chapter with testimonies from the Hub M&E Journals that serve as inspirations to the hubs, describing valuable lessons or good practices. We repeat this structure in each of the six steps.

Overview

In the first NEFERTITI demo year, many hubs were still defining and establishing their network. For some, this was an easy task as their hub was built around already existing groups or because the hub coach had sufficient (external) contacts to easily form a hub. A number of hubs mention that they cooperated with other, existing, networks (e.g. advisory groups, other projects, agricultural organizations) to set up their hub and reach the desired target group. However, other hubs struggled with setting up their hub and finding a 'core group' of hub members, for example, due to over-saturation of groups/networks surrounding the theme or because growers/farmers felt reluctant to share information in a group setting. When analysing the Hub M&E Journals, we noticed that many hubs defined rather broad objectives for their demo year, resulting in objectives such as 'organise 5 demonstration events', 'assemble a core group of hub members' or 'show good practices'. On the other hand, objectives for specific demo events were often more specific, although in many cases demo objectives were formulated as descriptions of topics that the event would address rather than goals for the hub.

Wins

- Define **clear goals** for each demo (what do you want participants to take home?) and adapt the programme to it
- **Cooperate** with existing networks, local stakeholders and interested host farmers
- Send out **targeted invitations** to attract relevant participants (in order to do so, you must first define a clear and specific demo-objective!)

Example of a good demo objective:
explore the results of tools (e.g. for farm management) and their impact on decision making processes

Hurdles

- Still difficult to create a **core group** and committed hub members
- Difficult to **attract enough participants** (especially for smaller demos)

Emerging Questions³

- How to **attract (enough) participants** with an interest in the demo topic?
- How to determine the **interests and profile** of the target group?
- How to target **policy makers** for a demo event?
- How to **reach the target audience**?

Testimonies

Below we share some testimonies of different hubs about what they learned regarding objectives and target groups:

The presence of growers, advisors and researchers facilitated the exchange of knowledge and information from multidisciplinary sources. The topic of the demo was relevant and innovative. (...) The visit was very professionally arranged, with care taken to keep to schedule, to take care of farmers, to plan well the topic, to display both projects (Nefertiti and IoF2020) and to create an atmosphere where people wanted to talk and discuss. Having knowledgeable people (top farmers, top coops, and top advisors) all in the same place gave credibility to the visit. Nothing was being "sold" here, but rather it was a serious session where the coop had also decided to send its growers. (Network 7 – Spain)

³ These emerging questions are further elaborated upon in Annex A, where we provide tips and/or examples of objectives. The tips are based on lessons we already learned within NEFERTITI, while the objectives provide examples of how you can investigate these questions through your demo activities.

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From an organizational point of view, we need to plan events and venues much sooner, and also have backup assistance to the farm and change the date, given that most of the demonstration days are out in the field - climatic conditions are a limiting factor and employment of farmers. Attracting more hub participants will give us more opportunities for demo events and knowledge dissemination. (Network 7 – Bulgaria)

The main objective of the network is very clear. Pesticide use reduction. This is what united us. (Network 9 – Bulgaria)

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Lessons: Demonstration farm

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Overview

Similar to setting up the hub, hub coaches who cooperated with other groups (e.g. advisory organisations, other projects, farmers' organisation) had an easier time finding suitable host farmers. Most hubs also used events (such as agricultural fairs) as an opportunity to organise a demo event. In some cases, finding host farmers was difficult due to the nature of the subject or due to external circumstances. For example, in horticulture some growers do not or cannot allow visitors on their premises because of hygiene regulations. In hubs where this is relevant, it was more difficult to organise events and find farms capable/willing to host. Successes with regards to the demo farm were characterised by working with an innovative and enthusiastic farmer, a detailed planning, good cooperation with other groups/networks and honest story telling.

Wins

- Work with a **committed and enthusiastic host farmer**, willing to share experiences
- **Cooperating** with other groups (e.g. advisory groups, projects, farmers' organisation)
- **Show and tell**; use stories to make it personal and encourage peer-to-peer exchange

Example of a good host farmer: host farmer shares his personal story of how/why he adopted an innovation, his struggles and

Hurdles

- Difficult to **identify ongoing activities** to collaborate with

Emerging Questions

- How to **motivate farmers** to host a demo event? (one of the missions of the Nefertiti project!)
- How to **coordinate better** with other events that are going on?
- Can we share **good practice examples** of inspiring young farmers, new-entrances, new on-farm-volunteers and new on-farm-consumers?
- How can we **find inspirational farmers**?

Testimonies

We have daily connections with agricultural experts, advisors, farmers, and researchers so it was easy to set up the cooperation and organizing the events. The events were a great combination of theory and practice in the field. (Network 5 – Hungary)

Let host farmer talk about his/her practices and experiences (encourage peer-to-peer learning/exchange). (Network 6 – Germany)

We need to collaborate with grower's organizations, suppliers, and advisors to have successful demo events. Relying on experimental farms is an option but the message should be very well adapted for growers (select researchers with good communication skills). There is an overload of continuous dissemination activities, so we need to find a way to make Nefertiti more visible and also to "piggyback" on events and deepen collaboration. (Network 7 – Spain)

Use tools to prepare: roadmap of the day with the notions of who does what, what to prepare, the duration of the activity, the objective of the activity. (Network 9 – France)

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Lessons: Demo set-up

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Overview

A key aspect of a successful demo event that arises from the Hub M&E Journals is the organisation of a diversity of activities. For example, combining a field visit with a (short) presentation and a discussion around a key topic. In preparation of the event, a good time table or script with clear task divisions is also a key factor for a successful demo event. However, creating a realistic time-table or script and sticking to the planning is also an often mentioned hurdle that hub coaches struggle with.

Many practical difficulties related to the demo set-up, such as bad sound quality, too tight space, finding a good date, etc. can largely be solved by detailed planning and starting planning an event more in advance. It is also good to have a back-up plan in case weather changes drastically (e.g. if a field visit is not possible due to heavy rain, make sure there is an alternative that can be organised inside).

Wins

- Prepare a **realistic time-table/script** with clear **tasks divisions**
- Prepare a **mix of activities**
- Ask the speakers **to adjust the contents** to the time that has been assigned to them
- Schedule time for **questions and exchanges**

Hurdles

- Not enough time dedicated to **discussions and peer-to-peer exchange**
- Dealing with non-ideal **weather conditions**
- Difficult to **stick to the planning**

Example of a good demo set-up: Divide specific tasks between host farmer, facilitator, monitor, etc.

Allocate time specifically for knowledge exchange and facilitate this

Emerging Questions

- How to make a good **time-table** for a demo?
- How to organise more **interactive events**?

Testimonies

There was a general feeling of mutual confidence and trust and the quality of the information was good. The care taken to create comfort for visitors, and also to create a sense of "round table" discussion, by putting small folding chairs in a circle, proved useful, as did clipboards. (Network 7 – Spain)

It is important to plan together with the partners involved; to clearly define the contribution of each element of the team and partners in the organization of the event; to identify possible risks and prepare a plan B. (Network 8 – Portugal)

It is still a challenge how to make the section of presentations more interactive. Interactive discussions and activities are really necessary to open the farmers and to start the discussions and knowledge exchange. (Network 5 – Hungary)

One idea is to divide the group into two: beginners and more experienced. If there are facilities and possibility to organize two separate programs for the groups, that could be more efficient regarding the learning experience. (Network 5 – Finland)

[We should organise] more practical and interactive work: round tables, facilitate group discussions etc.

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A successful demo event relies on a diversity of activities to engage different personality types, interests, and ages of participants, e.g. involving farm tours, hands-on demonstrations, and presentations by PowerPoint. (Network 10 – United Kingdom)

Organise longer demo-event (3-4 hours instead of 2). Time management during the demo events is critically important as the visitors have allocated a set time for the event for all visitors to get the full benefit. All speakers need to be kept on time at future events. (Network 10 – Ireland).

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Lessons: Promotion

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Overview

Using existing communication channels is a good way to quickly reach an audience, although hubs should keep in mind that broad communication channels may also attract a broad audience and overlook the target audience. Using multiple, different communication channels can ensure that different types of audiences are attracted to an event (e.g. university press to attract students, Facebook group to attract a specific type of farmer). A good tip from a few hub coaches is to collect visuals (pictures, videos) during demos that can be used for promotion of future events. Social media could be used more and in a better way, on the one hand as a way to promote an event, but also to report about the event and disseminate information during or right after an event. Another hurdle is reaching potential participants outside of the regular networks. Inviting (agricultural) press to an event can result in free publicity of the hub events, and can take away some of the work from already busy hub coaches.

Wins

- Use **multiple channels**
- **Cooperate** with existing dissemination/media platforms or groups
- **Collect visuals** (pictures, videos) during demos for promotion of future events

Hurdles

- Difficult to reach potential participants **outside regular network**
- **Social media** often not used optimally

Emerging Questions

- How to reach the **target audience**?
- How to **reach policy makers** for a demo event?
- How to **use social media** to get people engaged?
- How to optimally make use of **social media channels**?

Example of a good promotion strategy:

using diverse communication channels, including leaflets, e-mails, SMS/texts, internal communication in agricultural cooperatives, websites, social media (Facebook and twitter), local press.

Testimonies

A partner journalist reported the findings of the farmer(s) and published it online and in a magazine, in this way knowledge will reach a wide range of stakeholders: suppliers, buyers, advisors. (Network 4 – The Netherlands)

Pre-marketing of the event was successful and it reached the desired audience. The key is to start planning in advance. That way we could advertise the program already in email newsletters and our customer magazine. (Network 5 – Finland)

From an organizational point of view, we need to involve our regional district offices more actively in order to attract and identify farmers using innovative methods of fertilization for environmental protection as participants in the hub and in demo events. (Network 7 – Bulgaria)

The demo was advertised largely through different channels, valorising partners' networks: mail to journalist of regional journals, mail to local policy makers, social media, mailing list, university, leaflet and posters. (Network 10 – Hungary)

Choose an event with a more specific audience to have an impact on it. Don't target the general public if they don't really choose to come because you don't have a real impact on them. (Network 10 – France)

Promotion via advisory-fax/-mail reached high awareness of the event. (Network 9 – Germany)

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Lessons: Learning and facilitating

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Overview

Learning and facilitating remains a challenging topic, perhaps because it requires specific skills to be a good facilitator and encourage learning. Practical tips to improve facilitation skills and learning within the group include: pro-actively asking participants for their input, creating an environment that stimulates exchange, split large groups up into smaller groups to encourage participants to open up, schedule time for informal exchange (e.g. coffee breaks, drinks after the event) to create a relaxed and safe environment for exchange, make sure there is something tangible to shape a discussion around (machinery or even leaflets with research results).

Many hub coaches reflected in their Hub M&E Journals that there needs to be a better balance between Sending information and knowledge exchange. In many cases, presentations are still a big part of the demo event, which hub coaches recognise to not be the ideal exercise for knowledge exchange and learning. In some cases, having open discussions or conversations was difficult, for example, because farmers' landlords were present, farmers did not want to share their 'secrets' or because one person monopolised the conversation. These are all situations that are difficult for hub coaches to manage, especially if they have no facilitating experience.

Wins

- Prepare a **mix of activities** that stimulates exchange (priority to hands-on activities, alternating between in-door moments and field trial visits)
- **Organise small groups, with group leaders**, to facilitate exchanges between farmers
- Pro-actively **ask for input** from participants
- Leave space for **informal exchanges**
- Make sure you have a facilitator to **facilitate discussions**

Example of a good facilitation approach:

Short introduction by the host farmer, exercise with participants, discussion about exercise, coaching by host/advisor. Conclude with a social event.

Hurdles

- **Big groups** hinder exchange among participants
- Difficult to balance **sending information** versus **exchanging information**

Emerging Questions

- How to use and introduce a **variety of learning methods**?
- How to deal with participants who are **reluctant to share and exchange** knowledge?
- How to gain experience in **facilitation**?
- How to facilitate **knowledge exchange in large groups**?
- How to **incentivize farmers** to share knowledge?
- Which **tools** can be explored to **help participants open up**?

Testimonies

Farmers had good discussion among themselves and were able to learn from their peers on the topic. It also afforded members of the audience unwilling to ask questions to seek clarification from the sub-groups. (Network 1 – Ireland)

Enable dialog between farmers: moments dedicated to informal exchange, farm-pastures walks, [active] involvement of attendees through introduction, questions and feedback. (Network 3 – Germany)

Interaction between farmers and workshop leaders is very useful for both parties: discussion about the subjects demonstrated and why farmers think it is or isn't suitable for their farm is very useful information to exchange. (Network 4 – The Netherlands)

[Tips on how to] keep the attention of the audience:

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- Offer more interaction with the public
- Provide a balanced program
- Invite farmers to tell their 'farm-story' beforehand
- Ask the audience what they want to learn
- Use different methods of communication
- Avoid that the conversation is monopolized by a single person
- Program a coffee break or a time so the participants can discuss between themselves
- Group leaders should make themselves available for everybody after the demo
- Provide activities encouraging participants to general discussion
- Pay special attention to interaction with farmers

Network 4 – summary of the tips provided by Net 4)

Give some papers/evidence with relevant graphs or data that is of interest, so farmers can also look at results of techniques and discuss. Make sure that impact is evident and can be demonstrated and spoken about in the visit. (Network 7 – Spain)

We have to consider a demo day not like a lecture but like a place where participants have the opportunity to be in a dialog with the presenters. Every single farm is unique and every other demo day is an experience. There are a lot of things that can go in a wrong direction and regarding that you have to work as a team with your colleagues. The success is hard work, a lot of planning, good team and a bit of luck. (Network 9 – Bulgaria)

Outside/in field presentations may be more engaging than long PowerPoint presentations. Provide a field program, with more detailed presentation of the farm; more info about environmental protection in agriculture, rural development in general and about other farms. (Network 10 – Hungary)

Having a facilitator is crucial. Also inviting guest facilitators allows Nefertiti partners to play role of co-facilitator and be able to monitor audience at same time. (Network 7 – Spain)



7

Lessons: Evaluation and follow-up



Overview

In terms of follow-up, an often-used method is sharing information, pictures, etc. about the demo event afterwards. Some hubs also send out a special thank-you note or letter to the host farmer and/or demo participants. Staying in touch with participants after the event can be a good way to build the network and continue knowledge exchange. Online spaces such as Facebook or WhatsApp groups can be novel and handy ways to stay in touch and facilitate further knowledge exchange without having to put a lot of extra time and effort into it.

Collecting feedback for the Hub M&E Journal was hard for some hub coaches who could not find the right time for monitoring and evaluation or were too busy with practical organisation that it was difficult to find the time to also pay attention to monitoring and evaluation. One tip is to separate the roles of facilitator (who organised and facilitates the event) and a monitor (who observes during the event and asks feedback from participants). However, it should still be kept in mind that some hubs experienced unwillingness among participants to give objective and honest feedback after the event. Because of this, some hubs have resorted to online-surveys. Tools such as mentimeter (mentimeter.com) can be used if a hub wants to gather anonymous feedback during the event. This likely increases chances of participants providing honest and objective feedback.

A common thought in the Hub M&E Journals is that many hub coaches do not have an overview of whether their demo events are successful in terms of impact. The current M&E tools do not explicitly measure impact and it is difficult to determine when a demo event has been successful (e.g. when a farmer adopts an innovation? When participants are happy? When new knowledge was generated?).

Wins

- Provide an **online space** for participants to continue knowledge exchange
- **Share** pictures, videos, articles, demo report, **key information** (attendance list, technical documents, training courses, etc.) etc. with participants after the event
- **Separate the roles** of monitor and facilitator
- **Communicate the event** through local press, local TV, radio and social media

Example of good online spaces: Online space can be Facebook or WhatsApp groups

Hurdles

- Participants often show **little interest in NEFERTITI** as a project
- Difficult to find the **right time and useful input** for M&E

Emerging questions

- How can we **measure impact**?
- How to **stay in touch** with participants after the event?
- How to **facilitate feedback** (in large groups)?

Testimonies

We need to give more feedback to the participants after the event. Sharing photos and videos, articles with them. Motivating them to evaluate the event then we can also improve our demo events. (Network 5 – Hungary)

After the event, send an email to participants with main points of the event and what are the lessons learned. (Network 6 – Finland)

We have learned that participants in a demo event are not always ready to give objective feedback and that more people from the team need to be involved in the monitoring and interview process besides surveys. (Network 7 – Bulgaria)

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Provide feedback or extra information after the demo event. Sometimes questions are raised that could not directly be answered, in that case it is good to come back to it, for example via email. (Network 7 – Netherlands)

Continue to apply the so-called "coffee break" after the event, where participants have the opportunity to talk and get to know each other in an informal setting. And also it is the best way to collect feedback based on the questionnaires. (Network 9 – Bulgaria)

[We should] prepare a follow up to deliver a video related with the demo to increase the impact, with images collected during the event. (Network 9 – Portugal)

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8

Lessons: Virtual Demos



Overview

The 2020 sanitary context (covid-19 crisis) prevented most of the demo events to take place. As an alternative, hub coaches were encouraged to organise virtual demos in order to keep contact with the farmers and go on with demo activities. WP5 provided specific training sessions to support hub coaches in this new and unpredictable situation. Virtual demos have many differences compared to 'live' demonstrations: different tools, pedagogical techniques, time frames, organisational issues, technical issues, etc. This chapter is based on the analysis of the filled-in Hub M&E Journals about showcase virtual demos organised in early summer 2020, during the covid-19 crisis (6 answers).

Wins

- Provide good virtual material
 - Especially good quality videos ⁴
 - Good visualisation of the farm/technique shown even if it is not physically seen on the field
- Ask well-trained speakers to intervene in your demo: even more than in regular demos, the speaker is key for a good event!
- Ask farmers to testify in order to make peer to peer exchanges possible
- Audience may be larger (shorter schedule for very busy people, less transport for people living far away, less expensive option than moving on the field)
- Some good luck with the technical aspects!
- If possible, record it to offer the possibility to watch it again afterwards

Hurdles

- Difficulty to deal with technical problems, such as:
 - Need to re-log in
 - Delay between view and speech
 - Navigators choice (Chrome is often a good choice)
 - Connection problems
 - Loss of quality of the video when sharing the screen
 - Control of the entrance of the participants (computer or phone name instead of their real name).
- Lack of interaction
 - No visual feedback
 - Not all the cameras are visible (difficult to see who is participating for the participants themselves)
- Moderation is difficult
 - Difficult to keep it quiet (mute is not always used)
 - Domination of the discussion by some participants
 - Speaker who does not respect the initial timing and content.
- Difficulty of creating a good video: many shootings are needed, natural conditions (weather, recording living animals etc.) price of the realisation if done by a professional
- Lack of preparation (transition, next steps, script of the video etc.)

Emerging Questions⁵

- How to **prepare a virtual demonstration**?
- How to **create interaction** in a virtual demo?
- How to deal with **technical problems**?
- Which kind of guideline can we use to **improve interaction** during webinar/virtual demo?

⁴ See also the NEFERTITI webinar "How to produce your own farm video to enhance knowledge exchange" here: <https://nefertiti-h2020.eu/webinar/>

⁵ The FAQ on virtual demonstrations elaborates more on questions surrounding virtual demonstrations and is publicly available in the FarmDemo training kit: https://trainingkit.farmdemo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FAQ-virtual-demonstrations_200716.pdf



Testimonies

It is very strange but you don't "feel" this interaction while presenting because there is no direct feedback apart from the video you see.

To ensure personal data protection, we indicated in advance that the webinar would be recorded and asked for permission when participants subscribed. (Network 4 – Belgium)

Just give it a try, be prepared and test in advance gave more reassurance. (Network 4 – Belgium)

To make a good virtual demo, choose one open main-speaker/demo farmer, invite a good number of motivated young farmers, and show a short clip at the beginning to bring people into the situation. (Network 10 – Germany)

We had the chance to involve young farmers from all over Germany which would not have been possible in an on-farm demo. (Network 10 – Germany)

Provide a guide on how to use and install the virtual tool you plan to use, so it would have been easier to enter the conference. (Network 2 – Germany)

Test the virtual tool you are going to use in different electronic devices (computer, tablet and mobile) to make sure it works well in all of them. Make a leaflet of how to connect and use the virtual tool. (Network 5 – Spain).

Questions via chat were taken and part of it was answered. Also polls on "statements" were done. A lot of interaction took place. (Network 5 – The Netherlands)

Preparing a video takes time: I took video of the farm by drone and printed out papers with fertilization plans. Another person made a video about planning the fertilization on computer. Trainee at the farm took videos of farm life; cows herding, cow barn and so on, including also drone footage. Altogether three different persons used maybe two full days for this preparation work. (Network 5 – Finland)

Videos are difficult to prepare. We had to record many times and select the best images and sound (problems with the light, with the wind, etc). We prepared the videos ourselves because a professional video is very expensive. The selection of the digital tool for the virtual demo was also difficult. We tested several ones. We detected that when sharing the screen to show a video, the quality of the image was very poor if seen in a mobile or a tablet. We solved it by using the chat to put the links to the video and watching them in YouTube. (Network 5 – Spain)

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Final reflections



This deliverable is based on the analysis of the 45 filled in Hub M&E Journals of the first NEFERTITI demo year. After this first year, we can reflect on what we have learned so far and what we want to improve going forward into the next NEFERTITI demo year(s). In this last chapter, we share some reflections and recommendations for going forward. We split this chapter into two parts: first we discuss how to deal with the emerging questions as described in the previous chapters. Second, we reflect on what is still missing, which topics still need to be addressed within NEFERTITI.

Response to emerging questions

Looking at the lessons we extracted from the Hub M&E Journals, it stands out that many of these lessons are fairly obvious. A reason for this is that the objectives of many hubs were either too broad (e.g. 'organise 5 demos this year', 'get the hub going', etc.) or were focused on the *content* of the demo events rather than on the *process* of organising demonstrations. Because of this observation, we provide examples of suitable objectives that address the process of organising a demonstration. We further elaborate on the emerging questions by either providing tips based on what we learned in NEFERTITI so far (complemented with some tips from the authors of this deliverable) and/or provide examples of objectives that can be formulated to explore answers to these emerging questions. To keep this chapter readable, we put a table with tips and examples connected to the emerging questions in Annex A. This Annex is meant to be completed throughout the project to capitalize on the Nefertiti experience.

Topics still to be addressed

Looking at the lessons learned from the analysis of the Hub M&E Journals, we notice three topics that NEFERTITI has not addressed so far and/or where more research is needed: 1) clear descriptions of events; 2) how to measure impact; and 3) facilitation skills. We will elaborate on these three topics below. These reflections can be used to further improve learning within NEFERTITI and serve as input for future deliverables.

Firstly, the Hub M&E Journals do not provide clear descriptions of event or actions during demo events. This makes it hard to reflect and learn about types of activities that are successful. While we have learned a lot about demonstration events in terms of organisational successes and failures, we lack insight into what successful or unsuccessful event actually looked like. Hub coaches indicate that there is a need to share more about this. Until now, we have only addressed this in the NEFERTITI cross visit reports where monitors described in more detail what the actual demonstration events looked like.

Secondly, we have limited knowledge about the success or impact of the demo events, although we recognise the importance of addressing this issue. This remains a very difficult topic to address and current M&E tools do not explicitly measure impact. Questions that come to mind when thinking about this issue include: when do we consider a demo to be successful? What kind of impact do we want to measure? Impact of methods used? Impact on innovation uptake? Etc. In any case, it is clear that impact is a difficult topic because measuring impact requires quite some time for data collection and additional analysis of data.

Lastly, facilitating a demo event and facilitating knowledge exchange is a topic many hub coaches struggled with. Facilitation requires specific skills and not everyone (especially unexperienced people) is comfortable to take on facilitating roles. Until now, NEFERTITI has not trained hub coaches any facilitation skills, although we do recognise that using a variety of learning methods and facilitating knowledge exchange requires specific skills that not all hub coaches may have. This activity was foreseen during the third annual meeting in Hungary (April 2020) but have been cancelled because of the pandemic. In Annex A, we provide some (online) tools that can assist organisers in facilitating a demonstration event.



10

Annex A: Tips and examples of objectives

Annex A: Tips and examples of objectives

In the table below, we give an overview of the emerging questions from the analysis of the Hub M&E Journal. In response to these questions, we provide practical tips on how to deal with these questions and/or examples of how you can use these emerging questions to formulate objectives. The practical tips are either extracted from good practices as described in the Hub M&E Journals or the minutes of the 2020 virtual annual meeting, complemented with some tips from the authors of this deliverable.

We highly encourage hub coaches to look at the examples of objectives in the fourth column of the table. As you will notice, these objectives are targeted at the *process* of organising demo events. They are also specific enough that they are manageable and answerable. Of course, these objectives serve as *examples*; hub coaches can take them as inspiration or, if applicable, adjust them to their hub. When formulating your own objectives, keep in mind the questions: **what, where, how and when?** By doing so, you formulate objectives that are specific. Also keep in mind that for one demo event, you can formulate more than one objective. For example, you can formulate an objective for preparing the demo, during the demo and after the demo. Or you can pick some of the categories (column 1) and formulate objectives about a few of the categories for one demo event.

| Category | Emerging question | Tips | Examples of objectives |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Objective and target audience | How to reach the target audience? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use mailing lists from farmers of associated groups you may work with • Use official mailing lists (e.g. from governmental bodies) • Use WhatsApp groups (especially if their members are a specific target group such as farmers interested in precision agriculture) • Use advisors' networks • Use Twitter to reach a more general public • Use LinkedIn to invite professionals such as advisors, policy makers, researchers (also post an invite in any relevant LinkedIn groups you may be part of to target a specific group) • Use relevant Facebook groups to target a specific audience (e.g. a group where participants share information about specific machinery) • Formulating clear and specific objectives may make it easier to determine who your target audience should be | |
| | How to attract (enough) participants with an interest | | <p>The goal for demo event X is to attract 30 people who are interested in intercropping.</p> <p><i>Reflect in your Hub M&E Journal on how you went about achieving this objective. Did you</i></p> |



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| | <p>in the demo topic?</p> | | <p><i>achieve your goal? If yes: how did you attract these people, through which channels did you find them, etc.?</i></p> |
| | <p>How to target policy makers for a demo event?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask help from WP6 about how to actively involve policy makers • Include (a specific) agricultural policy as a topic in your demo (e.g. CAP, eco schemes, etc.) • Policy makers may be more eager to join if there is a big event, around election time and when there is press present at an event • Try to send a personal invitation (instead of mailing to info@...) • Collaborate with others who already have established relations with policy makers (e.g. farmer's group or an advisory organisation) • Make the value of NEFERTITI very clear in invitations to policy makers • Make sure there are other participants who are of interest to policy makers (e.g. head of an advisory organisation) • <i>During the 2020 NEFERTITI annual meeting, this topic was discussed extensively. For more tips, you can go through the minutes of the 2020 annual NEFERTITI meeting.</i> | |
| | <p>How to determine the interest and profile of the target group?</p> | | <p>In our first demo of this year, we will ask at least 20 organic farmers to fill in a quick menti meter survey (mentimeter.com) about their interests and profile.</p> <p><i>Reflect on the outcomes of the survey and report about them in your Hub M&E Journal. Of course adapt future events to the outcomes of the survey and reflect again: did this work? Are participants indeed interested? Etc.</i></p> |



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| Demonstration farm | <p>How to motivate farmers to host a demo event?</p> | <p>Make sure there is an <i>incentive</i> for the host farmer to collaborate with you: what is in it for him/her?</p> | |
| | <p>How to coordinate better with other events that are going on?</p> | | <p>During this demo year, we will collaborate with at least 1 other relevant EU project and 1 local event organised by a farmer's group.</p> <p><i>Reflect on how you went about these collaborations, what did you learn, what went well, what went wrong, were these collaborations worth it? Why?</i></p> |
| | <p>Can we share best practice examples of inspiring young farmers, new-entrances, new on-farm-volunteers and new on-farm-consumers?</p> | | <p>We will organise a Skype session every 2 months to share best practices, practical tips and experiences.</p> <p><i>Maybe not always applicable to reflect about in Hub M&E Journals, but do take notes of good examples so they can be shared with your peers/colleagues!</i></p> |
| | <p>How can we find inspirational farmers?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your own connections to ask for tips: for example from agricultural experts, advisors, other researchers • Make sure you build some sort of relationship with the host farmer prior to the event | |
| Demo set-up | <p>How to make a good time table for a demo?</p> | <p>It can be helpful to make both a time table (quick overview of what and when) and a script (more elaboration of who does what, where, when, in what order, what to say, which tools to use, etc.) in preparation of an event.</p> <p>Sharing a time table/script with everyone involved can be a way to avoid miscommunications and make sure everyone knows what is expected of them.</p> | <p>In preparation of demo event X, we are going to create a detailed time table with specification of time, place, roles and necessities.</p> <p><i>Evaluate after the event: what was helpful and what was not? What do you think you should change next time? Report about your experiences in the Hub M&E Journal.</i></p> |



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| | | <p><i>Do you have a good template for a time table/script? Do share within your peers/colleagues!</i></p> | |
| | <p>How to organise more interactive events?</p> | | <p>During demo X, time for presentations will be limited to 10 minutes, we will organise at least 3 different activities during the event and evaluate them.</p> <p><i>Reflect on the types of activities you organised and how well they went. Document this in your Hub M&E Journal.</i></p> |
| <p>Promotion</p> | <p>How to reach the target audience?</p> | <p>Use specific dissemination channels if you want to target a specific audience (e.g. organic farmers).</p> | <p>Prior to demo event X, we will research suitable communication and dissemination channels to reach target audience A and we will do a quick survey at the end of the event to ask how participants got to know about the event.</p> |
| | <p>How to use social media to get people engaged?</p> | | <p>Prior to demo event X about proximal soil sensing, we will use social media platform Y to invite participants to the event and also engage with them through posing questions/statements.</p> <p>During demo event X we will live stream (parts of) the event on Facebook and engage with online participants in the chat.</p> <p>After demo event X, we will continue discussion and knowledge exchange about proximal soil sensing on social media and ask for feedback from both online and 'live' participants.</p> <p><i>The above examples show how you can formulate objectives for preparing an event, during an event and after the event. In your Hub M&E Journal, you can describe shortly how you used social media and evaluate successes, failures, lessons, etc.</i></p> |
| | <p>How to optimally make use of social media channels?</p> | <p>Make use of multiple channels to attract a diverse crowd (e.g. in terms of age).</p> | |

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| | | <p>Examples: use twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp groups to inform people about the event and invite participants. Ask relevant parties (e.g. universities, farmer’s organisation, advisory organisation) to re-tweet, share, like, etc. to reach a broader audience. But be aware that this can result in a broad audience showing up. If you want to target a specific group, you may want to use specific mailing lists, or Facebook groups, etc.</p> | |
| <p>Learning and facilitating</p> | <p>How to use and introduce a variety of learning methods?</p> | | <p>During demo event X, we will integrate learning methods a, b and c and we will evaluate these methods with the participants.</p> |
| | <p>How to deal with participants who are reluctant to share and exchange knowledge?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making smaller sub-groups for discussion can help to create a safer environment for participants to share • Make sure there are also some informal moments during the event where participants can get to know each other • Include some ice-breaker exercises during the event (see also tips for the next question) • Ask questions and invite specific participants to respond (this is also a way to avoid 1 or w people monopolising of the conversation) • Think about how you want to divide participants if you split in smaller groups (e.g. make a ‘beginner’ group and an ‘advanced’ group) • Make sure there are designated facilitators to facilitate discussions (also in smaller groups!) | |
| | <p>Which tools can be explored to help participants open up?</p> | <p>Some suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start a demo with a getting-to-know-each-other round of introductions • Use an ice-breaker/energizer exercise (e.g. ask to share a fun fact; find 3 things you have in common with the person next to you; ‘mega-mind map’ exercise; ‘instant architect’ exercise) | <p>During demo event X, we will pay special attention to tools to help participants open up more. We will use at least 2 different tools and ask for feedback from participants at the end of de event.</p> <p><i>In your Hub M&E Journal, describe which tools you used and how participants evaluated them.</i></p> |



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| | | Look at this chapter from the MSP Guide for inspiration on introductions during an event that can help participants get more comfortable with each other | |
| | How to facilitate knowledge exchange in large groups ? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Action Catalogue is also a good source for facilitation tools (the catalogue is an outcome of the Engage2020 project) • The above linked MSP Guide and Action Catalogue provide many more tools for facilitation and multi-stakeholder partnerships • <i>If you find other relevant (online) sources with facilitation tools, please share them with your peers/colleagues!</i> | |
| | How to incentivize farmers to share knowledge? | An easy way to simply ask farmers what they would like to gain from taking part in a demonstration event or being a host of a demonstration event and make sure you cater to their needs. Also make sure to include an incentive in your invitation (What's in it for them?!). | |
| Evaluation and follow-up | How can we measure impact ? | <i>This remains a difficult (but important!) question that cannot easily be answered in this format. We reflect on this question in chapter 9.</i> | |
| | How to stay in touch with participants after the event? | Some hubs have good experiences with providing an online space (such as a Facebook group) where participants can keep sharing experiences and ask questions. Simply putting together a mailing list and sending some additional information, a thank you note or pictures/videos of the event can also be a way to stay in touch (of course keep GDPR rules in mind...) | <p>After demo X, we will create a way for participants to stay in touch with us and each other and ask participants to evaluate our method(s).</p> <p><i>You can be more specific and mention methods/tools you are going to try out and evaluate. Feedback from participants can of course be processed in the Hub M&E Journal.</i></p> |
| | How to facilitate feedback (in large groups) | | <p>During demo event X we will use method Y to facilitate feedback from the group.</p> <p><i>Under the category 'Learning and facilitating' some online sources are mentioned that may help you to organise this. Please also share your</i></p> |



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| | | | <i>methods briefly in your Hub M&E Journal and reflect on their effectiveness.</i> |
| Virtual demos | How to prepare a virtual demonstration? | <p>Get well prepared, even more than with a “regular” demo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a good program • Try out the tools before the demo • Prepare other speakers’ intervention with them (timing, interaction etc.) <p>Prepare attractive material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use testimonies: to be prepared, with key and clear messages, openminded speakers • Provide high quality videos (already existing or built specifically for the demo) • Use visuals: pictures, colours, photos... <p>Do not neglect promotion and invitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify channels: Facebook, WhatsApp, website, mailing to participants of previous demos/workshops • Split the event in different days if too many people register | |
| | How to create interaction in a virtual demo? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show a short video at the beginning to get people acquainted with the presenter and the demo topic • Use polls (mentimeter) or post its (many online tools available, see virtual demos guidelines) • Provide space for discussion: open Q&A, chat <p>Moderate the discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make some rules to get started about how to behave in online meeting (e.g. mute your mic) • Stress the importance of respecting the timing, even more than during a regular demo • Moderator and facilitator should be 2 different persons <p>Do not forget to do an evaluation, the result of which can be shared afterwards</p> | |
| | How to deal with technical problems? | Anticipate the technical problems, even if you cannot foresee everything: | |



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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a first try before in different electronic devices (computer, tablet and mobile) to make sure it works well with all of them • Provide a leaflet to use the tool chosen and send it to the participants a few days in advance • Provide a WhatsApp group or any support in parallel to the demo to help people having difficulty to connect • Share the different links you are consulting during the demo in the chat to enable people to watch them on their own if sharing of screen is not performant • Stay calm, some problems are very easy to solve <p>Ensure personal data protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request approval when enlisting to the webinar • Provide a list of participants to promote network contacts | |
| | <p>Which kind of guideline can we use to improve interaction during webinar/virtual demo?</p> | <p>Examples of programmes</p> <p>Video oriented programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction by the moderator • 7 videos with time for questions and interactions among the participants after each videos. • Extra time for questions at the end <p>Moderator, a demo farmer and interviewer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming • Showing a video • Interview with the farmer • Open Q&A • Mentimeter quiz • End of event | |

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