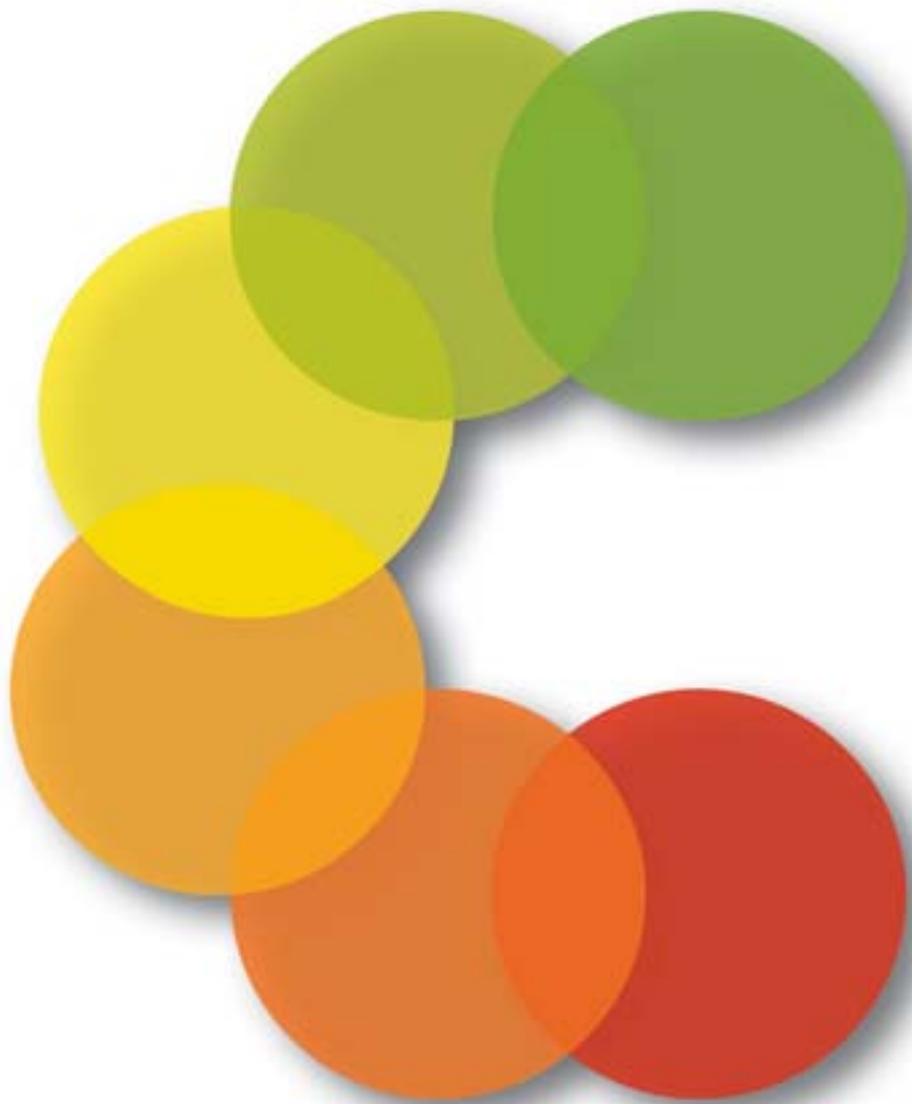


FRAMEWORK ON  
**EFFECTIVE RURAL  
COMMUNICATION  
FOR DEVELOPMENT**



**gtz**



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FOR DEVELOPMENT**

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# Foreword

The Framework on Effective Rural Communication for Development is the result of an inter-institutional expert consultation workshop organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH. The workshop was conducted jointly with the Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry “Laimburg” and held at the Center’s facilities in Ora (Bolzano, Italy) from 18 to 22 October 2004. The overall aim of the workshop was to identify key issues in research-extension linkages and explore communication approaches and tools that can provide effective linkage mechanisms in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

The workshop was an example of knowledge management in action. It brought together practitioners from 15 different countries and various institutions in order to extract their explicit and implicit knowledge on communication and rural development. The forty-five participants discussed key issues in research-extension linkages and identified, through a series of work space discussions and plenary sessions, six critical success factors that are necessary to ensure effective design and implementation of rural development projects. These success factors are: policy, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation, farmers and other rural organizations, participatory methods and media strategy.

The framework sets the scope and operational basis for the role of communication in rural development. It is related to other approaches such as:

- ↳ the Neuchâtel Initiative (<http://www.neuchatelinitiative.net>),
- ↳ the Rural Services Framework (<http://www.gtz.de/agriservice>) and
- ↳ the International Food Policy Research Institute (<http://www.ifpri.org>).

Both FAO and GTZ have gained considerable experience in these fields and are mutually engaged in joint activities which put knowledge and information at the heart of any rural development initiative. The Laimburg exercise and this publication are just one obvious result of this collaboration – other effects are more restricted to the participants proper, like new linkages, cooperation and insights.

The readers who wish to have more information about the workshop can download the proceedings from the FAO web site at: [http://www.fao.org/sd/dim\\_kn1/kn1\\_050501a1\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/sd/dim_kn1/kn1_050501a1_en.htm) or from the GTZ/Agriservice website at: <http://www.gtz.de/agriservice>

The FAO and GTZ have collaborated on the production of this handbook as part of their on-going programmes supporting rural development and communication. This handbook is regarded as a live working document and comments and suggestions on its content are welcome. Please address these to the editors.

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# Introduction

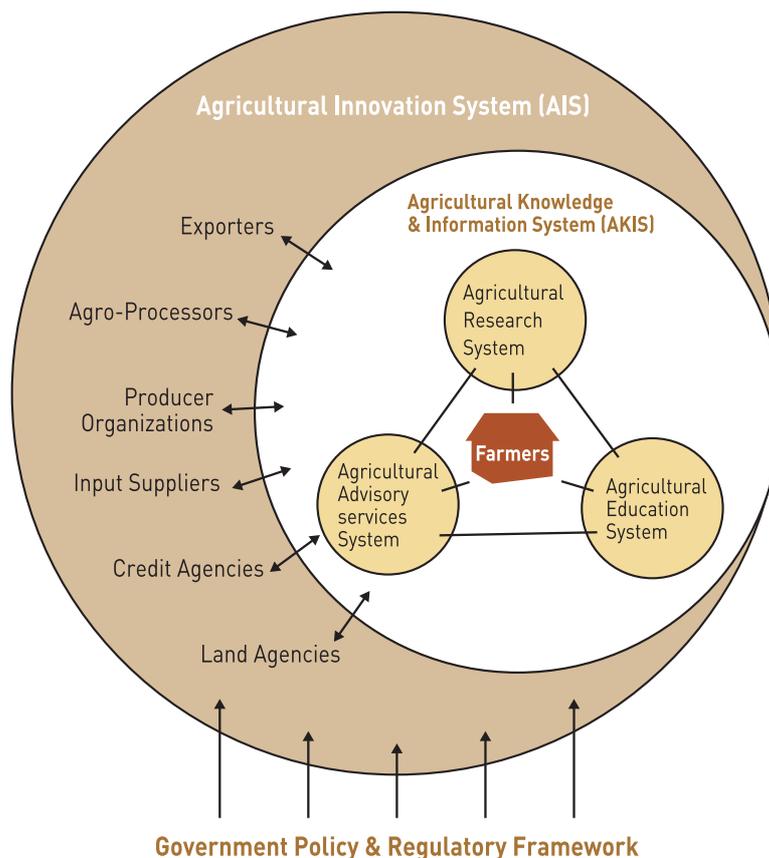
## Rural Communication and Development

**D**evelopment experiences of the last decades have shown that human resources development is essential for food security and market integration. Achieving sustainable agricultural development is less based on material inputs (e.g., seeds and fertilizer) than on the people involved in their use. This focus on human resources calls for increased knowledge and information sharing about agricultural production, as well as on appropriate communication methodologies, channels and tools.

New agricultural technologies are generated by research institutes, universities, private companies, and by the farmers themselves. Agricultural advisory services (including traditional extension, consultancy, business development and agricultural information services) are expected to disseminate new technologies amongst their clients. The role of research and advisory services is to give highly accurate, specific and unbiased technical and management information and advice in direct response to the needs of their clients. Due to poor linkages between research and advisory services, the adoption of new agricultural technologies by farmers is often very slow and research is not focussing on the actual needs of farmers. In many countries low agricultural production has been attributed, among other factors, to poor linkages between Research-Advisory Service-Farmers and to ineffective technology delivery systems, including poor information packaging, inadequate communication systems and poor methodologies.

In Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems (AKIS), people and institutions are linked together to promote and enable mutual learning and generate, share and use agriculture-related technology, knowledge, skills and information. The system integrates farmers, agricultural educators, researchers, extensionists and the private sector (support and input services, traders) to harness knowledge and information from various sources for better farming and improved livelihoods.

However, this integration among people and institutions, particularly in the research-extension-farmer relationship, has not been successful in many parts of the developing (and developed for that matter) world. Extension services are often under-equipped in terms of staff, transport and accommodation as well as inadequately trained for effective communication. Especially in areas where small scale agriculture is predominant and a wide array of crops is grown, there is a need for extensionists with a broad level of technical skills and expertise. There is also a basic difference in the information and extension needs between market-oriented, transitional and subsistence based farming. In addition, recent experiences show that depending on the situation, the human components of the system go beyond the researchers, educators, extensionists and farmers. Other key players such as informal leaders, community workers, businessmen etc. contribute substantially to the AKIS model.



Source: Birner *et al.* 2006

In the traditional research context, agricultural scientists tend to overlook situations at the farm level. Their research projects are often oriented at producing publications rather than solving concrete on-farm problems. Producers on the other hand expect immediate answers to local problems, and are not concerned with experimental details or the goals and objectives of the scientists.

Many linkage problems between major institutional actors are caused by a lack of coordinated planning, poor communication between linkage partners, and absence of follow through with actual linkage resource planning or implementation. In addition, there is typically little or no involvement at all of representative farmers or their organizations. A lack of appropriate communication structures, methodologies and tools results in poor identification of farmers' needs and priorities, inappropriate research programs, poor or irrelevant extension information and technologies and finally, low farmers' take-up of technology innovations. The poor results have led to dwindling factor allocation to agricultural research and extension. These are by no way new problems, but they need to be addressed again in the light of new developments in media and communication technologies and new support strategies to rural areas (programme based approaches). The recent drive towards donor harmonization and alignment offers a chance to overcome these challenges in a more comprehensive and coordinated manner.

**Rural communication** is an interactive process in which information, knowledge and skills, relevant for development are exchanged between farmers, extension/advisory services, information providers and research either personally or through media such as radio, print and more recently the new "Information and Communication Technologies" (ICTs). In this process all actors may be innovators, intermediaries and receivers of information and knowledge. The aim is to put rural people in a position to have the necessary information for informed decision-making and the relevant skills to improve their livelihoods. Communication in this context is therefore a non-linear process with the content of data or information.

In **Communication for Development** approaches, rural people are at the centre of any given development initiative and view planners, development workers, local authorities, farmers and rural people as "communication equals", equally committed to mutual understanding and concerted action. Communication for development is used for: people's participation and

community mobilization, decision-making and action, confidence building, for raising awareness, sharing knowledge and changing attitudes, behaviour and lifestyles; for improving learning and training and rapidly spreading information; to assist with programme planning and formulation; to foster the support of decision-makers.

### BOX 1 **Communication for Development**

*Communication for Development is based on the premise that successful rural development calls for the conscious and active participation of the intended beneficiaries at every stage of the development process. Rural development cannot take place without changes in attitudes and behavior among the people concerned.*

*Communication for Development is defined as the planned and systematic use of communication, through inter-personal channels, ICTs, audio-visuals and mass media:*

- > to collect and exchange information among all those concerned in planning a development initiative with the aim of reaching a consensus on the development problems being faced and the options for their solution.*
- > to mobilize people for development action and to assist in solving problems and misunderstandings that may arise during development plan implementation.*
- > to enhance the pedagogical and communication skills of development agents (at all levels) so that they may have a more effective dialogue with their audience.*
- > to apply communication technology to training and extension programmes, particularly at the grassroots level, in order to improve their quality and impact.*

### ↘ **Communication vs. Information**

It is appropriate, at this point, to distinguish between communication and information. Communication is a two-way process in which data and information are sent and received between two or more parties, each with an inherent knowledge and understanding about how the data and information is to be used and of each other (sender/receiver). Information is basically data which is more or less a passive commodity with little inherent value unless it enriches one or more of its recipients, either in terms of knowledge or in some other, material way.

Early theoretical models of communication from the 60's simply saw the communication process as an exchange of messages from a sender to a receiver with a lot of importance given to the sender and the channel used for the transmission. Since the 70's this model has undergone a 180 degree shift with more emphasis given to the communication process itself, understood primarily as an exchange of meanings and of the social relationships that have derived from such exchanges. From the agricultural and rural development perspective communication is considered as a social process designed to bring together agricultural technicians and farmers in a two-way process where people are both senders and receivers of information and co-creators of knowledge. Much of the work in Communication for Development focuses on two main areas of application: 1) information dissemination and motivation and, 2) training of field workers and rural producers. Both areas assume as essential conditions participatory audience involvement. The full potential of development can only be realized unless knowledge and technologies are shared effectively and rural people involved in the process are motivated to achieve success.

### ↳ Challenges to Rural Communication

The situation concerning communication in rural areas of developing countries is characterized by:

- 1** A dearth of information (absence of providers and of local communication content);
- 2** Conflicting messages (difficult to know what is relevant/correct information);
- 3** A fragmented market for information with many individual clients or client groups;
- 4** Relatively few clients scattered over a large area;
- 5** Structural transformations leading to constantly changing channels and content and a lack of the necessary skills for communication; and
- 6** A lack of well developed ICT infrastructure and low levels of ICT skills.

In rural areas, communication needs and available channels are facing tremendous changes through structural transformations: subsistence oriented farming remains the basis for food security especially in disadvantaged areas, while there is a general shift to move intermediate farmers into market-oriented production. Market-oriented farmers need to stay competitive in an increasingly global business environment. While

agriculture remains the mainstay for rural people, information and skills for alternative livelihoods gain in importance, not only as an exit strategy, but also for the increasing division of labour. Each of these groups of farmers has specific communication needs and capacities for innovation, management and finance. However, client/demand-oriented service provision for innovation, information, qualification and local organizational development remains the key driver. Ongoing decentralisation of government functions and services improve the prospects of local political decision making. These reform processes and their opportunities and consequences need to be communicated properly to rural people. Lobbying by organized groups, as a form of communication to politicians, becomes a necessary activity to voice rural interests. On the other side, efforts to close the information gap and, in particular, the digital divide in rural areas, have been supported by the wider availability and accessibility of communication technologies and infrastructures, like internet, rural radio and mobile phones.

### BOX 2 Principles for Agricultural Extension

- *Sound and negotiated agricultural policy as part of a broad economic policy*
- *Extension is more facilitation than technology transfer, to address a mix of commercial, technical, economic, social and environmental aspects*
- *Producers are clients, sponsors, and/or stakeholders, but not passive beneficiaries any more*
- *Market demand creates an impetus for new relationships to the private sector*
- *There are new perspectives for public funding and private actors in extension*
- *Pluralistic and decentralized services require coordination and dialogue to address change and a wide range of conditions.*

Source: The Neuchâtel Group, 1999 – Common framework on agricultural extension. <http://www.neuchatelinitiative.net>

### ➤ Specific Challenges and Key Target Groups

The participants of the Laimburg workshop identified specific challenges and their impact on three key target groups for agriculture and rural development. For market oriented agriculture, trade liberalization is leading to competitive national, regional and global markets for agricultural produce. Producers need to be aware of market changes (process, quality requirements,

market trends, innovations etc.) and be able to respond on a sound professional basis to maximize their returns from new opportunities in the market place. Equally, research, advisory, information and marketing services and farmers organizations need to be well informed and be able to share information, quickly and efficiently.

The risks for subsistence farmers are acute since their livelihoods depend on sufficient production. In the main, they need risk mitigating skills and information on diversification alternatives and, assurances in the form of information that shows how they can sell their surplus production, as well as ensuring sufficient production under unpredictable external situations.

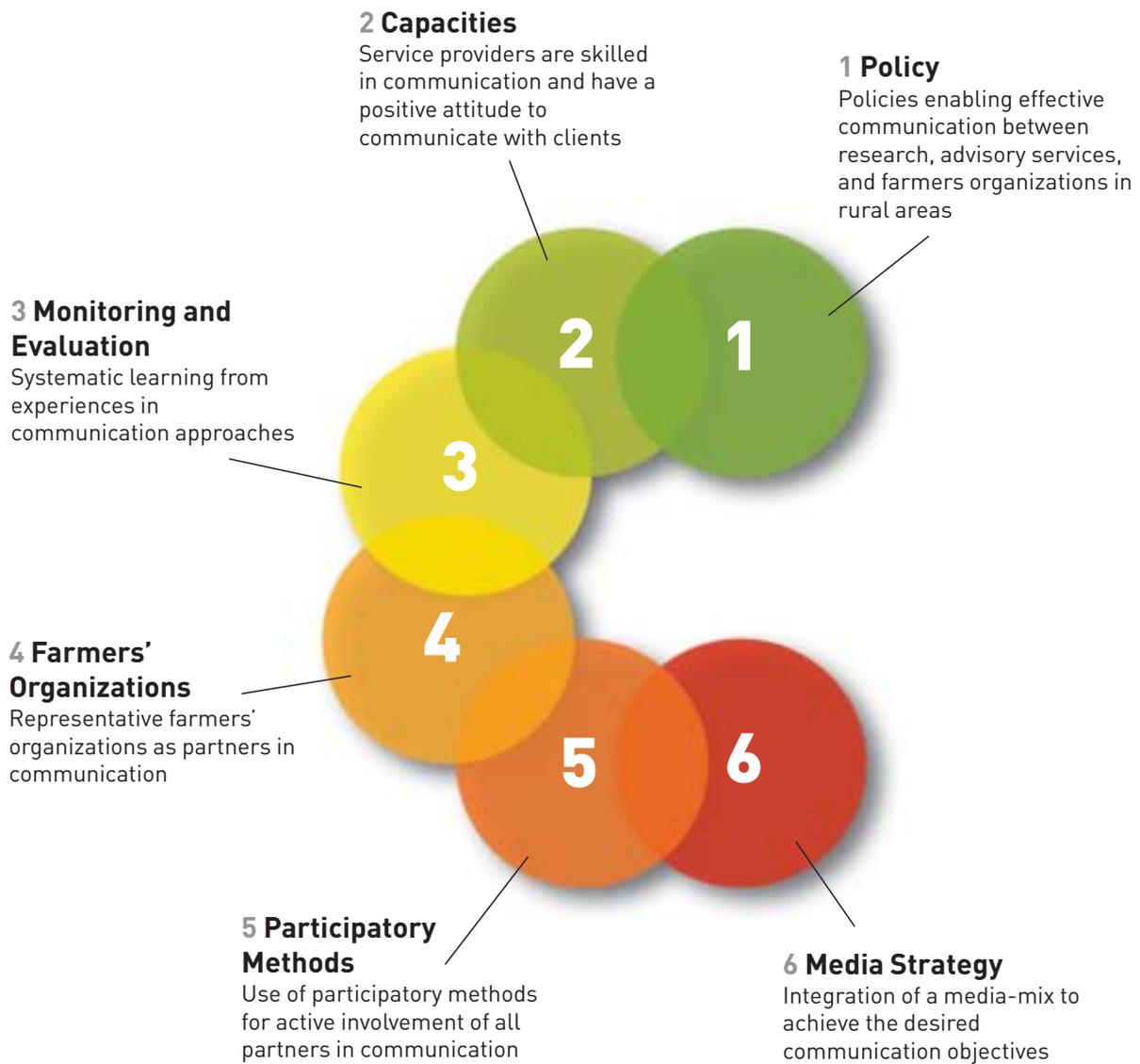
Intermediate farmers also need information on food security and, in addition, information on appropriate technologies and market opportunities plus alternative employment or diversification opportunities and skills.

# How to use the Framework

**T**he framework reflects the accumulated experience and consensus on a comprehensive set of necessary success factors and strategies for effective and efficient communication between agricultural research, rural advisory services and farmers' organizations in rural development. In the handbook each of these critical success factors is described in detail along with their interrelationships.

The framework is divided into a set of six generic success factors based on a breakdown of the development components necessary for effective communication in rural areas. They are regarded as essential prerequisites for successful project design and implementation. Each of the success factors contains a rationale, an objective in the form of the ideal situation, information on the main actors, the challenges to be overcome and the outline of a development strategy. Case studies have been incorporated to better illustrate these success factors. Web links and literature references have also been added as annexes for further reading.

The framework can be used as a basis for a comprehensive or a factor analysis of the existing overall situation concerning communication or on the level of the performance of each specific factor. The profile checklist set out on page 11 is designed to help in the analysis of a given situation and to identify possible entry points for interventions. It can also serve for planning or coordination between different development partners by dividing the tasks necessary to achieve the different success factors and supporting coordinated implementation with a common M&E system. It is therefore well suited to international programme-based approaches by providing a common basis and framework for planning in communication and for international division of labour. It also highlights the main entry points for targeted interventions. In this respect, it is also useful for evaluating projects as for planning them.



### **Profile for assessing the situation in rural communication and identifying entry points for interventions**

The success factors contained in this framework describe all necessary conditions, challenges, actors and strategies for coordinated interventions in improving the efficiency of rural communication in the broad sense. They have been put together as a set of guidelines - by practitioners, for practitioners. In practice, projects and programmes cannot work on all necessary success factors at the same time. They need to identify strategic entry points, while observing the other factors that may play a role. Work on such systemic success factors in the framework can even be shared in a coordinated way among several development agencies.

The following matrix can help to find these entry points. It can be used for developing a profile concerning the status of communication in rural areas in a given situation. The matrix is basically a qualitative checklist with the extremes of very unfavourable versus extremely favourable (positive) conditions and the reality is usually somewhere in between. If the conditions for a success factor are negative and if they can be influenced, this factor may be used as an entry point for interventions, or at least as a priority field of work. The positive conditions can also be used for the formulation of indicators in impact monitoring. The self-assessment exercise may be conducted in small groups or workshops. The results may also be displayed in a radar diagram with the success factors on policy, capacity, organization, M&E, participation and media strategies as axes. The list is only meant to be indicative and should be adapted to the specific circumstances.

## PROFILE FOR RURAL COMMUNICATION

	Unfavourable Conditions	Present Situation				Desirable Conditions
		--	-	+	++	
POLICIES	<b>Policies</b> restricting flow of technical information between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; applied research</li> <li>&gt; government extension</li> <li>&gt; information providers and media</li> <li>&gt; private / NGO advisory services</li> </ul>					Policies specifying clear mandates and obligations for sharing of information between organizations and institutions, both public and private
	Overall <b>policies</b> (e.g. PRSP) generally neglecting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; rural development</li> <li>&gt; rural information infrastructure</li> <li>&gt; special information needs in rural areas</li> </ul>					Coherent policies for positive, balanced development of rural areas, including information infrastructure.
DONORS	<b>Donors:</b> No influence of development agencies or other stakeholders in policy formulation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; pluralism of communication services (state, private, NGO)</li> <li>&gt; freedom of information</li> <li>&gt; media infrastructure</li> <li>&gt; farmers' organizations</li> </ul>					Constructive cooperation of concerned ministries with major stakeholders in negotiation and development of communication and media policy. Development of demand oriented strategies and policies.
	<b>Donors:</b> Many isolated interventions by development agencies in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; regulatory and investment strategies,</li> <li>&gt; capacity development of communication providers</li> <li>&gt; development of advisory services messages</li> <li>&gt; farmers' organizations</li> <li>&gt; infrastructural development</li> </ul>					Harmonised and coordinated policy interventions of development agencies; providers and clients have common goal or vision, clear division of tasks, cooperation and communication on progress.
EXTENSION	<b>Extension:</b> No recognised or applied quality standards for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; necessary capacities of advisory services/ information providers</li> <li>&gt; messages transferred through media and advisory services</li> </ul>					Capable and recognised advisory and information service providers; messages and organizations are clear, following transparent and professional standards.
	The content of <b>extension messages</b> and market information is decided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; centrally</li> <li>&gt; only on technical basis</li> <li>&gt; by state or other non-farmer institutions and organizations</li> </ul>					Rural communities are actively involved in the identification of communication contents, such as problems, search for solutions and development as a routine procedure.
	<b>Extension messages:</b> Isolated technical information and extension campaigns, without testing and follow-up.					Use of a strategic mix of media in campaigns, geared to impact on a maximum number of farmers.

## PROFILE FOR RURAL COMMUNICATION

	Unfavourable Conditions	Present Situation				Desirable Conditions
		--	-	+	++	
COMMUNICATION METHODOLOGIES AND CHANNELS	No <b>capacity development</b> of communication service providers in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; participatory methods</li> <li>&gt; media use</li> <li>&gt; communication methods</li> <li>&gt; adult education principles</li> </ul>					Communication service providers (extension, advisory, information) use a broad range of qualification offers from professional education to in-service training. Advisory services use adult education methods as a standard approach.
	<b>Communication channels:</b> the practice of communication between research, advisory/information services and farmers is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; top-down and one-way flow of information and knowledge.</li> <li>&gt; actors in the AKIS are isolated from each other</li> <li>&gt; the providers are accountable only to external donors</li> </ul>					Demand-oriented communication service providers, creating a positive learning environment. There are efficient mechanisms in place that allow feed-back and formulation of service demands by clientele; the providers are accountable for their services to the clientele.
	<b>Communication providers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; have a hierarchical communication culture</li> <li>&gt; do not allow participation in decision making</li> <li>&gt; use one-way communication channels</li> </ul>					Communication providers maintain two-way flow of information and participation for decision making as daily routine. They actively communicate with their clientele and the sources of information.
	The <b>media strategies</b> in rural areas are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; not differentiated to various target groups</li> <li>&gt; not context specific</li> <li>&gt; concentrate on one medium only</li> <li>&gt; not designed and implemented by media specialists</li> </ul>					Coherent, strategic use of suitable media mixes (radio, pictures, film, voice, internet etc.) in campaigns, designed and partly implemented by media specialists. The target audiences are analysed and the content of the communication is adjusted to their needs.
	Bureaucratic and administrative <b>M&amp;E</b> mechanisms in interventions and media campaigns for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; checking activities</li> <li>&gt; collecting data without consequences for management</li> <li>&gt; controlling personnel</li> <li>&gt; as internal information only</li> </ul>					A comprehensive M&E system (baseline, activity, impact) is used for steering and managing interventions, thus improving transparency and communication. The M&E information is used for lobbying.
CLIENTS	<b>Clientele:</b> the population in rural areas is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; not or hardly organized</li> <li>&gt; mostly subsistence farmers,</li> <li>&gt; scattered over a large area,</li> <li>&gt; has none or few, representative farmer organizations</li> </ul>					Most farmers are organized representatively in associations/cooperatives/unions etc. Their organizations have a mandate and capacities for playing an active role in AKIS and in lobbying.
	<b>Farmers</b> , as clientele for communication providers, have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; unclear or unrealistic demands for communication services</li> <li>&gt; no legitimate or representative voice for demanding communication services</li> </ul>					Farmers are able to articulate well defined, representative and legitimate demands to communication service providers that can be fulfilled with the available means.

# SUCCESS FACTOR 1: Policy

## **Policies enabling effective communication between research, advisory services, and farmers' organizations in rural areas**

**Why is it important?** Policies set the rules, direction and frame for the development of rural communication, media and services. The legal environment can be enabling, regulatory or prescriptive. Policies define the relative importance and direction of rural development in general, the actors, their roles and capacities in communication, their potential forms of organization and the development of media, channels and infrastructure. An enabling policy environment for efficient rural communication needs to allow a market orientation in the provision of services, a pluralistic approach backed by suitable mandates with user representation, free flow of information and transparent quality standards of services.

The situation concerning communication policies is characterized by a large number of involved ministries/divisions, e.g. for infrastructure and media (telecommunication, public works), information and knowledge (science, education, agriculture), mandates and channels (interior, privatization, decentralization). Therefore, it is common that policies are not coherent, often conflicting, i.e. a lack of “joined-up” government. Overarching policies, like PRSPs, often neglect communication needs in rural areas. Pluralism and the free flow of information are desirable, since monopolistic structures are unable to make communication for development efficient and meet the needs of rural communities, rendering their activities more or less useless. Reform processes resulting from the implementation of policies need to be properly communicated to be understood by all players and the rural people.

A recent development is donor harmonization and alignment (Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness).

Here, the proper communication of objectives and implementation strategies is a pre-condition for harmonised approaches.

The communication providers may be public (telecommunication, radio, research, advisory services, information services), governed by public law (TV and radio), private (advisory services, radio, TV, internet, mobile telephone) or from the civil society (radio, advisory services, information). There is no rule for the optimum mix, the aim should be for “best fit” arrangements and the development of reformable institutions and organizations.

Rural areas need special attention. Their communication infrastructure is usually thinner than in urban areas, the services fewer, commercially less attractive and the clientele thinly distributed and less aware of the possibilities and opportunities. The information/knowledge needs on agriculture, livestock, innovation, markets and alternative employment are quite location and group specific. Remote areas are particularly disadvantaged and may need continued subsidised support in communication infrastructure and services. It may therefore be necessary for governments to provide incentives for information providers (research, farmers with local knowledge, market information providers, government on regulations) to adequately communicate information to rural areas.

**What are we aiming at?** Policies for rural communication need to put rural people in a position to have access to information that is relevant for their livelihoods and to acquire the skills and knowledge to use the information. Rural people need to have a voice in demanding/formulating the data, knowledge and skills they need. Policies should define an arena that allows free and independent generation of information, communication with different media and pluralistic providers, through channels available for rural people even in remote areas. The policies should specifically provide a framework for disadvantaged rural people to have access to information and give them capacities to use and benefit from community media. Policies should also provide for mechanisms in quality management on the providers and the content of information and, address ways to overcome the imbalances and poor infrastructure in rural areas.

**Possible Actors / Clients** Actors include various ministries responsible for drafting policies and their agencies to implement them, the media providers for lobbying or as involved parties and the rural people as clients and partners. Development agencies play mainly an advisory role, but may also provide funding e.g. communication infrastructure.

The major policy stakeholders are:

- ↳ Ministries - to design and implement communication policies.  
They include the Ministries of Communication, Infrastructure, Rural Development, Food and Agriculture, Science and Education;
- ↳ Media outlets - TV, radio, print, internet, either private, public or from the civil society;
- ↳ Representatives of farmers' organizations – to collect and formulate the communication needs of their clients;
- ↳ Development organizations for policy advice and harmonisation of development interventions.

**Main Challenges** The main challenges are outdated, overregulated and/or uncoordinated national communication policies. These policies go well beyond rural areas and often neglect their special needs. If, for example, pluralistic and decentralised radio operation is not allowed, rural radio is hardly a sensible option for communication. If there are no institutional linkages between research, extension and farmers, communication often breaks down. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) often neglect the special communication needs of rural areas.

Challenges in the implementation of policies include uncoordinated actions by ministries and/or development agencies and poor implementation of existing policies. Often the implementation of policies and regulation of services reaching out to rural areas is not effective. Corruptive and unfair practices concerning regulation can also be a major challenge in designing media strategies. The drafting and implementation of policies are therefore matters of good governance in general. Rural areas are often commercially unattractive for investment in services and infrastructure. Without concrete incentives for investors, even well formulated policies will not be implemented. Donor harmonisation often fails, not only due to differing interests and strategies, but also because of poor communication of expectations and processes.

**Strategies** Any development of a strategic policy approach needs to begin with an inventory and assessment of existing policies, the ministries and departments involved and how policies are being implemented. In particular, the assessment needs to examine whether the policies have comprehensively considered the situation in rural areas, the communication infrastructure, capable providers, communication between partners (AKIS), quality content and client organization.

Criteria for effective communication policies include:

- ✎ Research is applied, autonomous, demand and communication oriented, allowing the provision of unbiased information to farmers;
- ✎ Advisory services are demand oriented and pluralistic;
- ✎ Advisory services for disadvantaged regions or to subsistence farmers may be supported by the state to maintain communication;
- ✎ Services use participatory methods to define information needs and to communicate with farmers.
- ✎ Farmers' organizations are accepted as partners in communication by government structures and thus they have the right for lobbying. In other words, the policies empower farmers and their organizations;
- ✎ Institutionalised links between applied research, advisory services and representative farmers' organizations for identification of research/extension topics, monitoring and setting of transparent quality standards;
- ✎ Media have free access to technical information and an obligation to communicate in rural areas; community media offer access for the poor; operation of private and civil society media providers is not overregulated;
- ✎ Communication infrastructure is expanded to rural centres and if possible to the countryside (bridging the rural digital divide [http://www.fao.org/rdd/index\\_en.asp](http://www.fao.org/rdd/index_en.asp));
- ✎ Measures are in place to check the quality of contents through self control or licensing reliable sources of information;
- ✎ Donor intervention strategies are transparent, communicated to partners and coordinated.

The first key steps are to identify the leading change agents and any potential allies (e.g. other donors), the involvement of the private sector, NGOs and community representatives. These primary stakeholders often have a strong influence on the policy making and decision process and may have existing information and resources. Lobbying the government for policy reforms can often be a long and tedious process and it is imperative to use as many means and conduits as possible. For example, there are consultation processes set out in the formulations of PRSPs. Evidence needs to be collected to demonstrate the benefits of communication policies (e.g. case studies from elsewhere, cost/benefit analyses, (see the success factor on monitoring and evaluation). Quality standards on extension messages and the performance of advisers can be set, e.g. through an accreditation system or codes of conduct (see the success factor on farmers' organizations).

**Case study** *In Ukraine, a variety of different projects had created a number of advisory services based on different models. However, these initiatives resulted in a fragmented pattern of delivery without a proper legal basis for their existence. In addition, the state had no means to allocate funds to these services. The DFID Ukraine Rural Livelihoods Project (URLP) established an Institute for Rural Development which sponsored the development of a law on advisory services. The law was eventually passed by the Ukraine Parliament and this laid the foundation for the legal operation of advisory services and provided a basis for state funding. The process took over 2 years to reach a successful conclusion.*

More information at <http://www.urlp.org> Ian Houseman, Rural Livelihoods Adviser, URLP  
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### BOX 3 **Sound agricultural sector policy**

**Key conditions and success factors:**

- > *Consistency of policy portfolio with government services*
- > *Consistency of fiscal priorities with purpose of policy*
- > *Incentives for private sector development in macro-economic, legal and policy environment*
- > *Inclusiveness of interests and values of stakeholders*
- > *Constructive engagement of donors*
- > *Accompanying support with agricultural education, producer organizations and applied research*

**Key elements:**

- > *Market access*
- > *Producer prices*
- > *Availability and costs of inputs*
- > *Supply and access to credit*
- > *Security of tenure*
- > *Freedom and regulation of producer associations*
- > *Education and training*
- > *Applied research*
- > *Government arbitration and supervision*
- > *Crisis management*
- > *Strategic vision*

Source: The Neuchâtel Group 2000: Guide for monitoring, evaluation and joint analyses for pluralistic extension support.  
<http://www.Neuchatelinitiative.net>

# SUCCESS FACTOR 2:

## Capacities

### **Service providers are skilled in communication and have a positive attitude to communicate with clients**

**Why is it important?** Effective communication between all actors in agricultural knowledge and information systems (AKIS) is a pre-condition for demand-orientation of services. It is not just the exchange of information, but the creation of a learning environment. Skills in communication have technical, structural and methodological aspects, as well as a “soft” facet concerning the attitudes, culture and behaviour of the actors. Behavioural change in particular is neither easy, nor fast.

Communication needs, the respective capacities and related information content as well as the respective skills need to be transmitted efficiently, that is as direct as possible, without misunderstandings or waste and adequate in language and contents for all the partners involved. The “traditional” linear, top-down model for communication is still very much in the heads of the actors and guides their behaviour, even though there is little or no evidence of the success of this approach. For example according to this model, agricultural research generates technologies and strategies, sends them to advisory services, which adapt them to the conditions of local farmers and transfer them to farmers as a homogenous recipient group. Farmers are supposed to learn and select those strategies and technologies they consider appropriate. New technologies and strategies that are applied become innovations. In reality, research and advisory services are often isolated organizations with no structured, inter-institutional communication and, for farmers, are only one source of information among many others. Farmers are very rarely organized into homogenous groups that can make optimum use of standard off-the-shelf information. The communication infrastructure is often weak in rural areas so that many farmers are excluded (e.g. the digital divide). The poor communication skills of all partners further hamper the effectiveness and efficiency of rural communication.

The concept of demand-orientation of services clarifies the roles, directions and qualities in communication. Adaptive research needs to know from farmers and advisory services specifically what to research on and has to communicate the results in an appropriate language (and quality) to advisory services and possibly farmers directly. The uptake of their advice and its acceptance depends on their communication skills as well as on the content. Farmers have to clarify with advisory services what information, technologies and skills they need and in what form and whether the services are of an appropriate quality. Possibly they will have to lobby with authorities on the services they need. Advisory services have to consider that different client groups have specific needs and capacities for information and skills. The clarification of demand between provider and client and the understanding of needs are basic for communication service providers to survive in a competitive environment. The relationship between the partners needs to be based on mutual respect and rapport to build trust and legitimacy. Transparency improves the credibility of the actors.

Embedded services, such as extension advice by agricultural input dealers or lead firms in a value chain are receiving more attention recently. They can be efficient extension agents, particularly in the absence of traditional extension. However, their inbuilt commercial bias must be recognised and taken into account.

The availability of new information technologies and media, like the internet, rural radio, mobile phones and TV, open more channels for communication and give the chance for wide access to information and to a limited extent also to interactive communication. In reality, the electronic media are still largely available only to institutions and companies (*Connectivity*), the contents are in a language that farmers do not use or communicate in, have little relevance to their needs and their use requires training (*content*). Also, culture and traditions of information gathering have to be taken into account (*Context*). Here the “CCC” bottom-line for effective use of electronic media applies: Connectivity, Content, and Context – all have to be assured to realise the potential of information technologies.

**What are we aiming at?** Research, advisory services and farmers have to consider each other as equal and important communication partners and they need to have a common language. There need to be channels that allow and demand interactive communication, an infrastructure that permits

outreach including well developed communication skills of all partners that favour and support interaction. This must include the resources to enable sufficient institutional, technical, information and methodological capacities for effective interaction between all the stakeholders operating within the AKIS.

**Possible Actors /Clients** The tasks to be fulfilled by the different actors are:

- ✎ Applied agricultural research generates technologies and strategies. They have to make them available in an appropriate language and incorporate demands for research by the users. Researchers have to communicate within their own community to find and validate innovations, as well as with industry and farmers to identify research needs and verify external innovations.
- ✎ Communication is the core business of advisory services as intermediaries between research, information services (data banks) and agricultural practice. They need to communicate information and skills to very diverse client groups and be informed on trends and developments.
- ✎ Information Services, mainly for markets, inputs, weather or logistical data, have the task to process and transmit data and information in an appropriate language, usually through the media.
- ✎ Farmers' organizations represent clients in order to formulate qualified demands to service providers, to organize communication services and to lobby for their interests.
- ✎ Agricultural input dealers and lead firms in value chains offer embedded services to farmers.
- ✎ Training organizations (universities, colleges , in-service training) have the task to train the necessary specialised skills for communication to (future) professionals, such as facilitation and interaction within adult education concepts, as well as the technical skills for media use.
- ✎ Media operators (rural radio stations, mobile phone providers, internet cafes etc.) offer additional communication channels for communication and outreach.

**Main Challenges** The communication culture of many research and advisory services leads to poor client orientation. Organizational structures are not conducive to improving this situation since they tend to favour hierarchical, top-down, one-way, undifferentiated communication to beneficiaries, or even worse only to peers. This prevents effective communication in the sense of mutual learning.

- ✎ The working environment in agencies often does not allow communication skills to be developed or implemented (e.g. time pressure, overload with

administration, no incentives). This is true especially for public advisory agencies which have also many other tasks to perform. The culture of many organizations does not support the effective implementation of communication strategies.

- ✎ Non-congruent service relationships, as often found between government research and advisory services and farmers, have profound influence on attitudes. The client remains a beneficiary and not somebody at the centre of interest. The lack of accountability to clients makes the service provider much less interested in communication, since the feed back of farmers on the quality of services has little influence on their remuneration. The client who receives free services is as well less interested in communicating his/her dissatisfaction and has difficulty in ascribing a value to those services.
- ✎ Capacity building in the necessary communication skills of professionals and front line staff of advisory services is often neglected. This includes verbal communication/facilitation and the proper use of media, e.g. the internet as information source (see the success factor on participatory approaches).
- ✎ The poor technical infrastructure, particularly in rural areas hampers not only internet communication, but even radio and face-to-face communication due to long distances.
- ✎ The lack of resources in some organizations and lack of investment in new technology inhibits their ability to utilise new media and communication opportunities.

**Strategies** As a first step, the existing communication culture in organizations and current contents and linkages between stakeholders need to be analysed and capacities assessed. Criteria for skills and attitudes of knowledge and information service providers (KISP) are that:

- ✎ The providers are motivated to communicate, it is part of their job description and their assessment procedures focus on effective communication;
- ✎ The providers are accountable to their clients in a way that they take up their clients' legitimate demands and are able to communicate specifically and effectively. This is especially needed for advisory services;
- ✎ Specific, effective communication must be based on active listening and facilitation skills;
- ✎ Because clients, i.e. farmers, are in heterogeneous groups, the communication strategies must be specific and tailored to the needs of individual groups;
- ✎ Providers need to be competent in both content and communication, especially to satisfy the demands for quality communication.

Training in communication for development needs to be included in pre-service and in-service training courses. Specialists in this field of work need to be recruited and trained, particularly in advisory services, and need to be given the necessary resources to contribute to development programmes. When training is given to input dealers giving extension advice in embedded services, emphasis must be placed on the communication issues as well as the technical content.

Mechanisms need to be put in place to elicit feed-back from farmers and rural communities on their information needs and the delivery of services, particularly on their ability to communicate with the diversity of rural interests and backgrounds.

Again participatory technology development and extension approaches need to be applied in research and advisory services.

Advisory services need to build relationships with information providers and users. These services have a strong role in modifying and tailoring communication content to meet the needs of their clients. This work requires the capacity to capture or acquire information, to store and retrieve it and to transform and communicate it to rural communities.

Ensuring that those services that are developed are truly responsive is a key aspect to the work and this means introducing mechanisms for even more demand-driven services, e.g. contract research, funding incentives, competitive grants for applied research, reversal of funds. To achieve this will mean putting in place appropriate incentive systems with effective rewards/sanctions for service providers and employees from the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of services rendered.

In addition, there are institutionalised or informal communication fora and channels with a communication infrastructure and outreach available to all actors. Committees to decide on research topics/evaluate progress need to have transparent rules and standards as well as mandated and representative participants.

### Case study **The village animal health worker as private service provider – concept and experience from Cambodia**

**Context:** *The concept of “Village Animal Health Workers” (VAHW) is a user-paid system or service provision for payment. The identification of the VAHW happens during a village meeting. The function and criteria of a VAHW are explained to the villagers. Participants for a village meeting propose candidates to become a VAHW. The facilitators, who are the Government or NGO extension workers, encourage the proposal of female candidates. The facilitators of the village meet and check whether the candidates meet the criteria. They include the ability to read and write. The candidate is elected by secret balloting, after that the candidate has the permission to enter the training process. This election process ensures that the future VAHW has the trust of most of the villagers.*

*The subsequent training of the future VAHWs from different villages takes place over a six-month period, covering seven modules. Participants of the training (five days in class and one week on-the-job for each module) receive a certificate which is also considered to be a licence. Major services offered by the VAHWs are treatments and vaccinations. Some VAHWs provide breeding services, act as demonstration farmers and give technical advice. They have the duty to report on diseases. There is no official fee structure for the services, and no charges for technical advice.*

*At district level, the VAHWs form associations of service providers and run a pharmacy for their own drug supply and for continuous learning and exchange of experience.*

**Lessons learnt:** *The seven weeks training of VAHWs cannot replace a veterinary course, hence the scope of and skills of VAHWs remain basic.*

*The most critical factor is the understanding of private service provision and what role Government should play. Although the private nature of VAHWs is always acknowledged, in practice they are often regarded and treated, by others and themselves, as extended Government service providers at village level.*

*Next steps based on observations so far: (I) create a better understanding of private business approach and independence from Government (II) development of a code of conduct to ensure quality standards of the service delivery.*

## BOX 4 Main principles for Demand Driven Delivery Systems

### **The main principles for Demand Driven Service Delivery Systems are:**

- > Services shall be driven by user demand
- > Service providers shall be accountable to the users
- > Users shall have a free choice of service providers
- > "Demand" is defined as what people ask for, need and value so much that they are willing to invest their own resources, such as time and money, in order to receive the services.

### **The indicators for success of Demand-Driven Agricultural Advisory Services are:**

- > Farmers have access to agricultural advisory services
- > Farmers use the services
- > Farmers have increased income from agricultural production
- > There is increased competition between providers of agricultural advice

### **Preconditions for success are enabling policies and public sector commitment to the transition:**

- > The public sector must stop free supply of advisory services that can be delivered through the private sector.

### **Development of demand driven advisory services emerges when:**

- > Farmers are motivated – have reliable and profitable market opportunities
- > Farmers have adequate capacity and organizations to formulate their demands
- > There is a good choice of advisers available that are able to deliver the demanded services
- > The delivery systems make service providers accountable to the users

### **Demand-Driven Agricultural Advisory Services are enhanced by:**

- > Improved access to markets for farmers
- > Increased capacity and sometimes external facilitation for demand formulation and articulation
- > User contribution to the costs of advisory services
- > Earmarked funding for subsidising the costs of advisory services
- > Building competencies of advisers to enable them to respond to demand
- > Appropriate approaches to quality assurance
- > Demand oriented service providers directly accountable to users
- > Channelling public funding through user groups
- > Existence of capacity building and backstopping institutions of farmers and advisers

Source: Neuchâtel Group (2006): Common framework on demand driven agricultural advisory services; <http://www.Neuchatelinitiative.net>

## BOX 5 Principles for Financing Agricultural Extension

*Extension today is carried out by producer organizations, NGOs, private enterprises, central and decentralised public bodies.*

*A pre-condition for the financing of services is the availability of enough capable service providers in a district or region/province.*

**The following principles apply:**

- > *Combine financial resources and competencies of players to improve effectiveness, quality and sustainability of services*
- > *Design transparent financing mechanisms to empower stakeholders, to foster the delivery of quality services, to ensure fair competition between providers and equitable opportunities for clients.*
- > *Introduce financial participation to make providers more accountable to users. The degree of public interest and the capabilities of users to pay determine the cost share. Invest public funds to serve public interests. Private interests in services should be paid directly.*
- > *Financial participation by poor client groups: only partial payment is practicable, use mechanisms adapted to the capacities of clients like payment in kind, after harvest or cost spreading methodologies (e.g. group extension).*

*From: Neuchâtel Group, 2002 – Common framework on financing agricultural and rural extension.  
<http://www.Neuchatelinitiative.net>*

## BOX 6 Pro-Poor Extension – Starting Points and Key Points for Analyses

*“Pro-poor reform depends on the political will to support a target group that will not, in many cases, in the short- or medium term, generate an economic surplus.”*

*Starting points for policy reform:*

- > *Critical assessment of priorities for public resources on disadvantaged areas*
- > *Coherence between extension programming and broader poverty reduction strategies and objectives*
- > *Placement of public sector human resources; incentives to frontline staff for service provision to marginal areas*
- > *Good governance in extension*
- > *Strengthen demand side of extension*
- > *Broader range of topics for extension*
- > *Promote technologies that create labour opportunities and cheap staples for poor consumers*
- > *Include elements of pro-poor growth and vulnerability reduction*





**Key points for analyses:**

- > *Degree of market integration of the poor*
- > *Degree of representation of poor towards government, private sector, civil society*
- > *Which rural livelihoods are considered viable*
- > *Implications of policies that fail to address the poorest of the poor*
- > *How do poor cope with poverty*
- > *Implications of technical change that displaces labour*
- > *Role of induced technical change within coping strategies of the poor*

*From: The Neuchâtel Group 2003: Framework for supporting pro-poor extension.*

<http://www.Neuchatelinitiative.net>

# SUCCESS FACTOR 3: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

## Systematic learning from experiences in communication approaches

**Why is it important?** Measuring the progress and outcome of interventions is vital in any development situation. This is needed not only to assess the effectiveness of the interventions but also to establish replicable working models and to steer the whole process. The key aspect is to ensure that the feedback mechanisms (see Chapter 5 - Participatory Methods) generate information and understanding that can be fed into any project whilst it is still being implemented. This style of approach, using participatory evaluation, also engages stakeholders in implementation and improves ownership. The lessons learned need to be captured in a form which ensures that they can be used in other development situations.

The data and information captured in this way can also be used for lobbying governments, administrations and rural communities to ensure the release of resources, the removal of barriers and the development of a consensual approach.

Other aspects of M&E are standards and quality management. There are needs for professional and transparent standards for extension messages and the accreditation of advisers. Performance of the system needs to be monitored, especially in terms of impact, i.e. more emphasis on the results of activities rather than the activities themselves.

Involving the key stakeholders through participatory impact assessments requires the joint setting of monitoring criteria and it encourages productive debate about cause and effect linkages and input/output relationships. Thus, it is possible to demonstrate accountability to donors and sponsors, as well as the rural communities themselves. Working in this way also allows for project planning to be based on experiences/results acquired so far. This closed feedback loop further encourages participation and commitment.

In many situations, monitoring is also a basis for transparency and openness by providing evidence or acting as a deterrent or by changing organizational culture.

Effective monitoring of projects also allows for the efficient allocation of resources to meet new challenges or changing situations. Evaluation of projects is usually an ex-post activity dependent on the quality of the data and information collected by the monitoring process. Judgement can then be made on the efficiency of resource utilisation. The approach can be extended to establish a basis for rating the quality of the approach compared to other approaches and styles of intervention (benchmarking).

Finally, a sound M&E approach is a fundamental prerequisite for dynamic self-learning and adaptation.

**What are we aiming at?** The primary requirement is to ensure the full involvement of all the actors so that they fully understand their roles and work with a common purpose to ensure that the goals and objectives are understood and agreed. This also means that all the actors sign up to, and are involved in, the M&E process.

A key output of this process is to ensure that all stakeholders are being motivated through the evidence of results and, similarly that they are learning through the process. This brings added confidence and more enthusiasm and energy for those involved and encourages others to participate. This then ensures a results-based approach which progresses through knowledge acquisition and learning.

**Possible Actors/Clients** The key actors are those M&E units involved in projects/programmes who are responsible for the M&E activity and the project/programme managers to whom they report. Similarly M&E units in donor organizations have a role in setting out their requirements and educating others on the approaches to be used.

The other main group of actors are the key stakeholders involved in communication activities. They need to have an understanding of M&E methodologies and constraints and also they should nominate persons to act as focal points for M&E activity.

**Main Challenges** M&E can be an expensive process and a major challenge to be overcome is the misallocation of resources in M&E practises that cannot be used or interpreted. This leads to inefficiencies, frustration and hampers true progress.

In some societies or situations there is a misunderstanding of the role of M&E. It is often seen as a mere control activity with concomitant sanctions, often collecting irrelevant information and not making any positive contribution to the development activity. Creating a 'learning environment,' which is open to admitting mistakes, is a new and potentially threatening concept to many project implementers.

Understanding the true cost of M&E activities can be difficult but it is important to ensure that sufficient resources are allocated in the project/programme design.

**Strategies** An effective M&E framework can be seen as an integral part of the communication approach, which is geared towards more efficient communication and deeper involvement of stakeholders. This then ensures a results-based approach which progresses through knowledge acquisition and learning.

The documentation of the experiences in the M&E process results in a greater understanding of the AKIS and is thus part of knowledge management. The lessons learned can be used to bring about changes in organizational culture and can also be used as a basis for measuring the quality of services provided to farmers and rural communities. This in turn informs future planning activities and can be used as a basis for planning according to community needs.

**Case study** **Management of rural services in the context of rural development in eastern Indonesia: Challenges and success factors.**

*The rural people of the Indonesian provinces of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) and East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) are particularly vulnerable to unfavourable climatic conditions and face extended periods of low/no income when production is impossible. The rural poor largely depend on agriculture and fishing for income. They rely on simple, traditional methods of planting, harvesting, processing and selling. With regard to rural development services, there is on the one hand a lack of sound strategies and services by public and private providers, and on the other hand a lack of awareness (and thus general demand) by the rural poor about the economic and social benefits of such services.*

*Existing public rural development service structures in the region have very limited outreach. They generally lack the capacities to develop locally adapted strategies. The AgroPro project strengthened the capacities of public service providers by facilitating a process wherein the local universities, NGOs and the private sector became accepted partners of the government-controlled service providers. One of the critical steps within the process was the acceptance by all to follow a bottom-up approach.*

*Strengthening the capacities of the service: Preparing extension services and support structures for such approaches is necessary. Tools and approaches are training as well as round table discussions and close examinations of the value chains of products. The most promising agents identified by the project to oversee this process are local universities with their own extensive networks. Acquisition of funding through public relation by making project results and benefits better known to legislators and other possible funding sources on local level is an activity neglected by many NGOs, universities and government agencies. Active canvassing of support is necessary within decentralised structures and limited public funding. Showing the impact of activities and the relevance to the local government is very effective here.*

*Providing market information to poor producers does not necessarily break the dominance of local traders, especially when these live far away from markets and have no other link to the market than through this one single trader. A local NGOs, formed by former rural development advisors of the district governments and former project staff offers a variety of consulting services, including technical training or business development training for the poor (based on CEFÉ), not only to local governments but also to third parties. An important prerequisite to create sustainable private service delivery in all districts is to foster*

*entrepreneurial thinking within the NGOs themselves, since most members come from public-funded working backgrounds and still have difficulties perceiving themselves and their work as a service delivery business. An overall lack of understanding of the value of professional advisory/brokerage services is difficult to overcome. Building awareness of the value of services for increasing incomes still needs to be improved and continued. This should remain the task of projects and governments.*

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# SUCCESS FACTOR 4:

## Farmers' organizations

### Representative farmers' organizations as partners in communication

**Why is it important?** Rural regions are low density, heterogeneous and fragmented areas that are difficult to be served comprehensively by research and advisory services and even by the media – economies of scale play an important role for these services. The many individual small-scale farmers often lack the means and capacities to demand, organize or finance the information access and communication services they need for development. The education level and thus the capacities to make use of ICTs, especially new media, are often low. Self-organization of the rural population allows more efficient set-up and delivery of information and knowledge services facilitating the communication among the key players. Farmers' organizations can pool resources from their members, both financially and from a human resource standpoint, in the latter case seen as a repository of information (institutional knowledge). The representative and legitimate organization of small-scale farmers in formal or informal groups makes them a viable partner for lobbying for services with (local) government institutions or private providers as well as for demanding quality information and knowledge that suits their real needs.

Farmers' organizations as partners may be cooperatives, associations, unions or extension groups - as common denominators they need to have a structure that ensures their representativity /legitimacy and a level of stability in membership. They may have purely commercial purposes or social objectives as well. Experience has shown that democratic and transparent internal structures are best suited to allow for effective communication and organization of services. A draw-back for out-scaling is that some member organizations make communication services available only to their membership.

Farmers' organizations can be involved in adaptive research, participatory advisory services, information sharing, by contributing with their knowledge

and providing access as partners in communication. They can make better use of the new communication media, may even acquire their own infrastructure, organize embedded services and are in a better position to pay for commercial services.

**What are we aiming at?** As communication partners farmers' representatives can communicate at peer level with research and advisory services, lobby at the level of government agencies and, be considered as clients by all communication service providers. They also have the capacities to collect and formulate the information, skills and knowledge needs of their members. They can foster and support the active participation in communication processes and ensure accountability of service providers. Effective communication will lead to improved performance and proper representation of the membership.

**Possible Actors / Clients** Actors include farmers, their organizations and representatives, the partner agencies and providers in communication (research, advisory services, and media providers) as well as the government for defining the rules and the mandates of self organized groups (see success factor 1). Additional supporting actors, like trainers and advisers can help in capacity building and organizational development while development agencies play mainly a facilitating role.

- ✎ Farmers' organizations (interest groups, associations, cooperatives, unions, committees, societies and others) for formulating their demand, pooling resources and organizing communication.
- ✎ Communication agencies to provide the required services to farmers' organizations (innovations, technologies, market and input information etc.).
- ✎ Capacity building agencies or individuals for communication, knowledge management and organizational development.
- ✎ Development agencies can facilitate capacity building, access to information and linkages.
- ✎ Central government institutions set rules on self-organization (e.g. cooperative legislation), local institutions carry out the bye-laws and are partners in communication of farmers' demands and interests.

**Main Challenges** The low degree of professional self-organization of rural people in many countries is a basic problem for effective communication services and dialogue. Often, the farmers' attitude to self-organization is

negative, due to previous negative experiences. The willingness to pay for information and communication services is generally low, as they used to be provided for free and farmers have difficulties in assessing their true value.

Existing farmer organizations are often weak, i.e. not representative, badly managed, not transparent, fragmented, without a long term vision and/or not geared towards communication, with no sustainable degree of organization and self-finance. Often the members lack the technical skills to access information and advisory services. In some cases, farmers' organizations are manipulated by politicians or by powerful groups and individuals. This way, equal access to information, knowledge and services is not safeguarded. Membership organizations have the tendency to restrict services to their members.

**Strategies** The first steps are to analyse and assess the existing situation, structure and capacities of the farmers' organizations;

- ↳ Assessment of the political, fiscal and legal framework conditions for the development of farmers' organizations (see the success factor on policies).
- ↳ Assessment of the existing organizations in areas such as number and type, structure (rich/poor, gender, ethnicity, commodities etc.) coverage and legitimacy (representation);
- ↳ Assessment of available communication channels and training in production of media messages.

The next steps refer to the development of communication and organizational capacities. Effective farmers' organizations need to be legitimate and representative and be represented, not only locally, but also on regional and even national levels (apex organizations). In this way they can become involved in decision making processes of government and its agencies. Larger organizations or networks can even organize and fund their own communication services, such as advisory services or information systems.

The needs are:

- ↳ Capacity building in organizational skills, communication and information management;
- ↳ Facilitating demand for quality services;
- ↳ Multiplying the channels of information
- ↳ Fostering active participation and communication, democratization (co-organize promotional activities e.g. participatory research days, training);
- ↳ Capacity building in uptake and use of relevant information (e.g. Internet);
- ↳ Developing indicators to measure the impact of communication and participatory approaches.

**AGATRO – (Association of Livestock Farmers of Trojes)**  
**Case study Breaking price monopolies and rendering services for the rural population in a remote border town in Honduras**

*Trojes is a small town of 8 000 inhabitants in Honduras right at the border with Nicaragua. Among the veterinarians of the Ministry of Agriculture the town figures as the centre of cross-border animal traffic. The town is difficult to reach from within Honduras. The difficult road connections have a number of implications for the livestock keepers like expensive veterinarian medical supplies or high transport cost for live animals, which have to be transported to San Pedro Sula, 400 km away in the centre of the country.*

*The association of the Trojes livestock farmers was founded in 1992 with some 65 members and since then has shown a lot of initiative and endurance. It started its own veterinarian pharmacy to break the prices of established dealers. The pharmacy started with about US\$2 000 through contributions of its members. Now it is well established, has two permanent positions and a gross turn-over of approximately US\$28 000 per year. The pharmacy offers products on credit to members for 30 days. After the 30-day pay horizon members have to pay 5 percent interest. At the end of the year the profits are redistributed to the members according to their contributions.*

*The second major activity is a savings and credit cooperative that was founded in 1999 with 33 contributing members. Currently it has a turnover of US\$ 55 000 per year. Membership of the cooperative rose from 33 to 640 members with 1 million in savings and a similar amount in credits per year. The credit taker needs 1/3 of the credit amount in savings deposited with the cooperative and two persons guaranteeing. The interest rates are 28 percent for crop agriculture, 32 percent for livestock and 36 percent for commercial investments. The normal limit is 500 US\$. In case larger amounts have to be disbursed, the cooperative requires an additional mortgage guarantee.*

*The third activity is a scaling service for animals at the fairgrounds of the association. This activity generates minor but regular incomes for the association. Once a year the association organizes a livestock fair and rents out kiosks to commercial shops and thus generates other incomes. During the fair bull riding and bull fighting are offered as entertainment.*

**Conclusion**

*The association shows strong cohesion and has a large number of dedicated members. It has had a strong president for 15 years who now continues as a normal member but has had a strong influence with his personal example of*

*dedication, creativeness and initiative for the other members. Every last Saturday of the month there is a full member gathering for taking decisions. All members are involved in decision-making. This seems to be one of the reasons for their creativeness and ownership. Another reason could be the remoteness of the little town from larger markets and services or the fact that the association has contributed to the cohesion and ownership of its members who in turn have profited in so many ways from the various activities organized by the association.*

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### **Case study** Institutionalising demand-led service delivery systems in South Africa

*The potential of people-centred development approaches is an effective entry point to institutionalise demand-led approaches into decentralised Government service delivery systems and bring about enduring changes in rural communities.*

*Characteristics of the approach are: (i) Learning approach, including various participatory methodologies for the strengthening of the individual and organizational capacities of rural people based on the guiding principles of experimentation of innovations, village as an organization, linkages and cooperation and learning from experiences. (ii) Building on the “life-world” of rural people who have agriculture as a common foundation and spreads from this into other fields of development; (iii) Facilitation of self-organization of various interest groups for their co-ordination at community level and their representation in different development for linking with service providers and political structures at municipal and provincial levels (local organizational development). Operational linkages between the three levels (micro, meso, macro) need to be designed and functioning. Thus, policy reviews are guided by informed insights of the micro (community) and meso (district) levels.*

**Lessons learnt:** *(i) Government bureaucracies are resilient in adapting management practices in line with people centred development (PCD) values and guiding principles. The prerequisite for fostering ownership and institutional sustainability of PCD is Change Management in an organizational development perspective and needs to be “grounded” on concrete results at local levels. (ii)*

*Approaches used at the micro-level need to be open learning cycles capable of including different methodologies as well as methods for strengthening local organizational capacity. (iii) Training of staff implementing PCD has to be designed as learning mechanisms where theory is complemented by practice. At an institutional level, the backstopping capacity of training providers based on know-how has to be developed. The facilitation of micro-meso linkages accompanied by intervention at the macro level is critical here.*

Pier-Paolo Ficarelli, South Africa. Source: Agriservice Bulletin No. 13, <http://www.gtz.de/agriservice>  
pier-paolo.ficarelli@gtz.de

## BOX 7 Main principles for Demand Driven Delivery Systems

**Level of Intervention:** *Organizing the Demand – the Clients of Services*

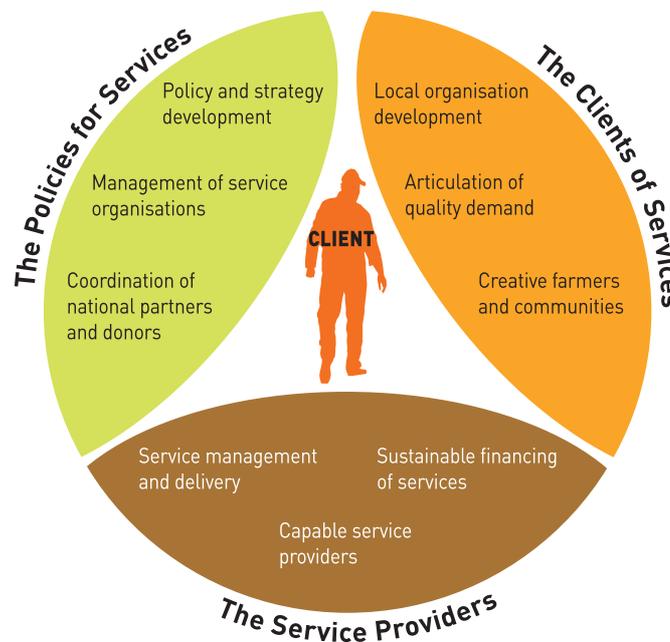
- > Local Organization Development for improved self-governance, representation and quality control of service provision.
- > Articulation of an inclusive quality demand based on well-analysed problems and opportunities and validated in terms of own potentials.
- > Creative farmers and communities who seek and experiment with innovative solutions and adapt change to their local situation.

**Level of Intervention:** *Responding to Demand – the Service Providers*

- > Efficient pluralistic, decentralised service management and service delivery.
- > Capable service providers responding to diverse demands by clientele.
- > Sustainable financing of rural service systems.

**Level of Intervention:** *Organizing the Response – the Policies for Services*

- > Paradigm change and renewal in policy and strategy development for an enabling environment in pluralistic, demand-oriented service provision.
- > High performing and adaptive management of rural service organizations.
- > Efficient coordination between national partners and donors in the development of pluralistic and demand-oriented rural service systems



Source: Ehret et al. (editors) 2005

# SUCCESS FACTOR 5: Participatory methods

## Use of participatory methods for active involvement of all partners in communication

**Why is it important?** Participatory methods are tools to involve partners with each other, meaning that they are themselves communication tools. Participation in the discussion, decision and planning of rural development requires effective communication. Participation and communication are essential elements for addressing the needs of the rural population, including those affected by poverty.

Effective communication in a development process cannot be one-way because it requires feedback and continuous exchange of information between partners and interest groups, communities and official entities.

Proper participation creates understanding, connectivity and commitment and thus synergies, without which communication remains at a basic level without participation and commitment. It helps focus knowledge creation on the most important targets and shortens the time for acquisition/integration of knowledge and conversion into action.

At times of ever more limited resources, faster changes and needs for rapid adaptation, only efficient participatory approaches in all sectors ensure that the gap between the knowledgeable and the doer, the less and the more trained, the rich and the poor, the rural and the urban, the giver and the receiver does not become wider every day.

Without effective participation, less vocal, less represented groups, less connected groups like rural communities, the most vulnerable, poor and least educated will not be heard. Many needs for services will not be addressed, local knowledge, often gained over generations of observations and experience, will not be recognized or heard, new knowledge will not be accepted (ownership) and the sustainability of interventions will be short lived.

Although participatory approaches are sometimes slower and more costly for starting a process, this will be rapidly compensated by better targeted action, faster absorption/acceptance, more meaningful/useful results and longer lasting effects.

In a time where clear vision and aims are often blurred by many short term goals, well facilitated participatory processes, which in essence are communication events, can clarify the common goal, the do-able paths and create the necessary dynamics.

**What are we aiming at?** Effective research, education, training, advisory service, policy and local action for development depends on communication (desirable flows of information). It therefore has to happen at and between different levels, i.e. horizontally and vertically.

The aim is that rural communities and their diverse members are actively involved in the identification of development problems, and search for solutions, development, promotion, and circulation of useful knowledge, through participatory communication.

This means that:

- ✎ Participatory interaction and planning leads to realistic, useful and effective action;
- ✎ Participation must become part of the daily routine in planning, decision making and execution/implementation by all players/stakeholders in any type of activity.
- ✎ Consensus for and acceptability of participatory approaches need to be adopted at all levels.
- ✎ Opportunities for dialogue and consensus building are created purposively and results are given proper voice, action, tools and responsibilities at various levels.
- ✎ Differences in opinion and consensus building are accepted as opportunities rather than as a basis for criticism or reasons for power plays.
- ✎ Consensus can also mean agreeing on differences.

Participatory approaches should also result in effective communication and have meaningful effects on policies, institutions, wealth distribution and people's attitudes and livelihoods.

**Possible Actors / Clients** Actors for effective participatory communication are individuals and institutions, including advisory services and research organizations, private advisory services, NGOs, local and central governments, farmer and rural people organizations, media companies, colleges and universities, training institutes. Development agencies can advise on proven models for participatory communication in various cultural contexts.

They include the following:

- ↘ Advisory services and Research
- ↘ NGOs
- ↘ Governments
- ↘ Farmers and Rural People
- ↘ Media Organizations (e.g. rural radio)
- ↘ Development Organizations
- ↘ Colleges and Universities
- ↘ Training Institutions
- ↘ Local Government and Administrations

**Main Challenges** The main challenges for the application of participatory methods in communication for development are:

**1** Participatory methods require a high initial investment in time, training and funds. Participatory bottom-up and multi-level approaches to communication are more complex than hierarchical ones, and their introduction requires resources and time for training in these methods, and time for selecting, introducing and adapting suitable methods. Funds are required for the participatory process involving larger groups of players with different perceptions and interests. Participants have to invest resources – their time, intellectual capital, and sometimes additional funds.

**2** Social, educational and cultural differences influence understanding of participation and modes of communication. Participatory tools have to be adapted to the specific social and cultural environments and participants. Communication habits have to be carefully observed and the communication situation has to be arranged in a way that people can build trust and feel free enough to speak about their deepest concerns, especially in the case of vulnerable groups and people perceived to be of lower social status. This is easiest done in at least initially well guided participatory processes. Communication between service providers (scientists, advisory services,

advisors) and rural people is a special challenge. Service providers have to understand the rural context, the connection between information provided by rural people and their actual behaviour and the value of local knowledge. They have to learn to manage expectations of their clients and, conversely, the clients have to take a more active role in and greater responsibility for the development process.

**3** Participatory manipulation. Communication among groups with different communication skills can lead to participatory manipulation where groups with better communication skills and of perceived higher social status can dominate weaker ones.

**4** To demonstrate qualitative/quantitative evidence of impact of participatory approaches. Participatory approaches are considered to be effective methods in the agricultural knowledge system for improving communications and thus, eventually, rural livelihoods leading to greater involvement and empowerment of rural people. Projects using such approaches often lack baseline data and clear monitoring and evaluation procedures to demonstrate qualitative and quantitative impact. Long term effects – long after the project end – may be of even more impact due to improved sustainability and continuous evolution of the process. Indicators and time scales are an important issue to be addressed in lobbying for more participatory processes and for scaling-up of local experiences.

**5** The introduction of participatory approaches in hierarchical and centralized institutions and their acceptance remains difficult. This is due to a variety of factors among which are the lack of understanding and knowledge of such approaches, the fear to loose control over a process and scarce data on qualitative and quantitative impact.

**Strategies** Strategies to improve participation in the communication process include:

- ↘ Assessing and understanding 1) levels and modes of existing participation of different stakeholders and their interfaces, 2) perception of participation, 3) different modes of communication.
- ↘ Adaptation of suitable methods to local situations with emphasis on giving voice to vulnerable groups.
- ↘ Raising awareness on and lobbying for participatory approaches (use evidence) in institutions, organizations and ministries along the knowledge chain (local and central level) and involving their representatives in well

facilitated participatory events to give positive experience on benefits of participatory processes (learning by doing).

↳ Educational programmes at various levels which include inter-disciplinary and participatory exposure and practice in order to create the required openness and develop the necessary skills.

↳ Convincing decision-makers to introduce and support participatory approaches for communication by inclusion of such approaches in strategies, programmes and funding.

↳ Capacity development for facilitating participatory communication at different levels and integration of participatory methodologies in curricula of institutions providing training in advisory services, research, communication and information technologies.

↳ Mainstreaming and sustainability: incentive systems such as inclusion of selection criteria for participation in evaluation of research/project proposals, monitoring and evaluation of such projects, documentation and promotion of successes, scaling-up of successful processes; continuing training in participatory approaches.

↳ Working with NGOs on supporting new approaches. NGOs are often more open to new initiatives and participatory approaches and can provide entry points.

↳ Involving administrations as stakeholders from the very beginning when introducing participatory approaches for better understanding and support.

↳ Keeping a certain amount of open-endedness of processes and results to permit participation but without compromising the clearly defined focus or objectives of the process.

↳ Development of formal and informal institutional processes which include sufficient flexibility to accommodate evolving changes in communication and participation needs, methods and partners.

### Case study The FAO Farmers' Field School (FFS)

*The FFS is a constantly evolving participatory learning process which, under trained facilitation, uses various adult education, participatory communication and learning through action approaches. It was developed in the 1980's as a model for introducing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in rice production and has now expanded (used by several million farmers) and been adapted for learning and action programmes in additional technical and geographic areas, i.e. for organic agriculture, seed improvement, rural youth programmes, social skills (farmers life schools) in Asia, Africa, Central and South America and Europe.*

*Participation in its various forms is essential to the programme and over time has led to a wide variety of impacts on farmers' livelihoods in the participating families as well as in their communities and in some cases also on national scales. Its immediate benefit are those of better learning as a result of self-determined knowledge needs followed by the experimental experience of their solution and the improved communication which changed relationship between knowledge users and providers. This results usually in higher and more regular production. In-depth analysis has shown particular cost effectiveness, durable effect of learning, increased cooperation and revitalization/empowerment of farmers resulting in additional and new initiatives.*

<http://www.farmerfieldschool.net>

### Case study Participatory Technology Development

*In 1995, CIAL (Local Agricultural Research Committees, initially sponsored by CIAT) started its active and very successful life with small groups of Central and South American farmers interested in innovation through research (now more than 250 groups). Even in fairly short time spans, the participatory research approaches have shown far reaching impacts on the productivity and livelihood of participating farmers and their communities.*

*Similar to other participatory programmes, CIAL's success is based on a few essential ingredients implemented with diligence:*

- > Thorough training of facilitators*
- > Limiting scope of action to that which can be implemented and committed to by the partners*
- > Resource availability, sharing and commitment through multiple partnerships*

*The nine steps in the CIAL ladder are:*

- > *Motivation*
- > *Election*
- > *Diagnosis*
- > *Experimentation*
- > *Evaluation*
- > *Analysis*
- > *Feedback*
- > *Facilitation*
- > *Monitoring and Evaluation*

*The programme's impact was not only remarkable in its contribution to the quick increase of local staple crop production and the very fast adoption of innovation, but also in its effect on the attitudes of Research and Development professionals, the diffusion of benefits also to marginal social groups and increased diversity of grown crops through greater willingness of experimentation by farmers.*

*The participatory approach relied strongly on well trained (technical and participatory methods) facilitators, local mobilization, election of participants, participatory needs assessment and prioritization, planning, experimentation, participatory analysis and evaluation and organized feedback/exchange.*

<http://www.ciat.cgiar.org/ipra/ing/index.htm>

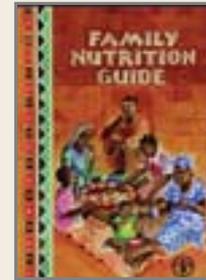
CIAT – International Centre for Tropical Agriculture

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### **Case study** Family Nutrition

*Malnutrition and food or water born diseases are often more dependant on knowledge or the lack thereof, rather than on actual food and water limitations. To improve nutritional behaviour in a large percentage of the rural population with highest impact on the current and future generations, the special teaching programme for small school children was initiated in Kenya. To change a family's food related behaviour and to improve a child's nutrition a number of actors have to come together to communicate the necessary information and enact the desirable changes. An FAO project in Kenya brought together the Ministry of Education and other public institutions, which showed willingness to collaborate, local agricultural and health experts, teachers and parents to identify the available resources and habits and the most urgent needs of families to obtain better nutrition for their children.*

After thorough consultations the different expertises of the partners moved into action: a modified curriculum for elementary school teachers, including identified needs such as hygiene, eating habits and local food choices; teacher training in new, more participatory methods for delivery of the messages; developing new teaching aids; assisting parents that responded with increased interest and questions; and more. In only a few weeks after teaching commenced, a very large portion of children already arrived after having a breakfast and with homemade snacks (from locally available and traditional foods); they were more alert and participated better in the classes and learning.



The initial participation and support at ministerial levels, in creating also national level ownership and responsibility, is now assuring the further dissemination of the experience and method and the adaptation of the programme to reach also older students. As with many participatory projects the initial preparatory phase and training was investment intensive, but the following implementation was very low cost and highly efficient.

[http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/nutrition/education\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/nutrition/education_en.stm)

### Case study **Trans-disciplinary and multi-institutional communication**

Solving increasingly complex problems, such as those related to climate change, environmental degradation, water management, poverty alleviation, food security etc. require the efficient interaction of very diverse partners with often very different educational, professional, cultural background and/or very specific interests. Communication across so many disciplines and between great numbers of institutional levels requires very special communication and participation skills rarely known to professionals specialized in technical disciplines. Training researchers and other professionals, practicing and accompanying such complex communication and participation processes is the main aim of the programme of the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research North-South.

Enabling the continuous process of communication between scientific and other societal partners, based on joint and participatory problem definition and knowledge generation, the process aims to change patterns of action in the longer term. The many years of experience of the programme have been analysed and are applied in the annual training programmes.

<http://www.nccr-north-south.unibe.ch>

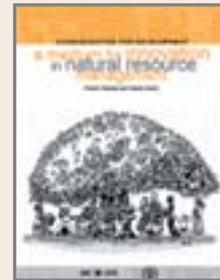
## Case study **Communication for Development**

*“Communication for Development in Natural Resource Management” is a participatory process for innovation through well coordinated collaboration and participation of many stakeholders from Ministries to grassroots levels, from rural radio to the internet and with very strong social and institutional involvement. It is designed for and by the people who need to come together to manage the degradation of natural resources which is exacerbated by or causing further food insecurity and poverty in many countries.*

*At the core of the programme are participatory approaches for improved communication that facilitate multi-level dialogue, conflict resolution and knowledge exchange while also building motivation, involvement and local competences. The programme is active in eight countries in Asia, Africa and Central and South America.*

*Adoption of trained practices is very high since the practices are specially tailored to local needs and strengthen the stakeholders own capacities to reach their own objectives. The multi-level and multi-stakeholder process creates special synergies beneficial far beyond the immediate stakeholders.*

*Through its demonstrated successes and its networks, the programme is now gaining wider recognition. Its learning process on getting public and private stakeholders to join forces is valuable for a wide variety of participatory as well as traditional and most modern communication programmes. A number of useful manuals and guidelines have been developed in the process.*



[http://www.fao.org/sd/kn1\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/sd/kn1_en.htm)

[http://www.fao.org/sd/dim\\_kn1/kn1\\_050902\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/sd/dim_kn1/kn1_050902_en.htm)

[http://www.fao.org/sd/dim\\_kn1/kn1\\_050901\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/sd/dim_kn1/kn1_050901_en.htm)

# SUCCESS FACTOR 6:

## Media strategy

### Integrating a mix of media in a strategic manner to achieve the desired objectives

**Why is it important?** Effective communication among researchers, extension workers and farmers, can only take place if there is a dialogue among equals. Farmers' opinions need to carry the same weight as those of the experts. Therefore a "demand-driven" mechanism is needed for farmers to demand and receive the best quality of agricultural research and extension services they require. At the same time, farmers often need help to define their own problems, reach consensus among themselves before they can express their ideas to the specialists. Communication activities and media can help to empower farmers in this way. They make it possible to:

- ↳ overcome illiteracy barriers (by conveying ideas in an audio and visual form);
- ↳ illustrate new ideas and techniques more effectively, improving the impact of extension and training;
- ↳ compress time and space (a whole crop cycle can be shown in a short presentation and events and practices in distant locations can be transferred to other places);
- ↳ standardize technical information (by creating audio-visual materials to illustrate the best available advice to farmers throughout the extension and farmer training chain);

Therefore the development of a media strategy will need to consider the issues of context, access and capacity dimensions. It will also need to ensure that there is coherence within the communication process and that the chosen technologies are in line with the cultural norms and the environmental situation, and are designed to use the available and appropriate infrastructure. In most situations this will mean designing and incorporating an interface between modern and traditional communication methods. The chosen media mix and the interfaces of the different media need to be assessed according to the needs for content, urgency, recipients, gender etc.

Clearly digital information is becoming cheaper, leading to wider availability and ownership of technologies. Although digital technologies are more and more available, bringing about behaviour change at both the individual and organizational level can take a long time. This means that there can be long lead times into interventions. Recognising this and designing media strategies which take account of the situation are likely to be more successful.

It also needs to be understood that often the impact or the outcome of a particular media strategy are not always readily visible but must have a long-term perspective (e.g. HIV/AIDS campaigns).

**What are we aiming at?** A media strategy is the planned use of communication channels and tools (and their related methods and techniques), aimed at achieving the objectives of a given project. Its purpose is to address, in a systematic and coordinated manner the specific communication needs of various stakeholder groups. The critical factor in the design of the strategy is a participatory analysis of the knowledge, attitude, and practice of the intended audiences in respect of the information to be shared and disseminated, as well as the channels to be used.

The key aim is to achieve cost-effective communication that is culturally and technically relevant and that is sustainable. This means that there has to be complete integration between modern and traditional media and that the strategic use of different media technologies (e.g. Internet, rural radio, print) and the optimum mix of media needs to be designed to meet this aim.

Media strategies and systems need to be designed so as to encourage ownership and use by all the major stakeholders. Equally the management skills and capacities of the main actors need to be developed through investment in technologies and training (See success factors 2 and 4).

In most rural areas of developing countries people depend on media channels to get vital information for their livelihoods. Therefore the communication strategy will depend on appropriate media channels that are considered by rural audiences as trusted and reliable sources of information, that speak their language, that are easily accessible and that the information they deliver is relevant to the social context in which they live. All actors need the ability and opportunity to generate, receive, store, retrieve, transform and send information. In fact, managing the information resources of an organization is second only to the management of its human resources.

**Possible Actors / Clients**

- ↘ Communication Units of stakeholder organizations at different levels;
- ↘ Media outlets, government or private entities, particularly community media such as local newspapers and rural radio;
- ↘ Media experts and professionals (internet, radio, print etc.).

**Main Challenges** Particularly for rural areas, the main challenges are concerned with access and availability. Digital services do not always reach the rural communities and, even in developed countries, there is evidence of an urban/rural digital divide. To overcome this, stakeholder organizations need to develop their capacity and their ability to empower rural citizens and give them access to the services they need. A further challenge in some countries is the need to ensure the freedom to use media. Designing strategies which promote sustainability and institutionalization of media services is often difficult due to changing circumstances, availability of resources and organizational inertia. It is vitally important to be able to demonstrate the impact of media (see Success Factor 3 – Monitoring and evaluation), especially on the behaviour of actors.

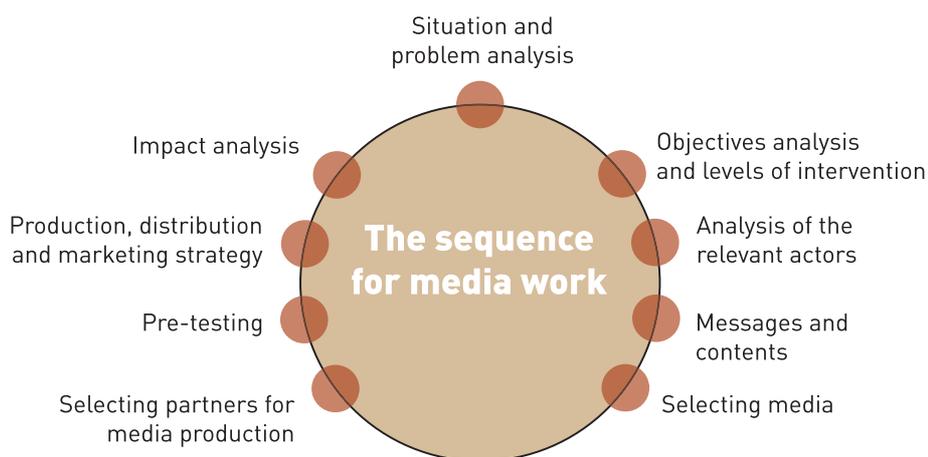
Many organizations lack the necessary skills and expertise to be efficient information managers. Designing strategies which ensure that the messages have the relevant content and are packaged for the specific media to be used needs to be a high priority. It is necessary to generate high quality content and the quality assurance process needs to be built in to the media strategy. Finally it is necessary to ensure that the chosen technologies are properly adapted to their intended purpose.

**Strategies** Communication among project stakeholders can be significantly enhanced when media use is planned according to a comprehensive strategy that is based on research, clear objectives, identification and assessment of audience groups, careful message design and choice of channels, monitoring and feedback. It has been proven that “multimedia approaches” using different communication channels in a coordinated and mutually reinforcing way give the best results. It is equally important to create a framework for integrated media (link to and select media and activities according to the recommendations included in the previous success factors of this framework).

A critical mass of staff, equipment and activities is needed to make an impact. Since the activities involve what is sometimes termed “social engineering”, they must be persistent over time. Media hardware may need to

be purchased or outsourced after determining clear objectives, needs and local infrastructure. An adequate maintenance facility is needed locally, and equipment operators must be trained in its use.

Developing countries are experiencing various economic pressures and find the costs of large research and extension services difficult to bear. Better agricultural knowledge and information systems are being sought to correctly identify, sort and match the needs and existing technical know-how of all three groups involved: farmers, extensionists and agricultural researchers. As a result, appropriate technology packages could be developed and disseminated, and would probably be rapidly adopted because of the farmers' contribution in developing them. An additional result of such a consultation process would be that researchers could focus their work primarily on those technical problems confronting farmers for which there is no ready solution available.



Source: Bohmann, 2004

# Annex 1

## Useful Literature, Links, Tools and Networks

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- ✎ **Fraser C., Sonia Restrepo-Estrada 1998:** *Communicating for Development. Human Change for Survival.* London, New York.
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## Links Rural communication

Name	Description	Website
<b>AgroWeb Network</b>	AgroWeb international network has been established by organizations and individuals involved in agricultural and rural development in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). It was facilitated by the regional chapter of International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists (IAALD) and by FAO.	<a href="http://www.agrowebcee.net">http://www.agrowebcee.net</a>
<b>Agricultural Libraries</b>	Good list of agricultural libraries – some catalogues are searchable	<a href="http://ricelib.irri.cgiar.org/screens/webcatalog.html">http://ricelib.irri.cgiar.org/screens/webcatalog.html</a>
<b>APC</b>	This is a site about the ICT profiles of all African countries	<a href="http://www3.sn.apc.org/">http://www3.sn.apc.org/</a> <a href="http://www3.sn.apc.org/africa">http://www3.sn.apc.org/africa</a>
<b>Campo Latino</b>	Virtual forum for rural development and natural resource management in Spanish	<a href="http://www.campo-latino.org">http://www.campo-latino.org</a>
<b>Communcation Initiative</b>	Excellent website and resource for development communication:	<a href="http://www.comminit.com">http://www.comminit.com</a>
<b>Cooperative Development centre</b>	Contains material on key issues and challenges in cooperative development. It brings together studies and analysis to help the practitioner and to advance the field of cooperative development.	<a href="http://www.coopdevelopmentcenter.coop">http://www.coopdevelopmentcenter.coop</a>
<b>Community Development Library</b>	CD-ROM with 1700+ full-text publications on development, using Greenstone software	<a href="http://www.humaninfo.org">http://www.humaninfo.org</a>
<b>Crystal</b>	Innovative solutions for Activity-Centred Training	<a href="http://www.crystal-elearning.net">http://www.crystal-elearning.net</a>
<b>CTA</b> (Centre technique de coopération agricole et rurale)	The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) was established under the Lomé Convention between the ACP Group of States and the European Union Member States. CTA's tasks are to develop and provide services that improve access to information for agricultural and rural development, and to strengthen the capacity of ACP countries to produce, acquire, exchange and utilise information in this area.	<a href="http://www.cta.int">http://www.cta.int</a>
<b>Dgroups – Development Through Dialogue</b>	Dgroups is an online platform offering tools and services that bring individuals and organizations together in the international development community. It is a joint initiative of organizations such as Bellanet, DFID, ICA, IICD, OneWorld and UNAIDS.	<a href="http://www.dgroups.org">http://www.dgroups.org</a>

Name	Description	Website
<b>Digital Library Software</b>	Greenstone is a suite of software for building and distributing digital library collections. It provides a new way of organizing information and publishing it on the Internet or on CD-ROM	<a href="http://www.greenstone.org">http://www.greenstone.org</a>
<b>DLGUD Net</b> (Decentralisation, local governance and urban/rural development network)	As a global UNDP network, DLGUD Net serves a platform for maintaining connectivity among DLGUD practitioners, through electronic exchange of comparative experience and lessons as well as information on new developments and resources in the field of DLGUD.	<a href="http://www.undp.org/governance/sl-dlgud.htm">http://www.undp.org/governance/sl-dlgud.htm</a>
<b>ECDPM</b> (European Centre for Development Policy Management)	The European Centre for Development Policy Management has been fostering better trade and aid relations between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries since 1986.	<a href="http://www.ecdpm.org">http://www.ecdpm.org</a>
<b>EFITA</b> (European Federation for Information Technology in Agriculture, Food and the Environment)	EFITA is an autonomous, non-political, non-profit making Association. EFITA's mission is to facilitate the exchange of information and experience, the development of knowledge in the area of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in agriculture in order to enhance the competitiveness of Europe and to promote the awareness of ICT in agriculture, food and the environment.	<a href="http://www.efita.net">http://www.efita.net</a>
<b>e-ForAll</b>	e-ForAll is a strategic public policy guide to the application of ICTs in the fight against poverty.	<a href="http://www.e-forall.org">http://www.e-forall.org</a>
<b>Eldis</b>	Eldis focuses on materials which are of strategic, policy or practical interest for development practitioners based in both the North and South. The target audience includes development professionals, donor agency staff, policy-makers, NGOs, researchers etc. It is one of a family of knowledge services from the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex and is core funded by Sida, Norad, SDC and DFID.	<a href="http://www.eldis.org">http://www.eldis.org</a>
<b>Farmer Field School Resource Centre for Community based Adult Education</b>		<a href="http://www.farmerfieldschool.net">http://www.farmerfieldschool.net</a>

## Annex 1 Links

Name	Description	Website
<b>The Farmer Research Group (CIAL) Concept</b>		<a href="http://www.ciat.cgiar.org/downloads/pdf/Investing_farmers.pdf">http://www.ciat.cgiar.org/downloads/pdf/Investing_farmers.pdf</a>
<b>FAO Communication for Development</b>	The website encompasses many different media and approaches for community development, farmer training and for linking researchers, educators, extensionists and producer groups to each other and to global information sources.	<a href="http://www.fao.org/sd/kn1_en.htm">http://www.fao.org/sd/kn1_en.htm</a>
<b>FAO WAICENT FAO IMARK (Information Management Resource Kit)</b>	The WAICENT framework integrates and harmonizes standards, tools and procedures for the efficient and effective management and dissemination of high-quality technical information, including relevant and reliable statistics, texts, maps, and multimedia resources.	<a href="http://www.fao.org/waicent/index_en.asp">http://www.fao.org/waicent/index_en.asp</a>
<b>FAO IMARK</b> (Information Management Resource Kit)	Partnership-based e-learning initiative comprising a comprehensive suite of distance learning resources covering concepts, approaches and tools for agricultural information management.	<a href="http://www.fao.org/imark">http://www.fao.org/imark</a>
<b>FAO Participatory Practices</b>	Website of the Informal Working Group on Participatory Approaches and Methods to Support Sustainable Livelihoods and Food Security (IWG-PA), to capitalize on FAO's most successful normative and field experiences with participatory approaches and methods. Contains resources and links.	<a href="http://www.fao.org/participation">http://www.fao.org/participation</a>
<b>GDPRD</b> (Global Donor Platform for Rural Development)	In line with the recommendations on harmonisation and alignment by the Development Advisory Committee (DAC) of the OECD, like-minded donor nations, development agencies and international finance institutions agreed to establish the GDPRD to increase overall aid effectiveness in rural development.	<a href="http://www.gdprd.org">http://www.gdprd.org</a>
<b>Global Campus</b>	Knowledge platform for International capacity building and cooperation	<a href="http://www.gc21.de">http://www.gc21.de</a>
<b>Global Food Network</b>	The Global Food Network is an initiative financed by the EU to improve the international cooperation in research on food safety and food quality between EU countries, ACP and MERCOSUR countries.	<a href="http://www.globalfoodnetwork.org">http://www.globalfoodnetwork.org</a>

Name	Description	Website
<b>GTZ Agriservice</b>	Access to a wide range of material and methods the development of on rural services, extension knowledge management, adult education and media use/strategies. Contains also general development frameworks on rural services.	<a href="http://www.gtz.de/agriservice">http://www.gtz.de/agriservice</a> Downloads under "Further information"
<b>iConnect Online</b>	iConnect is an initiative of the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) and serves as a jumping off point for information on the application of knowledge and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in sustainable development. iConnect draws content from experiences from IICD and its partners, links resources and expertise and encourages collaboration.	<a href="http://www.icconnect-online.org">http://www.icconnect-online.org</a>
<b>ict-km</b>	Information and communications technology and knowledge management	<a href="http://ictkm.cgiar.org/html/about.html">http://ictkm.cgiar.org/html/about.html</a>
<b>ICT for Development (GTZ)</b>	Website of the sector project ICT (IKT) of GTZ. The site covers the topics ICT-strategy, e-Government, e-Business, e-Learning, e-inclusion and knowledge management	<a href="http://www.gtz.de/ikt">http://www.gtz.de/ikt</a>
<b>id21</b>	A free development research reporting service on UK-resourced research on developing countries.	<a href="http://www.id21.org/education/index.html">http://www.id21.org/education/index.html</a>
<b>IDS Knowledge Partnerships</b> (Institute of Development Studies)	Seeks solutions to knowledge and communication challenges in international development and collaborates with development agencies, governments and civil society organizations in the analysis, design and management of knowledge support systems, learning partnerships and training programmes. It was initiated by Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.	<a href="http://www.ids.ac.uk/knowledge-partnerships.html">http://www.ids.ac.uk/knowledge-partnerships.html</a>
<b>IMARK</b>	Information Management Resource Kit a series of e-learning modules for agricultural information management	<a href="http://www.imarkgroup.org">http://www.imarkgroup.org</a> <a href="mailto:imarkenquiries@fao.org">imarkenquiries@fao.org</a>
<b>ITANA Nutrition</b>	Information technology for the advancement of nutrition in Africa	<a href="http://www.itananutrition.org">http://www.itananutrition.org</a>

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Name	Description	Website
<b>JOE</b>	The Journal of Extension (JOE) is the official refereed journal of the U.S. Cooperative Extension System. It expands and updates the research and knowledge base for Extension professionals and other adult educators to improve their effectiveness. In addition, JOE serves as a forum for emerging and contemporary issues affecting Extension education.	<a href="http://www.joe.org">http://www.joe.org</a>
<b>KM4Dev</b> (Knowledge Management for Development)	KM4Dev is a community of international development practitioners (e.g. UNDP, FAO, WTO, WWF) who are interested in knowledge management and knowledge sharing issues and approaches.	<a href="http://www.km4dev.org">http://www.km4dev.org</a>
<b>Laimburg</b> Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry	Web site of the Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Laimburg located in South Tyrol, Bolzano Italy	<a href="http://www.laimburg.it/de/default.htm">http://www.laimburg.it/de/default.htm</a>
<b>LLL</b> (Linking Local Learners)	This internet service supports groups of local learners around the world to share both their expertise and their challenges in a learning community of practice. It was initiated by representatives of FAO, ISG, LBL, DAAS and CTA.	<a href="http://www.linkinglearners.net">http://www.linkinglearners.net</a>
<b>Mistowa</b> (The regional Market Information Systems and Traders' Organizations project)	Mistowa is funded by the West Africa Regional Program (WARP) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The project aims to increase regional agricultural trade and food security by improving and linking the existing regional efforts to generate, disseminate, and make commercial use of market information.	<a href="http://www.mistowa.org">http://www.mistowa.org</a>
<b>Neuchâtel Initiative</b>	The Neuchâtel Initiative is an informal group of representatives of bilateral and multilateral development agencies involved in agricultural development. It was initiated by representatives of the Worldbank, French Cooperation und SDC.	<a href="http://www.neuchatelinitiative.net">http://www.neuchatelinitiative.net</a>
<b>Overseas Development Institute (ODI)</b>	Current practices on participatory research in international natural resources management research	<a href="http://www.odi.org.uk/agren/papers/agrenpaper_130.pdf">http://www.odi.org.uk/agren/papers/agrenpaper_130.pdf</a>
<b>OISAT</b> (Online Information Service for Non-Chemical Pest Management in the Tropics)	OISAT is an information management concept on non-chemical pest management in the tropics comprising two components: OISAT Info and OISAT PartnerNetwork. It was initiated by PAN Germany and is supported by GTZ.	<a href="http://www.oisat.org">http://www.oisat.org</a>

Name	Description	Website
<b>RENE</b> (Rural Extension Network in Europe)	RENE is a network for information, further education and counselling in Europe's rural regions. The overall objective is to strengthen the competitiveness of rural areas through the provision of a platform for exchanging information, experience and know-how on rural problems and solutions to these problems. It is promoted by the European Union.	<a href="http://www.rene-net.org/index.html">http://www.rene-net.org/index.html</a>
<b>Resimao</b> (Réseau des Systèmes d'Information des Marchés en Afrique de l'Ouest)	Resimao is a West-African Market Information Network, where several West-African Market Price Information Services are united. Members are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Senegal.	<a href="http://www.resimao.org">http://www.resimao.org</a>
<b>SARPN</b> (Southern African Regional Poverty Network)	The SARPN is a non-profit organization that promotes debate and knowledge sharing on poverty reduction processes and experiences in Southern Africa.	<a href="http://www.sarpn.org.za">http://www.sarpn.org.za</a>
<b>The Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research North-South (NCCR)</b>	Website of an international programme testing and applying broader communication and participatory concepts and methodologies for mitigation of non-sustainable practices (agriculture focus) in complex societal contexts. Participatory and communication skills in a trans-disciplinary environment are at the core; additional factors enabling change are included and their interactions tested.	<a href="http://www.nccr-north-south.unibe.ch">http://www.nccr-north-south.unibe.ch</a>
<b>SDC Focal Point for Rural Development</b> (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation)	The SDC Focal Point for Rural Development is an answer to the challenge of effectively managing knowledge, learning and joint work around rural development across sectors and thematic specialisations, and across globally dispersed programmes and partners. It is a joint initiative of SDC's thematic divisions.	<a href="http://www.sdc-ruraldevelopment.ch">http://www.sdc-ruraldevelopment.ch</a>
<b>Skills Development in Rural Areas</b>	An on-line debate among practitioners, policy makers, program designers, etc. on Skills Development in Rural Areas.	<a href="http://www.skilldevrural.net">http://www.skilldevrural.net</a>
<b>TEEAL</b>	The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library, "Library in a Box". 100+ CD-ROMs with full text of 100 major agricultural research journals, produced by Mann Library, Cornell University	<a href="http://www.teeal.cornell.edu">http://www.teeal.cornell.edu</a>
<b>The Communication Initiative</b>	Excellent website and resource for development communication.	<a href="http://www.comminit.com">http://www.comminit.com</a>

### Telecenters

(& country specific issues related to Telecommunications)

- ✎ Asia - eGroups: Indonesian Telecentres  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/datacom/>
- ✎ USA - AeRie - Applied Rural Telecommunications  
<http://bcn.boulder.co.us/aerie/resource/section1/btc.html>
- ✎ Community Technology Center Network - a project of the Education Development Center; CTC Start-Up Manual  
<http://www.ctcnet.org/resources/toc.html>
- ✎ Cybercafes - Internet cyber cafes guide all over the world  
<http://www.cybercafe.com/>
- ✎ Bellagio Statement on the Role of Communication in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. November 8 - 11,2004  
<http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/pdf/statementmdgmeetingnov04final.pdf>
- ✎ Improving the Access of Smallholders to Agricultural Services in Sub-Saharan Africa: Farmer Cooperation and the Role of the Donor Community  
<http://www.odi.org.uk/nrp/20.html>
- ✎ Website of the Cooperative Development Centre contains case studies, recommendations and definitions on cooperatives  
<http://www.coopdevelopmentcenter.coop>
- ✎ IPM That Works: The UN FAO IPM Programme and the Global IPM Facility  
[http://www.panna.org/resources/gpc/gpc\\_200104.11.1.07.dv.html](http://www.panna.org/resources/gpc/gpc_200104.11.1.07.dv.html)  
Farmer Field Schools in Sri Lanka: assessing the impact:  
<http://www.pan-uk.org/pestnews/pn61/pn61p14.htm>
- ✎ Egypt IPM: Impact of Farmer Learning Groups -- A Participatory Approach in Integrated Pest Management in Egypt  
<http://www.tropentag.de/2003/proceedings/node234.html>
- ✎ The Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research North-South. An international programme for testing and applying broader communication and participatory concepts and methodologies for mitigation of non-sustainable practices in complex societal contexts.  
<http://www.nccr-north-south.unibe.ch/>

### Tools for Service Analysis and Development

(in: <http://www.gtz.de/agriservice>)

The tools and methods presented are useful for orientation, analysis, planning and implementation of initiatives in rural services systems. All methods have been tried in practical development work, but need, of course, to be adapted to new situations by the user.

- ↳ **Actor/Function Grid**  
Clarification of roles of different service providers in public or private provisioning.
- ↳ **Defining the role of the State in public service provision**  
Identification of the role of the public sector concerning service provisioning.  
Contains a checklist for an inventory and approaches for improvement of public services.
- ↳ **Service Interaction Analysis (SIA)**  
Review of interactions between service providers, analysis of problems in complex service networks.
- ↳ **Analysis of service organizations**  
Analysis tool for service providers concerning capacities, management and potentials.
- ↳ **Benchmarking in Service Provision**  
Identification of deficits in service quality, benchmarking with comparable providers and possible strategies for development.
- ↳ **Scenario Technique**  
To support strategic planning / strategy development, several possible visions of the future are constructed, and the routes which may lead to these scenarios are described.
- ↳ **Characteristics of customer-driven organizations (self-test)**  
Self-evaluation concerning demand orientation in the context of change processes of organizations and institutions.
- ↳ **Determining Training Requirements for Upgrading Production Chains**  
Serves as basis for the development of training modules, extension messages, farm policies, definition of certifiable standards in Good Agricultural and other standards.
- ↳ **Systemic Integration Management (SIM)**  
Holistic development of systems with the dimensions of the sectors, communication, culture and vision, including implementation.

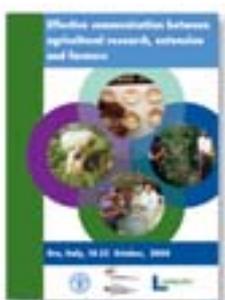
### Networks

- ↳ **Neuchâtel Initiative**  
Specialists for extension and research of the main donor and implementing agencies work in the Neuchâtel initiative on harmonised framework concepts for rural service providers.  
<http://www.neuchatelinitiative.net>
- ↳ **The DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Practices**  
The OECD-DAC working party was set up in the context of the international consensus reached at Monterrey on the actions needed to promote a global partnership for development and accelerate progress towards the MDGs.  
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness>

# Annex 2

## FAO/GTZ Workshop: “Effective Communication between Agricultural Research, Extension and Farmers”

Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Laimburg,  
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18-22 October 2004



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