



**Discussion Results on
Challenges and Success Factors for effective
Communication between Research, Extension
and Farmers**

GROUP A
PRIVATIZATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL (KNOWLEDGE) SERVICES

Context of privatization:

- Privatization means moving formerly public services to the private sector
- Privatization as an element of the general reform process with the political objective to reform the services and to achieve a pro-poor commercialization in rural areas. Not all extension services can/should be taken by the government
- In the context of privatization (some) farmers establish themselves as service providers
- Continuous communication between research, extension and farmers is very important during the transition process

Context of Commercialization:

- Commercialization is seen as contracting out services to consultants, universities etc.
- *Options exist that services are paid for by government (and free / subsidized for farmers) but are provided by private organizations*
- A voucher system is sometimes used to foster demand

Principles and objectives behind privatization and commercialization:

- Increase the effectiveness of demand
- Increase availability of services (other than extension)
- Break the monopoly of the state
- Foster democratization
- Multiply the channels of information

Issues and Questions in the context of privatization and commercialization

- What are the underlying reasons for privatization and commercialization?
- Under which conditions is privatization beneficial? Does it lead to a greater client orientation?
- What are best ways of paying and providing services? who will pay for such services? Who can earn money by providing services?
- Which options exist to change the system of communication channels?
- What is the private or public role of NGOs?

Policies

Challenges	Success factors
Contradicting objectives between privatization and a pro-poor orientation	Role of government to set priorities and to enable farmers to formulate the demand themselves ("empower the demand side")
No quality control for privatized services	Government to take its regulatory and enforcement role seriously
Privatization can lead to chaos and rise of malpractice (e.g. in Kenya)	More funding of local government for community organization (e.g. in Indonesia) -

Reform Process / Management

Challenges	Success factors
Management of transition process	
Confusion about the privatization policy (e.g. Kenya) => farmers don't understand it	Government communicate the reform process to stake holders
Unclear what remains public, what is to be privatized	Extension for food security is covered / remains with the public sector
A mix of different forms of payment and provision during the transition process	Educate farmers on the need to pay for quality services and taking them out of the "free rider" mentality
Need for changing attitude / behaviour of farmers who are used to get services for free	Community work is a precondition to use private services Government extension services help farmers to get organized

Linkages

Challenges	Success factors
Research is becoming fragmented and common concerns are not communicated properly <i>As a result of privatization linkages between research and extension risk of being disrupted</i>	
Research and extension needs for new commercial products have not yet been addressed	
Options to combine and link public research with private extension	Commercial service providers are more attentive to farmers' demands
Information requirements for farmers to bargain with traders about quality and quantity	
<i>In the context of privatization input traders with their own interests might enter into the extension field</i>	

Funding

Challenges	Success factors
Government funds are vanishing	Community work is a public good which can be outsourced
The ability to pay for services is limited to some farmers but also depends on the type of product	High value commercial products can generate funds to pay for services

GROUP B
NEW APPROACHES TO USE OF MEDIA / NEW INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Policies

Success factors	Empirical Examples
Democratization process (in early 1990s) enabling involvement of women in decision making	Fishing Village in Tanzania
Use of radio broadcasts for development purposes	Tajikistan

Linkages

Success factors	Empirical Examples
Inclusion of all stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linking donors with government, extension and farmers and establishment of evaluation mechanism (Tanzania)
Establishment of mechanisms for common understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linking agricultural research and rural radio (West Africa) Communication between vets and breeders on a Rinderpest campaign (Africa) Researcher designed, farmer managed on-farm trials on agroforestry systems for soil fertility (Benin)
Building on existing systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual extension and research communication network, VERCON Egypt

Methods

Success factors	Empirical Examples
<i>Content and urgency of information flow should lead, not the technology Technology level of communication to be consistent with development stage of production</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision support system for land use planning (Romania)
Participatory methodology enabling the generation of knowledge which responds directly or indirectly to ultimate clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishing Village (Tanzania) Soft / CaNaSTA Database system / GIS tool that makes information / knowledge available to farmers Rural radio (Tajikistan)
Involvement of stakeholders	<i>Include principles of "adult education"</i>
<i>Interface between traditional and modern communication methods</i>	<i>Combination between "modern" ICT to reach extensionists (the multiplier), combined with traditional ("oral") approaches for communication between extensionists and farmers</i>
<i>New ICT allow only communication of explicit knowledge, not applicable for implicit knowledge</i>	

Monitoring and Evaluation

Success factors	Empirical Examples
Performance appraisal	VERCON - Egypt

GROUP C
PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES IN RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

Policies

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Success factors</i>
Clear national policy on extension and research to prevent that: – National research strategies neglect rural development and agriculture – Rural development policies neglect research and extension	Market oriented policy in agriculture
	Pluralistic extension policy (Indonesia, Ghana)
	Support to “non-manipulated” farmer organizations – i.e. FO free from political influence
Coordinate / synchronize reforms and policies of extension and research	Coordination and quality control “Chile”
Provide proofs of success in research or extension to influence policy	
Research strategies built on stakeholder participation and communication across levels (including local) → Benin case	
Budget for subsidized extension and education (→ farmers receive free consultations)	
Develop education for extension	
Same benefits and career development opportunities for both research and extension	

Methods and Skills

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Success factors</i>
Low level of organization of stakeholders	Long term farmers’ vision
Farmers’ mentality : wait instead of being proactive	Work also on soft skills: Ghana, Benin – Reflection analysis, communication, conflict management – Team building and training in group dynamics and facilitation skills – Scientists reoriented – Principles of adult training
Lack of farmer vision calling participation of R-F	
Interactive approaches (including regular meetings and trial visits) with multiple and complementary channels of communication	
Lack of experienced researchers in participatory approaches	Incentive systems, quality requirements and criteria for research in harmony with participatory methodologies

Challenges	Success factors
Researchers' mentality → e.g. no linkage between commodity programs and field research	Accompany a process which is piloted by the stakeholders
Quality control on good participation	Legitimate representation of target groups for priority setting
High variability in farmers → many wishes	Ability of target groups to articulate qualified research and extension priorities
Equal advantages for all stakeholders	→ Method and training for Farmers (organizations in Benin, Rwanda, Ghana)
Systematic M&E	Joint criteria setting for M&E indicators (Ghana, Benin)
Lack of shared understanding between Farmers, extension and researchers	On Farm research Educate farmers
	Ability and willingness to communicate results to extension, farmer organisations and policy makers Make research results and existing extension material available → Inventory and collection of extension material (Benin)
	Push principles through location specific extension (methodologies) / research instead of blue prints
	Avoid "heavy" training requirements
	Allow facilitating organizations to adapt to their own needs

Organization and Funding

Challenges	Success factors
Sharing good practices	Champions in participatory approaches in research and extension
Competition between different methodological approaches for funding	Continuous sustainable funding support from diverse sources (public and others) Donor diversification and alliances (Benin)
	NARS mobilised for partnerships according to stakeholder priorities → grant scheme (Benin)

Farmers organized around a commonly defined objective	Competitive grant scheme linked to stakeholder priorities → criteria and approach of peer review / resource allocation in Benin, Ecuador, Bolivia → FOs participate during peer review
Vast training curriculum to study extension	Creation of technology assessment institutions / province with common terms of reference , involvement of NARS, private sector, FOs + extension→ farmers benefit from researchers and extension with equal service conditions (Indonesia, Bolivia, Ecuador) Formalise training for extension Institute for extension education (Ukraine)
Economic capacity of the target group to follow the process	Farmers contribute to funding of services

Management and M&E

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Success factors</i>
Low status of extension vs. research and private sector actors Extension agents convert to agricultural business advisors	Suitable reward systems for scientists & extension agents taking into account regular field contacts
Check economic viability of technological options from the beginning	Integration of private sector and market mechanisms wherever possible
Monitoring of success through farmer groups by farmers indicators.	Joint impact assessment by farmers and extension workers and researchers
Make local and tacit knowledge explicit	Make field staff responsible concerning their role in accompanying the process and methods to be used
On-farm research where appropriate	Train field staff and stakeholders on change management
Develop marketing for extension and research	Develop a sound program of work

Linkages

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Success factors</i>
Hidden interests no transparency	Same levels of understanding and joint terminology
Linkages from farmers to extension as buyers of services	Find the common vision and do role clarification
Ensure two way communication through interactive tools	Regular meetings of stakeholders
Appropriate tools to cultural and physical setting	