



**Discussion Results 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 	

GROUP B TRANSITIONAL FARMERS

Delimitation of mixed farmers

Generic types: Men, women, young, old

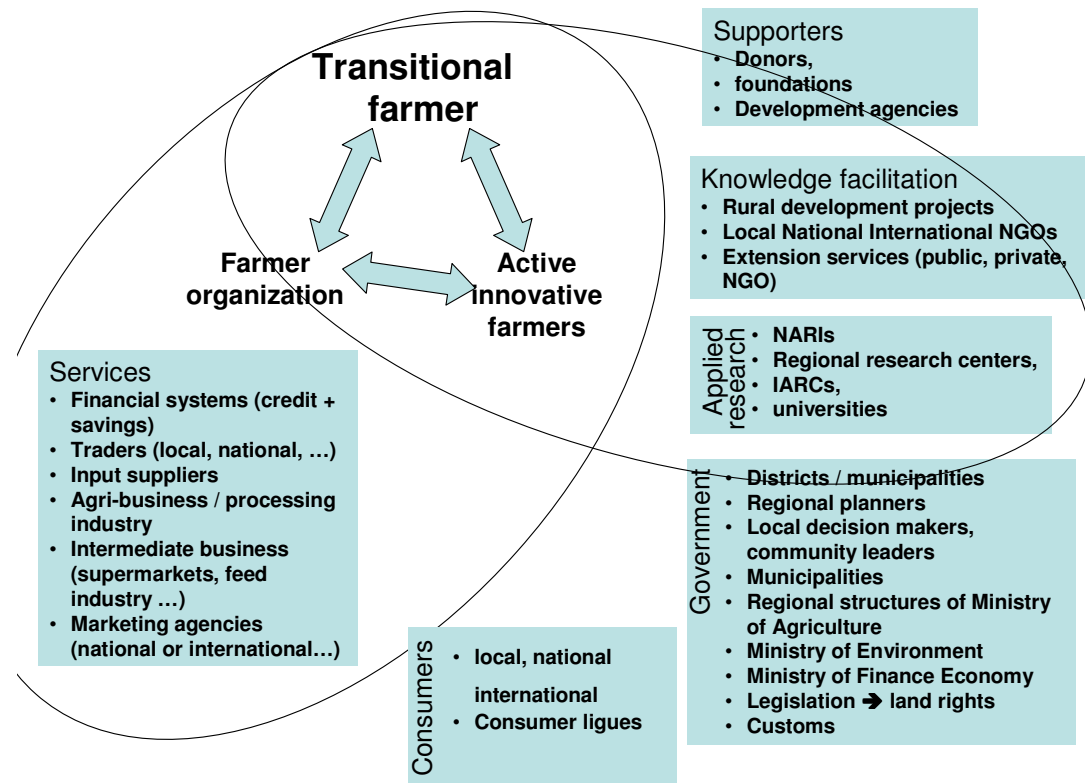
Types according to degree of commercialisation:

- 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

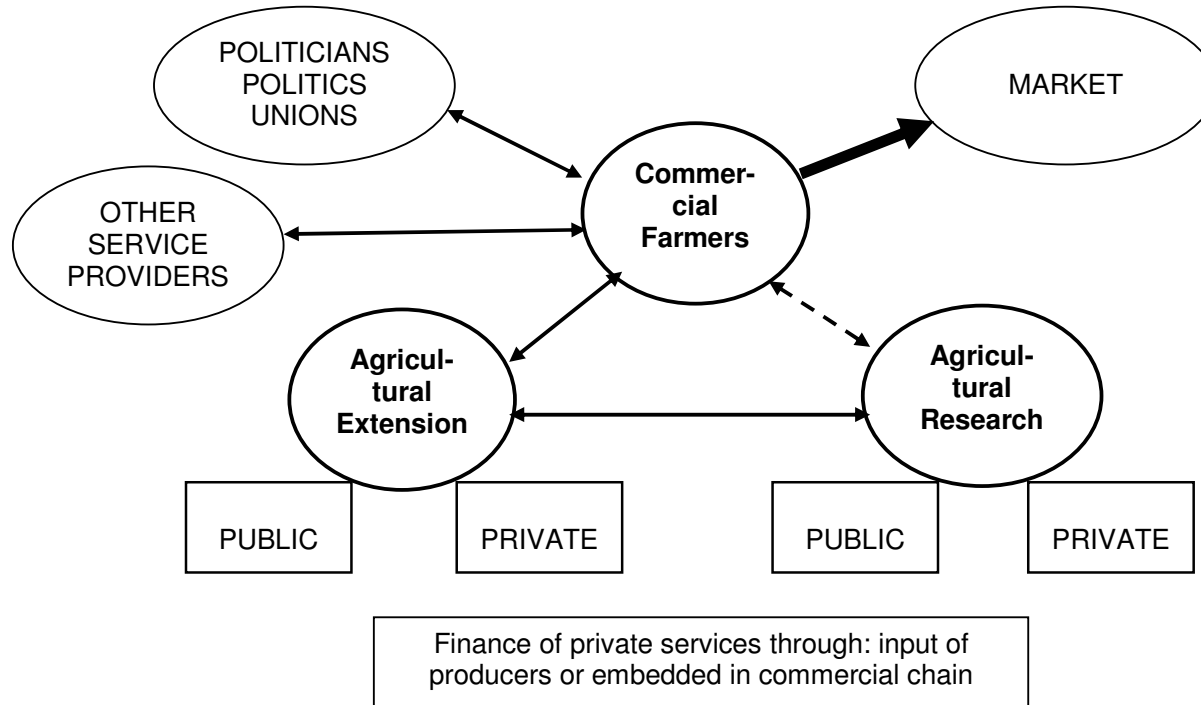
Identify organizational communicational set-up

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.</p> <p>The information management of farmers and processors is often organised along value chains.</p> <p>Farmers organisations (associations, cooperatives, unions etc.) need to have good internal communication and be able to lobby for their specific interests.</p> <p>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 commercial extension what is public or paid-for information and what remains a business secret.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>Note : the country situation determines the type of services (private/public)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarify and regulate roles of private, public and commercial provision in research and extension clearly ▪ 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.
SUCCESS FACTOR: VIABLE TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION SYSTEMS	
Description	Elements for a Strategy
<p>Commercial farmers need to know research innovations for increasing production, quality and efficiency.</p> <p>Market information needs to be accurate and transparent and transferred as quick as possible to commercial farmers.</p> <p>The economic performance of farm business can be assessed, e.g. through comparisons (benchmarking)</p> <p><i>Note: Extension and research should sell to the farmers the benefits of new ICTs, not the technology</i></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.
SUCCESS FACTOR: EMPOWER THE FARMERS	
Description	Elements of a Strategy

<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.</p> <p>Commercial farmers can be enabled to cooperate with research, e.g. by "starting support".</p> <p><i>Note: in-house extension services of larger farms or cooperatives may exclude smaller farmers</i></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>Elements for a Strategy</p>
<p>Focus on the development of the market (framework, infrastructure).</p> <p>Lobby for policies that foster market oriented research & extension and regulate it. Do effective lobbying through economic impacts.</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
<p>OTHER SUCCESS FACTORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 	