



# Farmer organizations

## - their roles in demand led extension and advisory service provision

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# What is demand led extension?

- Needs based extension
  - Source of needs often based on individual or group information
  - Tools: questionnaires, interviews
  - Consultation of farmers by extension agents
- Demand led extension
  - Source of needs based on discussion and exchange within and between FOs
  - Tools: discussion process by FOs
  - Farmers discuss their needs, select priorities and formulate their demand



# Why demand led extension?

- **Relevance** more likely to be achieved
  - Tailor made services possible based on demand
- **Pluralism** - public, private, FOs, NGOs, ...
  - Chance that diversity of services and providers match with diversity of demands
- **Accountability** reinforced through
  - Demand led mechanisms
  - Farmers' payments for services





# FOs as drivers of the demand side of extension

- Two major mechanisms required for effective demand led RAS:
  - (1) Mechanisms to organize demand
  - (2) Financial mechanisms

# (1) Mechanisms to organize demand

- Identification of advisory needs by FOs
- Priority setting by FOs
- Formulation of demand
- Expression of demand towards service providers
- Negotiation of service provision



## Conclusions:

- Representation and organizational capacity of FOs is critical
- Financial support to FOs for organizing demand required



## (2) Financial mechanisms

- Financial support to the demand side, i.e. for the process of organizing demand
- Enabling smallholders and their FOs to pay for their services (empowerment, accountability)
  - Co-financing mechanisms, incl. fees for services
  - Funds managed by FOs for their development activities financed or co-financed by third parties,
  - Access to funds through proposal submission by FOs (Mexico, Uganda (NAADS, Prolinnova), Senegal, ...)
  - Extension advisors hired by FOs (cooperatives, ...)
  - Particular extension services/experts paid by FOs
- More mechanisms and tools to be developed



# Knowledge management and networking in demand led extension

- **Change of farmers' role**
  - from receiving messages to pro-actively searching for advice, knowledge, information, training ...
- **Direct access to knowledge and information by FOs/farmers**
  - Focus on ICT technologies used by farmers (e.g. young farmers - social media (Facebook, YouTube, Skype, Twitter, ...))
- **Farmer contributions to interactive knowledge exchange**
  - Networking as prerequisite for this knowledge exchange





# Monitoring and Evaluation



- Involvement of farmers/FOs in M&E required to assess relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact
  - Reviewing extension systems
  - Re-designing extension policies and programmes
  - Evaluation of programmes, projects, services, ...
  - Assessment of extension advisors (e.g. mobile apps, ...)



# The Roles of FOs - supply side of extension

- Governance role of FOs in extension and innovation systems
  - Representation of FOs in decision-making bodies
  - Policy formulation process
  - Institutionalized participation in RAS planning (e.g. Pakistan)
- FOs as service providers
  - Farmer(s)-to-farmers(s) learning (Farmer Field Schools, exchange visits, ...)
  - FOs managing information-/training centers
  - FOs recruiting advisors
- Promotion of FOs indispensable and task of RAS



# Implications and Challenges

- For the demand side
  - **Capacity development**
    - Promotion of FOs (strengthening organizational and financial capacity, ...)
    - Representation in decision making bodies (board of extension systems/providers, planning committees, M&E, board of fund, ...)
  - **Financial support**
    - Government and donor support to FOs
    - Development funds managed by FOs, including funds for organizing demand for research, RAS, etc.
    - FO financial participation, fees for services
  - **Access to information** on who provides what services under what conditions



# Implications and Challenges

- For the supply side
  - **Farmers and FOs as partners/clients**, not as beneficiaries
  - **Engagement of all farmers** (e.g resource poor farm families, women, young farmers, ...)
  - **Brokerage role of advisors**
    - Emphasis on facilitation, coordination, linking and directing farmers to where they can find solutions
    - New skills and extension profiles required
  - **Services that are able to respond to demand** (lean, flexible, specialized or multi-disciplinary, collaboration/synergies, ...)
  - **Marketing strategies** needed by service providers
  - **Transparency of service provision** (who provides what under what conditions)



# THANK YOU

<http://www.fao.org/nr/research-extension-systems/en/>