



IN-HABIT – INclusive Health And wellBeing In small and medium size ciTies

D2.5 Upscaling Plan of the Āgenskalns food hub

Project Number	869227	Acronym	IN-HABIT
Full Title	INclusive Health And wellBeing In small and medium size ciTies		
Project URL	https://www.inhabit-h2020.eu/		
Document Type and Name	Deliverable, D2.5 Upscaling Plan of the Āgenskalns food hub		
Project Coordinator	University of Cordoba		
Project Call and Funding Scheme	SC5-14-2019 – Visionary and integrated solutions to improve wellbeing and health in cities H2020-SC5-2019-2 (IA)		
Date of Delivery	M60 – 29 August 2025		
WP, WP Leader	WP2, BSC		
Status	Final		
Dissemination level	Public		



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 869227

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(confidentiality)

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VERSION LOG

Issue date	Rev. No.	Responsible
29/08/2025	1.0	Emils KILIS (BSC), Rudolfs CIMDINS (RPR), Sabine SKUDRA (RPR)
30/01/2026	2.0	Emils KILIS (BSC), Miks BRASLINS (BSC), Sabine SKUDRA (RPR), Rudolfs CIMDINS (RPR), Una MEIBERGA (KQ), Darja TRIZNA (KQ), Sanija STANGUTE (BSC)

HISTORY OF CHANGES

Page	Description
Authors and affiliations (2)	Missing authors and affiliations added.
Version log and history of changes (3-5)	VERSION LOG and HISTORY OF CHANGES updated.
List of tables and figures (11-12)	Newly added figures included.



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<p>Executive summary (13-14)</p>	<p>Summary points on replication activities updated.</p>
<p>Solution description (24-38)</p>	<p>Expanded sections on Soft and Hard VIS to more explicitly detail principles, mechanisms, and well-being impacts of solutions. Alignment with Farm-to-Fork Strategy principles highlighted in educational event and waste reduction sections.</p> <p>Provided a more detailed description of the IN-HUB co-management and co-deployment approach for co-creating Soft and Hard VIS.</p> <p>Brief paragraph on Farm-to-Fork principle implementation added in Policy Alignment section.</p> <p>Graphs added for the IN-HUB nine-step collaboration process, iterative co-design loop, and evolution timeline. Additional event photos added in Soft VIS section.</p>
<p>Replication activities as part of IN-HABIT (39-51)</p>	<p>Replication approach and challenges for direct replication of piloted solutions in other markets outlined more explicitly in introduction.</p> <p>First and third replication activity descriptions expanded, listing high and low investment replicable elements. Wider impact illustrated by listing practices adopted by other markets.</p> <p>Graphs added for step-by-step replication process, activity timeline, and iterative event life cycle</p>
<p>Upscaling plan for multi-functional</p>	<p>Segment on financial sustainability expanded in the pre-conditions, barriers, and challenges section.</p>



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markets
(52-68)

Graphs added for upscaling steps and collaboration pathways, funding streams, monitoring and evaluation methods, impact and sustainability factors.

Annexes
(69-81)

Attached an upscaling and replication stand-alone guide.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GA	Grant Agreement
GDEI	Gender, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
H2020	Horizon 2020 projects
IHW	Inclusive Health and Wellbeing
PPPPs	People-public-private-partnerships
SMSCs	Small and medium sized cities
WP	Work Package



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PARTNERS' SHORT NAMES

AVUE	Neighbourhood Association of Las Palmeras
BOT	Book on a Tree
BSC	Baltic Studies Centre
B4B	Bridge for Billions
CORD	Ayuntamiento de Córdoba
DFC	Design for Change Spain
HIDE	Hidepark Civic Association Triptych
KQ	Kalneciema Quarter
LABORELEC	Engie Laborelec
LCREA	Lucca Crea
LUCCA	Comune di Lucca
NITRA	Mesto Nitra
PUJ	Pontificia Universidad Javeriana



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RIGA	Riga Planning Region
SUA	Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra
TSR	Tesseræ
UCO	University of Cordoba
UNIFI	Università di Pisa
UREAD	University of Reading



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Executive summary

- Riga’s upscaling plan presents the plan for upscaling solutions implemented as part of IN-HABIT, specifying the steps and resources needed to extend the impact beyond the initial scope.
- **The upscalable solution in Riga is composite**, integrating “soft” (events) and “hard” (infrastructure) interventions and social capital. **It is designed as a multifunctional food hub** that combines market trade with social, cultural, health-promotion and sustainability activities, aiming to improve social cohesion and food-related health behaviours.
- Implemented in Riga’s Āgenskalns neighbourhood, the multifunctional hub addresses (i) limited opportunities for socialisation and cultural activities, (ii) safety perceptions, (iii) the need for healthier lifestyle options and (iv) inclusive public spaces that foster interaction across diverse backgrounds.
- The solution aligns with EU policy goals related to social inclusion, health & wellbeing by delivering community-driven, environmentally responsible solutions.
- **Replication activities showcased the Āgenskalns Market model, including both short term, low investment and long term, high investment Hard and Soft VIS solutions.** A series of workshops brought together market operators, local authorities, and community groups from multiple towns to share best practices and reflect on how to adapt the hub concept.
- **Co-deployment and co-management methods and principles were tailored for market stakeholder engagement.** In addition to promoting multi-functional solutions, replication activities also incorporated a preliminary assessment of conditions, aims, and needs of other market stakeholders, focusing on identifying barriers that hinder adopting hub model.



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- **Upscaling strategies will focus on establishing a market association platform for coordinated advocacy and best-practice sharing.** Upscaling attempts will have to contend with regulatory complexity, financial sustainability, varied market capacities across municipalities, and the need for strong municipal support.
- **Long-term sustainability** hinges on institutional embedding, diversified financing, robust multi-stakeholder partnerships, and adaptive management to respond to economic or geopolitical shifts.



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Introduction

IN-HABIT is giving answers to the challenges specified in SC5-14-2019: Visionary and integrated solutions to improve wellbeing and health in cities: “delivering visionary and integrated solutions at the intersection of social, cultural, digital and nature-based innovation to increase citizens' health and wellbeing in cities; demonstrating how the integration of these solutions into innovative land use management, urban design and planning could reduce health-related environmental burdens in socially deprived neighbourhoods, foster equitable access for all to public spaces, enhance their quality and use and promote sustainable urban mobility patterns; and testing new transition management approaches, governance models, legal frameworks and financing mechanisms to re-design public spaces and urban commons and assess their contribution to improving health and wellbeing. They should promote multistakeholder initiatives, citizens' engagement and co-creation and co-ownership of public spaces.”

Over the past five years, the project has been developed in four European peripheral medium-sized cities: SMSCs - Córdoba (Spain), Riga (Latvia), Lucca (Italy), and Nitra (Slovakia). It focuses on innovative methods of resource mobilisation to promote Inclusive Health and Wellbeing (IHW) in cities, targeting both vulnerable groups and the broader urban population. Each city addresses specific urban challenges, but all utilise a similar methodological framework based on participatory action research, the creation of people-public-private partnerships (PPPPs) involving the public, private sector, and local communities to mobilise existing and underused resources. This approach allows them to co-design, co-deploy, and co-manage visionary and integrated solutions (VISs) to tackle emerging societal issues and a holistic monitoring framework to co-assess the impact of the VISs, measuring aspects related to social, economic, environmental, spatial, and subjective wellbeing and healthy lifestyles (CO-CO-CO-CO method)

In Córdoba, cultural and environmental resources are leveraged within a deprived neighbourhood, affected by segregation, concentration of socio-economic-environmental



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problems and territorial stigma. Riga concentrates on food and food culture by revitalising an old traditional food market. Lucca focuses on human-animal bonds by establishing the first EU city with an integrated human-animal urban policy, addressing the needs of vulnerable populations and revitalising urban dialogue. Nitra aims to foster a new culture for architectural manufacturing and design by engaging with residual areas and marginalised communities, harnessing environmental resources.

Throughout the process, the cities encountered several challenges, including the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the economic repercussions of the Russia–Ukraine conflict, inflation affecting physical investments in public space reorganisation, and mid-term political changes in the city's administration. These factors slowed progress but simultaneously enriched the research by providing valuable insights for future replication strategies. Despite these challenges, the project achieved significant and innovative outcomes that can be of interest to other cities.

IN-HABIT introduced new approaches to transition management, governance models, legal frameworks, and financing mechanisms to reimagine public spaces and urban commons, while assessing their contribution to health and wellbeing. The project demonstrated the feasibility of delivering visionary and integrated solutions (VIS) at the intersection of social, cultural, digital, and nature-based innovation to improve health and wellbeing in cities.

We took an innovative approach to nature-based solutions (NBS), developing the concept of social NBS (S-NBS) by incorporating co-design, co-deployment, co-management, and co-assessment processes in the naturalisation of public spaces that reduce health-related burdens and promote equitable and sustainable urban regeneration. Additionally, the Lucca pilot advanced the vision of an innovative human-animal city, introducing animal NBS (A-NBS) based on multistakeholder collaboration, citizen engagement, co-creation, and co-ownership of public spaces.



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Each city has prepared a deliverable to share the main VISs and the specific methodological adaptations it has developed and tested over the past five years, along with opportunities for replication and upscaling. Collectively, the cities have addressed the most pressing needs they face to enhance IHW, such as social transformation of vulnerable neighbourhoods (Córdoba), creating a new culture of food markets as multifunctional hubs (Riga), developing spaces and initiatives to include pets in city life and valorise animal-human bonds for promoting new public goods (Lucca), and using art, design, and nature to build links with marginalised communities (Nitra). This deliverable presents results from Riga, but the other three can be accessed on the IN-HABIT Zenodo community.

While the four deliverables follow a similar approach, they are tailored to the specific contexts and solutions tested in each city. Together, they form a collection of potential actions, methods, and solutions that can be scaled up to tackle a wide array of urgent societal challenges, such as increasing poverty and vulnerability, an ageing population, contradictions caused by migratory flows, rising animal populations, and the growing need for greater cohesion and societal dialogue in our cities. The variation in the scale of the pilot areas, the main issues addressed, and the VIS implemented open up numerous options for replication and upscaling, which can be customised to suit the resources and contexts of other cities.

Contribution to EU policy objectives

The proposed catalogue of replication and upscaling opportunities directly contributes to key EU policy objectives, values, and principles by fostering an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable approach to community development and by facilitating active participation in the policy design processes.

IN-HABIT VISs and working methods advance the EU policy objectives of social inclusion and equality by creating participatory frameworks that empower vulnerable communities, promote equal opportunities, and reduce disparities. Additionally, by addressing wellbeing through community-led initiatives, it supports the health and wellbeing objective, ensuring access to



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resources that improve quality of life. In alignment with EU values, particularly freedom, the solutions empower individuals and communities to actively shape their environment, ensuring inclusive participation and self-determination. The solutions embody the EU Principle of Solidarity, fostering cooperation, mutual support, and collective action to address shared challenges. By strengthening social cohesion and reducing disparities, the solutions contribute to national and city-specific policy priorities focused on economic resilience, digital inclusion, and public wellbeing. Through its multi-faceted and participatory approach, the solution drives meaningful progress while reinforcing fundamental EU commitments to equality, sustainability, and innovation.

The solutions also reinforce the education system, promoting inclusion and social cohesion by engaging students in reflective activities and designing solutions focused on assisting vulnerable members of society. They also support the goal of Democracy and Active Citizenship by fostering democratic values and empowering individuals to participate fully in society.

The European Union promotes the Right to the City and public spaces to foster democracy, social cohesion, and cultural integration. In this context, the INHABIT VISs and regenerated urban spaces create new opportunities for inclusivity, dialogue, accessibility, and active citizen participation, fully aligned with the EU Urban Agenda and Urban Innovative Actions. These interventions aim to build vibrant, safe, and well-designed areas that symbolise EU values by supporting citizens' rights, respecting diversity, equity, and human rights, and strengthening social cohesion. They also foster encounters across social groups and generations, generating belonging, pride, and stronger community bonds. The new public spaces actively involve citizens in co-design, co-deployment, and co-management, ensuring that strategies remain responsive and incorporate feedback through co-assessment. Their added value lies in their inclusivity and openness, their role in reinforcing democracy and freedom of expression through public discourse, and their ability to nurture community identity and belonging. They can also contribute to the local economy and tourism by attracting visitors, enhancing attractiveness, and encouraging broader social exchanges, while simultaneously creating opportunities to share



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innovative solutions linked to the Urban Agenda. Finally, the reorganisation of public spaces, together with the integration of social and animal-based nature solutions (S-NBS and A-NBS), directly supports the objectives of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) by enhancing sustainable aesthetic and inclusive urban development.

Structure of the upscaling plan

We begin with a brief overview of what we mean by upscaling. We then situate the work within Riga's specific context, outlining local challenges, opportunities, and the solutions that were designed to address them. Next, we detail the replication activities carried out during the project. Finally, we present a clear plan for upscaling those solutions, specifying the steps and resources needed to extend the impact beyond the initial scope.



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Purpose of upscaling plan

Upscaling refers to activities that aim to expand the reach and impact of a VIS (or combination of VIS), often involving modifications to fit new contexts and suit diverse settings. Upscaling activities require innovative and reflexive strategies to address larger-scale challenges and resource constraints. This may include (but is not limited to):

- Increasing the number of beneficiaries or coverage area (e.g. entire city) within the original context (city).
- Integrating with city-wide urban planning.
- Deepening the intervention's impact through enhanced features or services.
- Strengthening capacity to deliver the solution at a larger scale.
- Integrating the solution into existing city-wide systems and policies.
- Establishing new partnerships and stakeholder networks that expand the scope of the innovation.

For the urban context of IN-HABIT, upscaling means expanding a VIS's reach within a broader context (incl. regional, national, international). An example could be the extension of a pilot programme to a city- or nationwide initiative, but many upscaling pathways are possible.

Upscaling is important for IN-HABIT for several reasons. First, it maximises the potential impact of the piloted solutions by ensuring they reach more people who could benefit from them. This is particularly important for urban health and wellbeing initiatives aimed at inclusivity, as it helps create more equitable access to beneficial programmes across different neighbourhoods and socioeconomic groups. Second, upscaling builds on existing achievements, relationships and an intimate understanding of the local context. Third, successful upscaling can lead to transformative change by embedding solutions into broader local systems and policies, creating lasting institutional change that supports long-term innovation and sustainability.



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Moreover, upscaling often creates opportunities for refining solutions that might not be apparent at a smaller scale. As programmes grow within their original context, they can develop more sophisticated and tailored responses to the needs of a greater number of socioeconomic groups, build stronger partnerships with local stakeholders, and create more robust implementation mechanisms. This process of learning, adaptation and extension can subsequently inform future efforts to scale impact.

IN-HABIT upscaling plans serve as roadmaps for expanding the solutions explored and implemented in the project to a broader context, ensuring their continued impact, effectiveness and sustainability on a larger scale. Building on the replication activities carried out in the project, the plans provide a summary overview of the process in each of the cities, outlining the steps, methodologies, and resources employed. They provide comprehensive guidelines that offer actionable strategies for scaling and adapting solutions aimed at fostering inclusive health and wellbeing, while also addressing potential challenges. The plan does not focus solely on positive results but also shines a light on the barriers encountered during the project's initial and implementation stages. By documenting these obstacles and detailing the strategies used to overcome them, the plan equips stakeholders and interested parties with valuable insights to anticipate and navigate similar challenges in future implementations.



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Problem statement and proposed solution

City: Riga

Country: Latvia

Project Partners: BSC, KQ (Āgenskalns food hub in Riga), RPR (Regional public authority - Riga city representative)

Identified Challenges: The specific challenges addressed by IN-HABIT interventions in Riga include a diverse range of issues affecting quality of life in Āgenskalns, though they touch upon broader possibilities of turning markets into multifunctional hubs. Before the project, there were limited opportunities for cultural life and social life in Āgenskalns itself, particularly for families and young professionals. In addition, the presence of several liquor shops and gambling establishments had historically contributed to the perception that Āgenskalns is insufficiently safe and, consequently, limited its social desirability. Secondly, the influx of new residents and students from abroad due to the proximity of Āgenskalns to several university campuses required spaces that allowed individuals from various backgrounds to interact. Thirdly, there is a need to foster healthy food consumption habits by discouraging sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy diets.

Solution(s) developed in IN-HABIT: Several soft and hard VIS were designed and implemented at a multi-functional urban food hub (Āgenskalns Market). Soft VIS included numerous economic (trade), social, cultural, environmental and educational events. Hard VIS refer to various infrastructural solutions that were developed as part of the project. These include the transformation of the outdoor marketplace, installation of a lift and co-creation kitchen in the market pavilion and the creation of an eco-island for reducing waste. These solutions should be treated as a composite whole, though can be considered individually in the context of selective replication efforts.



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Target/Beneficiary Groups: Families with children, young people, students, the elderly, minority groups, and people living alone.



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Solution description (multifunctional food hub)

Innovative solution: The solution developed and implemented in Riga was composite in nature - a multifunctional market that combined different elements and functions. These elements ranged from infrastructural solutions to social/cultural interventions that sought to redefine the identity of a neighbourhood market and reframe the possibilities for what a neighbourhood market can be in Riga and Latvia. From the perspective of replication and upscaling, no single element should be treated as the unit of replication and upscaling. Rather, a multifunctional market that contributes to IHW in the broad sense should be treated as the model to emulate and presents a contextually innovative solution that used food (locally undervalued resource) to address broader questions of inclusion, health and wellbeing.



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Soft VIS



Figure 1. Economic and social events

Economic / trade events such as weekly flea and monthly vintage markets bring together antiquity traders and customers interested in second-hand goods, reuse and repair practices. Trade events relate to the minimisation of waste and promote the idea of sustainable lifestyles and circular resource use and potentially contribute to economic wellbeing.

Social events take different forms: festivities, celebrations, competitions, creative workshops, sports activities, community sharing and gifting events, reading sessions, meal preparation, ethnic days and other. A common characteristic of social events is their interactive nature,



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thereby facilitating community engagement and skill development. They also act against discrimination and foster inclusion, thus contributing to subjective and social well-being.



Figure 2. Educational events

Educational events include cooking masterclasses, meal preparations, food recipe demonstrations, craftsmanship training, bicycle repair sessions, gardening classes, and more. These events usually take place at the community kitchen and transformed outdoor marketplace. Many educational events are food-related and contribute to broader sustainability objectives, particularly those set out in the EU Farm to Fork Strategy. In practice, these activities support awareness raising and skills development via teaching, demonstrating, learning and sharing knowledge related to sustainable consumption, including meal preparation, food saving, food planning, food waste avoidance, menu diversification, healthy nutrition, and emphasis on local and seasonal product use. Other food event topics include culinary heritage and ethnic cuisines, aimed at promoting a better understanding of local and other cultures.

Educational events also include language training for the migrant population, entrepreneurship start-up courses for Ukrainian war refugees, craftsmanship classes, and physical health-related workshops. Such events are key to fostering inclusion of vulnerable populations.



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Cultural events include concerts, artistic performances, theatrical shows, dances, musical performances and more. Similar to social events, cultural events are offered free of charge and are aimed at the general public. Most of them take place in the transformed outdoor marketplace (community stage, community greenhouse). Cultural events are co-organised by Āgenskalns Market team together with artistic collectives, such as musical groups, literary associations, and cultural education establishments. The market is guided by the principle of empowering communities to host their own events, rather than relying solely on management-driven programming, ensuring alignment with local interests and needs.



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Hard VIS



Figure 3. Infrastructure solutions

Accessibility features include structural modifications – the addition of a lift to the second floor and an accessibility ramp –, as well as ongoing refinement of premises after major renovations to address emerging needs identified via user feedback.

Infrastructure and urban furniture were designed in collaboration with experts, with an emphasis on implementing anthropometric and ergonomic principles to support mobility and ensure access to the market for diverse publics. These solutions were tailored for audiences who have special needs or typically encounter difficulties in urban settings – families with children who use strollers, elderly patrons, and people who use mobility aids or have health complications.



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These features help support a safe and comfortable environment that contributes to spatial and subjective well-being.

Public gathering and adaptable event spaces include both outdoor (stage, community garden and greenhouse, raised terrace) and indoor additions (community kitchen). Taken together, these areas are important for catering across several well-being dimensions.

These areas are central to the market's capacity to fulfil multiple functions simultaneously or at different times. In practice, these locations alternate between functioning as event hosting spaces or as seating areas where visitors can engage in self-initiated activities. This adaptability maximises the diversity of uses of limited space, thus serving as a model of sustainable urban land use. Furthermore, these areas support various types of equipment and temporary installations, provided either by the market or partner stakeholders hosting events, which allows the venue to take on different forms tailored to specific situations.

The community co-creation kitchen is a specialised area that comes with a full set of cooking equipment and has been designed as a learning and event space that can host groups of up to 20 people. This arrangement enables hands-on practical skill development.

To fulfil the function of a public space and foster socialisation, a key principle is the “public living room” management approach for seating areas. This entails that the areas are not tied to specific vendor stalls, and visitors are free to use them for extended periods without the obligation to make purchases. Users are also given a large degree of freedom to reconfigure seating arrangements and modify these spaces for their own activities, including leisure, work, socialising, and play.



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Figure 4. Eco-Island waste reduction site

Waste reduction initiatives were implemented following an internal audit that identified waste sorting among vendors as a key issue at the market. To address this, environmental NGOs and waste companies were consulted to establish a dedicated sorting facility (Eco-Island) in the market courtyard. A staff member responsible for educational outreach and on-site assistance was also appointed.

The intervention directly contributes to spatial well-being by reducing waste generation, enhancing safety and cleanliness, and decreasing waste management costs. By embedding circular economy principles -source separation, material recovery, and waste prevention –, as well as education on responsible consumption within daily market operations, Āgenskalns market provides a practical example of how Farm-to-Fork implementation can help support sustainable food systems at a local level.



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Key components: The key components include Soft and Hard VIS solutions outlined in the previous section. The underlying principle that makes the multi-functional model work is that Hard and Soft VIS elements work in tandem, creating a mutually reinforcing system. Hard infrastructure – accessibility features and adaptable event/public gathering spaces – provides the physical foundation that enables diverse publics to access and use the venue. Soft VIS elements like programming and community activities then activate these spaces, complementing the market's dining and retail functions. This layered approach creates multiple avenues for different social groups to engage meaningfully with the market and fulfil various needs. In addition, waste reduction facilities and educational programming on sustainability make the market an important node for disseminating environmental thinking and reducing waste at a local level.

Crucially, these elements should be managed by a forward-looking and proactive team that (i) builds relationships with key stakeholders, (ii) combines social and entrepreneurial objectives and (iii) employs participatory co-creation methods.



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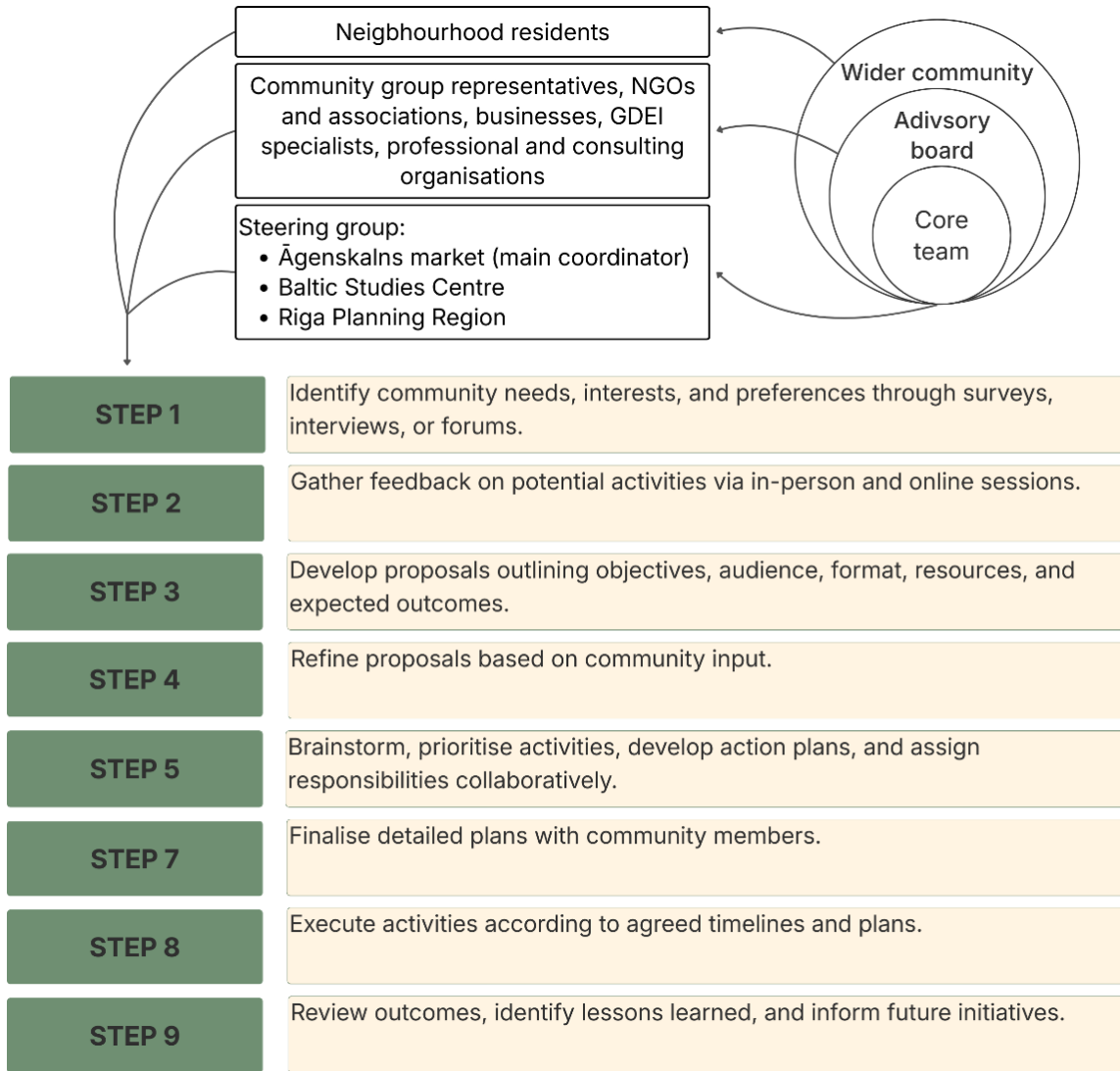


Figure 5. IN-HUB co-deployment and co-management nine steps



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Hard and Soft VIS were implemented using a co-deployment and co-management approach overseen by the IN-HUB. The core team – Āgenskalns market management, Baltic Studies Centre, and Riga Planning Region – acted as the steering group, responsible for onboarding stakeholders and expanding the collaboration network, overseeing coordination, monitoring and evaluation, and proposing, refining, and implementing solutions.

To align market revitalisation with community needs and preferences, stakeholder groups affected by the development were identified and invited as consultants and co-creators on the User Advisory Board. It included both long term and short term members, the latter mostly being experts and professionals invited situationally to assist with the development of a specific solution. The wider community – neighbourhood residents and specific intervention target groups (students, seniors, families, tourists, vulnerable populations) – were regularly consulted for feedback to determine the relevance of proposed solutions. The nine step solution implementation process and iterative design loop are illustrated in Figures 5 and 6.



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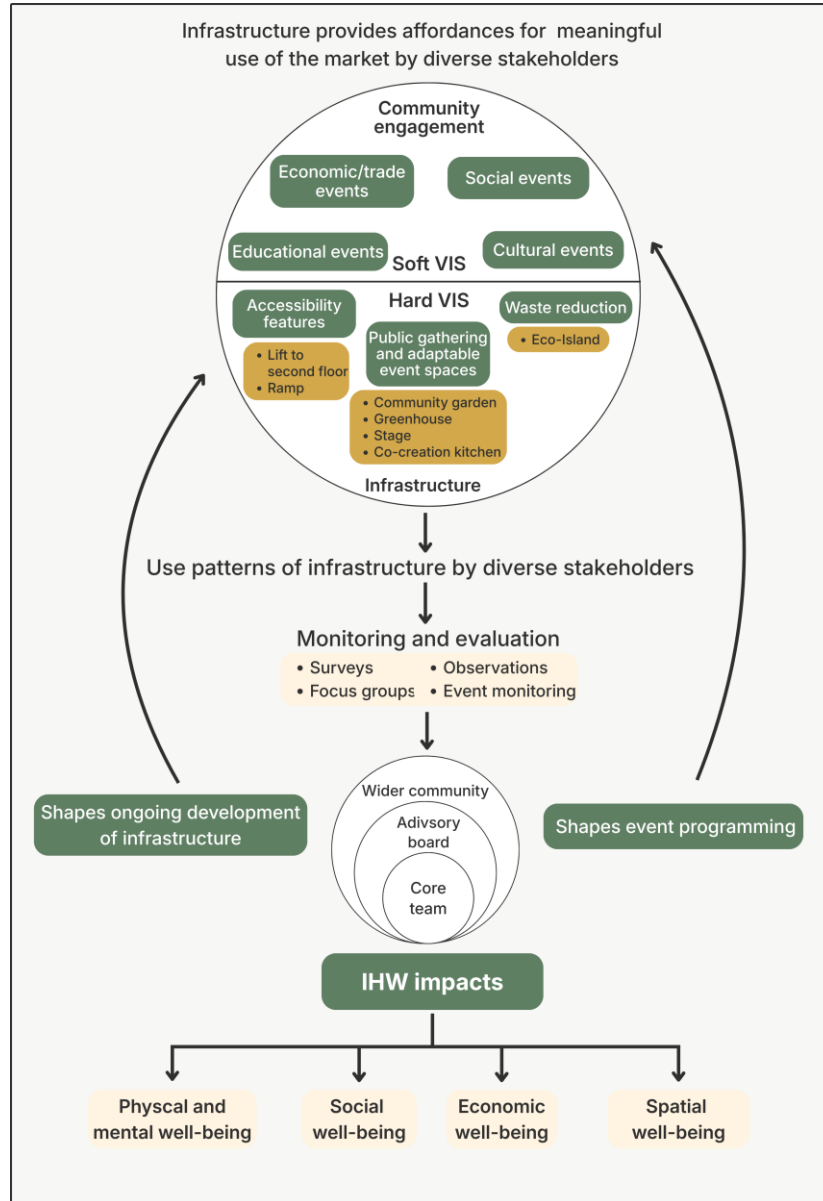


Figure 6. Participatory co-deployment and co-management iterative loop



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This collaboration format informed initial major renovations in the market, as well as subsequent smaller scale refinement of premises and events programming. Importantly, this mechanism allowed for the core team to react to emerging circumstances and user feedback.

Evolution: The general vision for Āgenskalns Market predates the IN-HABIT project. Nonetheless, the project provided an opportunity to increase the presence of IHW aspects and further refine the plans for the activities at the market. In practice, IN-HABIT activities in Riga operated in lockstep with the overall vision of KQ, but the local team took into consideration the local context and the needs of the local community. This was done via the co-deployment and co-management approach described in the preceding section. The initial vision was formulated in the Inclusive Transformation Plan (D2.1), which was subsequently implemented and refined by the market team.

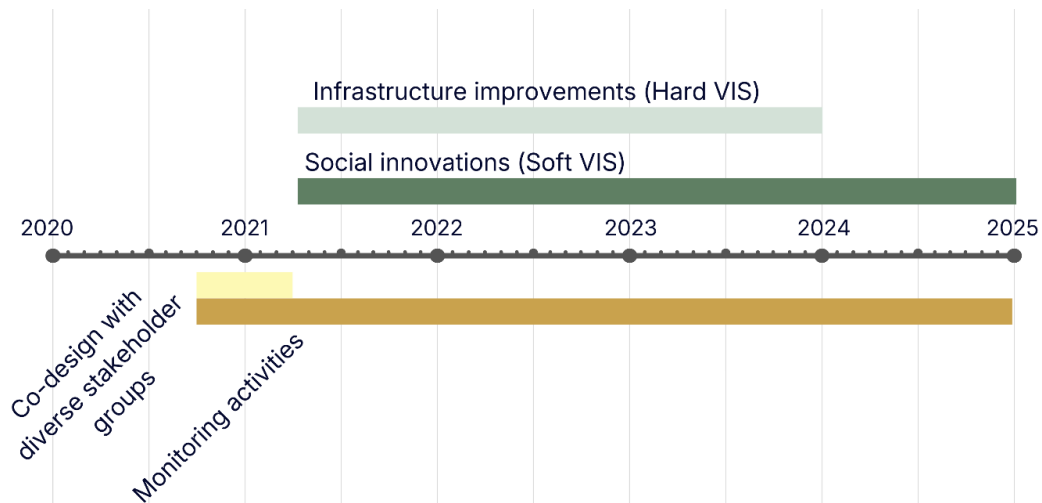


Figure 7. Evolution timeline

A **key enabling contextual factor** was the social capital that the market team had accumulated over many years because of their previous projects and collaborations. This meant that different



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groups trusted the market team and were comfortable voicing their concerns. Thus, we note that co-creation and collaborative efforts were enabled by a growing network of connections maintained based on social capital that coalesce around a key partner with a vision for the market.

However, the **challenging environment** (pandemic and Russian invasion in Ukraine) meant that the team had to constantly adapt to changing circumstances. For instance, one of the initial ideas was to strengthen the online/digital market, but this solution gradually lost its relevance. Likewise, unexpectedly high levels of inflation meant that the costs of various solutions were higher than initially anticipated. Finally, engaging with groups that do not have institutional or group-level representation has proved to be challenging.

Overall, a **key success** of the interventions in Riga is the fact that the market is increasingly recognised as a community centre (local impact) and an example of a neighbourhood market that should be emulated by other markets (both in Riga and other cities in Latvia). Crucially, the emphasis is not placed solely on economic impacts. The multifunctionality and creativity of the market is recognised and a multitude of positive impacts on IHW are associated with such an approach. In other words, it is an ambassador for the reimagined market culture and multifunctional urban food hub development in Latvia.

Policy alignment: The multifunctional neighbourhood market in Āgenskalns represents an example of how local initiatives can directly advance European Union policy objectives while embodying EU values of equality, non-discrimination, and social justice. The market, by embedding health and wellbeing services within an accessible community space, removes traditional barriers that prevent vulnerable populations from accessing cultural resources, creating a tangible pathway toward inclusive health and wellbeing.

The Āgenskalns multifunctional market embodies the principles of the New European Bauhaus by merging sustainability, inclusivity, and aesthetics into a single, community-centred space. It demonstrates how heritage preservation, contemporary design, and social innovation can co-



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exist to create places that are functionally and socially significant. Crucially, the market goes beyond its traditional role as a space for trade by hosting a wide range of services and activities. This multifunctional approach transforms the market into a living laboratory for urban wellbeing, where different dimensions of community life – social, cultural, economic, and environmental – are interconnected.

By aligning with New European Bauhaus principles, the Āgenskalns Market demonstrates how urban regeneration projects support local food systems, foster belonging, revitalise historic architecture and create spaces that promote inclusion. In this way, the Āgenskalns multifunctional market contributes to the EU's wider cultural and policy agenda, offering a replicable model of how multifunctional neighbourhood markets can become drivers of inclusive, sustainable, and aesthetically enriching urban life.

Āgenskalns Market also applies EU Farm to Fork Strategy principles through a place-based, multifunctional food hub model that addresses issues of food production, distribution, consumption, and education. The market collaborates with local and regional producers to shorten supply chains and prioritises procuring seasonal food. Awareness raising and skills development on sustainable consumption and food waste reduction are realised via regular workshops and events organised in collaboration with experts in the field. The addition of a dedicated on-site waste sorting facility directly puts circular practices into action by reducing waste volumes via separation and recovery of materials. Altogether, the market provides several examples of how food system sustainability can be promoted at a local level.

In addition, the market's approach aligns with the EU's evolving approach to mental health and community wellbeing. A market space that combines social interaction, physical activity opportunities, healthy food access, and community programming offers a holistic and community-based approach. By transforming a traditional market into a multifunctional health hub, the project demonstrates how innovative urban planning can integrate the promotion of health and well-being into daily community life.



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At the national level, the market directly supports Latvia's strategic priorities to reduce inequality, improve the social safety net, and foster social integration and inclusion. The neighbourhood market serves as a practical implementation of these goals, creating infrastructure that strengthens social cohesion. For Riga specifically, this represents forward-thinking urban development that addresses social and public health objectives simultaneously.

Furthermore, the market's contribution extends beyond individual outcomes to encompass broader social and economic benefits that reflect EU values in action. By creating a space where people of different backgrounds can interact and access resources together, it naturally promotes non-discrimination and inclusion. The emphasis on prevention aligns with EU priorities for strengthening health systems, while the combination of market activities with health programming generates natural opportunities for community building and social integration.

Ultimately, this multifunctional market exemplifies an innovative, community-centred approach that addresses health inequalities through accessible, integrated community resources rather than traditional medical models. It demonstrates how local initiatives can serve as vehicles for advancing European values while meeting specific national and municipal policy priorities, creating a model that could be replicated across other EU communities facing similar challenges with health equity and social cohesion.



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Replication activities as part of IN-HABIT

Goals and objectives

When planning replication activities, **it is crucial to acknowledge the complexity of marketplaces as hybrid public and commercial spaces**. The diversity of market formats (temporary/permanent, open-air/covered/indoor, thematic focus), governance arrangements, as well as overall concepts are all factors that influence how directly specific solutions can be replicated. Ågenskalns Market's transition to a multi-functional format was predicated on conditions that cannot be easily emulated:

- the managing entity's pre-existing network of collaborations,
- accumulated social capital,
- the market hall's spatial characteristics,
- support in the form of EU programme funding.

Therefore, **a context-sensitive approach – understanding each venue's unique circumstances and aims – is paramount before tailoring Hard and Soft VIS solutions for replication in other markets**.

To achieve this, a two-pronged approach was used. **First, Hard and Soft VIS solutions and their well-being benefits were presented to other market stakeholders via soft replication activities** – on-site demonstrations, knowledge sharing, and experience exchange events. The aim was to:

- showcase tested practical solutions and approaches, including ones requiring more extensive resources, long-term planning and policy alignment, as well as low investment practices that are more easily transferable to other market contexts,



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- raise awareness of the multi-functional model and foster the concept's endorsement by prompting other market stakeholders to reflect on how proposed solutions can potentially be adapted for their venues,
- collectively identify good practices employed by other markets in the Riga metropolitan area,
- foster knowledge and experience exchange between entrepreneurs and specialists from municipalities within the metropolitan area.

Second, participatory methods and principles tested as part of the IN-HUB co-deployment and co-management approach were replicated and adapted for engagement with other markets. The primary focus was on stakeholder mapping and overall condition pre-assessment. Similar to the initial steps of co-designing VIS at Āgenskalns market, replication activities sought to involve stakeholders that would be affected by the development across multiple levels of governance and among different groups – including market owners, managers and users, municipal representatives, policymakers, NGOs and associations, businesses, among others. Particular emphasis was placed on assessing other market and municipal structural unit needs, as well as identifying challenges and barriers that hinder the adoption of a multi-functional model.

Insights from replication activities informed the upscaling plan, which focuses on necessary actions to strengthen the capacity to deliver multi-functional market solutions at a larger scale. Figure 8 outlines the logic behind the replication activities.



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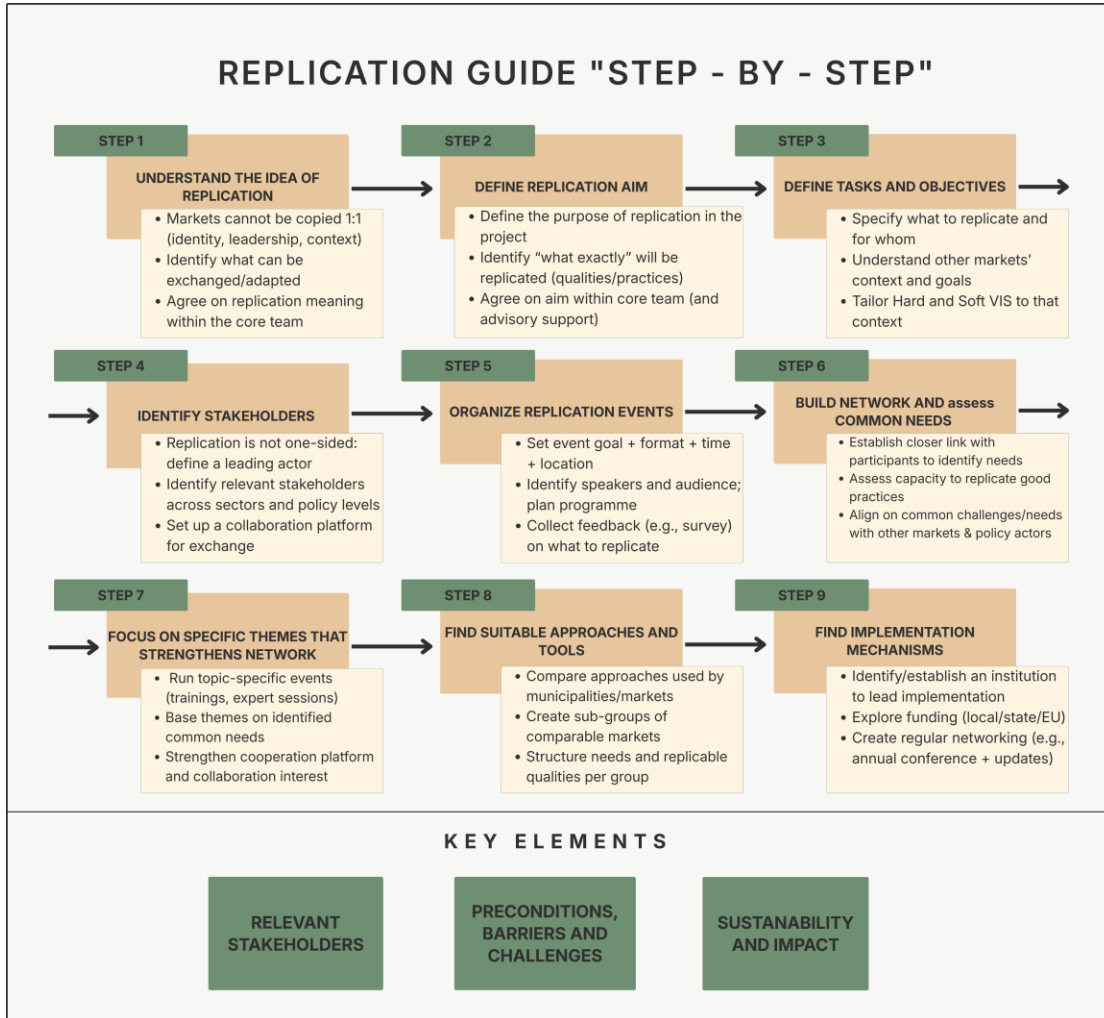


Figure 8. Replication plan step-by-step process outline

Three in-person events dedicated to replication activities were organised in the Riga Planning Region, as well as one online event for food entrepreneurs with policymakers and decision-makers from the Riga metropolitan area. All events were planned and organised with a similar structure in mind.



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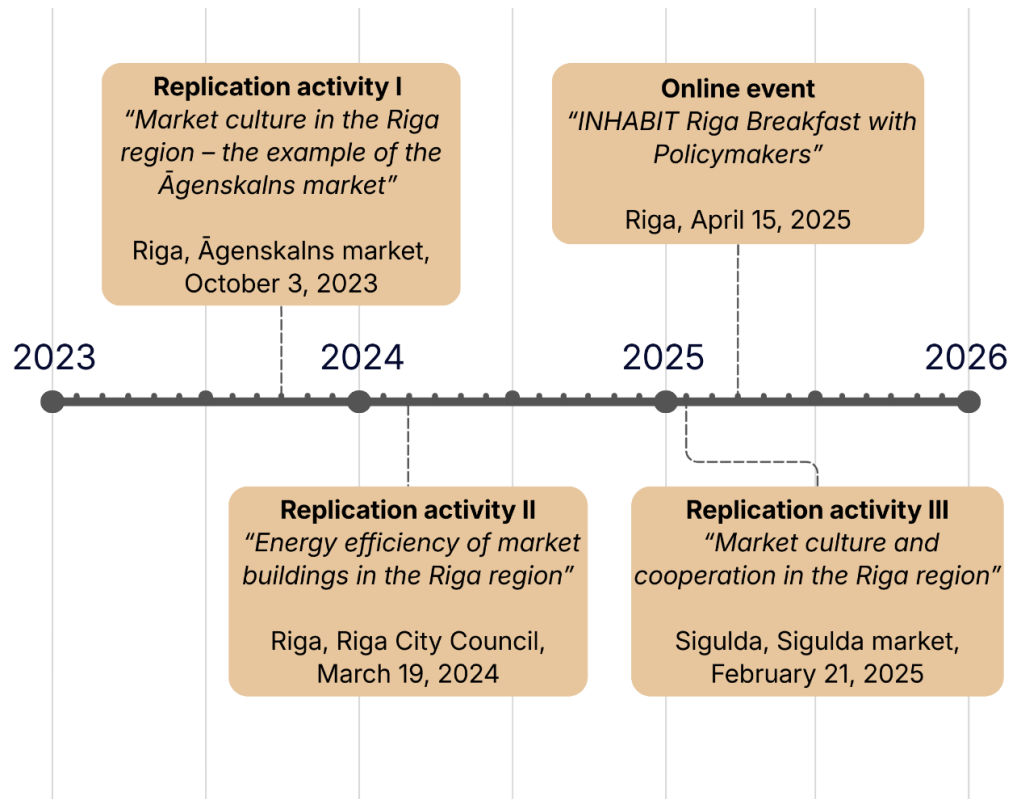


Figure 9. Replication activity timeline

In the first replication event, which was organised at Āgenskalns Market, a tour of the market was conducted, presenting the results of the renovation process, as well as the role of the INHABIT project in the market’s development.



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Figure 10. Replication activity I – “Market culture in the Riga region – the example of the Āgenskalns market”

Riga, Āgenskalns market, October 3, 2023

The market team presented Hard and Soft VIS innovation outlined in the Solution Description section. Particular attention was devoted to the experience of the Āgenskalns market, which demonstrates both **resource-intensive, long-term investment solutions** and **good practices that can be implemented in the short term** and replicated in other markets.

First, the **Public–Private Partnership (PPP) approach** is used to implement market development activities. This model enables private sector investment and professional management while safeguarding traditional market functions, public access, and community orientation. The Āgenskalns experience shows that PPPs, when combined with clear public oversight, can ensure both economic sustainability and public value.

More financially intensive investment solutions are mainly associated with the implementation of **Hard VIS**, including the renovation and modernisation of the historic market building. Although such investments require significant resources and time, they provide long-term benefits by improving safety, functionality, and adaptability of the market space.

At the same time, the market demonstrates several **easily transferable good practices**. These include **accessibility improvements based on universal design principles**, ensuring inclusivity for all user groups, and **public space enhancements** in the market area by prioritising



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pedestrians and community activities, replacing car-centric layouts with greenery and seating. These interventions strengthen the market's role as a local social hub and can be implemented with relatively limited investment. In addition, the introduction of **waste reduction measures and a co-creation kitchen** supports sustainable food systems and corresponds to the **Farm-to-Fork concept**, promoting short food supply chains, reduced food waste, and community engagement.

Overall, the Āgenskalns market experience highlights how a balanced combination of **governance solutions, targeted infrastructural investments, and replicable soft measures** can support the sustainable revitalisation of urban markets.

Among the solutions presented, the **Soft VIS** methods for curating events were the most flexible and readily transferable to other market contexts in the short term, as they can be implemented without the extensive financial investment that structural innovations require. In addition to the **nine step co-deployment and co-management process**, Āgenskalns market's representatives showcased their approach for iteratively developing **event programming**, with an emphasis on **organisational procedures, skills and knowledge capacity building, finance planning, and stakeholder engagement** approaches. The process is represented in Figure 11.



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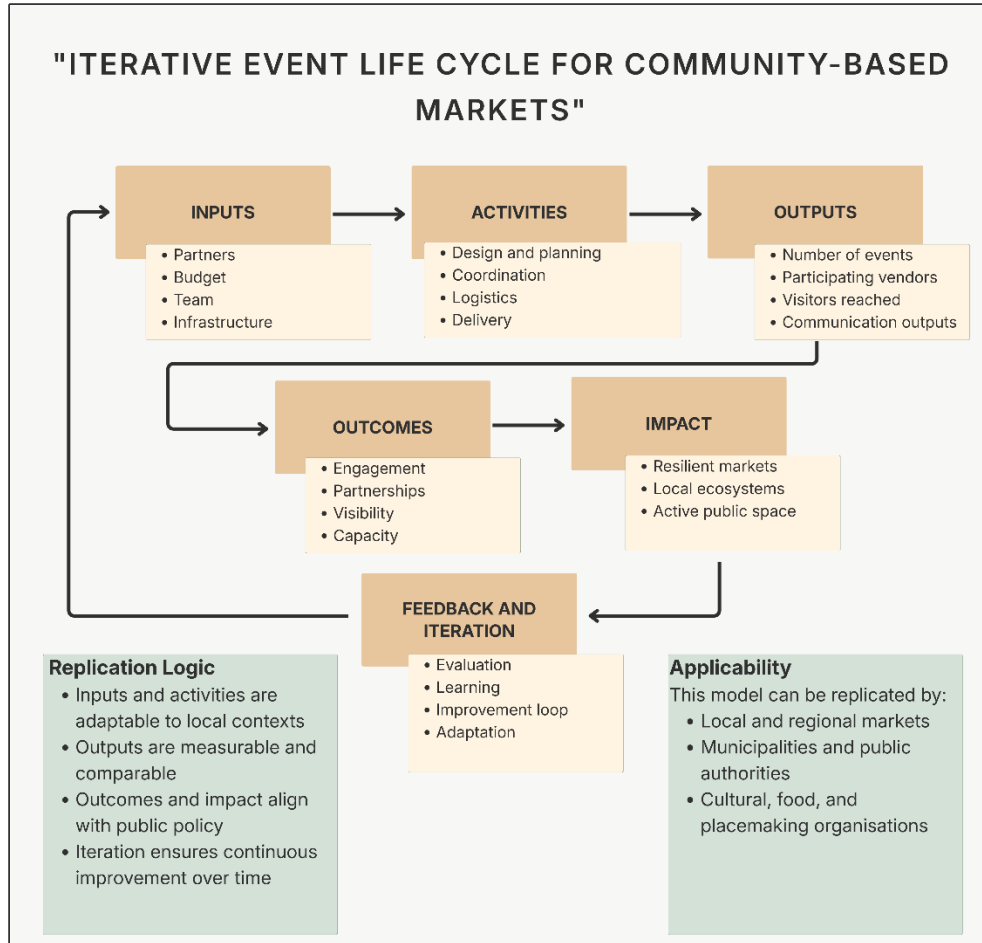


Fig 11. Iterative event life cycle for community-based markets

Afterwards, representatives from Sigulda municipality were invited to present the activities carried out by the municipality in the development of the market in Sigulda. The talk focused on observations made in the region, such as renewed demand for market accessibility and the availability of local products and goods nearby. However, it was noted that the high popularity



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of supermarkets also remains prominent and holds back the successful development of the permanent market in Sigulda and the cultural shift it represents.

As the third case, the experience of Ādaži municipality was presented at this event (a market in the Riga city agglomeration). Specifically, the story of Kukū MARKET, which is a contemporary open-air pop-up concept market and is dedicated to highlighting the creativity, talents and skills of Latvian craftspeople, designers, home producers and farmers. By organising these markets as open-air events, even without their own specific home (building), gathering traders in the open-air market promotes the recognition of local values and strengthens cooperation between local producers and visitors.

The second replication event had a completely different central theme, and its format differed from the first. Specifically, it **was not an experience exchange event, but a seminar dedicated to the energy efficiency of market buildings in the Riga region**. Therefore, replication in this case concerned the potential to repeat the solutions discussed and implemented at Āgenskalns Market and their suitability for other markets in the region.



Figure 12. Replication activity II – “Energy efficiency of market buildings in the Riga region”

Riga, Riga City Council, March 19, 2024



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This topic was chosen because of the energy efficiency challenges that Āgenskalns Market faces are also present elsewhere in the region. The event provided the vision for the city of Riga in the field of energy efficiency of public buildings and a counterexample – Āgenskalns Market, a municipal public building, facing energy efficiency challenges. During the event, financial instruments such as the Emissions Quota Auctioning Instrument and a specialised program: Energy Efficiency Loan with Capital Discount were also presented. In turn, the discussion section of the event concerned the needs, challenges and visions in the field of energy efficiency, assessed policy and management options, examined various planning solutions in the Riga region and suggested appropriate financing and implementation options.

The **third replication** event was the final in-person **experience exchange and development opportunity generation event among market representatives and local government specialists to jointly search for new cooperation models and sustainable development solutions**. This time, the event took place outside the city of Riga – in Sigulda County. During the event, representatives of Āgenskalns Market introduced the participants to the IN-HABIT project's support for the development of the Āgenskalns Market in the city of Riga, emphasised the market's replicable successes, valuable experiences, and led **an interactive session dedicated to the creation of a Self-Organised Market and Food Platform**.



Figure 13. Replication activity III – “Market culture and cooperation in the Riga region”

Sigulda, Sigulda market, February 21, 2025



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During the interactive session, issues such as information acquisition and circulation in the market platform, market association and interest representation, offers, advertisements and collaborations, deliveries and other solutions through the platform were addressed in detail. Representatives of **various markets located in different parts of Sigulda County shared their experiences and referred to the practices adopted and adapted from the inspiring examples seen in the Āgenskalns and Kalnciema Quarter markets, which have been and are being used in the development of local markets.**

Āgenskalns and Kalnciema Quarter markets strongly emphasise **local producers and short supply chains**, highlighting small farmers, artisans, urban food makers, and eco-friendly production. Sigulda and **other regional markets follow this model** by curating vendors and prioritising local producers. Both markets also integrate **cultural programming** into market life, hosting concerts, seasonal festivals, workshops, and craft or food masterclasses. **Regional markets adopt this “community-space” approach** by adding events, music, educational activities, and thematic days.

Their investment in **high-quality design and renovated spaces** – heritage preservation, modern layouts, aesthetic stalls, and cosy public areas – **inspires other markets to improve layout, branding, lighting, cleanliness, and visitor comfort**, even if full-scale renovation is not feasible. They also frequently host **themed and niche markets**, such as organic, vintage, craft, seasonal, or plant markets. **Sigulda and nearby markets replicate this through recurring thematic days** like eco-weekends or craft Saturdays.

Āgenskalns promotes **sustainability practices**, including re-use events, zero-waste initiatives, plastic-free packaging, composting, and urban gardening. Inspired by this, **other markets introduce waste-sorting, eco-friendly vendor rules, sustainability partnerships, and reusable packaging systems**. In addition, Āgenskalns additionally integrates a **food-hall concept** with cafés, ready-to-eat counters, and community dining, **motivating regional markets to create café areas, street-food corners, and gastronomy showcases.**



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Finally, both markets maintain a strong **digital and promotional presence** – active social media, clear branding, professional visuals, and online vendor announcements. **Sigulda county markets and other markets increasingly adopt similar communication and visual identity practices.**

During the needs assessment session, much emphasis was also placed on the necessary support from local governments to promote the sustainability of markets, so that success stories would not be based only on enthusiasts but also on the well-considered provision of the necessary infrastructure for market development.

Within all replication events **representatives of markets and municipalities** shared their experience and jointly discussed challenges both sides are facing and exchanged ideas for market development and replication of good practices.

Riga planning region, as a regional level public authority, consists of 9 municipalities but regular **collaboration network stewarded by RPR** extends beyond the **Riga metropolitan area**, encompassing at least 13 municipalities. Good collaboration also exists among **neighbouring regions and its municipalities**. **Thus, thanks to the existing collaboration network around RPR there is high potential to reach representatives of municipalities and through them representatives of markets and entrepreneurs.** Consequently, there is very high potential to upscale solutions implemented at Āgenskalns Market thanks to IN-HABIT project and experiences exchanged within replication events.

Events dedicated to replication activities took a place in Āgenskalns Market in Riga, in Riga city council and one event took place outside the city of Riga – in the region – in the Sigulda County. The invited participants came from the Riga metropolitan area, neighbouring regions and municipalities, so our ambitions were **almost at a national level.**



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Relevant stakeholders

Public sector: regional level public authorities' representatives and representatives of municipalities – spatial development planners and business support specialists are coordinating collaboration and experience exchange, but policy makers and decision makers needs to be well informed to provide the necessary support on time and in the long term.

Private sector: market organisers, entrepreneurs – representatives of markets and traders are those who in general are key implementors of replicable solutions and other good practices.

Significant input for innovations and high-quality solutions is needed from **NGOs, community organisations and professionals** – researchers, designers (architects, landscape architects, interior designers), constructors, environmental specialists etc. – to facilitate co-creation and collective work based on common understanding of values.

Preconditions, barriers and challenges

To carry out replication activities within the IN-HABIT project, foremost it was important to identify the **state of development of market culture in Riga and the entire region**. The Riga region encompasses both the capital and its surroundings, and although market culture in Riga is evolving and well-established, the development of permanent markets in other towns of the Riga region, such as Ķekava, Ādaži and Mārupe, is not really taking place, although the demand is there. Signs of existing market culture are more clearly visible in Riga, as there are several discernible interconnected elements that go beyond economics and touch upon social, cultural, and spatial practices. Historical and cultural identity, social interaction and community life, multifunctionality, accessibility, environmental and sustainability practices are all key elements for thinking about market culture.

One of the most important enabling factors was **the use of a regional scale in the replication activities**. This allowed the approach taken in IN-HABIT and the Āgenskalns Market to be



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demonstrated on a larger scale. A good example outside of Riga is the previously mentioned Sigulda, where we already see signs of a well-functioning market.

As anticipated from the outset, one of the challenges during replication was the **relatively large diversity of markets in the Riga region** and the correspondingly different needs. **The scale and functionality of Riga markets** are not always comparable to smaller markets outside the capital. **Different approaches of municipalities** in organising markets, planning support and coordinating activities make the replication process more complicated.

Sustainability and impact

The sustainability of the replicated solution will largely depend on the **support of local governments** in organising markets, the activities of **local active entrepreneurs and individuals**, as well as the general public's perception of the revival of market culture and the addition of various types of cultural and creative activities that make markets neighbourhood centres.

Anticipated positive impacts are the foundations created for raising the issue of **market culture development** and **establishing a market association**, which could serve as a basis for broader opportunities for permanent markets both in Riga as the capital and in other places in the region. It is essential in the development of markets to increase their social function and expand the basic functions of the market with inclusive, healthy and cultural activities. The role of local governments as drivers of strategic planning and developers of public outdoor space and mobility issues is very important in terms of market development, accessibility, and general support.



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Upscaling plan for multifunctional markets

Goals and objectives

Upscaling activities are planned for expanding the solutions explored and implemented in the IN-HABIT project to a broader context, ensuring their continued effectiveness and sustainability on a larger scale. In essence, upscaling includes a policy-making component (at various planning levels), aiming to promote healthy and inclusive communities, as well as a cooperation and action implementation component, resulting in the implementation of various projects and the creation of new collaborations. At its core, **the objective is to promote and implement a model of cooperation and promotion of a multifunctional modern market**, using the example of the multifunctional Āgenskalns Market, via regional markets, and the creation of a **unified market cooperation platform** in the Riga metropolitan area or even Latvia as a whole.

The main benefits of establishing such a cooperation platform for markets are a shared development vision, capacity building, knowledge exchange, joint branding and promotion, as well as policy advocacy and representation. The platform would allow markets to speak with a unified voice in the context of discussions with local, regional and national stakeholders regarding the development of multi-functional urban food hubs. The main practical steps to move forward with the market association idea are to organise the first foundational workshop with key market stakeholders, map existing markets, operators, and associations to identify potential members, establish a steering group and develop a pilot cooperation project (e.g. market conference) to demonstrate the added value of this platform.

Crucially, the idea behind upscaling is to promote the understanding that today's markets, in addition to their trading function, also have a **multifunctional role**, acting as neighbourhood centres that creates opportunities for socialisation, creative activities, and are generally places to revitalise the urban environment.



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Multi-level stakeholder engagement and regional scale actions are key for the upscaling process. National, regional and local level policy makers can improve development planning documents, anticipate relevant actions, and promote stakeholder cooperation with local governments and community organisations. To ensure cooperation on a larger scale, it is planned to participate in a social entrepreneurship support program for the creation of a unified market cooperation platform which would potentially take the form of a market association. As a result of initially successful cooperation, **the first market conference in Latvia was held in the autumn of 2025.**

The core IN-HABIT partners (BSC, KQ, RPR) act as **mediators of stakeholder collaboration and are key promoters of the main idea** during the implementation of IN-HABIT. They popularise the experience of the implemented activities and the multipurpose innovations operating in Āgenskalns Market and **disseminate the multifunctional concept** on a larger scale. **Other scientific organisations** can provide a significant contribution to creating an analytical research base for studying this issue and bringing the topic to the forefront in the research field.

The main target audience and beneficiaries of upscaling activities are policy makers, decision makers as well as the public. Crucially, upscaling solutions include the wider community and those taking over previously replicated solutions – local authorities, city planners, business coordinators, decision makers, market organisers, entrepreneurs etc. A significant group are **policy makers** at national, regional and local levels who can include these types of activities in development planning documents and implement them according to the **needs of the local community.**

To disseminate the multifunctional market among policy and decision makers, and the public, a differentiated communication and engagement strategy is necessary. The main upscaling steps and approaches for stakeholder engagement are outlined in Figure 14.



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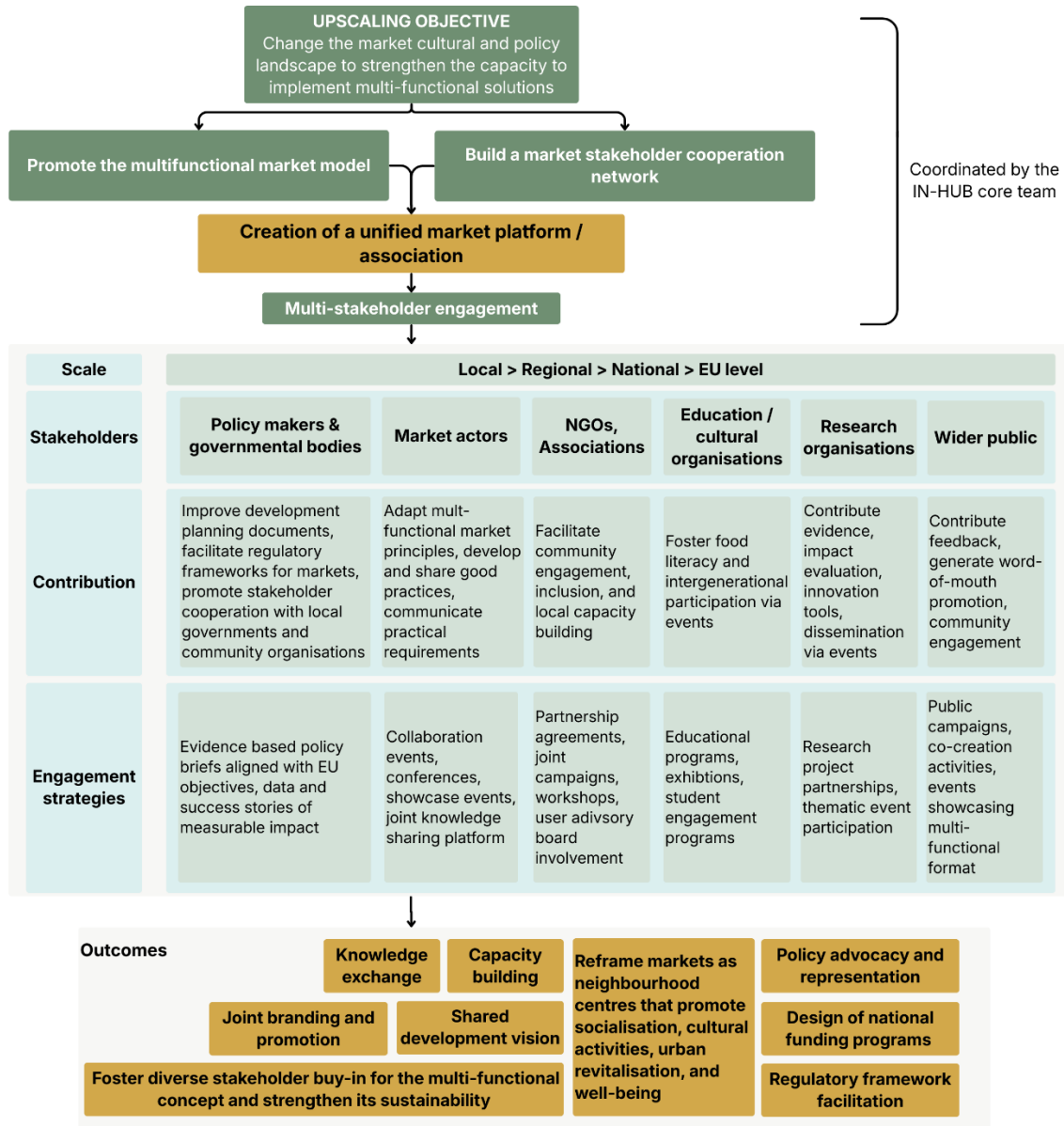


Figure 14. Upscaling collaboration pathways and outcomes



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Almost all cities (public and private sector) that have markets could benefit from adapting Āgenskalns market's Hard and Soft VIS solutions to improve accessibility, attractiveness and service provision to include a wider range of functions and events held in markets to attract more visitors and meet the needs for a wider range of people. While Hard VIS infrastructure adaptations require more long term investment and policy adaptation, Soft VIS strategies for engaging local communities and educating them on social and food consumption issues (e.g., supporting local producers, reducing food waste, promoting healthy eating) **could be upscaled in the short term as a common approach to local markets in other Latvian and European cities to strengthen their local food systems, promote sustainable consumption habits and contribute to overall wellbeing.**

It is essential to explore the transformative potential of local markets as cultural and educational drivers. Strategies tested in Āgenskalns can indeed be upscaled into a shared culture in the Riga metropolitan area, the whole of Latvia and across Europe. This can be achieved by framing them not only as “market activities” but as community practices that strengthen food systems, social cohesion, and wellbeing. By combining community empowerment, educational programming, cultural storytelling, and supportive networks, local engagement strategies become a shared approach of multi-functional urban food hub development. This strengthens local food systems, fosters sustainable consumption habits, and enhances wellbeing and inclusion across cities – while also supporting EU policy objectives.

Overall, the successes and lessons learned from the Āgenskalns Market project could contribute to the development of national policies related to market infrastructure, local food systems, sustainable food consumption, and urban regeneration. The approaches used to secure funding and implement the project in Riga could inform the design of national funding programs aimed at supporting similar initiatives in other municipalities. The Āgenskalns Market project can serve as a national case study and a source of best practices for other cities and regions undertaking similar projects.



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Engaging relevant stakeholders

Effective upscaling requires a coordinated and collaborative approach where different stakeholder groups work together. Leveraging their respective strengths and resources will allow them to adapt and implement the successful elements of the Āgenskalns Market experience in new contexts. Clear communication, shared goals, and well-defined roles are essential for achieving sustainable and impactful results at broader scales.

To effectively foster collaboration and partnerships in support of the upscaling of the Āgenskalns Market experience, a set of strategic and multi-level approaches are essential. Strategic approaches should set clear long-term goals and measurable outcomes. Multi-level actions must link local initiatives with regional, national, and EU frameworks, and cross-sectoral cooperation should unite municipalities, market operators, producers, NGOs and researchers to create an integrated and sustainable market model. These strategies should promote replication, adaptation, and transformation of the market model in other contexts.

The successful upscaling of the Āgenskalns Food Market relies on a broad coalition of stakeholders across local, regional, national, and EU levels.

- Crucially, **private sector actors like the Āgenskalns Market team, other market teams, market vendors, and food entrepreneurs** ensure operational viability and sustainability. However, they do not operate in isolation.



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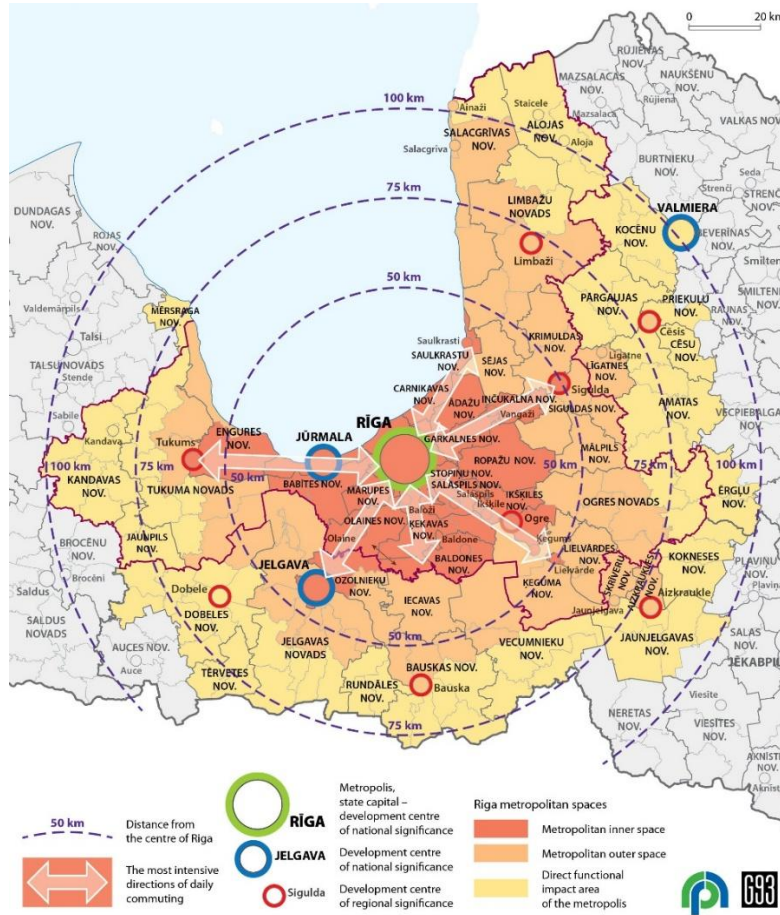


Figure 15. Spatial scope of IN-HABIT upscaling activities – Riga metropolitan area
 Source: Action Plan for the Development of the Riga Metropolitan Area

- Riga City Council and other municipalities in Riga metropolitan area play a central role in integrating food hub models into urban development plans, while the **Riga Planning Region** supports territorial coordination, inter-municipal collaboration, and regional strategy alignment. National ministries - including those responsible for agriculture, health, culture, education, and environment - provide the regulatory frameworks, policy support, and funding instruments essential for replication.



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- **Academic and research institutions** such as the **Baltic Studies Centre, universities,** and technical schools contribute evidence, impact evaluation, and innovation tools.
- **NGOs and civil society organizations** facilitate community engagement, inclusion, and local capacity building.
- **Educational and cultural institutions** foster food literacy and intergenerational participation via events organised at Āgenskalns Market and other future multifunctional markets.
- At the international level, **EU programs,** networks (e.g., URBACT, New European Bauhaus), and funding bodies (e.g., Horizon Europe) provide scaling opportunities, to help align efforts with broader food system and climate goals.

In Riga, such a **constellation of stakeholders of the IN-HABIT project forms the so-called Riga IN-HUB,** which has **evolved from a core of project partners to a cooperation platform** and growing network of connections for various stakeholders involved during the project implementation. However, to adapt and replicate the approach taken in Āgenskalns, certain conditions have to be met to ensure that upscaling efforts are successful.



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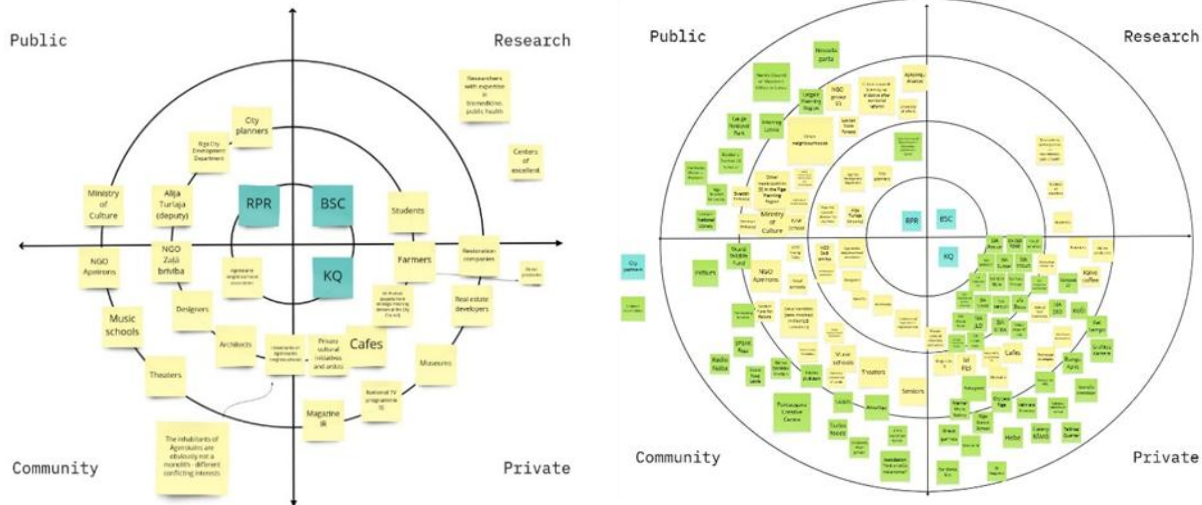


Figure 16. Evolution of Riga IN-HUB stakeholder map (2020 & 2024)

Preconditions, barriers and challenges

When scaling a multifunctional market focused on health and wellbeing, several significant barriers and challenges emerge that can determine the difference between successful expansion and failure. Significant barriers to scaling include complex regulatory environments, a lack of co-creation, municipal and community support, poor infrastructure and inconsistent demand. The most fundamental barrier lies in **achieving financial sustainability** while maintaining social objectives. Many community-focused food hubs and markets struggle with the **tension between commercial viability and accessibility**, particularly when trying to serve disadvantaged groups while covering operational costs and infrastructure maintenance.

For multifunctional hubs that combine food access with health/wellbeing programming, these challenges multiply. **Regulatory compliance becomes more complex** when operating across multiple sectors - food safety, health services, and community programming. Additionally,



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scaling requires significant capital for infrastructure and staffing, while revenue streams from community-focused activities often develop slowly and may never fully cover costs.

The **preconditions for successful upscaling** are robust operational foundations and **strategic partnerships based on social capital**. A motivated and experienced market team represents perhaps the most critical factor - individuals who understand both the commercial realities of market management and the nuances of community engagement. This team must possess a combination of entrepreneurial skills and community development experience. The team must also demonstrate adaptability, as successful scaling often requires pivoting strategies based on community feedback and changing local conditions (e.g. high inflation, Russian invasion in Ukraine).

Municipal support emerges as equally essential in aligning social objectives with commercial sustainability. The municipality's role involves creating regulatory frameworks that facilitate rather than hinder multifunctional operations and potentially offering financial support.

Additional preconditions include **establishing diverse funding streams that combine public grants, private partnerships, and earned revenue**. Āgenskalns market's diversified funding approach is illustrated in Figure 17.



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Figure 17. Funding strategies for sustaining community oriented market initiatives

Āgenskalns Market applies a differentiated access model to generate revenue while sustaining its public-oriented mission. Aspects of this approach can be replicated by other markets. A significant share of community, grassroots, and non-profit initiatives are granted free access to market spaces, particularly when activities align with the market’s social, cultural, educational, or neighbourhood objectives.

At the same time, the market maintains commercial rental relationships with private actors, event organisers, and partners whose activities generate revenue. **Income generated through these commercial uses directly subsidises free or low-cost access for community groups**, ensuring that financial sustainability reinforces public benefit rather than competing with it.

Adopting a social enterprise approach allows markets to combine commercial activity with the reinvestment of surpluses into community benefit, reflecting a widely recognised EU social



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economy model that supports social impact alongside economic viability and facilitates access to relevant support and financing instruments.

Potential earned revenue pathways include:

- Trader space rental – long-term traders ensure stability and continuity, while short-term and daily traders add flexibility, seasonal diversity, and access for emerging producers.
- Rental of multifunctional spaces – indoor and outdoor areas are rented for private events and functions, pop-ups, and programming, maximizing the use of existing infrastructure.
- Cultural, educational, and tourism services – guided historical and gastronomic tours, tastings, and educational activities generate income while reinforcing the market's identity and public role.
- Strategic partnerships and hybrid collaborations – cooperation with private partners combines paid services and barter-based exchanges (e.g., market space usage in exchange for media communication support), reducing costs and strengthening visibility.

Overall, building strong relationships with local producers and creating governance structures that maintain accountability to both financial sustainability and community benefit are key strategies. Successful multifunctional hubs develop hybrid models that leverage their social mission to access grant funding while building commercial activities to ensure long-term viability, creating a sustainable balance that neither purely commercial nor purely social activities can achieve alone.

Furthermore, a final key component to upscaling the innovations developed as part of IN-HABIT is **cooperation between different market teams in the market association.**



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Key steps for upscaling

Address key barriers

- Simplify and align regulatory frameworks across food, health, and community sectors.
- Strengthen municipal and community support mechanisms.
- Improve infrastructure and ensure consistent demand.
- Balance financial sustainability with social accessibility.

Build strong operational foundations

- Develop a motivated, adaptable, and skilled market team with both entrepreneurial and community development expertise.
- Establish governance structures that ensure accountability to both financial and social objectives.

Secure municipal support

- Advocate for enabling regulatory frameworks tailored to multifunctional markets.
- Seek municipal financial contributions or co-investment where appropriate.

Diversify funding streams

- Combine public grants, private sector partnerships, and earned revenue.
- Use hybrid models to blend commercial activities with social mission funding.

Strengthen producer and community relationships

- Build long-term partnerships with local producers.
- Co-create initiatives with communities to ensure demand and relevance.

Adapt to external conditions



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- Develop strategies to remain resilient in times of economic or geopolitical uncertainty (e.g., inflation, war impacts).

Promote cooperation between markets

- Establish or join a market association to share knowledge, resources, and advocacy.
- Foster peer-to-peer learning between market teams at local, regional, and national levels.

Monitoring and evaluation

To effectively track the upscaling of multifunctional food hubs, indicators should span **multiple dimensions, including reach, sustainability, and community impact**. Quantitative metrics might include:

- the number of participants served;
- revenue diversification ratios (percentage of income from commercial versus grant sources);
- vendor participation rates
- attendance figures.

Equally important are qualitative indicators such as community ownership levels, partnership strength with local organisations, and the degree of integration between commercial and social activities. Social impact indicators could measure improvements in local food access, community social cohesion scores, health behaviour changes among regular participants, and the extent to which the multifunctional hub model influences broader local food policy.

A **mixed-methods approach would provide an appropriate monitoring framework**, combining quantitative with qualitative insights. Regular surveys of participants, vendors, and community partners can capture satisfaction levels, usage patterns, and perceived impacts on health and wellbeing. Semi-structured interviews with managers, municipal partners, and long-term partners would reveal operational challenges, adaptation strategies, and deeper community



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transformation stories. Participant observation protocols can document actual versus intended use patterns, the quality of social interactions, and the integration of different hub functions. Digital tools like participant check-in systems and social media engagement metrics can provide real-time data, while periodic community mapping exercises can assess broader neighbourhood changes.

An **evaluation framework should employ a theory of change** that explicitly links activities to outcomes and long-term impacts. The framework should assess effectiveness across at least two domains: operational sustainability and community impact. Sustainability evaluation requires examining not just financial indicators but also institutional resilience, community ownership, and adaptability to changing conditions. The framework should incorporate participatory evaluation methods. This would allow community members to define impacts, success metrics and contribute to ongoing assessment, ensuring the evaluation serves both accountability and learning purposes for continuous improvement.



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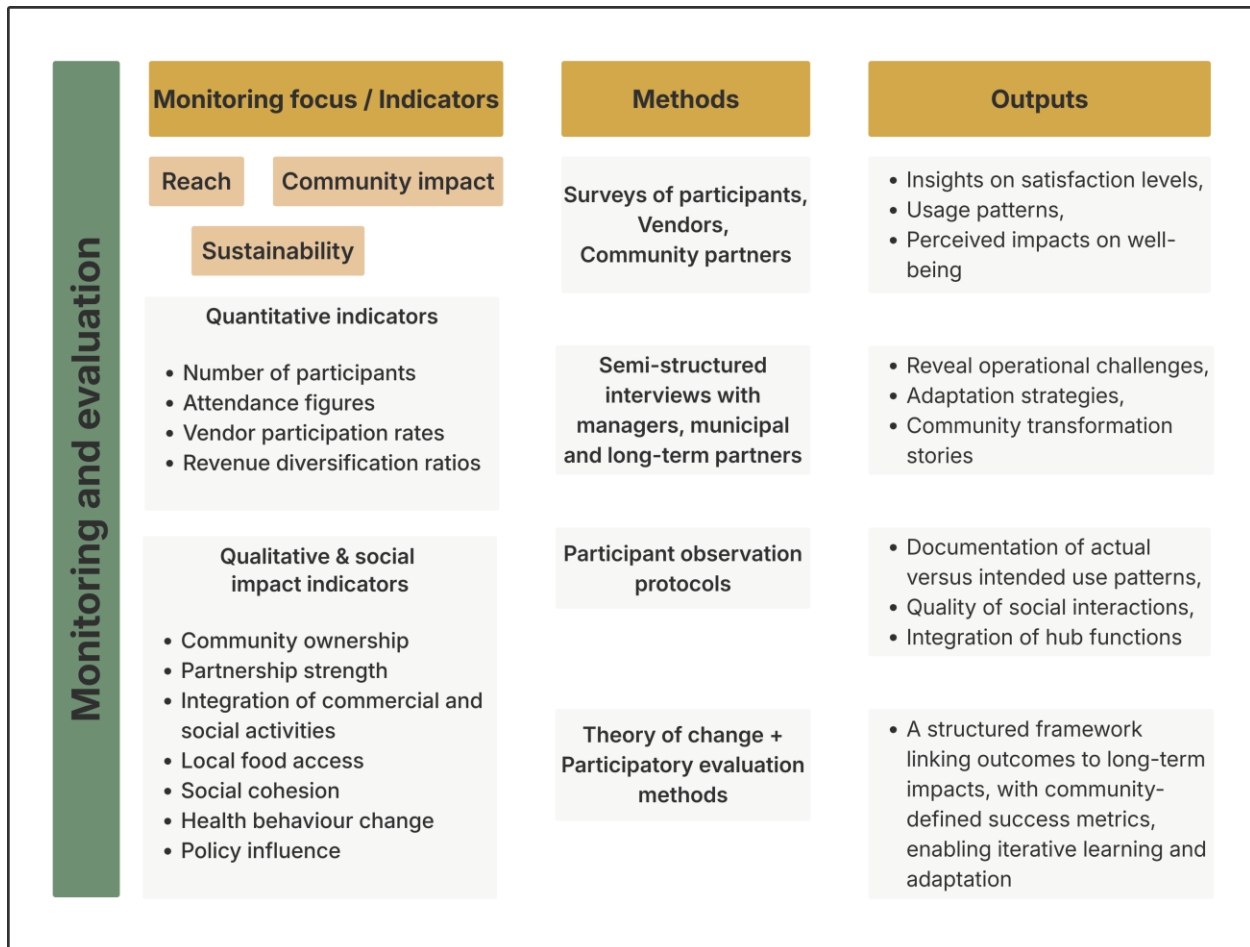


Figure 18. Monitoring and evaluation framework

Sustainability and impact

The **long-term sustainability** of upscaling the Āgenskalns Market model depends on several interrelated factors:



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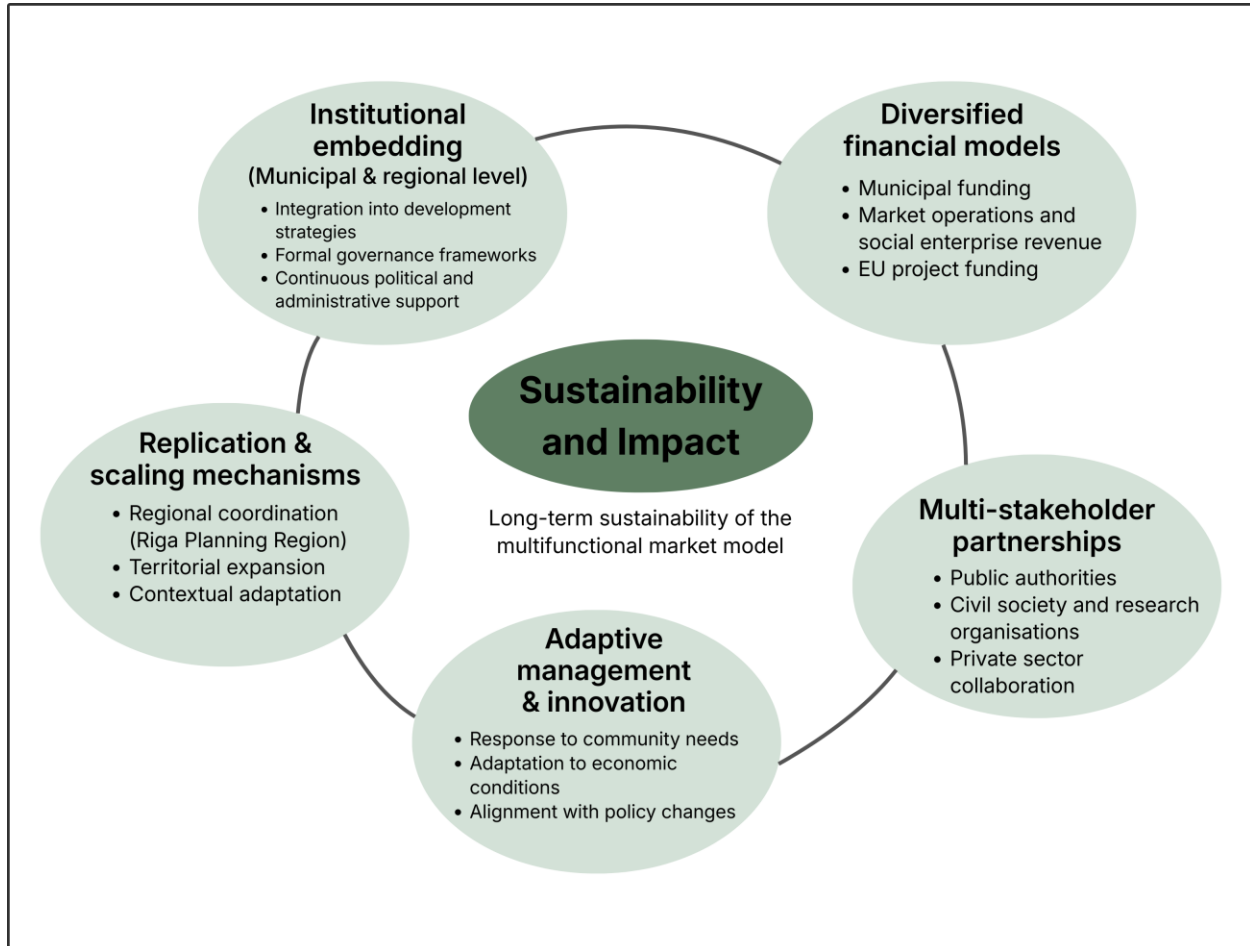


Figure 19. Long-term sustainability and impact factors

Expected impact - upscaling the Āgenskalns Market will generate **multiple positive outcomes** aligned with local and EU priorities:

- **Social inclusion:** Enhances access to healthy, local food for vulnerable groups, fosters community engagement, and reduces social isolation.



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- Health and wellbeing: Promotes nutritious diets, food literacy, and active participation in urban food systems, contributing to improved physical and mental health.
- Economic development: Supports local food producers and social enterprises, generating jobs and strengthening short supply chains.
- Environmental sustainability: Encourages circular economy practices, reduces food waste, and integrates green infrastructure.
- Policy alignment: Contributes to EU objectives such as the Farm to Fork Strategy, the European Green Deal, and the New European Bauhaus by advancing sustainable food systems, inclusive urban regeneration, and healthy living environments.

IN-HABIT provides a plethora of resources to facilitate **knowledge exchange and capacity building for cities and regions** interested in replicating or adapting the Āgenskalns Market model:

- Toolkits and reports: access to project-developed methodologies, impact frameworks, and best practice case studies.
- Technical assistance: expert advice on project design, stakeholder engagement, and funding opportunities.
- Networking opportunities: Connections to EU initiatives (URBACT, Horizon Europe) and regional stakeholders.



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Annexes

- Annex 1: Upscaling and replication guide for a multi-functional market model



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Annex 1: Upscaling and replication guide for a multi-functional market model



Why adapt a multi-functional market model?

Markets have historically served as important nodes of trade and social interaction, contributing to quality of life for urban dwellers. However, with the proliferation of alternative retail options beginning in the mid-20th century - shopping malls, convenience stores, and e-commerce platforms - their former role diminished. Social activities and needs once fulfilled in the marketplace also found other outlets, with people increasingly seeking them in the private realm or other public venues and establishments.

In recent years, in line with broader urban sustainability initiatives and the UN New Urban Agenda, markets are increasingly being recognised for their untapped potential for bolstering well-being in cities. Key to this is taking their core commerce and social functions and expanding upon them by transforming venues into vibrant social hubs that combine leisure, education, cultural events, and environmentally oriented initiatives.

At its core, the multifunctional model integrates flexible and accessible infrastructure with a range of necessary and optional functions, offering diverse public avenues for meaningful engagement and fulfilment of various needs in one place.



Community engagement

Central to the idea of multi-functionality is that markets go beyond being just spaces of retail and incidental socialisation, serving instead as hubs that actively promote cultural events, community gatherings, workshops, and performances that engage diverse audiences.

Guided by public space quality and IHW principles, markets can support socialisation and visitor self-initiated activities by serving as "third places", welcoming neutral gathering grounds where people can foster relationships outside of work and domestic life.

More than just providing leisure and entertainment opportunities, markets can also serve as nodes for disseminating knowledge, practices, as well as foster inclusivity through educational initiatives.

Key principles:

- **Co-ownership and co-governance of programming** is essential to ensure events reflect local interests and that communities play an active role in shaping the market's evolving identity.
- **Regular free events** help foster community engagement and support the inclusion of diverse groups.
- **Socialisation is bolstered by adopting a "public living room" management approach for seating areas** - visitors can spend extended periods in these areas without feeling obliged to make purchases, as well as have a high degree of freedom to reconfigure seating arrangements to accommodate diverse other activities, including leisure, socialising, work, or play.



Infrastructure

Physical infrastructure shapes how multi-functional markets function as inclusive public spaces. The core principle is that the market accommodates diverse users – from elderly shoppers to families with young children, to people with mobility and health challenges. Comfort, weather protection, waste reduction, safety, accessibility, and aesthetic appeal are all essential aspects that shape inclusive and attractive markets.

The second core characteristic is adaptability – multiple facilities supporting different activities and flexible spaces allow the market to host events either simultaneously or at different times, transforming the venue to serve a variety of purposes.

Key principles:

- **Adaptable, event/public gathering spaces** are an efficient means for maximising the variety of use of limited space by alternating their functions.
- **Accessibility features and ergonomic and anthropometric design principles** enable the use of the venue by diverse publics.
- **Dedicated waste reduction facilities** not only foster a cleaner, safer environment, but also reduce waste volumes and management costs.



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The co-deployment and co-management approach

To ensure that multi-functional solutions are relevant and align with community preferences and needs, it is crucial to co-design them with multiple stakeholder groups using balanced top-down and bottom-up approaches.

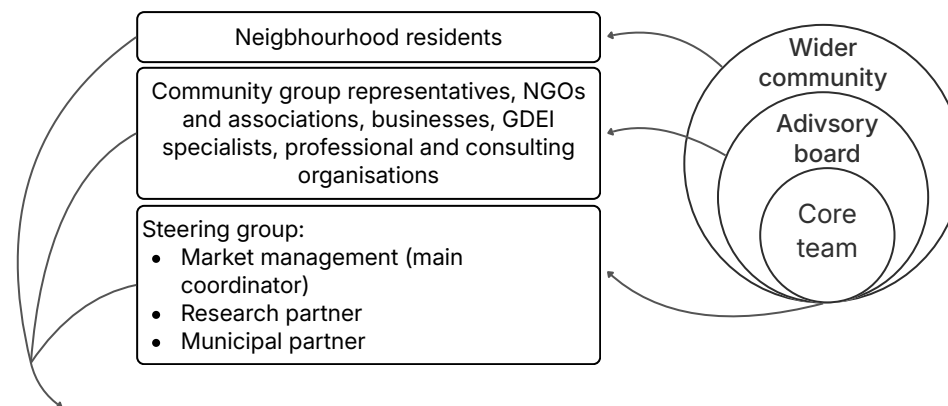
Structured implementation hinges on establishing a skilled steering group responsible for stakeholder onboarding and coordination, data gathering and evaluation, and solution proposal drafting, refinement, and implementation.

At the outset, the core team should map stakeholders affected by the development, and contact target group representatives to form an advisory board, including both long term and situational members who assist with solution refinement.

The wider community – neighbourhood residents and intervention target groups (seniors, students, tourists, families, vulnerable populations) – should be regularly consulted using data gathering approaches (online and on-site) to assess intervention relevance.

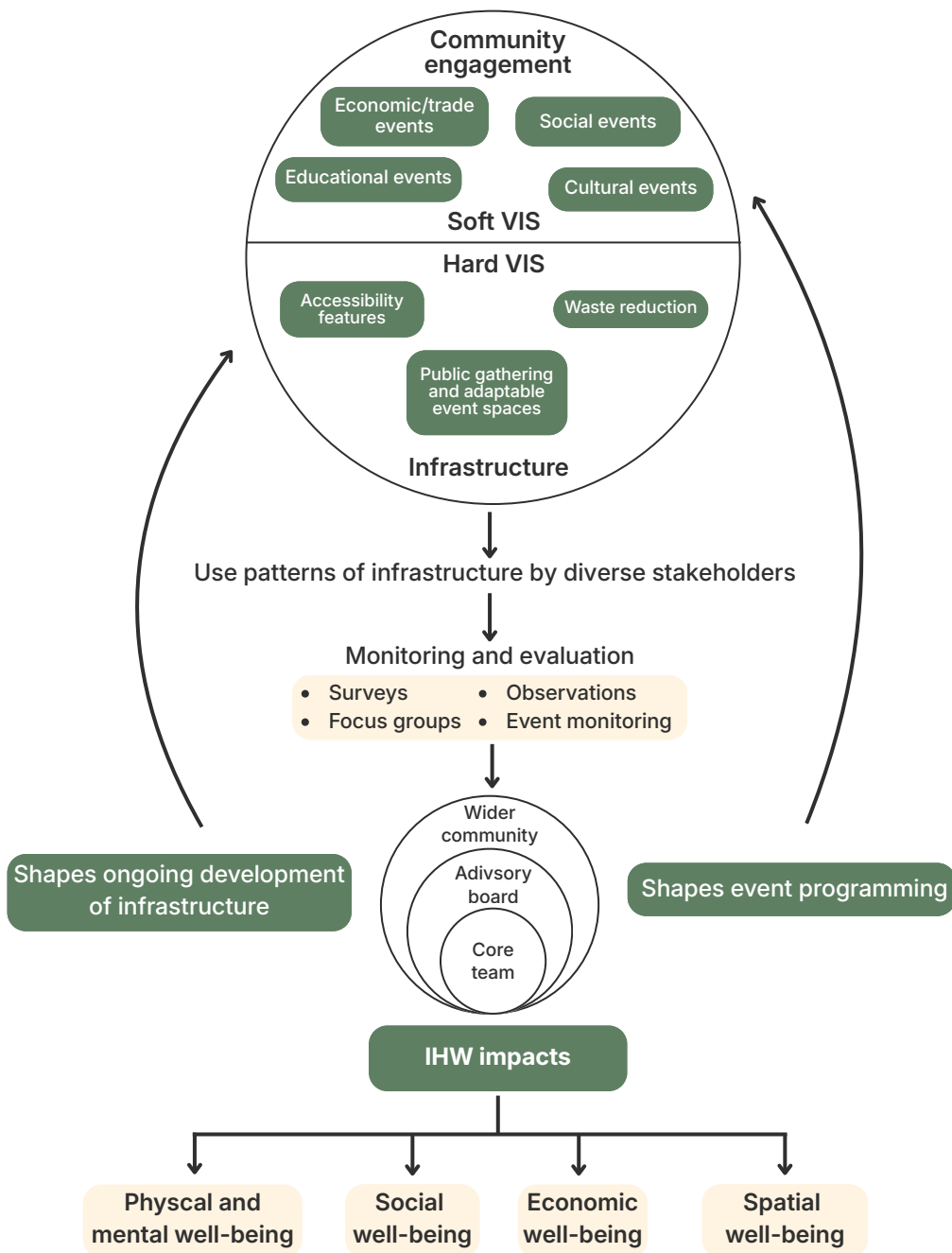
Key lessons for other cities:

- IN-HUB work must be grounded in the city's wellbeing context, population needs, and development plans and policies.
- It is crucial to build upon existing development projects and initiatives to maximise the IN-HUB's relevance and impact through strategic synergies.
- The IN-HUB needs to maintain an open structure designed to stimulate co-creation, requiring continuous mobilisation, facilitation, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure effectiveness.
- Improving health and wellbeing depends on expanding the IN-HUB through purposeful networking with stakeholders.
- Successful co-design and deployment of sustainable health and wellbeing solutions requires skilful IN-HUB management. It falls upon the steering group to assess feasibility and implement solutions, often finding compromises between divergent stakeholder opinions.
- Collaboration must be tailored iteratively, adapting procedures based on changing circumstances and capacities of involved parties. Respecting professional commitments of IN-HUB members is a key consideration.



STEP 1	Identify community needs, interests, and preferences through surveys, interviews, or forums.
STEP 2	Gather feedback on potential activities via in-person and online sessions.
STEP 3	Develop proposals outlining objectives, audience, format, resources, and expected outcomes.
STEP 4	Refine proposals based on community input.
STEP 5	Brainstorm, prioritise activities, develop action plans, and assign responsibilities collaboratively.
STEP 7	Finalise detailed plans with community members.
STEP 8	Execute activities according to agreed timelines and plans.
STEP 9	Review outcomes, identify lessons learned, and inform future initiatives.

Infrastructure provides affordances for meaningful use of the market by diverse stakeholders



Iterative design loop for ongoing infrastructure and community engagement activity development

Maintaining and developing a multi-functional market that caters to diverse public needs requires ongoing monitoring and active community involvement.

The iterative design loop illustrates the logic behind responsive refinement: infrastructure provides users with a range of affordances for meaningful use, and as people engage with the market's premises, amenities, and features, behavioral patterns begin to emerge.

By monitoring these patterns and gathering feedback, planners can identify which aspects of the market are most valued, which areas require improvement, and how different user groups interact with the space. This insight then guides iterative adjustments to infrastructure, programming, and services, ensuring the market remains responsive, inclusive, and relevant to the community it serves.

Key lessons for other cities:

- **It is not possible to account for everything at the outset.** Even with careful planning and co-designing with community members and experts, unforeseen needs and circumstances will emerge as people begin to inhabit the venue. Therefore, monitoring and co-designing should be conducted regularly.
- **Design can raise the probability of certain behaviours occurring, but not determine them.** It is crucial to observe and reflect on which solutions work, which do not, and why. Special attention needs to be devoted to user stress points. Combining surveys, observations, and focus groups is key to uncovering motivations behind use patterns.
- **Major infrastructure solutions should be implemented with long-term considerations in mind.** Planning structural changes that allow for flexible adaptation is essential to respond to evolving conditions, including emerging user needs, the impacts of climate change, and the effective management of capacity in the face of increasing visitor numbers.



Market diversity and tailored replication

At the outset of planning replication activities, it is crucial to acknowledge the complexity of marketplaces as hybrid public and commercial spaces.

The diversity of market formats (temporary/permanent, open-air/covered/indoor, thematic focus), governance arrangements, as well as pursued concepts are all factors that influence how directly specific solutions can be replicated.

Therefore, a context-sensitive approach – understanding each venue’s unique circumstances, capacities, and aims – is paramount before tailoring infrastructure or community engagement solutions for replication in other markets.

Building a collaboration network with other market stakeholders and starting with soft replication activities – such as on-site demonstrations, knowledge sharing, and experience exchange events – is the first step in raising awareness of multi-functional solutions and encouraging other stakeholders to consider how to adapt them for their own venues.

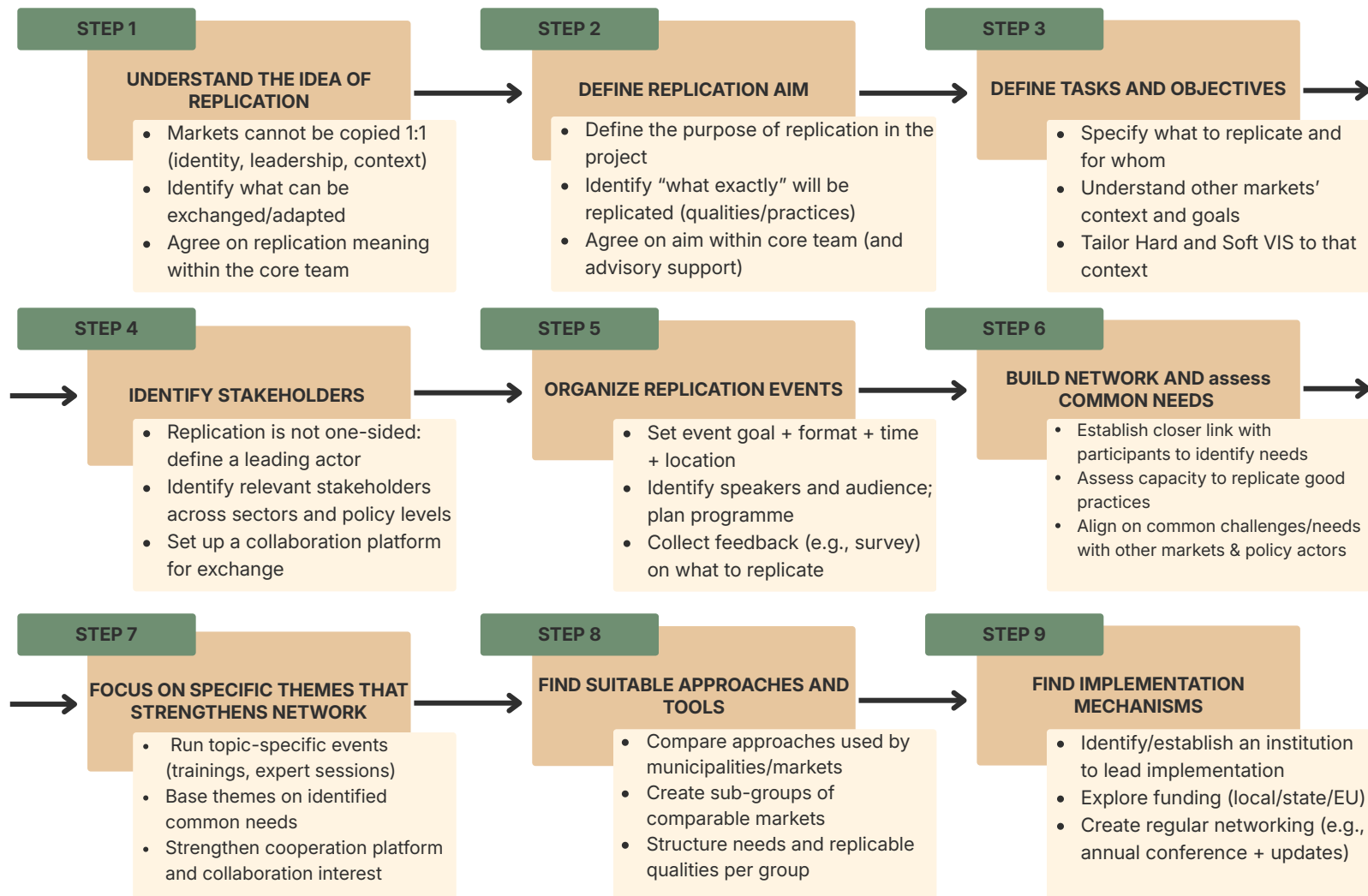
The IN-HUB co-deployment and co-management approach can be adapted to foster dialogue between diverse marketplace actors and across multiple levels of governance, thus ensuring that each market’s situation is understood with input from multiple perspectives.

Key lessons for other cities:

- Stakeholder mapping, condition pre-assessments, and focus group discussions are essential methods during the initial phase.
- When contacting other market stakeholders for collaboration or joint events, it is beneficial to distribute an online survey in advance. This helps collect key information about each venue, including market format, concept, operational characteristics, and open-ended inputs on needs and expectations.
- Experience exchange events provide an effective platform for bringing together different stakeholder groups across multiple levels of governance that may not normally have opportunities to interact. These events support dialogue, mutual learning, and the identification of concrete needs.
- Skilled moderation by event organisers is crucial to ensure balanced participation, inclusive discussion, and productive outcomes for all stakeholders.



REPLICATION GUIDE "STEP - BY - STEP"



KEY ELEMENTS

RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

PRECONDITIONS, BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT



BSC



RIGA PLANNING REGION



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Replicable elements

Low investment, short term replicable elements

Accessibility improvements

- Implement universal design principles for all user groups
- Ensure pedestrian-friendly layouts and public seating

Public space enhancements

- Prioritise greenery, seating, and community gathering areas
- Designate non-commercial areas for social interaction and events

Community engagement and cultural programming

- Host concerts, seasonal festivals, workshops, or masterclasses
- Organise thematic or niche market days (e.g., eco-weekends, craft Saturdays)

Support for local producers and short supply chains

- Curate vendors to highlight small farmers, artisans, and urban food makers
- Promote eco-friendly and sustainable products

Waste reduction measures

- Introduce waste sorting, reusable packaging, and eco-friendly vendor rules
- Run small-scale initiatives like re-use events, composting, or urban gardening

Food and gastronomy activation

- Create low-cost café areas, street-food corners, or ready-to-eat counters
- Encourage communal dining or co-creation kitchens

Digital communication practices

- Maintain active social media accounts and clear visual branding
- Promote vendors and events online to engage the community

Market aesthetics and visitor comfort (incremental improvements)

- Improve layout, lighting, cleanliness, and signage
- Add cosy corners or decorative elements without full-scale renovation

Event curating capacity building

- Organisational procedures, skills and knowledge capacity building, finance planning, and stakeholder engagement approaches

High investment, long term replicable elements

Major renovations to improve accessibility

- Install permanent lifts, ramps, and barrier-free circulation, widened corridors and doorways, and accessible sanitary facilities

Adaptable multi-functional spaces

- Purposefully design and create indoor and outdoor areas for flexible use across commercial, social, cultural, and educational activities
- Procure different event type equipment (sound systems, lighting, monitors, etc.) for easy activation by partners and community groups

Permanent community facilities

- Install equipped community kitchens and learning spaces that enable long-term programming

Integrated circular economy infrastructure

- Construct on-site waste sorting and reduction facilities embedded into daily operations, supported by education and dedicated staff capacity

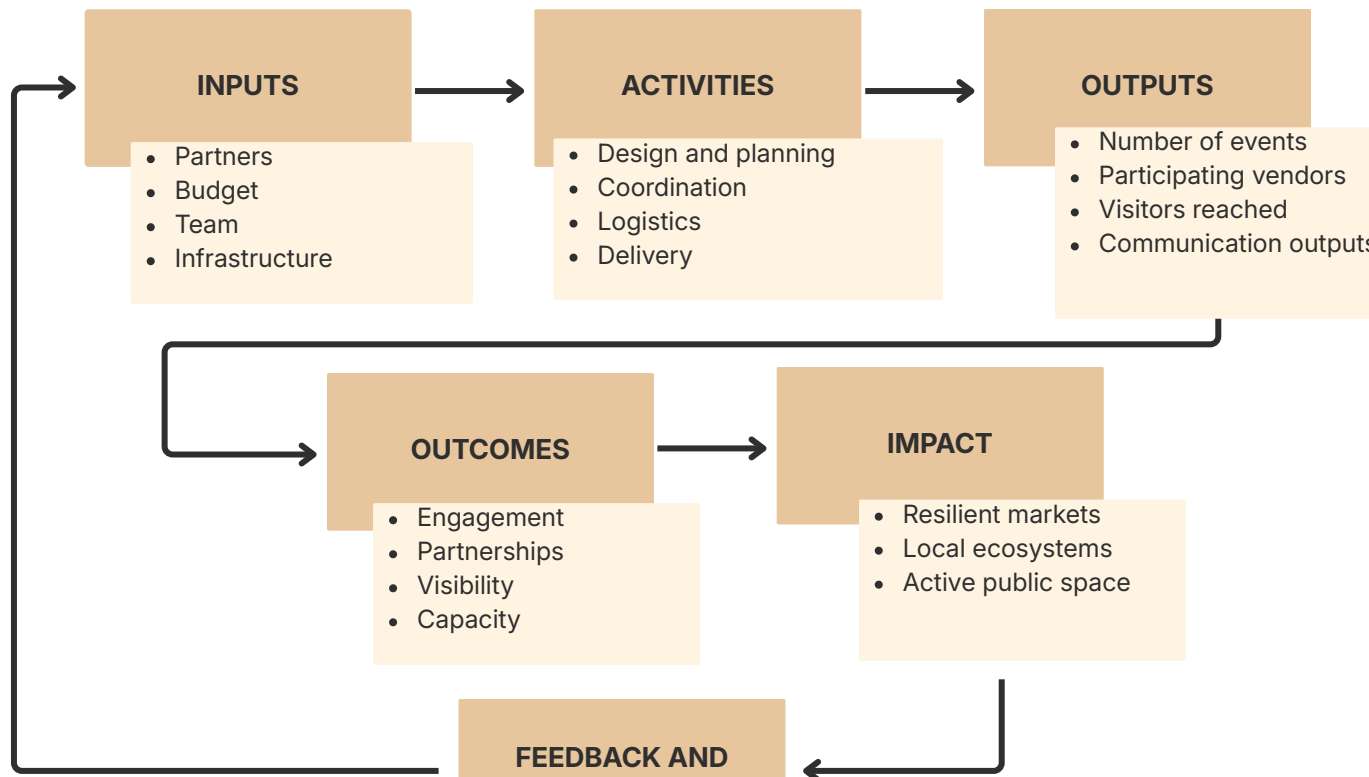
Consumption-independent public areas

- "Public living room" areas not tied to vendors, allowing extended, flexible, non-commercial use

Key lessons for other cities:

- **High investment, long term solutions require alignment between municipal and market planning at early stages.** Changes must complement the supporting infrastructure on a neighbourhood level
- **Both market and municipal stakeholders should be proactive about communicating with one another.** Stakeholder discussions highlighted the lack of communication and engagement as key barriers for solution implementation

Iterative event life cycle for community-based markets

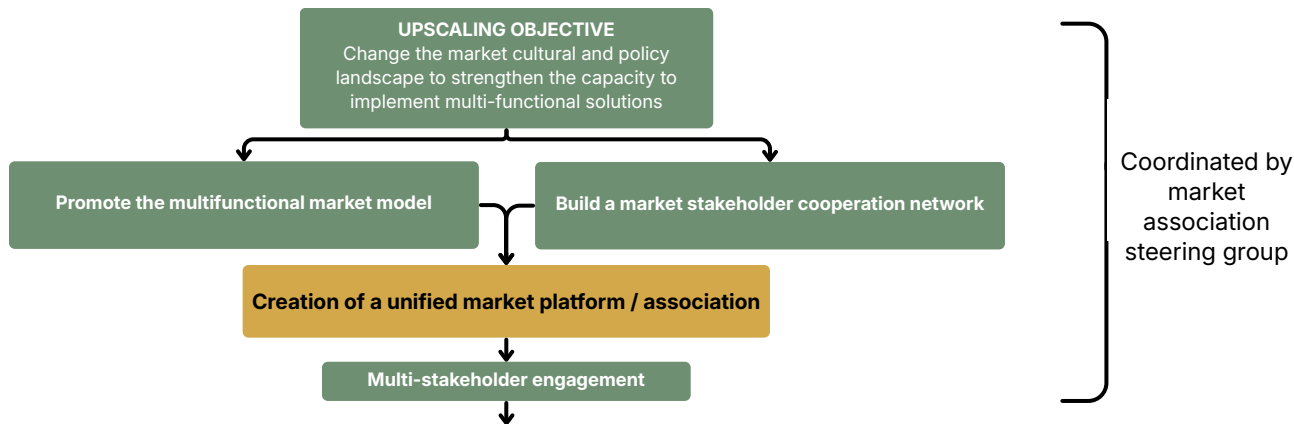


Replication Logic

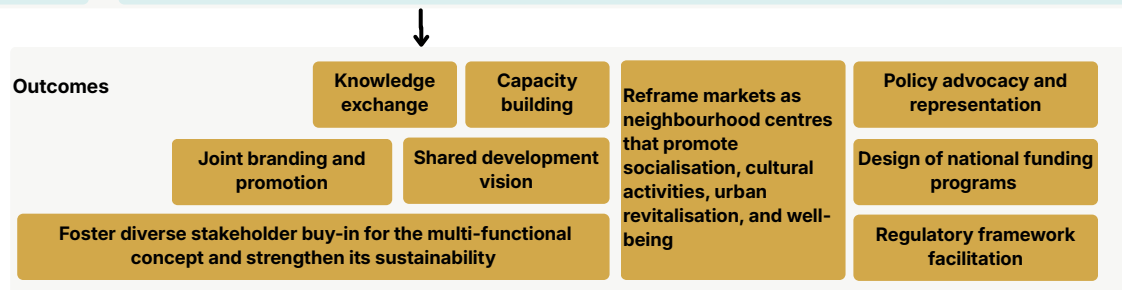
- Inputs and activities are adaptable to local contexts
- Outputs are measurable and comparable
- Outcomes and impact align with public policy
- Iteration ensures continuous improvement over time

Applicability

- This model can be replicated by:
- Local and regional markets
 - Municipalities and public authorities
 - Cultural, food, and placemaking organisations



Scale	Local > Regional > National > EU level					
Stakeholders	Policy makers & governmental bodies	Market actors	NGOs, Associations	Education / cultural organisations	Research organisations	Wider public
Contribution	Improve development planning documents, facilitate regulatory frameworks for markets, promote stakeholder cooperation with local governments and community organisations	Adapt multi-functional market principles, develop and share good practices, communicate practical requirements	Facilitate community engagement, inclusion, and local capacity building	Foster food literacy and intergenerational participation via events	Contribute evidence, impact evaluation, innovation tools, dissemination via events	Contribute feedback, generate word-of-mouth promotion, community engagement
Engagement strategies	Evidence based policy briefs aligned with EU objectives, data and success stories of measurable impact	Collaboration events, conferences, showcase events, joint knowledge sharing platform	Partnership agreements, joint campaigns, workshops, user advisory board involvement	Educational programs, exhibitions, student engagement programs	Research project partnerships, thematic event participation	Public campaigns, co-creation activities, events showcasing multi-functional format



Building a market network and strengthening capacity to adopt multi-functional solutions at a larger scale

Markets vary significantly in their capacity to implement multifunctional solutions, depending on governance arrangements, available resources, and the level of support provided by municipal structures. As a result, many community-driven market initiatives struggle to sustain momentum and discontinue without adequate support mechanisms.

Realising the multifunctional potential of markets at scale therefore requires a shift from isolated initiatives to a coordinated, structural approach. This entails the establishment of a unified platform and formal association of market stakeholders, led by an experienced steering group.

Such an association would provide markets with a unified voice and enhanced capacity to coordinate advocacy efforts, engage with institutions, influence policy, secure funding, and facilitate cross-sector partnerships. Crucially, it would enable the strategic alignment between markets.

Central to this approach is the development of a broad, multi-level stakeholder collaboration network - spanning local, regional, national, and EU levels - to promote and embed the multifunctional market model. This networked structure would support the scaling of impact, inform policy development, and lay the groundwork for long-term sustainability through dedicated policies and national funding programmes.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring focus / Indicators

Reach

Community impact

Sustainability

Quantitative indicators

- Number of participants
- Attendance figures
- Vendor participation rates
- Revenue diversification ratios

Qualitative & social impact indicators

- Community ownership
- Partnership strength
- Integration of commercial and social activities
- Local food access
- Social cohesion
- Health behaviour change
- Policy influence

Methods

Surveys of participants, vendors, community partners

Semi-structured interviews with managers, municipal and long-term partners

Participant observation protocols

Theory of change + Participatory evaluation methods

Outputs

- Insights on satisfaction levels,
- Usage patterns,
- Perceived impacts on well-being

- Reveal operational challenges,
- Adaptation strategies,
- Community transformation stories

- Documentation of actual versus intended use patterns,
- Quality of social interactions,
- Integration of hub functions

- A structured framework linking outcomes to long-term impacts, with community-defined success metrics, enabling iterative learning and adaptation

Tracking the upscaling of multifunctional food hubs requires indicators that capture **reach, sustainability, and community impact**.

Quantitative measures include participant numbers, attendance, vendor participation, and income diversification.

Qualitative indicators should assess community ownership, partnership strength, integration of social and commercial activities, and improvements in food access, health, and social cohesion.

A mixed-methods approach is essential, combining surveys, interviews, observation, and digital data tools to capture both performance and lived experience. These methods are complementary and can reveal crucial insights that singular methods can omit.

Evaluation should be guided by a clear theory of change and focus on operational sustainability and community impact. Participatory evaluation is crucial, ensuring communities help define success and support continuous learning and improvement.

Overview of key upscaling steps

Address key barriers

- Simplify and align regulatory frameworks across food, health, and community sectors.
- Strengthen municipal and community support mechanisms.
- Improve infrastructure and ensure consistent demand.
- Balance financial sustainability with social accessibility.

Secure municipal support

- Advocate for enabling regulatory frameworks tailored to multifunctional markets.
- Seek municipal financial contributions or co-investment where appropriate.
- Build long-term partnerships with local producers.
- Co-create initiatives with communities to ensure demand and relevance.

Adapt to external conditions

- Develop strategies to remain resilient in times of economic or geopolitical uncertainty (e.g., inflation, war impacts).

Diversify funding streams

- Combine public grants, private sector partnerships, and earned revenue
- Use hybrid models to blend commercial activities with social mission funding.

Build strong operational foundations

- Develop a motivated, adaptable, and skilled market team with both entrepreneurial and community development expertise.
- Establish governance structures that ensure accountability to both financial and social objectives.

Strengthen producer and community relationships

- Build long-term partnerships with local producers.
- Co-create initiatives with communities to ensure demand and relevance.

Promote cooperation between markets

- Establish or join a market association to share knowledge, resources, and advocacy.
- Foster peer-to-peer learning between market teams at local, regional, and national levels.