



Co-Creating a New Form of Governance in Societal Transition for Healthy Living

Frame of Reference with innovation principles (Deliverable 3.1)

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List of Acronyms

CC	Creating Commons
EU	European Commission
COP	Community of Practice
ICOP	International Communities of Practice
HL	Healthy Living
HE	Higher Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SIE	Social Innovation Ecosystem
SIEHL	Social Innovation Ecosystem for Healthy Living
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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Introduction

NEST is an Erasmus+ Alliances for Innovation project focusing on Healthy Living promotion in communities and their people.

Health and well-being are of high priority on the EU agenda and fundamental pillars of societal progress and individual flourishing. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the intricate interplay between various factors influencing health outcomes, spanning from individual behaviours to broader social, economic, and environmental determinants. As societies grapple with the challenges posed by aging populations, emerging health threats, and disparities in access to healthcare, there is an imperative to adopt innovative approaches that address the complexity of health and promote holistic well-being.

This document serves as a frame of reference and guide for the partners of the NEST Innovation Alliance and for other contexts aspiring to “co-create a new form of governance in societal transition for healthy living”.

It creates awareness of the spirit of how we seek to work together and describes the methodological framework of why and how our approach towards social innovation works, and how it allows to develop an improved form of social innovation environment.

Drawing upon insights from diverse disciplines, stakeholder perspectives, and best practices, this document aims to guide stakeholders in navigating the complexities of health promotion, social innovation, and systemic change.

Background

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations (UN) declare health as a fundamental right. Yet, to achieve health for all, an aligned co-operation of the diverse stakeholders is vital (2008). Health is a gamechanger. It means quality of life. Whereby health is influenced by a plethora of internal and external factors: Good healthy living involves an interaction of psychological, social, political, economic, and environmental factors. This includes aspects of nutrition, physical activity, personality, and community. It implies building the capability to achieve health and the removal of obstacles to good health, like low income and low education, unhygienic housing, or access to drinking water. Plus, it concerns urban planning and aligned environmental development, as quite as much as the provision and access to health care systems and health prevention services (WHO, 2021). This integrative, biopsychosocial view of

health means that health is not only an individual responsibility. Rather, we need to create communities that strengthen people's ability to reach optimal health. This includes the education and training of health care workers but also involves the notion of individuals and communities being able to act as agents of health (Prah Ruger, 2010).

To reach this aim, a proactive, systemic health-capability-approach towards people and their living environment is needed. We need to start looking (more) beyond pre-defined linear diagnose-intervention-relations. And we need to co-create complementary approaches beyond reactive and problem-orientated diagnosis-intervention strategies that are still dominant in current social and healthcare systems. Because we are otherwise ignoring the function(s) and capabilities of the whole system, with all the relations in between its parts. It means that we must embrace the systemic and individual complexity of health at its different levels (Beenen & Guett, 2022). Fortunately, there is an increasing acknowledgement of the complexity of health and the necessity for innovation in public health (Launer 2018; Braithwaite et al., 2017). Both as regards the governance and leadership of public health, plus concerning individual relations between professionals and patients.

Complex global challenges like health are addressed by the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Therefore, UN SDG3 calls for Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being at all ages. Yet, achieving the SDG health targets would require new investments from an initial US\$ 134 billion annually to \$371 billion by 2030 (WHO, 2017). This includes educating more than 23 Mio. health workers. One of the most important aspects related to UN SDG3 is, however, to create awareness and a will to take up the wicked challenge of a healthy society from a sense of agency. Because it necessitates a true mind-shift accompanied by fundamental systemic changes in societal regimes conceptualized in sustainability transition (Guett, Beenen & Steinbach, 2021). So, a key objective for achievements towards the UN Agenda 2030 is to facilitate multi-stakeholder and interdisciplinary operating models to better and sustainably exploit knowledge, resources, and capacities (UN, 2020). And whilst some may think that this may not be a problem to European countries, one needs to acknowledge that a healthy society becomes even more of a challenge with increasing aging populations. The aging of European societies is accompanied with more chronic diseases, lower quality of life and higher costs; estimated 2% of the global GDP equalling 30 trillion USD (Matheson et al, 2013). Around 90% of mortality in the EU is due to non-communicable diseases (NCD) (WHO, 2014); and risk factors such as a person's lifestyle are known to increase their likelihood. For example, low cardio-respiratory fitness, which is one aspect of healthy living, accounts for about 16% of all deaths (Blair, 2012). Ageing and the exponential growth of NCDs require a fundamental rethinking of how we organize health systems and policy. And this requires suitable ecosystems for collaboration and innovation towards healthy

living. And the time to act is now. It has been forecasted for over a decade that aging together with financing of increased medical and technical possibilities will deplete healthcare resources, if we do not change the way current healthcare is organised. So far, however, we have failed to disrupt that trend (Berwick, 2008; WWR 2021). So, the healthcare system, which is currently optimised for care and cure rather than prevention, is under stress and change plus innovation is urgently needed. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has further added on to this understanding. The Covid-19 pandemic has provided a major wake-up call on the need to acknowledge the complexity of health (Beenen & Guett, 2022). The pandemic has disclosed the severe under-financing of health systems around the world (WHO, 2021), and it has stretched the resilience and the resources of the health system, its workforce and society. It has laid bare the inequalities and limitations of the current system and approaches in their capacities to prevent major health crises or respond to them (WHO, 2020; Prah Ruger, 2020).

All European countries have now endured years of being immensely affected by Covid-19, both at a systemic and individual level. Covid-19 and the different forms of lockdown have had, and still have, major influence on people's healthy living. Many social contacts have been lost, and health-enhancing behaviours of an active lifestyle have been contained. This has immense consequences on the physical and mental health of European citizens (De Jong, 2020).

Health care workers have been reaching their limits of dealing with the working circumstances to become truly personalized with their patients on a day-to-day basis. Also, because they struggled to acknowledge and act in the complexity of the whole patient system. This is because the field is vastly fragmented; health interventions are still developed and implemented independently throughout health disciplines and professions. Still largely denying other social and economic aspects of life and all the interactions in between that contribute to a balanced and healthy living. This counteracts impact, sustainability, and exploitation. This is also because traditional health care approaches are often limited by their scope. Therefore, this siloed thinking and acting in the health sector must be opened. Because a more efficient and effective approach to healthy living is based on the premise that an individual's behaviour is shaped by a dynamic interaction with their environments. This includes influences at the interpersonal, organizational, policy, and community levels. And education must and can play a leading role in this. The shift towards co-creation in prevention with impact-driven structures demands knowledge and professionals who are educated to "shine" in complexity and guide social innovation processes. But, although single strategies for education and implementation are independently developed, there exists lack of co-creating innovative solutions and bridging the gap between knowledge and practice when it comes to stimulating healthy living, especially when it comes to the local context. This urges education institutes to (better) exploit the non-linear innovation model of the Quintuple Helix that combines

knowledge, know-how, and the healthy living environments and systems together into one interdisciplinary framework. This leads to shared agenda setting towards socio-ecological transition in the field. With it, multilevel intervention strategies at the micro, meso, and macro levels must be applied to allow for sustainable, socio-economic health impact. Innovation towards healthy living demands co-learning and co-creation in an ecosystem that is sustainable and that engages the full variety of public and private stakeholders across disciplines, which includes education institutes, businesses, and the citizens.



Context

Social change and social innovation

In its broadest sense, change means to make things different or to become different. Striving for social change is an eager goal. It involves the alternation of the social order of a society. This assumes interconnected sustainable change in social institutions, social behaviours, and social relations. In our context, social change means tackling the complex challenge of a healthier society. It refers to mid- to long-term developments in society at large that are often accompanied by disruption.

Social innovation is then the process of commonly developing and deploying novel ideas and effective solutions. This includes out-of-the-box-thinking to meet social needs, create social relationships and implement co-creation towards active and healthy lifestyles. Such social innovations can be projects, products, services, programmes, or models addressing unmet challenges more effectively or that are more suitable.

In our project context, social change determines the learning pathway towards tackling the complex challenge of a healthy living for all. This includes more citizens enjoying a healthy lifestyle and (better) health, but also creating social, physical, and economic environments that hold (greater) capacity to value and enable a healthy living. Social innovation is the process of co-creating and deploying novel ideas and effective solutions to circumstances that challenge a healthy living.

Healthy living (HL)

Healthy living encompasses a holistic approach to maintaining or improving one's physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. It involves making conscious choices and adopting behaviours that support overall health and vitality. It encompasses not just physical health, but also mental, emotional, and social well-being. It emphasizes the importance of addressing all aspects of health to achieve a balanced and fulfilling life.

Healthy living emphasizes preventive measures and proactive health promotion strategies to prevent illness and promote wellness. This may include initiatives to encourage healthy eating, regular physical activity, stress management, and other lifestyle behaviours. It acknowledges the influence of social, economic, and environmental factors on health outcomes. It seeks to address social determinants of health such as income, education, housing, and access to healthcare to improve overall well-being and reduce health disparities.

Healthy living initiatives involve active participation and engagement from community members, organizations, and stakeholders. It emphasizes the importance of community-based approaches to health promotion and encourages collaboration across sectors.

Healthy living involves innovative approaches and collaborations to address complex health challenges. It seeks to harness the power of technology, entrepreneurship, and interdisciplinary collaboration to develop and implement effective solutions.

Healthy living initiatives aim to promote sustainable and resilient communities that can adapt to changing health needs and environmental conditions. This may involve building infrastructure, policies, and systems that support long-term health and well-being.

Healthy living efforts prioritize equity and inclusivity, ensuring that all individuals and communities have access to resources, opportunities, and support needed to live healthy lives. It seeks to address health disparities and promote health equity for all.

Healthy living in the NEST project context represents a multi-faceted and inclusive approach to promoting health and well-being that addresses the diverse needs and priorities of communities. It involves collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to creating environments that support healthy choices and lifestyles.

Social Innovation Ecosystem (SIE)

Social Innovation Ecosystem (SIE) represents a dynamic network of stakeholders united to tackle complex social issues, especially those pertaining to promoting healthy living and societal well-being. This ecosystem comprises individuals, communities, organizations, and institutions collaborating to create innovative solutions. It embraces diversity, drawing on a wide range of backgrounds, expertise, and viewpoints. Within this ecosystem, there's a culture of continuous innovation, where novel ideas and approaches are developed and applied to address societal challenges. Importantly, the SIE is adaptable and responsive, evolving to meet evolving needs. Sustainability is a key focus, aiming for long-term positive impacts. Moreover, the SIE empowers individuals and communities to actively engage in the innovation process, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment. It serves as a platform for collective action, driving systemic change towards healthier, more resilient societies.

Community of practice (COP)

Communities of practice refers to a group of people who share a common interest, profession, or passion and come together to learn from one another, solve problems, and collaborate on shared goals. COPs are characterized by their informal nature and focus on peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Members of a COP typically engage in activities such as:

- Sharing experiences, insights, and best practices related to their shared interest or profession.
- Discussing common challenges, problems, and solutions.
- Collaborating on projects, initiatives, or research endeavours.
- Learning from one another through informal mentorship, coaching, or peer support.
- Developing and refining skills, knowledge, and expertise within their domain.
- Building relationships and networks with other members for ongoing learning and support.

COPs can exist within organizations, professional associations, online communities, or other social networks. They play a valuable role in fostering collaboration, innovation, and continuous learning among individuals with shared interests or expertise.

A COP is one valuable enabler and accelerator to facilitate and drive social innovation. It builds the social innovation ecosystem to enable social change. Communities of practice describe a social learning pathway where people voluntarily commit to improve a common concern around a complex social challenge. Its members interact regularly to learn and to co-create innovative solutions.

A COP is determined by an active and open learning environment that allows for eyelevel exchange and a participatory approach. It leads to action towards social innovation that is openly shared and can be applied in practice. In this regard, a COP is an instrument for common learning towards anticipating contemporary challenges. It gives a structure for lifelong learning. The way learning and cocreation is organised through communities of practice is opposed to classical knowledge-to-action approaches and more generic public health initiatives. It demands the necessity of the direct involvement and true engagement of end-users and from there the formulation of a common agenda; respectively, no specific outcome targets are set in advance.

Communities of practice are often also called learning communities or learning networks. They aim to build intentional relationships between like-minded actors to accelerate shared learning, collaborative problem-solving, and collective action. Communities of Practice are often used as

forums for the exploration of ideas, experimentation, analysis, reflection, and capacity building that is essential to driving social impact. COP bring together a range of perspectives on a problem and ensure that relevant knowledge is accessible to those who need it. Its members share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

COP are distinct from other types of groups, such as project teams, working groups and social networks in that they are somewhat self-selecting (at least over time), often voluntary (or participation is self-driven) and have fluid goals around learning (in the scope of the common concern and the self-set principles) rather than being predetermined management objectives. COP are characterised by mutual learning, shared rich practice, and joint exploration of innovative ideas. Many structural aspects are not pre-set or follow a plan, but they emerge from the action of the COP.

COP distinguish from think tanks as they take on and spread new knowledge but with a clear focus on implementation in practice, rather than just theory. And they embrace an ongoing cycle of learning and doing through multiple smaller scale initiatives emerging from the overall COP activities.

NEST approach

The NEST Innovation Alliance (NEST) sees a need and great opportunity for co-creating a new form of social innovation ecosystem (SIE) that acts as a sustainable vehicle for societal transitions and increased capacity in knowledge creation towards healthy living (HL) in Europe. Our aim is to empower and enable local communities to thrive with social innovation towards a healthy society.

NEST identifies key learning questions related to positioning and organizing a social innovation ecosystem sustainably and growing and maintaining knowledge and collective agency of stakeholders. To address these questions, it implements International Communities of Practice (ICOP) with four working groups tailored towards healthy living, focusing on areas such as sustainable social innovation ecosystem, engaged community science, reflexive monitoring, and knowledge creation.

The implementation process involves an iterative learning and co-creation process that includes "playing back and forth" between ICOP level progression and experimentation in social innovation ecosystems at the local level. This process enhances understanding about appropriate governance and leadership structures, building engagement and capacity, and finding innovative solutions for transformative learning in higher education and vocational education and training.

The learning and insights gained from the ICOP lead to the development of a blueprint for a Social Innovation Ecosystem tailored towards healthy living (SIEHL). This ecosystem functions as a sustainable enabler and accelerator for engaging diverse stakeholders in co-learning and co-creation towards facilitating and driving social innovation in the field of healthy living.

NEST develops a virtual learning space with educational courses and open-access learning materials to empower change agents to effectively frame, govern, and facilitate SIEHL in their local context. This ensures that knowledge and skills can be shared and applied effectively across education institutes, businesses, and other stakeholders.

The approach increases the capacity of education institutes to co-create with businesses and other stakeholders, focusing on collective knowledge creation and common agenda setting. This helps bridge the gap between knowledge and practice, leading to more innovative and sustainable solutions towards healthy living in local communities and a healthier and more resilient society in Europe.

Principles Guiding the Approach

We believe in the power of collaboration and co-creation, bringing together diverse stakeholders from across sectors and disciplines to develop innovative solutions to complex health challenges.

Our approach is interdisciplinary, recognizing the interconnectedness of various factors influencing health outcomes and drawing upon insights from fields such as public health, sociology, psychology, education, and environmental science.

We adopt a system thinking approach, acknowledging the dynamic interplay of individual, social, economic, and environmental factors in shaping health outcomes. This holistic perspective informs our interventions and strategies for promoting health and well-being.

We are committed to promoting empowerment and equity with the aim of ensuring that all individuals and communities have the resources, opportunities, and support they need to achieve optimal health and well-being.

Innovative Aspects of NEST Innovation Alliance

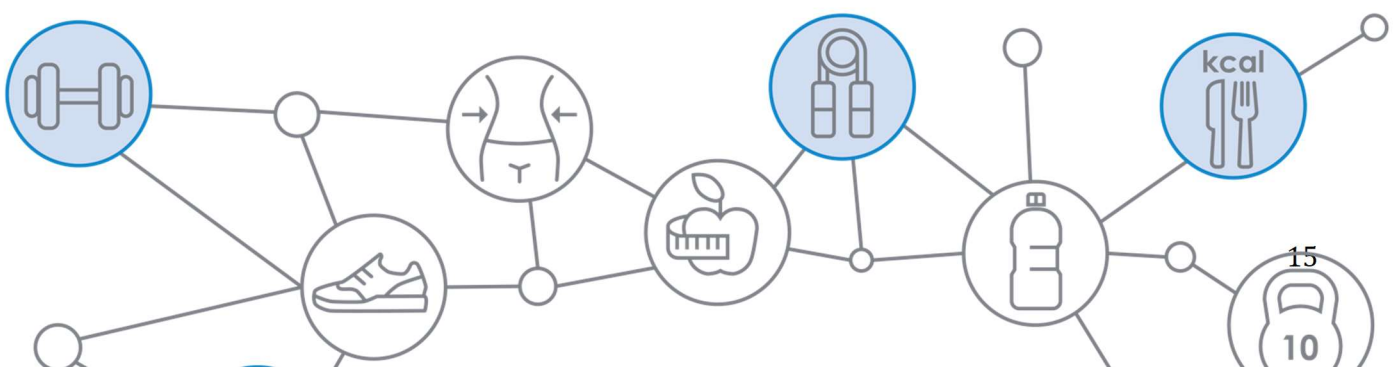
This approach is characterized by a commitment to pioneering new methods and strategies that drive transformative change and foster sustainable impact. The endeavours are characterized by several key innovative aspects:

Co-creating a Contextual Framework for Transformative Research: At the heart of the Alliance lies a commitment to co-creating knowledge within real-world contexts. Embracing a transformative research approach, it prioritizes problem-driven, goal-oriented collaboration among diverse stakeholders. By consolidating the collective learning into an interconnected framework, it transcends singular thematic aspects, breaking down siloes and providing an integrated blueprint for Social Innovation Ecosystems tailored to local needs. This approach fosters aligned development across various fields and promotes a more nuanced and reflexive understanding of complex issues, ultimately amplifying the impact of our collective efforts.

Positioning and Organizing SIEHL into Long-term Societal Transitions: The Alliance is not content with merely achieving short- and mid-term results; it aspires to catalyse long-term change in healthy living policies and systems. Leveraging the conceptual framework of the X-Curve, it facilitates a deeper understanding of governance practices for sustainability transitions. This framework illuminates the intricate dynamics of societal transitions, empowering stakeholders to anticipate and navigate future challenges with agility and foresight. By embracing proactive strategies informed by a nuanced understanding of transition dynamics, they lay the groundwork for enduring societal transformation, driving positive change at both the individual and systemic levels.

Applying an Iterative Learning Process towards a Quintuple Helix Model: Central to the approach is an iterative learning and co-creation process that bridges international communities of practice with local social innovation ecosystems. Grounded in transformative learning principles, this process fosters critical thinking and alternative perspectives, empowering stakeholders to drive meaningful change within their communities. Moreover, it prioritizes knowledge transfer from SIEHL into existing education courses, equipping educators and students with the tools and insights needed to navigate complex socio-environmental challenges. By engaging citizens as active research partners, it ensures that the interventions are not only effective but also responsive to the diverse needs and realities of local communities.

The Alliance stands at the forefront of innovation, pioneering new approaches to address the complex challenges of healthy living and societal well-being. Through collaborative, sustainable, and transformative efforts, it is committed to driving positive change and building healthier, more resilient communities for generations to come.



NEST Concept

This chapter serves as the theoretical foundation of NEST project, providing a framework for understanding the key concepts, theories, and principles that inform the initiative.

SIEHL

A SIEHL stands for Social Innovation Ecosystem for Healthy Living, and it operates as a dynamic and sustainable framework that enables and accelerates collaboration among diverse stakeholders. With effective governance and long-term implementation strategies, it fosters an environment for contextualized co-learning and immersive co-creation. By facilitating meaningful engagement, SIEHL drives social innovation, ensuring that shared learning experiences and collective efforts translate into impactful and adaptable solutions for healthy living.

SIEHL Change Agent

SIEHL Change Agents are persons who can encourage people to engage in successful change assignments and who are skilled to facilitate change processes. Agents come from inside a local community of practice and engage with promoting active and healthy lifestyles at the local level at a regular basis.

They may be individuals or groups who champion innovative approaches to promoting healthy living, driving social change, and fostering collaboration and innovation within the ecosystem. They play a key role in catalysing and sustaining positive change and transformation.

They are equipped to facilitate change processes and the implementation of innovative solutions through communities of practice under the specific circumstances of their local environments. Due to the various roles of change agents to take in the running of local communities of practice, the mindset of change agencies is beneficial.

Change agents play a crucial role in catalyzing innovation by identifying opportunities for improvement, challenging the status quo, and championing new ideas and approaches. They facilitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders within the ecosystem, bringing together individuals, organizations, and institutions to work towards common goals and objectives related



to promoting healthy living and social innovation. They promote a culture of learning and adaptation, encouraging experimentation, reflection, and continuous improvement. They facilitate processes for sharing knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned among stakeholders. They support the development of individual and organizational capacity within the ecosystem, providing training, mentorship, and resources to empower stakeholders to drive change and innovation in their respective domains.

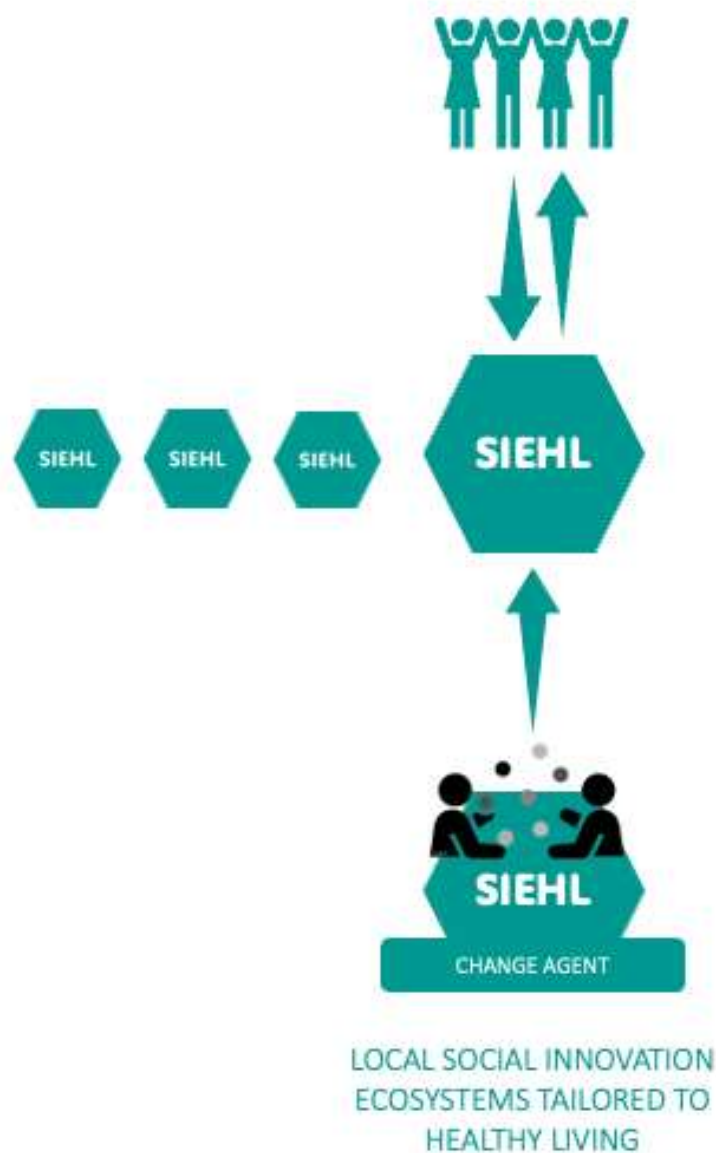
SIEHL Change Agency

SIEHL Change Agency is made by a team of change agents that have the complementary knowledge and skills to commonly – and sustainably – facilitate their local community of practice towards social innovation for a more active and healthier local society.

To guide the social innovation process and to take advantage of the full potential of ICOP approach, the concept of change agencies will be exploited. As it accounts for the concept of social innovation, also the concept of change agencies is anchored twice in the NEST setting: In the very beginning of the project, ICOP change agents will be trained to facilitate the co-creation and co-learning in the four working groups of ICOP. And towards the end of the project, a new change agent course will be developed that empowers to frame, govern, and facilitate SIEHL. Again, benefiting immensely from the opportunity of such parallel process of learning and co-creation.

SIEHL Change Agents are persons who are skilled to establish, facilitate and sustain change processes through communities of practice / social innovation ecosystems that lead to impact. Whereby the change agents always have a focus on the wicked challenge of healthy living. And as there is a great range of roles to take for change agents, or as it refers to the so-called change agencies, which may be described as a complementary team of change agents of different roles.

SIEHL Change Agency represents a collective commitment to driving positive change and innovation within the ecosystem, with the goal of creating healthier, more equitable, and sustainable communities.



ICOP

ICOP stands for International Community of Practice. It is a group of individuals who share a common interest, profession, or passion and come together to learn from each other, share experiences, and collaborate on projects or initiatives related to their field. In the context of NEST, within the ICOP four working groups are established to focus on specific aspects related to healthy living. Each working group is dedicated to a particular area, such as:

- sustainable social innovation ecosystem,
- engaged community science,
- reflexive monitoring,
- and knowledge creation,

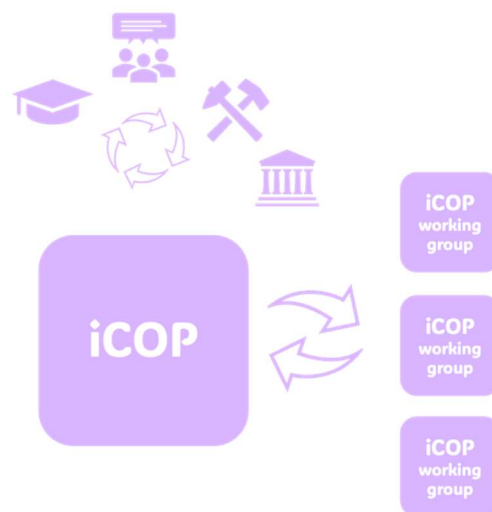
tailored towards healthy living.

For the implementation of our project activities and goals, the concepts of social change and social innovation play a central role: social innovation, as a process, guides the co-creation and co-learning activities in the four thematic working groups of ICOP.

And in addition, a new structural framework for framing, governing, and facilitating a social innovation ecosystem declares an important result of our innovation alliance.

This consciously chosen working framework allows for an iterative process of learning, implementing, and developing in parallel, and determines one of the strengths of our concept. Although research on social innovation and its impact has gained momentum in the last decade, it has not yet resulted in a common understanding or definition.

Members of an ICOP may include professionals, academics, practitioners, policymakers, and other stakeholders who are interested in advancing knowledge and practice in their respective areas of focus. ICOP working groups provide a platform for collaborative learning, networking, and innovation, contributing to the overall goals of NEST.



Identified key factors

NEST builds on innovation ecosystems that contribute to the long-term systemic change of societal systems involved in health policy and healthy living. We call this the health transition and view it as a complex, mission-driven, and long-term learning process.

Based on our experience and the literature, we have identified four key factors pivotal for this transition. These key factors represent the themes of our Innovation Communities of Practice (ICOP), each supporting the paradigm shift from classic regime systems to more sustainable and just approaches. The themes identify and position themselves within the transition, building a knowledge base, developing potential actions and methods, and offering practical support to innovation ecosystems in advancing these specific areas. In the project, these are known as SIEHLs. The themes—social business development, reflexive monitoring, engaged community science, and knowledge creation—are each at different stages of development and have their own learning processes, supported by guiding questions. These themes are highly interrelated, and the ICOPs collaborate across many aspects to further develop the themes and efficiently support the SIEHLs, from demand articulation to the use of methods and instruments.

Social business development (sustainable social innovation ecosystem)

The goal of the open learning approach between the ICOP and the SIEHL focuses on harvesting a climate of social entrepreneurship that promotes healthy living. This means the ICOP will provide opportunities for the SIEHL to in long-term operations. This collaboration is invaluable because it leverages diverse perspectives and expertise, creating a rich environment for innovation and shared learning. By working together, members can exchange best practices, co-create solutions, and build a supportive network that enhances individual and collective capacities.

We are dedicated to cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets within the SIEHL, resulting in the development of creative, flexible problem-solvers who possess a strong sense of initiative. This synergy not only accelerates the learning process but also amplifies the impact of its initiatives, driving sustainable change in the communities we serve.

To enhance this collective sense of agency, the SIEHL must become fully operational and self-sustainable, moving beyond reliance on project-based public funding. Achieving this requires integrating entrepreneurial thinking into the co-creation processes of social innovation ecosystems. By doing so, we can identify and pursue viable social business cases, public-private partnerships, and diverse funding streams, ensuring long-term viability and success.

Engaged community science

Effective Community engagement aims at building relationships in the community to strengthen its social fabric and achieve long-term, sustainable outcomes. It increases the visibility and

understanding of issues and empowers communities to have their say over decisions that affect their lives, their towns, cities and neighborhoods.

The role of NEST's ICOP working group on Engaged Communities is to help and support members of existing Social Innovation Ecosystems for Healthy Lifestyle (SIEHL) in effectively engaging their communities in activities and social innovation projects aimed at promoting Healthy Leaving.

The primary way the ICOP supports the activities of the SIEHLs is by adapting and optimizing the theory and established ways of engagement (as described in the previous section) to the specific characteristics and requirements of each Social Innovation Ecosystem in NEST, its projects and its initiatives. The “tailoring” is needed because the value of engagement and participation tends to be contingent on the form and practice of each specific activity, the context in which it is performed, and the supporting structures around it.

In particular, the ICOP will provide help with addressing both theoretical and practical aspects of the strategy for engaging communities, including asking fundamental design questions, emphasizing specific aspects, and suggesting practical activities.

Reflexive monitoring

Traditionally, monitoring and evaluation have been used to determine the effects of a strategy after its delivery. This means that insights into the progress and direction of a project are gained retrospectively. Additionally, conventional monitoring is not flexible because it is designed at the beginning of a project and cannot be changed. It often leaves no space for the participation of different actors/stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation activities.

Our societies need a fundamental shift in how we perceive health. Rather than seeing it solely as something managed within hospitals or healthcare systems, health should be positioned at the heart of people's daily lives—where we live, work, and play. This shift requires a change in perspective: moving from “health care” to “care for health” (Beenen 2023; Prah Ruger 2010). Well-being becomes an essential concept in this context, as it broadens our understanding of health and creates opportunities for individuals to take more ownership of their well-being. This perspective moves away from viewing people as mere consumers of healthcare services and instead empowers them to actively engage in maintaining their health.

As health becomes an integral part of everyday life, the roles of various stakeholders—such as citizens, students, local governments, and businesses—will transform significantly. Collaboration and joint strategy development become crucial, as stakeholders must work together in new and dynamic ways (Parkhurst 2014). However, this transition also demands effective guidance and

coordination, given the diverse interests at play—from individual participants to collective goals at organizational, neighborhood, municipal, or regional levels. These are inherently long-term and complex processes, where results cannot always be predicted due to the interplay of numerous influencing factors. To navigate this complexity, continuous monitoring and evaluation are essential to steer innovation processes and assess the impact of research and development projects (Patton 2011). Embracing this complexity allows for sustainable development, fostering learning and change as integral parts of progress.

NEST aims to foster social innovation through mission-driven and complexity-oriented approaches. Within this context, one of the key objectives is to develop monitoring practices that align with the dynamic nature of social innovation. This involves creating a holistic framework for reflexive monitoring specifically tailored for SIEHLs, enabling them to navigate complex challenges while fostering continuous learning and adaptation. To support this, a range of instruments and training materials will be developed to enhance capacity-building in evaluation and impact measurement. Additionally, an action planning and agenda-setting dashboard with an integrated impact monitor will be designed to facilitate strategic decision-making and track progress. In this context, “impact” is understood in a broad sense, encompassing not only health outcomes but also collaborative processes, shifts in the learning culture, and other transformative changes.

This activity explores the existing knowledge around reflexive monitoring and highlights key features crucial for implementing reflexive practices. It also examines how reflexive monitoring can effectively support SIEHLs in their ongoing efforts and discusses the relationship between monitoring practices and the themes addressed in other ICOPs. Through this approach, the project aims to enhance the ability of SIEHLs to reflect on their processes, learn from experiences, and continuously evolve to meet emerging challenges.

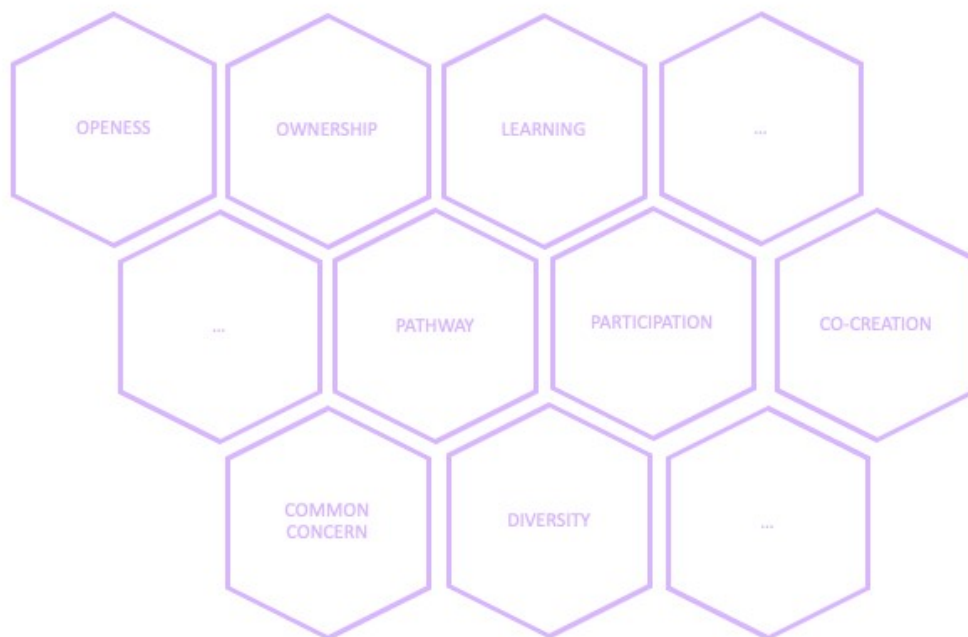
Knowledge creation

The Knowledge Creation ICOP working group can provide SIEHLs with tools to identify where, by whom, and how knowledge is co-created in the process of collaboration. By increasing awareness within the SIEHL, the ICOP can effectively share relevant knowledge and pinpoint areas where knowledge is missing.

Furthermore, the ICOP offers practical resources (methods, tools) to help local social ecosystems for healthy living to analyze their structure and operations. This will reveal which voices are being heard, which are not, and the reasons behind this, allowing for more inclusive dialogue and knowledge sharing.

The ICOP poses fundamental questions to the SIEHL regarding the conception of knowledge:

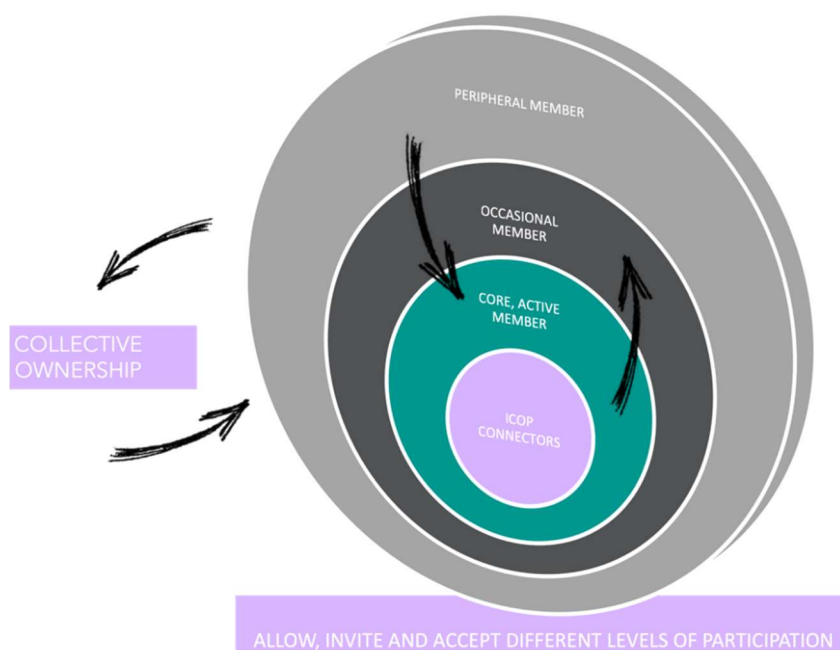
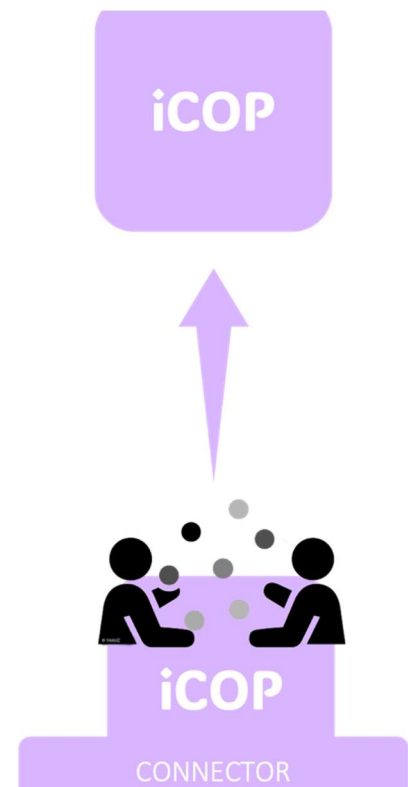
- How do you view knowledge in the SIEHL? According to a constructivist perspective on knowledge it is required that knowledge is developed through a social process and is 'embedded' in practice.
- What knowledge do you perceive in the SIEHL?
- What knowledge is still missing?



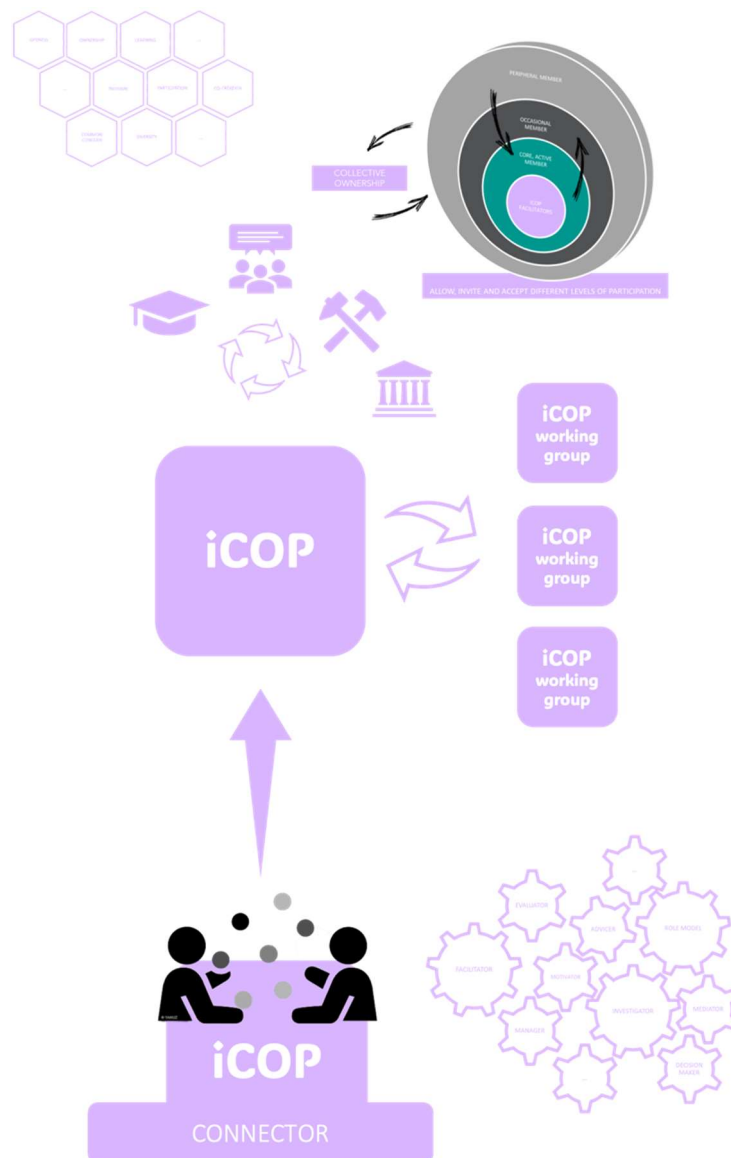
ICOP connector

An ICOP connector refers to an individual who guides and supports the activities of ICOP within the NEST Innovation Alliance framework. The ICOP connector plays a crucial role in fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing, and learning among members of the ICOP to achieve its objectives and goals related to promoting healthy living and social innovation.

ICOP connector operate within a team-based environment, collaborating closely to support the goals and objectives of the ICOPs. Working together, ICOP connectors leverage their collective expertise, skills, and experiences to facilitate productive and impactful collaboration within their respective communities. By working together as a cohesive team, ICOP connectors maximize their effectiveness in supporting the collaborative efforts of the ICOP and advancing the goals of the NEST project towards promoting healthy living and well-being in Europe.



An ICOP connector plays a pivotal role in enabling collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective action within the ICOP, contributing to the overall success and impact of the NEST framework in promoting healthy living and social innovation.



Mentor

A mentor is an experienced individual who provides guidance, support, and mentorship to members of the ICOP/SIEHL. The mentor plays a crucial role in facilitating the learning, development, and collaboration of ICOP/SIEHL members, helping them achieve their goals and objectives related to promoting healthy living and social innovation.

A mentor plays a vital role in guiding and supporting ICOP/SIEHL members by sharing their expertise, offering advice, and helping them navigate challenges. They contribute to members' learning and development by providing insights into best practices, successful strategies, and methodologies relevant to ICOP/SIEHL's objectives. Mentors also help members build professional networks by connecting them with experts, stakeholders, and valuable resources, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange. Additionally, they support professional growth by identifying learning opportunities, offering feedback, and encouraging skill development. By motivating and inspiring confidence, mentors keep members engaged and committed to their goals while serving as role models who demonstrate professionalism and integrity. Through constructive feedback and reflective discussions, they create a supportive environment that promotes continuous learning and improvement.

Mentor plays a vital role in supporting the growth, development, and success of ICOP/SIEHL members. Through their guidance, expertise, and mentorship, they contribute to the collective impact of the ICOP and SHIELs in promoting healthy living and social innovation.

Stakeholder

A wide range of stakeholders contribute to promoting healthy living and societal well-being within the NEST project. At its core, NEST empowers individuals and communities by providing access to resources, information, and support services that encourage healthier lifestyle choices. Healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, therapists, and community health workers, play a crucial role, alongside educators and students in higher education (HE) and vocational education and training (VET) institutions. Businesses and organizations involved in healthcare, social services, and community development also benefit from engaging with NEST. Additionally, policymakers and government agencies responsible for public health, social welfare, and urban planning are key stakeholders, as the project provides evidence-based research, policy recommendations, and advocacy efforts to support informed decision-making at various levels. Civil society organizations, NGOs, and community-based groups further enhance NEST's impact by driving

grassroots initiatives, advocacy campaigns, and social innovation projects, fostering a collaborative approach to improving health and well-being.

The target groups and end-users of the NEST project encompass a wide range of stakeholders involved in promoting healthy living and societal well-being, with a focus on empowering individuals, building capacity, fostering collaboration, and driving systemic change.

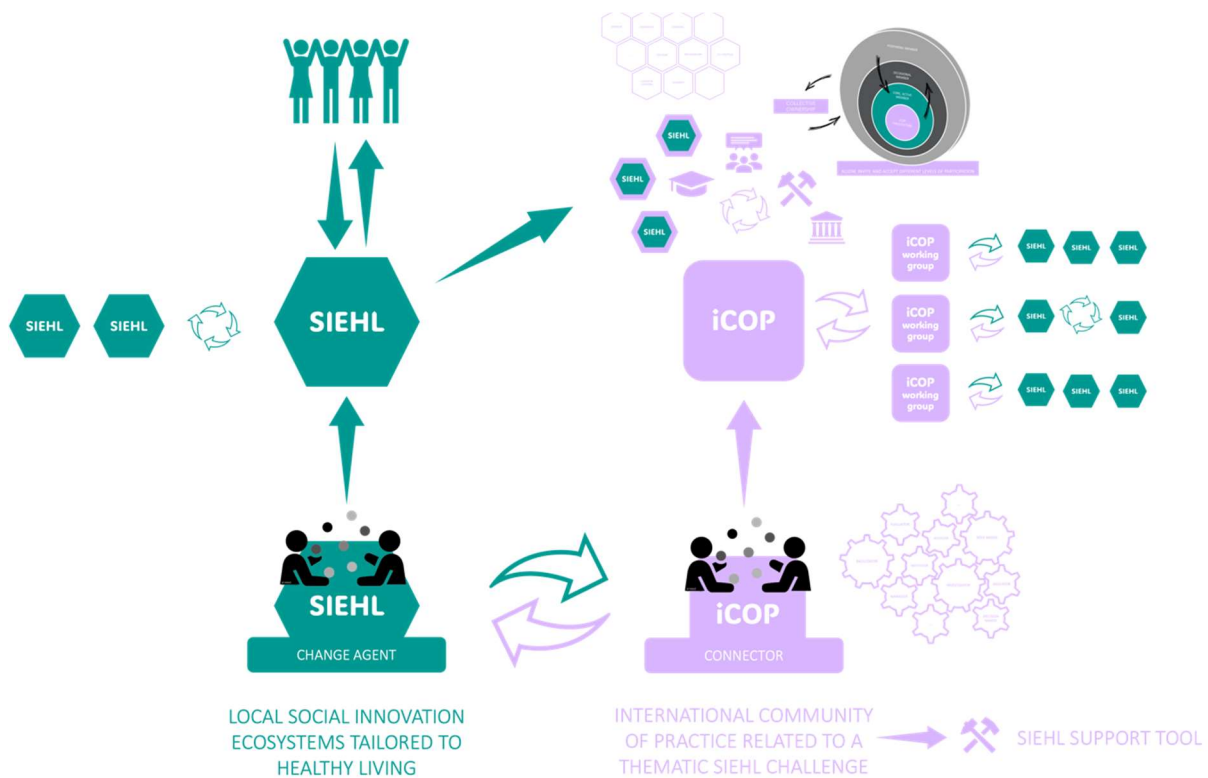
Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the NEST project are individuals and groups who directly gain from its initiatives aimed at promoting healthy living and societal well-being. These include people of all ages who receive access to health education, preventive care, and social support services that enhance their quality of life. Communities also benefit through improved living conditions, better access to healthcare facilities, and strengthened social infrastructure that fosters sustainability. The project places particular emphasis on supporting vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, low-income individuals, immigrants, and people with disabilities, who often face barriers to healthcare and social services. Additionally, healthcare systems, organizations, and professionals benefit from capacity-building initiatives, training programs, and resources that improve the effectiveness and efficiency of care delivery. Ultimately, the NEST project strives to create meaningful, lasting improvements in health and well-being for all its beneficiaries.

How does ICOP relate with a SIEHL?

ICOP and SIEHLs are closely related within the context of promoting healthy living through social innovation. ICOP focuses on specific aspects related to healthy living, such as sustainable social innovation ecosystem, engaged community science, reflexive monitoring, and knowledge creation. These ICOP working groups bring together experts, practitioners, and stakeholders with a shared interest in these areas to collaborate, share knowledge, and work on projects or initiatives.

ICOP contributes to the broader goals of the Social Innovation Ecosystem for Healthy Living (SIEHL) by addressing specific challenges or opportunities within the domain of healthy living. Each ICOP may focus on a particular aspect or dimension of healthy living, such as business innovation, community engagement, monitoring and evaluation, or knowledge creation, thereby contributing to the overall objectives of the SIEHL.



ICOP working groups provide platforms for collaborative exchange and learning among stakeholders within the SIEHL. Members of ICOP working groups may share insights, best practices, and resources, collaborate on projects or initiatives, and contribute to the collective knowledge and expertise of the SIEHL.

ICOP working groups facilitate cross-pollination of ideas and innovation within the SIEHL by bringing together diverse perspectives, expertise, and experiences. Members of ICOP working groups may apply lessons learned or innovations developed within their respective areas to other aspects of the SIEHL, fostering creativity, synergy, and continuous improvement across the ecosystem.

ICOP working groups operate within the broader framework of the SIEHL, with clear alignment and coordination with the overall goals and strategies of the ecosystem. While each ICOP working group may have its own specific focus and objectives, they are all part of a larger collective effort to promote healthy living through social innovation within the SIEHL.

In summary, ICOP working groups and SIEHLs are interconnected components of a collaborative ecosystem aimed at promoting healthy living through social innovation. ICOP working groups provide focused, specialized platforms for collaboration and learning within specific areas, while contributing to the broader objectives and impact of the SIEHL.

SIEHL Change Agent capacity building approach

In our SIEHL Change Agent capacity building approach, we make use of an interconnected mentoring and learning systematic. It means that we implement appreciative mentoring that adaptable in its implementation approach and can be tailored towards specific context in practice and individual learning needs. This alternative design for personal capacity building provides the advantage to design change agent programmes that are highly learner-centred and reflective. It ensures to yield at relevant, innovative, and implementable solutions rooted in practice and adapted to the local context.

This capacity building approach involves empowering individuals or groups to drive positive change and innovation within their respective contexts.

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