Trends and Challenges in Agricultural Extension – Policies and Strategies for Reform

by Magdalena L. BLUM, FAO Rome, Research and Extension Division

Building Partnerships for Technology Generation, Assessment and Sharing in Agriculture among West Balkan Countries, Workshop, Skopje 27-29 June 2007
Introduction

- Extension is a function with multiple purposes: commodity production and productivity, processing, marketing, NRM, producer organization, health information (HIV/AIDS)
- Extension and advisory services refer to different models/concepts
- Various stakeholders involved in extension and advisory services: public, private, civil society
- Need for decentralized pluralistic extension / advisory systems

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### Various ‘extension’ models (1)

by M. L. Blum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODELS</th>
<th>Linear Model</th>
<th>Advisory Model</th>
<th>Facilitation Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PURPOSE</td>
<td>Production Increase through transfer of technologies Government Policies</td>
<td>Holistic approach to farm entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Empowerment &amp; ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOURCE OF INNOVATION</td>
<td>Outside innovations</td>
<td>Outside innovations and by farm manager</td>
<td>Local knowledge and innovations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROMOTER’S ROLE</td>
<td>Extensionist</td>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARMER’S ROLE</td>
<td>Adoption of recommended technologies</td>
<td>- Asking for advice - Taking management decisions</td>
<td>- Learning by doing - Farmer(s) to Farmer(s) learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Various ‘extension’ models (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Linear model</th>
<th>Advisory model</th>
<th>Facilitation model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSUMPTIONS</strong></td>
<td>Research corresponds to farmer’s problem</td>
<td>Farmer knows what advisory services he needs</td>
<td>Willingness to learn to interact and to take over ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FARMER’S ROLE</strong></td>
<td>‘Passive’ role Others know, what is best for him</td>
<td>Active role Problem-solving</td>
<td>Active role Problem-solving Ownership of process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPLY/DEMAND</strong></td>
<td>Supply</td>
<td>Demand</td>
<td>Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ORIENTATION</strong></td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Client</td>
<td>Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Target’</td>
<td>Individuals Contact farmer model (T&amp;V)</td>
<td>Individuals Groups with common problems</td>
<td>Groups and organisations, interaction of stakeholders, networking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Why reform of extension?

- Globalization (shaping and shifting agriculture)
- Trade pressures to compete
- In 1990s agricultural extension services (T & V system) were attacked for being inefficient, irrelevant, ineffective, & poorly targeted
- Need for linkages and partnerships to support agricultural innovations and development
- Need for pluralistic extension system (public, private, civil society)
  - Specialization of services required, rapid change of advisory requirements, …
- Redefined roles of stakeholders with changed, but continuing role of government in extension
  - Principle of subsidiarity and comparative advantage

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# Institutional and Operational Reform of Extension Systems

**by M. L. Blum**

### FROM

- One main public system
- Extension as public good
- National coverage by the public sector
- Centralized
- Technology focus
- Mandate for agricultural development
- Hierarchical lines of command
- Entirely public funded system

### TO

- Pluralistic system with public and private service providers
- Redefinition of roles and tasks of stakeholders (public, civil society, private)
- Private sector driven by markets and funding – needs for tools to identify gaps and for coordination mechanisms
- Decentralized (need for coordination, role and influence of national level needs to be redefined)
- Problem, demand & market focus (requires new strategies and procedures, instruments, mechanisms, etc.)
- Broader mandate for agricultural and rural development
- Horizontal collaboration & multi-disciplinary teams (different and more management capacities needed)
- New Funding mechanisms, Clients share costs according to their capacities

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## Alternative funding and delivery arrangements

*by Prof. William Rivera*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public funding</th>
<th>Private funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public delivery <em>(public good)</em></td>
<td>Public delivery <em>(cost recovery)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public funding</td>
<td>Private funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private delivery <em>(outsourcing)</em></td>
<td>Private delivery <em>(privatized)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Government Decentralization

- Deconcentration (more authority for advisory services to government branches)

- Devolution (authority for advisory services down to lower tiers of government -- state, district or municipality)

- Subsidiarity (authority for advisory services to grassroots level – e.g. community, NGOs, farmer organization)

- Government withdrawal from advisory services – Total privatization, e.g. UK/ADAS, New Zealand, The Netherlands/DLV; or partial privatization (outsourcing, cost-recovery, mixed societies)

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Decentralized Institutional Arrangements

- Units or teams with distinct roles for different purposes (production/NRM, promotion of producer organization, health information, etc.) requiring specific approaches and organizational arrangements (see models)

- TQM (total quality management with defined objectives, performance indicators, etc.)

- New leadership/management:
  organize, teach, motivate teams and networks of extension/advisory agents

- “Fishnet teams”: establish temporary teams for specific purposes
Demand-driven Advisory services
Market-oriented Advisory services

Demand-orientation:
- Create mechanisms for producer inputs,
- Respond to producer requirements and modify programs according to producer feedback,
- Create financial and non-financial mechanisms that make demand more effective, e.g. funds for advisory services, vouchers, identification and request of advisory demands in farmers organizations and/or communities.

Market-orientation:
- Identification of consumer/production needs in the market,
- Linking up with stakeholders in the private sector involved in marketing,
- Contracting small farmers, guaranteed sales of harvest.

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Frameworks and Linkages of Knowledge and Information Systems

- AKIS: Agricultural Knowledge Information System
  - Linking Agricultural research, extension and education

- AKSS: Agricultural Knowledge Support System
  - Linking agricultural development support systems: credit, supplies, marketing

- AIS: Agricultural Innovation System
  - Links to commodity and technical innovation projects

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Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS)

![Diagram of AKIS system with various components interconnected]

Source: Adapted from Rivera et al. (2006).

Figure 1. Agricultural Advisory Services as Component of an Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System

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Critical Linkages

by Rivera and Qamar, 2003

Knowledge Support Services
- Research, Extension, local knowledge systems
- Producers and their organizations

Policy

Support Services

Market Opportunities

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Agricultural Innovation System (AIS)

- Extended AKIS
- Emphasis on innovation capacities and learning of all stakeholders
- Hence strengthening of:
  - Institutional capacities
  - Interactions between stakeholders
  - Technical, social and institutional innovations
  - Policy research

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Specific situation of extension services in Eastern Europe

- Extension/advisory services are quite young and predominantly public; strategies and methodologies for extension advisory services are not sufficiently discussed.
- Certified agricultural training for farmers not yet established.
- Marketing links not yet well established, especially for small farmers, which requires organization of farmers.
- Human resources of advisory services well qualified in agriculture, livestock, etc., but overall not sufficiently specialized (commodity development, marketing, strategies and methodologies for advisory services).
- Use of ICTs can be relatively easy introduced.
- EU support with the risk of dominating advisory services.

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Future of Extension?

- Commercialization and privatization of public sector extension
  - More efficient in providing technical assistance

- Continuing role of government in pluralistic extension
  - Foster clean environment, food safety, sustainable agriculture, and poverty reduction
  - Quality control for advisory services, monitoring and evaluation, audits
  - Delivery of advisory services where justified (financial aspects, comparative advantages, etc.)
  - Coordination mechanisms, identification of advisory gaps.
What mix of reform initiatives do you need in your country?

Do you need … ? Do you have … ?

- A favorable framework/environment/policies for extension/advisory services
- Pluralism established and partnerships/networks defined for extension/advisory services
- Plan developed to introduce reform measures according to the development of vocational training for farmers, the development of the private advisory sector and of support systems, etc.
- Sustainable financial commitments of government and users of advisory services
- Cost-recovery options and contracting for outside services tested
- Extension/advisory services decentralized to lower levels
- Subsidiary to grassroots introduced, farmers organizations involved in advisory services
- Institutional planning, quality management, accountability, result- and performance orientation, staff career possibilities
- Policy orientation to support young farmers, disadvantaged farmers or alternatives to farming, etc.

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Thank you very much for your attention