

Advice & Support on Work Organisation & Conditions



Thematic Area: Socio-economic performance.

Priority: How can working conditions be improved?

Need: How to reduce arduousness of work; How to improve the well-being of employees and managers

Solution EU Number: WC-11.

Content of the Solution:

Advisory support structures can support equine farms to enhance communication, efficiency, decision-making, resource sharing, and mental health support among equine farms.

Key Contacts:

- Agricultural chambers, private advisory services, public health services, etc.



Reasons for Implementing this Solution

Working in better conditions, maintaining efficiency at work, reducing the arduous and dangerous nature of the job, enjoying the work and preserving the meaning given to the job, assessing your workload and organising yourself to deal with it safely, ensuring that your personal and professional objectives are aligned. In the case of joint ventures, it can help to define clear operating rules and to encourage communication between partners to ensure continuity over time.

Description of Solution Strategies

The aim of this solution is to be accompanied (at any stage of your working life : it can be before the installation or after) by an advisor on the topic of organisation and working conditions, with the objective of improving the efficiency of daily or seasonal work, taking into account the farmer's aspirations (pro/perso), considering the adequacy of workloads and labour.

Generally it's an individual service (0.5 day or 1 day), the farmer can be alone or with other farmers who work together in the same farm. An advisor meets farmers or partners of the farm. There is one or several meetings between advisor and the farmer(s). During these meetings, the advisor work/discuss with the farmer(s) about:

1. Reflection on the importance of communication, the personal objectives of the operator(s), a shared vision, how the business is projected, what the objectives are.
2. Reflection on personal life goals and the farm's operating objectives.
3. Study of everyone's role, workload, means of production and safety.



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The advisor work on the case study and after there is a final meeting between farmer(s) and advisor to discuss the conclusions of the report. This service is very useful/used when several farmers work together/are partners. For this target, the report contains the conclusions about set up a routine based on a weekly coordination meeting, an office and rules of procedure.

Another option for farmers is to attend a training course. It lasts 2 to 2.5 days. An expert intervenes on the subjects of work organisation. There is no report and there are exchanges with the expert and between the farmers.

Implementation Steps

1. Contact an advisor.
2. Plan a meeting.
3. 1st step of the meeting: Active listening. During this meeting the advisor will actively listen you to discuss all aspects of work conditions and organisation and will answer your questions.

Examples of some topics:

- How do you feel about your job? Clarify your perception of work, put your feelings into words.
- What are your priorities in life? Define your MARS objectives (measurable, attractive, achievable and stimulating), compare the objectives of the workers of the farm.
- How can you make sure you have time at the right time? Optimise traffic routes on the farm, take a step back from your practices.
- How far have you got with your working time? Calculate your working time, compare 'work' benchmarks with your objectives.

4. 2nd step of the meeting: Defining your objectives.
 - Optimising work organisation to meet your objectives :be more serene, save personal time, increase production, free up time for another workshop.
 - Managing work organisation problems: improve day-to-day efficiency, better manage peak or on-call periods, share information to communicate quickly.

TIPS : even perfect organisation needs to be reviewed every 10 years.

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5. The advisor will help you to analyse and will develop a support plan:
 - Identifying the real causes of work organisation difficulties: taking a step back, analysing your feelings, cross-checking your practices, taking stock to see things more clearly (strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, workload, etc.).
 - Identification of your current organisational mode :positioning analysis, comparison with your expectations.
 - Proposed changes and action plan: concrete solutions to be put in place, conditions for implementation.

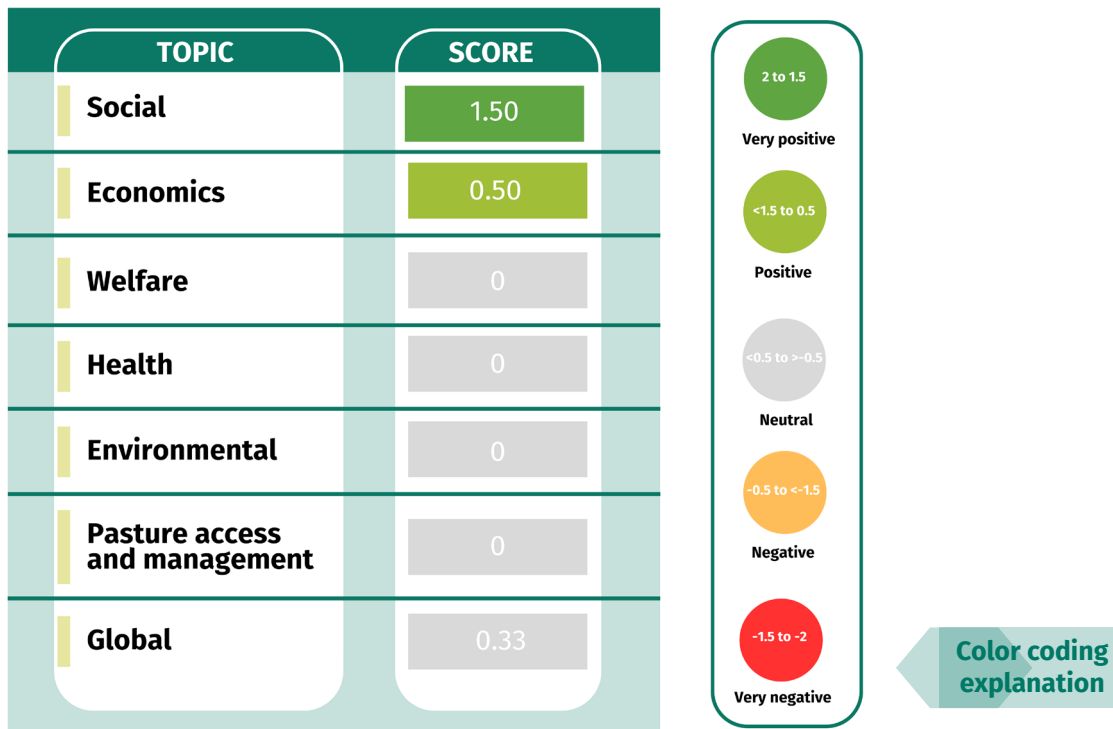
This plan can include mental and physical health resources, work management strategies, changes in practice, buildings adaptation and communication protocols. It can also provide training and education on effective work management, communication and stress management. It can also suggest to use digital tools to improve work organization and communication.

6. Monitoring and continuous adaptation
 - Regularly review the support plan and operating rules based on feedback and changing conditions.
 - Ensure that the financial aspects of the operation are secured, e.g. through funding or business advice.
 - Use data analysis and professional support to make informed decisions and optimize operations sustainably.



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How Will this Solution Impact the Performance of your Farm ?



Socioeconomics: This solution will support the socio-economic performance of your farm because it helps build a better image, optimizes task organization to save time, and frees up resources, allowing you to focus on commercial activities that generate revenue.



Health & Welfare: This solution should not have direct impact on health and welfare performance of the farm but it may have a positive effect if the workers and the farmer are better organised and if their well-being increased it can affect positively the health and the welfare of equines.

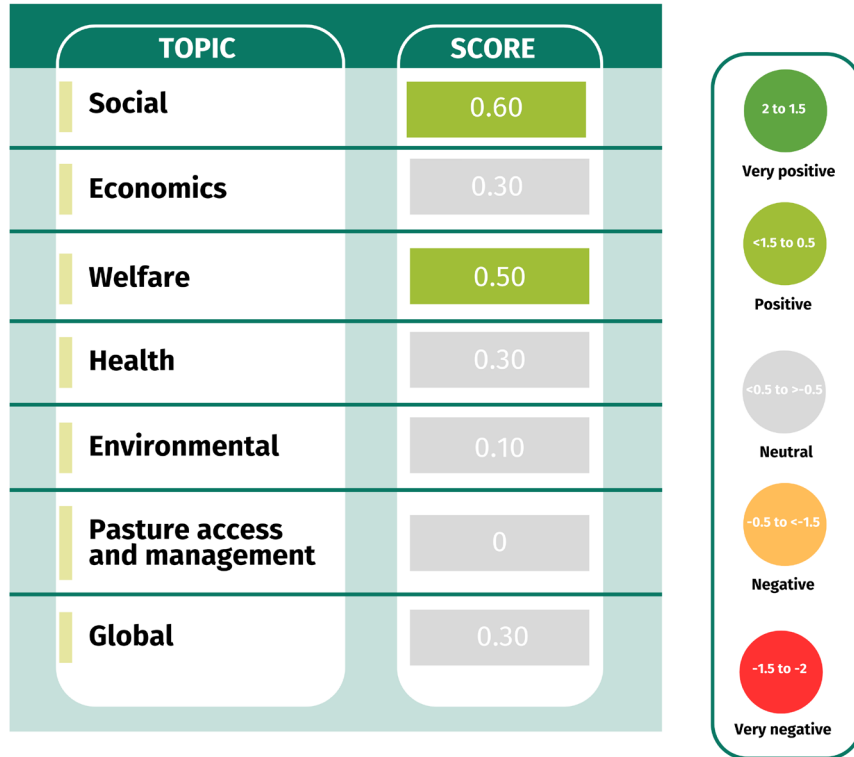


Environmental Sustainability: This solution has no direct effect on the performance of the farm on environmental sustainability or pasture management. As for health and welfare, if workers are better organised they can save time for environmental and land management. However, it depends on the sensitivity of the future farmer and the advisor on environmental issues.

So globally, this solution will have a neutral (slightly positive) effect on the global performance of the farm.

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How Will this Solution Impact the Resilience of your Farm?



Socioeconomics: This solution will support the social performance of the farm facing external challenges because it helps reorganize work to address manpower loss and improve the farm’s structure, working conditions, and attractiveness. Additionally, it focuses on enhancing skills, productivity, and customer loyalty. On the other hand, it does not directly improve economic performance or reduce investment costs, materials, equipment, or PPE expenses.



Health & Welfare: This solution may have a positive effect and slightly positive on the performance of the farm in terms of welfare and health when exposed to external challenges. Indeed, this type of advice can help to organise the work on the farm to better meet the challenges while maintaining good performance in these areas.



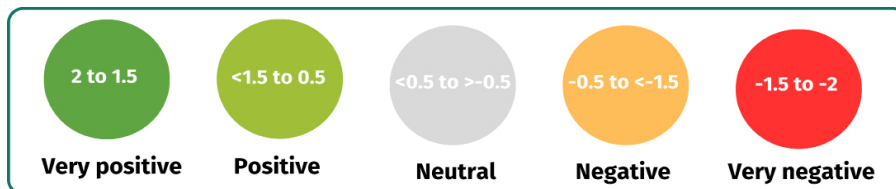
Environmental Sustainability: This solution has no direct effect on farm’s ability to recover in terms of environmental sustainability or grassland management as most of the time, the priority facing challenges is not to be environmentally performant but to maintain economic, social and horse welfare and health as good as possible.

So globally, this solution will mainly help the farm to face external challenges in terms of social expectations and welfare/health of horses. But overall, it will not particularly help the farm to be more resilient as the support received by the advisor is exclusively dedicated to working conditions.

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How Can this Solution Help your Farm Cope with Specific External Challenges to Become More Resilient?

CHALLENGES	SCORE
Inflation	0.08
Pandemic	0.25
High welfare standard	0.67
High infectious diseases	0.25
Extreme weather event	0.41
Loss/limited access to grassland	0.08



Inflation & Social Crises: This solution will have neutral (slightly positive) effect on global performance of the farm facing inflation or pandemic.



Welfare & Diseases: This solution may have a positive effect on the performance of the farm when exposed to challenges to health and welfare areas as these challenges are directly linked to the objectives of farmers in most of the cases that are discussed with the advisor.



Climate Change & Access to Land: This solution has no direct effect on a farm's ability to recover in a case of abnormally high temperatures, draught, excessive raining and/or high inter-seasonal variability. However, prior support can help to better manage the well-being and health of equines during this kind of extreme weather events. This solution has no direct effect on resilience in a case of loss or limited access to grassland.

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Cost-Benefit Analysis

Costs

Socioeconomics:

- Initial Investment: cost of 1 or 2 days of support by the advisor.
- Cost of investments, materials, equipment, PPE necessary to change practices.
- Coordination costs: Time and resources spent on organizing and maintaining cooperation between farms, the study/construction time of the project.

Health & Welfare:

- No effect.

Environmental Sustainability:

- Travel of the advisor.
- Setting up of infrastructure (equipment, construction machinery, etc.).

Cooperation between farms:

- Coordination Efforts: Time and resources spent on organizing and maintaining cooperative efforts.



Benefits

- Improving overall health and reduce risks.
- Improving working conditions so the satisfaction of workers.
- Attractiveness of the farm.
- Improving productivity.
- Customer loyalty.
- Upgrading skills.



- Good living conditions for horses, availability for farmers to pay more attention to the equines.



- More time for environmental actions (planting hedges, recreating wetlands, etc.).



- Networking and opening up to other farms (mutual assistance, sharing of best practices).



Technical Sheet for Solution Implementation

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Additional Resources

Websites

- <https://chambres-agriculture.fr/je-suis-agriculteur/strategie-dentreprise/organisation-du-travail>
- <https://equipedia.ifce.fr/en/equipedia-the-universe-of-the-horse-ifce/economy-and-the-horse-sector/economics/accounting-and-company-management/improving-economic-efficiency-of-equestrian-stud-farms-and-businesses>



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Ideas to Animate a Workshop about the Solution

- Ask a farmer who was supported by and advisor to participate/ host the workshop.
- Participation: Engage participants to familiarize themselves with the support structures.

Proposed Structure for the Workshop

1. Introduction to Farmer Organizations: Advisory and Support Structures

- What are advisory/support structures?
- Key features and components (e.g., communication, personal objectives, shared vision).
- Types of advisory and support structures available (e.g., individual services, training courses).

2. Benefits of Farmer Organizations in Equine Stables

- Improved Communication: Enhances collaboration and trust among farmers.
- Increased Efficiency: Streamlines operations and reduces workload through shared resources and knowledge.
- Better Decision-Making: Access to expert advice and collective problem-solving.

3. Practical Applications on Equine Farms

- Share experience about the different steps of implementation.

4. How to Choose the Most Suitable Support Structure

- Evaluation of Farm Needs: Assessing the specific needs and challenges of the farm.
- Cost Considerations: Comparing costs and benefits of different support structures.

5. Case Studies and Real-World Examples

- Success Stories: Sharing examples of farms that have successfully implemented support structures.
- Lessons Learned: Discussing challenges faced and how they were overcome.
- Practical Tips: Providing actionable advice from experienced farmers.

6. Q&A Session

- Open floor for participants to ask questions about specific concerns or experiences.
- Address any uncertainties regarding the effectiveness or cost of modular facilities.
- Sum up with the participants which chances they would see in taking part in a support structure or funding one. Which challenges would they feel more empowered to tackle?

7. Wrap-Up and Resources

- Summary: Recapping the key points covered in the workshop.
- Additional Resources: Offering further learning materials (websites, suppliers, online communities).