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## Role of the Facilitator in the Emergence and Scaling up of a Geographical Indication Initiative

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### Abstract

Geographical Indications (GIs) have become a negotiation stake at the WTO since their recognition by the TRIPS agreements in 1994. Nevertheless their protection and the support they benefit from are at the centre of sharp controversies. Though a collective organisation is not a pre-condition for the registration of a GI, the registration implies a delimitation of the territory of the GI as well as negotiations among producers to define the product and the practices accepted for its production. For these reasons, the registration procedures require a more or less formal structure of animation or networking piloting.

Numerous practical guides are dedicated to facilitators and there has been a wealth of academic research on the subject of broker in the field of political sciences, regional sciences and management. In agricultural socio-economics, research underlines the determining role of external actors and leaders in the emergence and the scaling-up of local agri-food initiatives, as well as the specific needs in terms of management.

This article focuses on the role of the facilitator in building collective agri-food organisation which valorized a Geographical Indication. These roles cover a large field from technical expertise to the coordination of networks, as well as conflict manager. Moreover, these roles evolve during the scaling up of the initiative.

By comparing case studies of emergent GI initiatives in Serbia and satellite French and Swiss cases of established GIs, we specify the values, the mobilisation of competencies and the roles of the facilitator during the translation cycles of the GI initiative. Moreover we analyse the leadership style, the types of challenges and dilemmas that they face and typical ways in which they respond to these.

**Keywords:** Facilitator, geographical indication, transition countries