

## Developing shared valorisation goals in inter-organisational networks: the Flemish Elderly care living lab experience

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**Background:** In 2012, the policy program Care Living Labs Flanders (CLLF) was launched to stimulate social innovation in elderly care. The valorisation goal of the programme is social innovation. Six living labs (platforms) were introduced to enhance innovations in elderly care grounded in a logic of ‘open innovation’: innovation by collaboration between autonomous organisations from different sectors. A particular problem is how these collaborations can be effective and sustainable. Valorisation and developing shared network objectives are important success factors for a network.

**Methods:** Data were collected and analysed from focus groups with formal strategic and operational network partners of four platforms in Flanders. We focused on experienced barriers and facilitating factors in the implementation process of the collaboration.

**Results:** Developing collective and shared (not necessarily homogeneous) valorisation goals is a time consuming learning process. Individual network partners have different backgrounds, opinions and interests on both economic and social added value of shared network activities. These different interests and visions have to be balanced with the collective interest of the partnership in order to make the platforms sustainable and allow them to create added value.

**Conclusions:** Developing shared objectives is a complex process in which different regulations and financing mechanisms, cultures, visions and power relations have to be coordinated. Network structure and appropriate network governance are key in this process.

*\*KIO is een interuniversitair en hogescholenconsortium dat innovaties in de ouderenzorg in Vlaanderen onderzoekt. Het consortium bestaat uit Mark Leys & Lien Pots (OPIH-VUB), Ellen Gorus & Charlotte Brys (GERO-VUB), Ezra Dessers, Geert Van Hootegeem & Yennef Vereycken (CESO-KUL), Marc Jegers & Lukas Versteede (iCher), Patricia De Vriendt & Juul Lemey (Arteveldehogeschool), Bart Jansen (ETRO-VUB), Bart Mistiaen & Bart Grimontprez (HOWEST). Het consortium wordt gefinancierd door het Agentschap voor Innovatie door Wetenschap en Technologie (IWT)*