



Effective Communication between Agricultural Research, Extension and Farmers

Ora, Italy - October 18.-22., 2004

Workshop Report

Table of Content

Background and Objectives	2
Concept Note	3
Success Factors for Effective Communication between Research, Extension and Farmers	5
Options for Future Collaboration	7
Annex 1: Group Work Results – Challenges and Success Factors	11
Annex 2: Group Work Results – Strategies and Recommendations	17
Annex 3: Workshop Evaluation	24
Annex 4: Workshop Participants	26
Annex 5: Workshop Program	34

Background and Objectives

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GTZ, German Agency for Technical Cooperation) organized a four-day technical consultation workshop on the theme “Effective Communication between Research, Extension and Farmers”. The workshop is the outcome of an ongoing discussion between FAO and GTZ on issues related to Communication for Development, Research, Extension and Agricultural Information Management. Both organizations 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 workshop was conducted jointly with the Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry “Laimburg” and held at the Centre’s facilities in Ora (Bolzano, Italy) from 18 to 22 October 2004. Forty-five experts¹ in communication for development, agricultural research and agricultural extension, representing the GTZ, FAO, the World Bank, CGIAR Centres, CIRAD, universities and other international and national organizations, participated in the presentations and discussions.

The specific objectives of this workshop were to:

- Collect and analyze information on the state of the art in communication from field projects/programmes in research, extension and farmer organizations
- Identify and systematize success factors for effective research – extension – farmer communication
- Identify and develop concrete options for ongoing and/or new collaborations

The workshop consisted of²:

- Six keynote presentations to provide overviews on the different dimensions of research – extension – farmer – communication;
- A series of “open space” sessions which allowed participants to present and discuss individual experiences and working contexts;
- A selection of special cases of successful communication between research, extension and farmers;
- Two rounds of facilitated group work, focusing on “challenges and success factors” as well as on “strategies and recommendations” for communication with different groups of farmers;
- The consolidation of the major workshop findings in a set of 6 enabling success factors.
- A technical excursion to familiarize participants with the linkages between extension and farmers in the context of South Tyrolean fruit production;
- A “promotional exercise” for participants to present their own ideas and proposals for collaborative activities and to establish first contacts for future cooperation.

In addition to this summary report the organizers will compile a CD-Rom with all presentations and documents for distribution to the participants and their respective organizations. Based on the workshop results a more comprehensive publication will be produced in 2005, with specific attention to the “Options for Future Collaboration”.³

¹ For a list of participants see Annex 4.

² For the detailed agenda of the workshop see Annex 5.

³ Page 7

Concept Note

Development 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 food production.

New agricultural technologies are generated by research institutes, universities, private companies, and by the farmers themselves. Agricultural extension services are expected to disseminate them among their clients, but due to poor linkages between research and extension the adoption of new agricultural technologies by farmers in the developing world is often very slow and research is not focussing on the actual needs of farmers. In many countries the low agricultural production has been attributed, among other factors, to poor linkages between Research-Extension-Farmers and to ineffective technology delivery systems, including poor information packaging and inadequate communication systems.

Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems - In an agricultural knowledge and information system 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 and 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 and ill 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 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 programmes, 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).

Communication in Research and Extension - Public agricultural research institutions often have poor relations with extension agencies. Extension workers see researchers working in isolation and developing technologies not applicable to the farm, whereas researchers often question the ability of the extension agents to perform their jobs effectively. Bridging the gap

between research and extension is the most serious institutional problem in developing research and extension programs.

Within the research process, communication and information dissemination are key components. This has led to a heightened awareness of the need for better communication structures and strategies for the generation and dissemination of research results to intermediate and end users. Communication is no longer seen as a top-down flow of information through the national mass-media to mobilize populations about development programmes. Nor, is it a didactic approach to extension in which agents deliver regular messages to 'passive' populations. Farmers are now seen as discerning groups of people with specific information needs and perspectives and their input and feedback are critical to the research design. Therefore they must be allowed to voice their opinions regarding a particular issue of their concern, and actively contribute to the knowledge and technology transfer process.

In recognizing that rural people are at the heart of development, communication for development methodologies and tools can help overcome barriers to information and knowledge dissemination by fostering two-way sharing of information among communication equals. This approach, known as participatory communication, highlights the importance of cultural identity, concerted action and dialogue, local knowledge and stakeholder participation at all levels. Participatory communication has become the key link between farmers, extension, and research for planning and implementing consensus-based development initiatives.

Communication for development encompasses different media ranging from folk media and traditional social groupings to print, rural radio, mobile telephones, video, internet platforms and multimedia. New information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the Internet can also be effective tools for linking researchers, educators, extensionists and producer groups to each other and to global information sources. However, digital information requires new roles, responsibilities and skills for its management, and the users must be empowered to use them effectively. Whether or not villages are connected to the outside world through modern telecommunications, learn about cropping techniques from folk proverbs and songs or listen to radio broadcasts on better farming practices, the processes are the same – people communicating and learning together.

Success Factors for Effective Communication between Research, Extension and Farmers

Based on the various state of the art presentations on the workshop themes, special cases, group work results, the findings from the excursion and the plenary discussions, the participants identified a number of enabling factors for an effective communication between research, extension and farmers. These “generic” factors should be considered as overall guiding principles that are required in all projects, or project components which aim at improving the communication between agricultural research, extension and farmers. The list of subcomponents is not intended to be exhaustive, but represents the major issues that were addressed during the workshop. They may be seen as condensed and structured recommendations from the participants.

These “**generic success factors**” include:

1. Policies and markets conducive for communication

- Policy environment allowing market orientation, pluralistic services and mandates, quality regulation
- Coherence of policies at different levels and from different donors. Clear national policies on research, extension and rural development
- Harmonized reform processes in related fields. (e.g. research and extension ensuring linkages)
- Communication of, and lobbying for market orientation, pluralism and funding mechanisms

2. Involvement of farmers through participatory methods

- Articulation of (gender specific) demands and formulation of priorities by farmers and rural communities together with:
 - Formulation of quality demands by representative farmers’ groups or organizations through facilitation
 - Quality guarantee of extension messages
 - Long term orientation / vision
- Use of adult education principles in extension and training and of participatory group extension methods

3. Communicative capacities and attitude of research / extension services

- Development of a client oriented attitude in service provision
- Developing facilitation competence and orientation of extensionists
- Differentiated communication strategies for different client groups (e.g. subsistence, transition or market oriented farmers; gender; old, young farmers etc.)
- Communication aspects to be included in pre-service trainings (including training skills for adult education) of researchers and extensionists
- Autonomous and flexible structures for research and extension allowing provision of unbiased information to farmers.
- Effective guidance and transparency (strengthening accountability to clients)
- Technical competence through strong linkages between research and extension.
- Development of special messages for HIV/AIDS affected clientele and gender differentiation.
- Marketing for research and extension

4. Farmers' organizations as partners in communication

- Farmers organized on democratic principles with transparent selection of members' representatives, ensuring legitimate representation in communication processes
- Foster and support active participation in communication process (instead of "passive recipients" of information)
- Farmers as partners in adaptive research and / or providers of extension services
- Horizontal and vertical communication within "value chains"
- Non-manipulated farmer organizations
- Farmers contribute to funding of services
- Equal advantages for all stakeholders

5. Utilization of different Media Options

(considering the content, context and connectivity dimensions)

- Mix and interface of different media according to
 - content
 - urgency
 - recipients (extensionists, researchers, farmers, etc.)
 - gender and other client group differentiation
- Communication technology should be the "dependent variable"
- Chosen technology to be in line with environmental, cultural, available infrastructure
- Interface between "modern" and "traditional" communication methods
- Cost effectiveness

6. Monitoring and impact evaluation of communication strategies

- Ensure systematic monitoring and feed back (articulated perception) by involved actors with respect to communication policies / strategies / activities
- Participatory impact assessments involving various key stakeholders and joint setting of monitoring criteria
- Need for a methodological framework to allow for plausibility statements linking effects to different ways of communication, (i.e. the communication strategy actually made a difference), to deal with the "attribution gap"
- Monitoring results can be used for lobbying

During the **excursion**, the participants had the opportunity to observe and discuss a practical case of successful linkages among research and extension ("Beratungsring") and commercial fruit growing farmers in Southern Tyrol. The participants could discuss on site with the manager of a fruit cooperative, an apple growing farmer and the extensionists.

At **cooperative level** important factors included the following:

- Professional management of the cooperative, including marketing and technical services.
- Established market linkages
- Applied research for quality production and storage
- Transparent handling of fruits, producer can be traced until it reaches the consumer

At **farm level** (apple farm of Mr. Hannes Kofler) important factors included:

- An "ideal" family farm size of approximately 4 ha, relying on the full capacity of family labour which can assure a sufficient income
- The availability of part time off-farm income

- Membership in a cooperative which assures the marketing and upgrading of the product – while the resulting distance from the market requirements proposes a certain disadvantage
- A market for a high quality product at a reasonable price
- Easy access to competent and timely extension services at reasonable fees
- Farmers are competent partners (skilled and experienced) of the extensionist. The advice needed is very specific.
- Information is collected from various sources, not only from the extension service

Corresponding success factors at the **extension level** (the "Beratungsring") included:

- Regular and intensive direct contacts (weekly) between extensionists and farmers.
- Advice to members is largely given on demand and very timely (e.g. early warning for hailstorms)
- The service uses a large variety of information tools and techniques: field days, print material, telephone and SMS, warning services, intranet, etc.
- All extensionists are generalists, supported by subject matter specialists for specific cases. All are technically competent with a good in-house reference system
- All extensionists share a common vision and professional pride.
- Extensionists have regular internal feed-back sessions to discuss particular cases, while there is a certain felt weakness in extension methodology.
- The service is financed by its members and partly subsidized by the government, but it is independent of government control.
- There is a strong linkage to agricultural research in the region (Laimburg) (advice, trials, training, management of research)
- The extension service is technically and logistically well equipped.
- The service is independent from suppliers of agricultural inputs
- The extension service has been in operation for more than 40 years. During this time it has built a strong reputation as a reliable and trusted partner for communicating with farmers

Options for Future Collaboration

Within the broader context of improving the communication between research, extension and farmers, the workshop participants identified a number of topics and modes for future cooperation. The following statements should only be considered as preliminary ideas for collaborative work and will surely require further specification of the planned activities, intended outputs, involved partners/institutions and timing. All proposals are obviously open to newer ideas and additional partners who are interested in contributing to the initiative.

Among the main proposals for further cooperation is the preparation of a publication on the workshop results by a mandated core group, the collaboration with professional experience in communication strategies in various countries, the sharing of experiences in evaluation of communication activities, support for a further regional workshop on communication, the collection and circulation of extension material and communication tools and the academic support of students in extension.

a) Elaboration and publication of workshop results

- An editorial group will be established under the coordination of FAO and GTZ. It will consist of Riccardo Del Castello, Mathias Braun (both acting as contact persons),

Michael Bosch, Ian Houseman, Clare O'Farrell, Heinz Heile, Michael Peters, Mohamed Kassem and Sophie Treinen. The group was mandated by the workshop for this task.

- The workshop proceedings will be finalized and distributed to all participants by the end of 2004 / beginning of 2005.
- A first meeting to elaborate a plan of action will be held within the next 6 months in order to specify the outline of the publication; including case studies from the field and key issues or special success factors to be addressed.
- An editorial core group will work from Europe and involve other members and contributors via e-mail.
- Funding options for publication, travel and possible consultants have to be explored.

b) Compilation of case studies on special communication aspects from different countries

- The objective of this proposal is to assess the impact of different communication strategies and methodologies.
- FAO (Karin Nichterlein) is also interested to collect and share experiences with participatory research approaches.
- Partners include Mathias Braun (contact person), Boru Douthwaite, Joseph Kwarteng, Karin Nichterlein, Virgil Vlad, Michael Bosch and May Hani.
- Possible cases to be analyzed include:
 - the Romanian situation and strategy,
 - the work for the CGIAR Science Council on impact assessment,
 - a study on impact assessment of participatory research by Nina Liljan (CGIAR PRGA Programme),
 - a case study produced by DANIDA,
 - a comparative study on farmer field schools (Mohamed Kassem),
 - contributions by CIAT on participation to a publication edited by Fujisaka ("Scaling Book").
- FAO (Ms. Hani) plans a workshop in 2005 in Cairo, Egypt during which regional case studies will be presented and analyzed, which focus on the understanding of communication processes.

c) Collection of case studies on Information and Communication for Development (ICD)

- Coordinated by Sophie Treinen (FAO), potential cases include:
 - Romania (Virgil Vlad)
 - ICT stories from IICD (concerning methodological approaches and the relation between ICTs and livelihood approaches),
 - Communities of practice in the field of ICT (Bellanet),
 - Needs assessment for ICTs in research - especially in Central and Eastern Europe (Karin Nichterlein, FAO),
 - VERCON as example for needs assessment (Mohamed Kassem).

d) Identification of (communication) factors which constrain or foster the ability to innovate

- A Community of Practice (CoP) will be initiated to explore common interests in Social Network Analysis.
- Possibilities for research collaboration will be explored by Boru Douthwaite (CIAT), Lucie Lamoureux (Bellanet), Jenni Heise (GTZ) and Karin Roskopf (FAO).

e) Collection and compilation of (physical) extension material

- All participants are encouraged to send copies of extension materials and corresponding media (English, French, Spanish, German) to Annemarie Matthes (GTZ Project Pro CGRN, Benin). In return they will receive the complete list of available materials and an analysis of cross-cutting issues.
- Special interests on an exchange and a dialogue about scaling up possibilities for different concepts are expressed by Annemarie Matthes, Kalim Qamar, May Hani, Jean Pierre Ilboudo, Joseph Kwarteng

f) Exchange of experiences in setting up rural radio

- Initiated by the Rural Development Program in Cambodia (Georg Deichert, GTZ).
- Technical assistance / information on design, implementation and training for rural radio programmes is being offered by FAO (Jean Pierre Ilboudo, Riccardo del Castello).
- FAO is planning a workshop on "Rural Radios, ICTs and Rural Development" in June 2005 in the Philippines (UoP Los Banjos).
- Personal experiences can be provided from the Tchad by Ernst Mill (GTZ).
- A potentially useful report is available on experiences with rural radio for strengthening decentralized extension services in the Philippines and Indonesia.
- Kim Dara (Extension Unit – MAFF) can be contacted as a potential resource person, trained in video, printed materials and multimedia communications.

g) Capacity building in transition countries to improve research – extension – farmer communication for rural development

- FAO supports this approach in Romania (Karin Nichterlein, Riccardo del Castello, Clare O'Farrell).
- GTZ is interested to apply their experience in capacity building to transition countries as well; contacts can be made through Andrea Wetzler (Knowledge Management in Rural Areas) and Rainer Neidhardt (for details and contact persons in Romania, Georgia).
- DFID supports a project in the Ukraine which links livelihood approaches with extension and communication (Ian Houseman).
- The LWG has contacts in Romania and Georgia which can be reached through Petra Hönig.
- At the Humboldt University Berlin a PhD thesis is underway looking at extension in Central and Eastern European Countries (Jenni Heise from GTZ, Prof. Nagel from Humboldt University).

h) Workshop on Effective Communication between Research – Extension and Farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa

- Initiated and coordinated by ICIPE (Brigitte Nyambo).
- The workshop is planned for autumn 2005, possibly located in East Africa and hosted by ICIPE.
- Potential contributors include Brigitte Nyambo (ICIPE), Joseph Kwarteng (University of Cape Coast, Ghana), Emile Ndejuru (ISA Rwanda), Jean Pierre Ilboudo (FAO), Christian Didier (CIRAD), Anne-Marie Matthes (GTZ, Benin), Pamela Shao (WFP).
- CGIAR Centres located in Africa will be contacted for further collaboration and inputs.
- Additional facilitation is being sought from World Bank, GTZ (Project on Knowledge Systems), FAO and CIRAD.

i) Tools for communication and dissemination to small farmers

- The Agricultural Research Institute Rwanda is especially interested in application of Rural Radio and ICTs; FAO offers to provide information and share experiences in this field.
- A second topic is options for strengthening extension systems and farmer group training for which experiences of CIAT, ICIPE and CIRAD are relevant.
- Back stopping support in communication will be sought from FAO and GTZ.
- Possible linkages with the workshop in sub-saharan Africa (see paragraph h)

j) Pre-Service Training for Extension

- The University of Cape Coast (Joseph Kwarteng) looks for experts willing to serve as co-supervisors of Master or PhD Thesis.
- Mathias Braun (GTZ), Jean Pierre Ilboudo (FAO) and Christian Didier (CIRAD) have indicated their willingness in principle to support these tasks.

k) Introduction of Rural Radio in Angola

- A planned FAO project using rural radio to support the dissemination of technical and technological innovation; especially linked with extension activities.
- Potentials for collaboration with GTZ are sought, GTZ Angola will be contacted (Rainer Neidhard).
- A formulation mission of FAO-SDRE (Jean Pierre Ilboudo and Kalim Qamar) is planned for 2005 in which GTZ might want to participate.

Annex 1: Results of the first Round of Group Work Discussions – Focussing on *Challenges and Success Factors* for effective Communication between Research, Extension and Farmers

Note: Statements in *Italics* indicate additional points being made during plenary presentations and discussions

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 exists to change the system of communication channels?
- What is the private or public role of NGOs?

Policies

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Success factors</i>
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) -
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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
Content and urgency of information flow should lead, not the technology <i>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

Challenges	Success factors
Clear national policy on extension and research to prevent that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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

Challenges	Success factors
Low level of organization of stakeholders	Long term farmers’ vision
Farmers’ mentality : wait instead of being proactive	Work also on soft skills: Ghana, Benin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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
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	

Challenges	Success factors
Equal advantages for all stakeholders	Ability of target groups to articulate qualified research and extension priorities → 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
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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	

Annex 2: Results of the second Round of Group Work Discussions

Focussing on *Strategies and Recommendations* for effective Communication between Research, Extension and Farmers

Group A: Subsistence and small scale Farmers

Recommendation	General Strategy	What should be done	Lead Actor / participating actors
a) Actor-related Factors:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the rationale of small/subsistence practices, as applicable to all actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situation Analysis for small-scale/subsistence farming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) studies Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensionists and Communication Specialists in collaboration with researchers and farmers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address attitudinal issues across the board, i.e. researchers, extensionists and farmers Develop a long term, common vision among all actors of rural development (e.g. farmers, researchers, extension politicians etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Education Team building Role Clarification Appropriate institutional/organizational structures covering research and extension, engaging farmers in a strategic manner (Indonesia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve understanding of participatory communication through training Train actors on group dynamics and team building Understand values, interests and motivations. Education and training on soft and hard skill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication experts in collaboration with all actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmer empowerment to be able to articulate issues ("raise their voice") and formulate realistic / quality demands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raising Farmer organization Self-help capacity building Priority setting according to available resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve general agricultural and communication knowledge Improve farmers' organizations (professional, coop,...etc) Develop training modules for small-scale farming, taking into account their communication channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve all actors ensuring that farmers play a key role from early stages.

Recommendation	General Strategy	What should be done	Lead Actor / participating actors
<u>b) Environmental Factors:</u>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account physical and political environment • Consider the socio-economic and cultural contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the physical and political environment • Assess the socio-economic and cultural context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment • Survey • Involvement and support of local authorities 	
<u>c) Media Factors:</u>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use appropriate media/ mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience Analysis • Inventory of Communication Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select media that are appropriate for the local context based on actor-related and environmental factors. • Diversify to accommodate all in terms of level, form and time. • Learn/benefit from traditional communication methods 	
<u>d) Message Factors:</u>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure relevant content, appropriate format, cultural and gender sensitivity. • Link extension message and development strategy to communication channels / strategies • Specific messages and communication strategies for HIV/AIDS prevalence areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design client-oriented messages, based on farmers' needs. • Consider education level of different actors (e.g. time needed for problem definition, languages and symbols to be used, etc) • Develop a feedback mechanism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication needs assessment • Draw-up and field test messages 	

Summary. Based on the above, establish an appropriate communication strategy in terms of priorities, needs and funding, taking into account the social/cultural context, existing infrastructure (organizational, technical) and available resources.

Group B: Transitional Farmers

Delimitation of mixed farmers

Generic types: Men, women, young, old

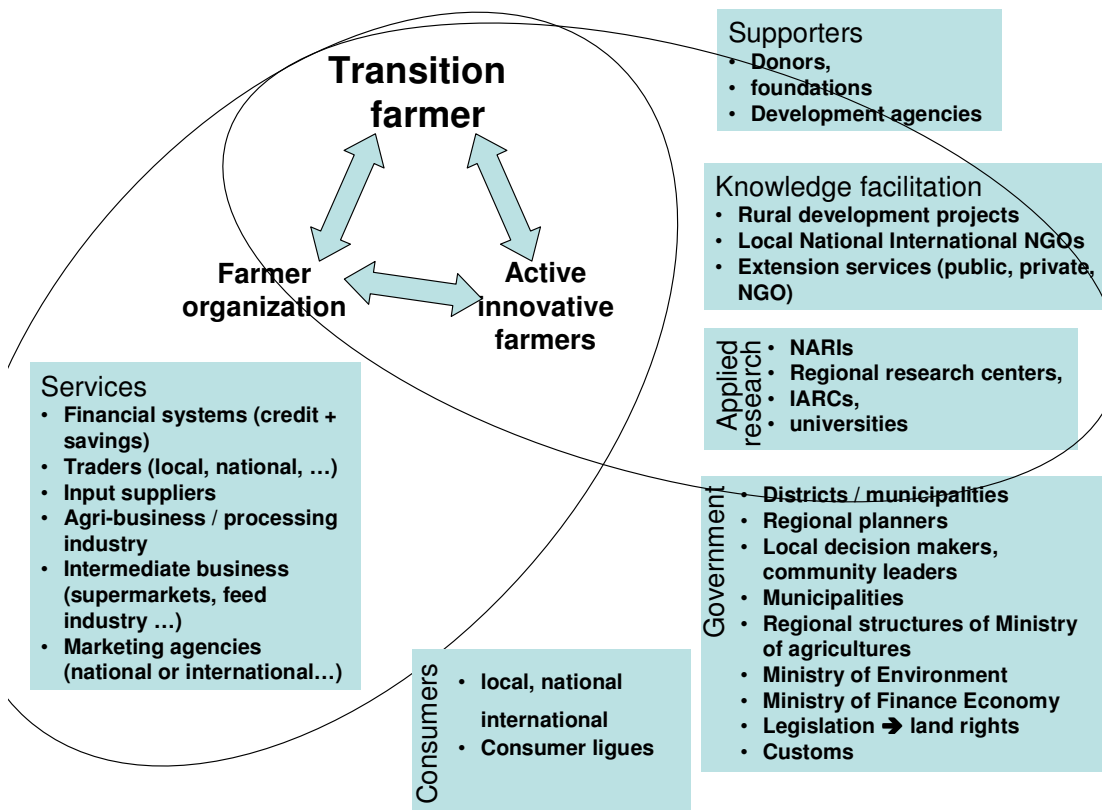
Types according to degree of commercialisation:

- A On the limit of being only subsistence farmer (vulnerable, possible exit strategies out of agriculture)
- B Transitional type combining subsistence and market production
- C On the verge of becoming full commercial farmers

Principles

To formulate an effective communication strategy you should:

- Follow a multi-stakeholder approach
- Be conscious about the operating and communication level(s)
- Understand the needs of each stakeholder in terms of communication
- Verify what works and what does not work in communication
- Ensure systematic communication channel with government services and administration
- Provide options and communicate related consequences



Communication functions

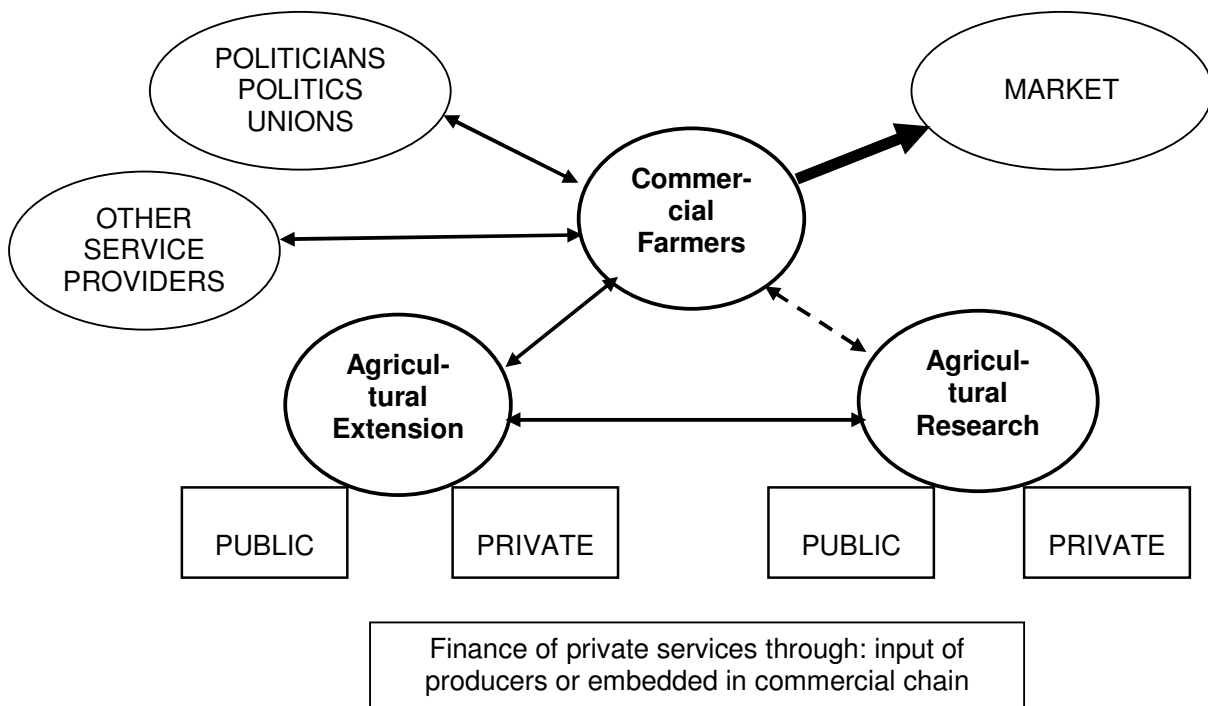
Market exploration Identify production level, constraints + potentials Identify organizational communicational set-up

Examples

<i>Relation</i>	<i>Communication problem</i>	<i>Approach to solution</i>
Farmers ↔ farmers associations	Weak internal and external communication skills of CBOs and farmer organisations	Training for internal and external communication / facilitation skills
Farmers + farmers associations ↔ services	Organizational capacity to respond to market requirements	Develop mechanisms for historical and up to date market trends
	Not all services reach farmers in a timely fashion to respond to market demand e.g. due to lack of marketing information	
	Farmers and their associations lack accurate information regarding their outputs and negotiation skills for marketing their products (contracts)	Identify context specific solutions methods of communication Build capacities according levels Encourage horizontal communication and provide appropriate tools for it
Farmers ↔ research ↔ Services	Know the aggregate demand to allocate resources in research and other services	Learning alliances with NGOs and service providers across levels

Group C: Market Oriented, Commercial Farmers

1. The Actors Network



2. Main Characteristics of Commercial Farmers:

- Can convert knowledge into money
- Depend substantially on market
- Invest into her/his business
- Organised along Value Chains (Commodities)

3. Description of Success Factors in a Strategy to Enhance Communication

SUCCESS FACTOR: THE MARKET IS THE DRIVER OF THE SYSTEM	
Description	Elements for a Strategy
<p>Commercial farmers monitor markets, input supply and research/extension progress; they have very specific technical and economic information needs. The market provides major management information for farmers (what to grow, what to sell, where to sell, inputs etc.).</p> <p><i>Note: Use the value chain approach for designing feed back from the market.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work and communicate with market players ▪ Identify information needs of traders and possibly influence their communication with farmers ▪ Organize regular meetings between traders and commercial farmers; ▪ Train commercial farmers in marketing ▪ Support organisation by and attendance of commercial farmers to fairs and exhibitions ▪ Support market observation – journal, e.g. CIRAD
SUCCESS FACTOR: VIABLE COMMUNICATION LINKAGES AND NETWORKS	
Description	Elements for a Strategy
<p>Specialised information and communication services usually provide the various types of information, such as prices, innovations, skills, etc. Therefore plan for a mix of horizontal and vertical communication. The information management of farmers and processors is often organised along value chains. Farmers organisations (associations, cooperatives, unions etc.) need to have good internal communication and be able to lobby for their specific interests. There is a multitude of service providers, therefore introduce elements of quality management.</p> <p><i>Note: the information flow is often selective if some farmers are organised in membership organisations that exclude others from acquiring information.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop integrated research – extension - farmer networks ▪ Research needs to give commercial farmers clear information about benefits/costs of their work ▪ Commercial farmers need to be regularly informed about research innovations (e.g. new varieties) ▪ Involve researchers in farmers’ field days ▪ Farmers organization can create websites for dispatching information (e.g. OCAB RCI) ▪ Universities can provide training for extension staff in market orientation/farm economy ▪ The government can offer/organize training for service providers against payment ▪ Private service providers should look for partners to cooperate ▪ Support interdisciplinary (package) teams in commercial research
SUCCESS FACTOR: DEFINED LEVEL OF PUBLIC AND EXCLUSIVE INFORMATION	
Description	Elements for a Strategy
<p>Knowledge transfer should be paid by commercial farmers with full right to select services. Stakeholders define in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarify and regulate roles of private, public and commercial provision in research and extension clearly

<p>commercial extension what is public or paid-for information and what remains a business secret. A more general advisory service besides chains should stay independent. Specialized services to commercial farmers need to be financed by users fully or at least on an increasing scale. <i>Note : the country situation determines the type of services (private/public)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up a forum and planning board with all stakeholders for decision making on priorities for research and extension and for monitoring progress. ▪ Support a technical resource centre for commercial farmers, jointly paid by farmers and public.
<p>SUCCESS FACTOR: VIABLE TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION SYSTEMS</p>	
<p>Description</p> <p>Commercial farmers need to know research innovations for increasing production, quality and efficiency. Market information needs to be accurate and transparent and transferred as quick as possible to commercial farmers. The economic performance of farm business can be assessed, e.g. through comparisons (benchmarking) <i>Note: Extension and research should sell to the farmers the benefits of new ICTs, not the technology</i></p>	<p>Elements for a Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extension can train farmers in the use of ICTs and other media. ▪ Encourage farmers to invest in ICTs, with support and advice from extension. ▪ Collect and disseminate value added information through appropriate communication channels. ▪ Establish market (price) information through appropriate means, e.g. mobile phone (sms). ▪ Produce newsletter with participation of and contribution by commercial farmers.
<p>SUCCESS FACTOR: EMPOWER THE FARMERS</p>	
<p>Description</p> <p>Support representative farmers' organisations that can competently demand and manage extension & research services. True representatives of farmers organizations can ensure flow of information and the formulation quality demand to their members. Commercial farmers can be enabled to cooperate with research, e.g. by "starting support". <i>Note: in-house extension services of larger farms or cooperatives may exclude smaller farmers</i></p>	<p>Elements of a Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design linkages between main actors that promote (business) interaction. ▪ Support group organization training for smaller groups of commercial farmers ▪ Consultants can do leadership training & organizational & communication skills development in cooperatives ▪ Organize economic training for small commercial farmers ▪ Facilitate commercial farmers to have access to different markets ▪ Farmers should form representative boards on different levels ▪ Support in-house extension services within local companies (Kenya)
<p>SUCCESS FACTOR: LOBBY FOR PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT</p>	
<p>Description</p> <p>Focus on the development of the market (framework, infrastructure). Lobby for policies that foster market oriented research & extension and regulate it. Do effective lobbying through economic impacts.</p>	<p>Elements for a Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a clear and transparent communication strategy for the government with farmers ▪ Develop lobbying material to influence local and national governments through representative farmers organisations and extension

OTHER SUCCESS FACTORS:

- Keep the value chain as much as possible in farmers hands
- Monitor the competitiveness of the chain and its elements
- Assist farmers to be partners of research
- Quality and trust-worthiness

Annex 4: Workshop Evaluation

At the end of the workshop participants had the opportunity to express positive and critical feedback on the results and outcomes of the workshop, the adopted methodology, the organization and environment of the meeting. The responses were generally positive, with appreciative comments on the venue, the excursion and the chances for professional interaction. The duration of the workshop was largely seen as insufficient with respect to the topics to be discussed and some of the results were considered too theoretical. The organisation and especially the moderation were very much appreciated.

The results of the card collection exercise show that:

- many participants felt the results to be a step forward in the discussion; e.g.:
 - *good, solid and some visionary results*
 - *great amount of results within a short period*
 - *results should contribute to providing directions for future activities*
 - *results of the workshop are a good basis for future refinement and for a publication*
- however for some the discussion results are still too general and theoretical; e.g.:
 - *results need to be distilled*
 - *too much discussion on development (sector) strategy at the cost of "communication strategy"*
 - *a lot of theoretical discussion*
 - *group work results remained sometimes too vague*
- the aspects of gender and HIV/Aids are not yet covered by the discussion; e.g.:
 - *results are not yet gender specific*
 - *HIV / AIDS issue was not taken into account and no topic for discussion*
- the opportunity to exchange ideas and develop perspectives for future collaboration was considered very useful; e.g.:
 - *"I got new ideas and I am motivated to further co-operate"*
 - *informal discussions and contacts were very helpful for future collaboration*
 - *session on future collaboration very useful for effective collaboration*
- most participants felt the workshop methodology and the mix between different sessions of inputs, open space and group work were helpful in fostering interaction and discussion; e.g.:
 - *Highly interactive method, suitable for exchange of experiences*
 - *good mix of contribution and group work, sequence of steps very productive*
 - *very active and effective facilitation*
 - *open space and "collaboration pinboard" are interesting methods*
- while at the same time the tight schedule was considered to be a limiting factor for discussions; e.g.:
 - *time allocated to open space should be adjusted to allow for more discussion*
 - *too much time to listen, too little to talk*
- the excursion trip was seen as a very interesting and enriching contribution to the workshop; e.g.:
 - *excursion was an interesting contribution to the workshop programme and results*
 - *excursion with high relevance and good link of topics to the area*
- last not least the organization of the workshop, the facilities at Laimburg, as well as the support and hospitality of the staff were greatly appreciated; e.g.:

- *excellent organisation with very suitable environment*
- *outstanding atmosphere, very nice and conducive workshop environment*
- *fantastic location and hospitality*
- *beautiful, friendly professional !!*
- *Laimburg presents the perfect combination of a conference place with success examples*

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Effective Communication between Agricultural Research, Extension and Farmers

Ora, Italy October 18 – 22, 2004

Programme

Monday 18.10.2004

- 18:00 Hotel Ideal Park
- Registration and welcome cocktail - Conference Room
 - Dinner (presentation of participants) "Stube"
-

Tuesday 19.10.2004

- 8:30 Bus transfer from Hotel Ideal Park to Research Centre Laimburg
- 9:00 Session I Introduction to Workshop - Lecture Hall (1)
- Welcome addresses by FAO, GTZ and Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Laimburg
 - Presentation of Workshop objectives and programme
- 09:45 Session II Key Note Addresses - Lecture Hall (1)
- Karin Nichterlein: "Agricultural research for sustainable development: Challenges and trends".
 - Kalim Qamar: "Global reform trends in agricultural extension: Implications for research and farmers"
 - Andreas Springer Heinze: "Knowledge services and value chain promotion - the link between two perspectives on agricultural development"
- 11:10 Coffee Break and group photo
- 11:30 Session II (cont.d)
- Riccardo del Castello: "Communication for development: Bringing together research, extension and farmers".
 - Sophie Treinen: "New ICTs for research/extension linkages: opportunities and challenges".
- 12:15 Lunch
- 13:15 Session II (cont.d)
- Volker Hoffmann: "Research and extension for small farmers in developing countries: The main constraints and challenges"
- 14:15 Session III Open Space – Lecture Hall (1); Classroom (2); Tasting Room (3);

17:00	Tour	Terrace (4) – Includes Coffee Break Guided Tour of the Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry Laimburg (18:00) - Aperitif in the greenhouse; informal discussions.
19:30		Bus transfer from Research Centre Laimburg to Hotel Ideal Park

Wednesday 20.10.2004

8:30		Bus transfer from Hotel Ideal Park to Research Centre Laimburg
9:00		Orientation on the day – Lecture Hall (1)
9:15	Session IV	Introduction to group work and group composition Group Work on “Analysis of main Challenges” Group 1 - Lecture Hall (1) Privatization/Commercialization of agricultural Services Group 2 - Classroom (2) New Approaches to the Use of Media in Research, Extension and Communication Group 3 - Tasting room (3) Participatory Approaches in Research and Extension including coffee break
12:30		Lunch Break
14:00	Excursion	Departure by coach from the Research Centre Laimburg (14:30) Visit to a fruit cooperative in Algund (close to Meran/Merano). (15:30) Visit to a typical fruit growing farm in Tschermers (close to Meran/Merano). Presentation of the Consultation for Farmers in the “House of Apples” in Terlan. Discussion with consultants.
19:00		Bus transfer to Hotel Ideal Park

Thursday 21.10.2004

8:30		Bus transfer from Hotel Ideal Park to Research Centre Laimburg
9:00		Orientation on the day
9:15	Session V	Presentation and discussion of group work - Lecture Hall (1)
10:30		Coffee Break
10:50	Session VI	Presentations on Special Cases - Lecture Hall

- Jean Pierre Ilboudo: Report on the 9th UN Roundtable on Communication for Development
 - Boru Douthwaite: “CIAT's experience linking farmers to research organizations
 - Josef Dalla Via: “Communication between Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Farmers in South Tyrol”
 - Mohamed Kassem: The Virtual Extension Research and Communication Network in Egypt
 - Virgil Vlad: Agricultural information and communication in Romania - status and prospects.
 - Jean Pierre Ilboudo: Rural Radio: An overview of twenty years of Communication Activities in Support of Rural Development
- 13:00 Lunch Break
- 14:00 Session VII Group Work on “Recommendations for different groups of “clients”. (policies, organisational arrangements, capacity building, methodologies..)
- Group 1 - Lecture Hall (1)
Group 2 - Classroom (2)
Group 3 – Tasting Room (3)
- including coffee break
- 17:00 Social event Wine tasting in the Rock Cellar
(18:30) Dinner in the Rock Cellar
- 21:00 Bus transfer from Research Centre Laimburg to Hotel Ideal Park
-

Friday 22.10.2004

- 8:30 Bus transfer from Hotel Ideal Park to Research Centre Laimburg
- 9:00 Orientation on the day
- 9:15 Session VIII Presentation and discussion of group work results – Lecture Hall (Identification of common elements and recommendations)
- 10:30 Coffee Break
- 11:00 Session IX Group Work on “Future Activities” (options for collaboration, research priorities etc.)
- 12:30 Lunch Break
- 14:00 Session X Final discussion – follow up activities - Lecture Hall
- 16:00 Closing of Workshop
- 16:30 Bus transfer from Research Centre Laimburg to Hotel Ideal Park