

# Entrepreneurial skills as strong stimuli for COFAMIs?

Some thoughts from the research project  
*Developing entrepreneurial skills of farmers (ESoF)*

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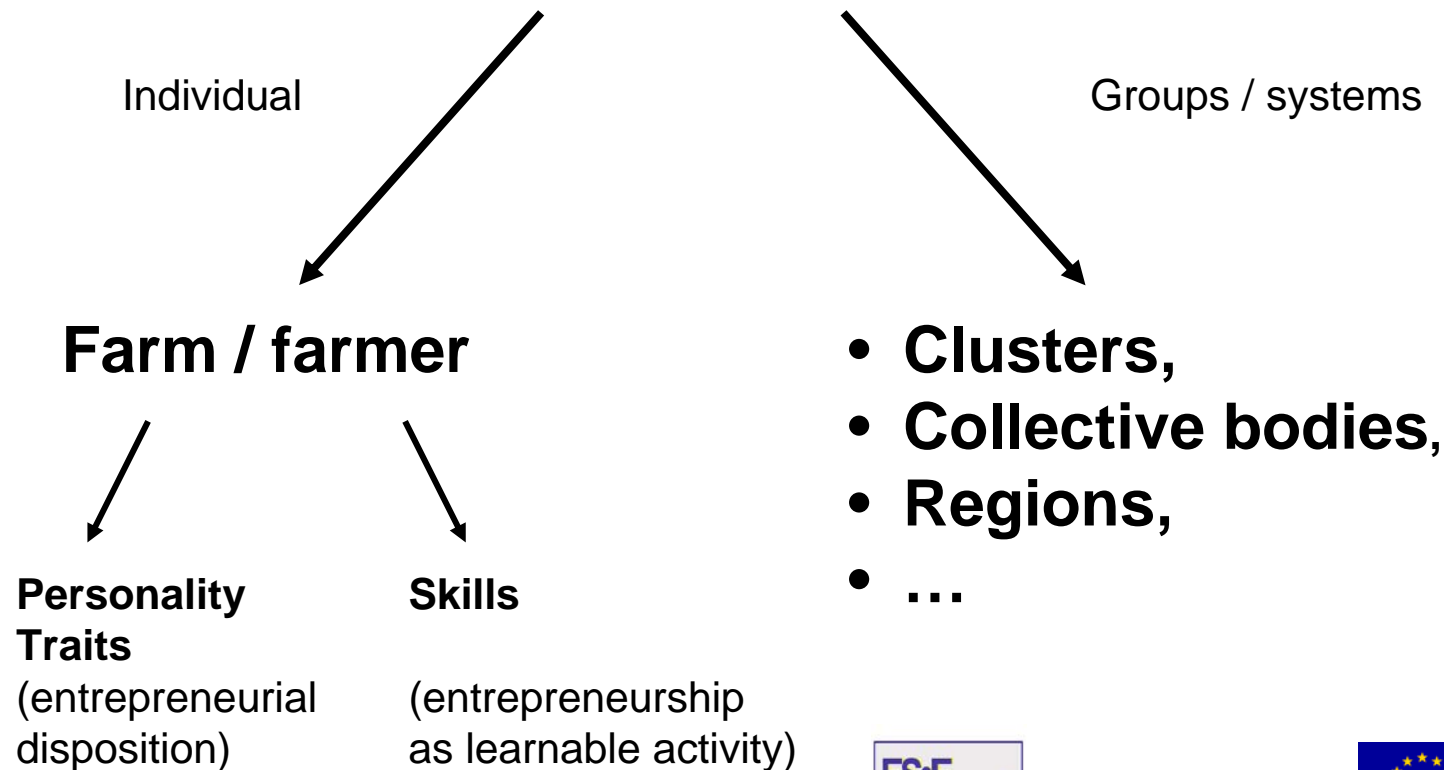
# Content of the presentation

- **Connecting entrepreneurship with entrepreneurial skills and COFAMIs**
  
- **Comparing results of the two projects**
  - Influencing factors
  - Interrelation of the two projects
  
- **Conclusions**

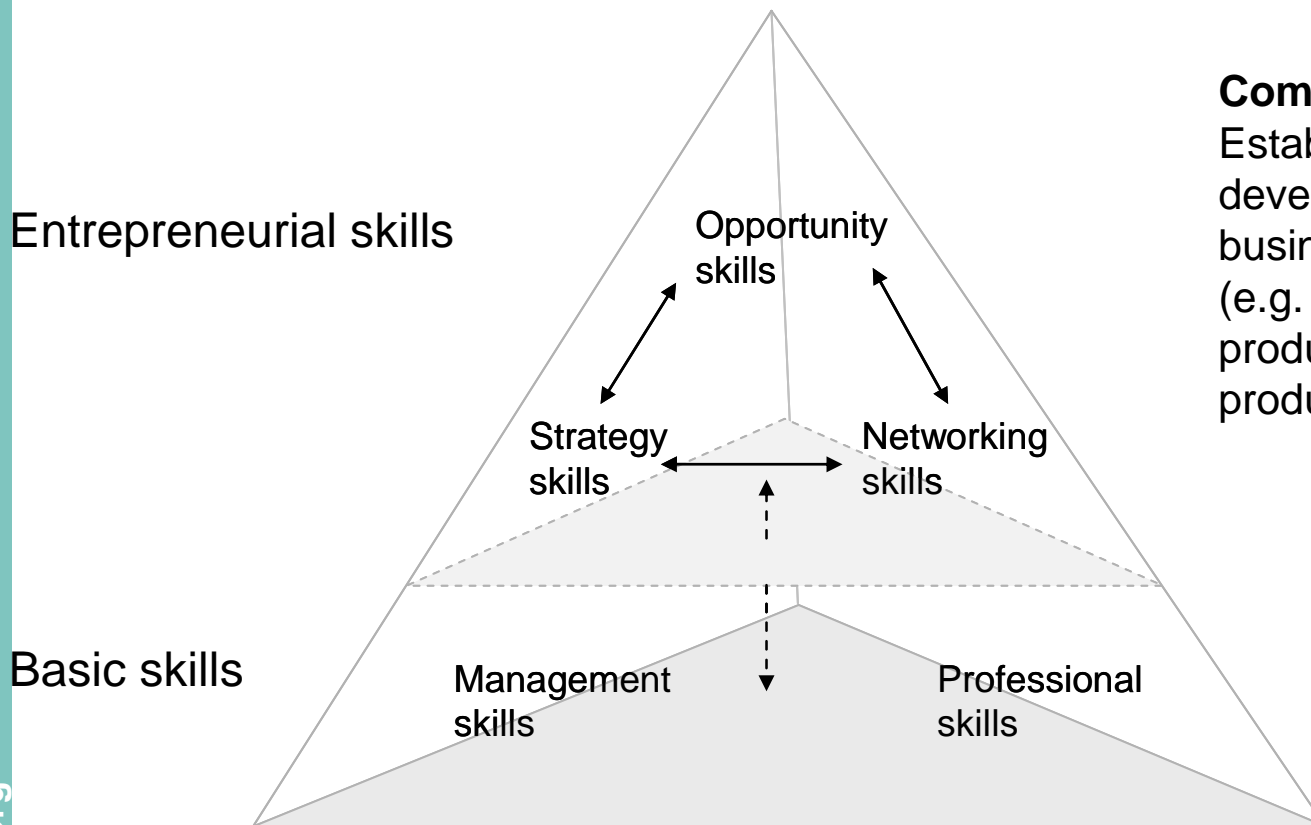
# Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial skills, COFAMIs

## Entrepreneurship in farming:

- **Finding (new) ways of doing business in a changing environment**



# Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial skills, COFAMIs



**Complex, higher order skills:**  
Establishing, steering +  
developing a profitable  
business  
(e.g. find a market for own  
products or develop a new  
product for existing markets)

**Lower order skills:**  
“doing” agriculture  
(e.g. milking a cow,  
financial management)

Source: Rudmann (forthcoming), adapted

# Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial skills, COFAMIs

## ➤ Entrepreneurship in farming:

- Finding (new) ways of doing business in a changing environment

## ➤ Entrepreneurial skills in farming:

- **Know how** to do **tasks** of establishing, steering and developing a profitable business in a changing environment

## ➤ COFAMIs :

- Entrepreneurial strategies of marketing (“collective” entrepreneurship)

# Influencing factors for entrepreneurial skills

Beyond the farming community!

*Factors internal to the farmer - actor*

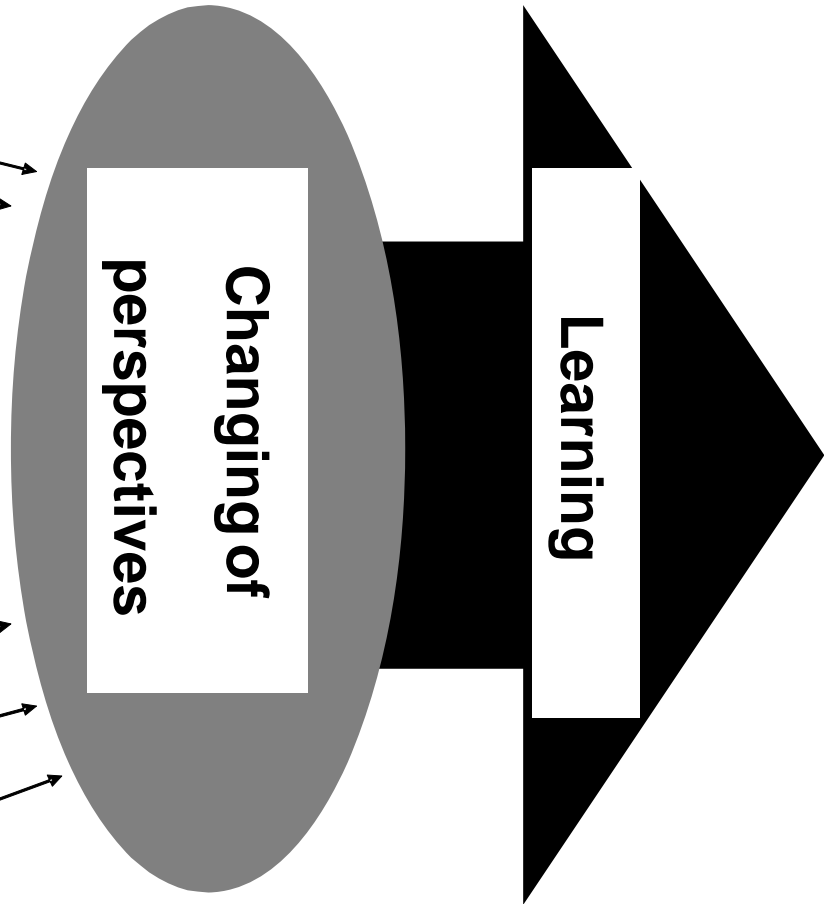
- Personal features
- Experience
- Education / training
- Age (+Gender)

*Relational factors*

- Social relations: **NETWORKS!**

*Factors external to the farmer -actor*

- Features of the farm
- Tradition / culture of farmers
- Supply of education, services, projects
- Politico -economic issues



Source: Vesala & Pyysiäinen (2008), adapted

# Influencing factors in comparison

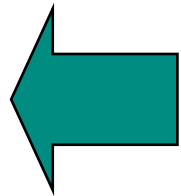
## Contextual factors:

- › Influencing factors more or less the same
- › ESoF factors are experienced as enabling and limiting, depending on the (social, cultural) context

## Internal factors

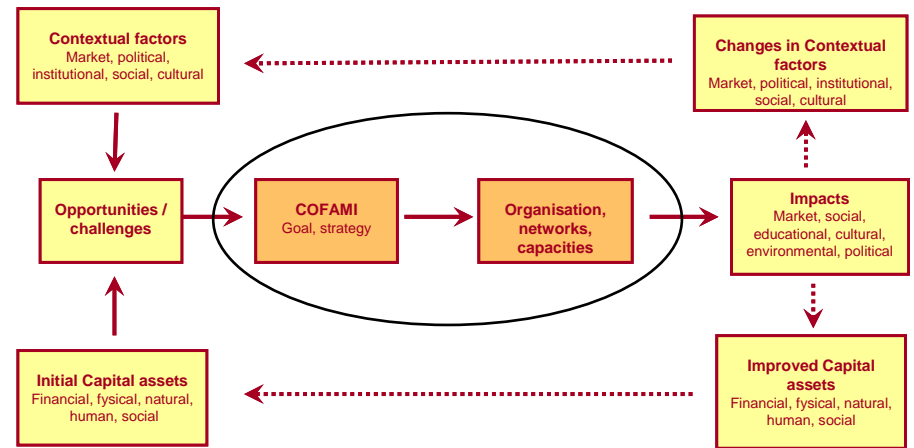
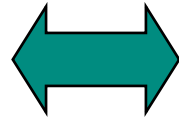
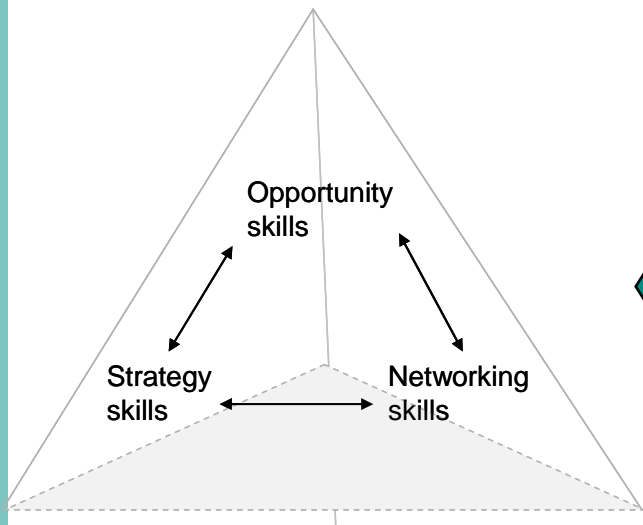
- › Personal ↔ organisational

Personal skills  
+  
development



- › Key initiators
- › Pre-existing networks
- › Reaction to changing environment
- › Learning / Creating learning environment
- › Internal communication

# Entrepreneurial skills ↔ COFAMIs





# Conclusions

- **Entrepreneurial skills as stimuli for**
  - **Farmers' generating ideas for initiating COFAMIs**
  - **Farmers' recognition of a COFAMI as an entrepreneurial opportunity**
  - **Engaging in this opportunity**
  - **Adding to the success by bringing in personal**
    - **Communication skills, management skills, innovation skills, ...**
    - **Networks**
    - **Ideas**
  
- **COFAMIs as an opportunity for learning / experiencing of**
  - **Change of perspectives**
  - **Entrepreneurial skills (networking, communication skills, realising opportunities, ...)**
  - **Social/cultural aspects (sense of belonging, trust, regional identity, ...)**

# Further information on specific aspects of the presentation

# Skill categories for farmers

## Entrepreneurial skill categories:

- **Recognising and realising business opportunities:**
  - Recognising business opportunities
  - Market and customer orientation
  - Awareness of threats
  - Innovation skills
  - Risk management skills
  
- **Developing and evaluating a business strategy:**
  - Skills in receiving and making use of feedback
  - Reflection skills
  - Monitoring and evaluation skills
  - Conceptual skills
  - Strategic planning skills
  - Strategic decision-making skills
  - Goal setting skills
  
- **Networking and utilising contacts:**
  - Skills in cooperating with other farmers and companies
  - Networking skills
  - Team-working skills
  - Leadership skills

# Skill categories for farmers

## Basic skill categories:

### › Professional skills:

- › Plant or animal production skills
- › Technical skills

### › Management skills:

- › Financial management and administration skills
- › Human resource management skills
- › Customer management skills
- › General planning skills

Source: de Wolf & Schoorlemmer (2007)

# Support strategies for entrepreneurial skills

- **Education/extension/research:**
  - Experience exchange
  - Change of perspectives
  - Complex skill training (fictitious farms)
  - research programmes which include farmers more as partners
  
- **Politics/economics:**
  - Foster rural development rather than “agriculture”
    - Regions rather than nations
    - Cross-sectoral strategies
    - Clusters (e.g. in the knowledge system)

# References

- **De Wolf & Schoorlemmer (Eds.)(2007):** *Exploring the significance of entrepreneurship in agriculture*. Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, Frick, Switzerland, and [www.esofarmers.org/publications](http://www.esofarmers.org/publications)
- **Vesala & Pyysiäinen (Eds.)(2008):** *Understanding Entrepreneurial Skills in the Farm Context*. Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, Frick, Switzerland, and [www.esofarmers.org/publications](http://www.esofarmers.org/publications)
- **Rudmann (Ed) (forthcoming):** *Entrepreneurial Skills and their Role in Enhancing the Relative Independence of Farmers*. Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, Frick, Switzerland, and [www.esofarmers.org/publications](http://www.esofarmers.org/publications)