



M.Sc. Programmes in Rural Development (INRM, IMRD)

Module: Participatory Agricultural Knowledge Systems

Time: Fridays, 8.30 – 12.00

Introduction

The module introduces students to the concept of **Agricultural Knowledge Systems (AKS)**, i.e., the various ways in which knowledge and information are produced, disseminated, and utilised. The main actors in this concept are **farmers, researchers, extension** or change agents, and **consumers**, regardless of the way in which they are organised. Discussions in recent years have shown that a meaningful functioning of the AKS cannot be assured without the full and equal **participation** of relevant actors. However, a well-established and consistent set of activities and approaches to achieve this objective is not available. The module will, therefore, confront you with some theories and practical findings in order to identify present weaknesses and sensitise for possible solutions.

This will be done by reviewing some basic **theoretical issues** and, in a second step, discussing the roles and organisational setting of the main group of actors: researchers, farmers, and extension personnel. To strengthen practical advisory skills, an intensive weekend course will be held.

2. Methods of instruction and learning

Methods will vary from short lectures, work in pairs or small groups, to plenary discussions. Participants will be required to prepare for each session by reading the texts provided in advance. Reading material will be available on the web and will be handed out only in exceptional cases. It is therefore essential to **register in moodle!**

Course: Participatory Agricultural Knowledge Systems

Key: PAKS

Participants will write up the minutes of each session and will be given a chance to prepare research papers for selected sessions.

3. Exam

Regular and full-time attendance of the module is required. **Active participation** (minutes, short presentations, own contributions) is expected and will influence the final grade.

There will be a **written exam** at the end of the module. Exam questions will be presented during the module. Be aware that in order to succeed in the exam you will have to master both, the contents of required reading as well as the material developed during discussions in class. A small number of **research papers** may substitute the written exam.

4. Learning objectives

At the end of the course, participants will...

1. ...know the theoretical background of AKS, including current criticism of conventional models;
2. ...be able to identify major problems faced by farmers, extension, and research in establishing meaningful linkages;
3. ...know some approaches to institutionalise participatory elements within the AKS;
4. ...know the system of international agricultural research and its linkage to national systems;
5. ...have been exposed to a number of practical advisory instruments (→ training course).

5. Preliminary Programme

Sess ion	Date	Topic	Lecturer
1	October 29 th , 2010	Agricultural Knowledge Systems	Aenis
2	November 5 th , 2010	Participation and joint learning	Aenis
	November 12th – 14th, 2010	Intensive Training course: communication and advisory skills	Aenis Rupschus
3	November 19 th , 2010	Farmers as actors in extension and research	Aenis
4	November 26 th , 2010	Priority setting in research: The Critical Triangle	Aenis
5	December 3 rd , 2010	The international agricultural research system Management of transdisciplinary research	Participants' short presentations Aenis
6	December 10 th , 2010	Problem solving in research and extension	Aenis, Participants' presentations
7	December 17 th , 2010	Knowledge Systems analysis • RAAKS – rapid Appraisal of agricultural knowledge systems	Aenis Participants' presentation
	January 7th, 2011	No session!	
8	January 14 th , 2011	Extension: History and theory • Lewin's field theory and implications for extension • Rogers' diffusion theory and implications for change management	Aenis, Participants' presentations
9	January 21 st , 2011	Extension: Organisational issues • Privatisation trends • Public goods extension	Participants' presentations
10	January 28 th , 2011	Extension: Methods • The Training and Visit System • Farmers Field Schools	
	February 18 th , 2011	Final exam (exam questions will be handed out in advance)	

6. Minutes or short presentations (session 5)

Sess ion	Date	Topic	Who?
1	October 29 th , 2010	Agricultural Knowledge Systems	
2	November 5 th , 2010	Participation and joint learning	
3	November 19 th , 2010	Farmers as actors in extension and research	
4	November 26 th , 2010	Priority setting in research: The Critical Triangle	
5	December 3 rd , 2010	<p>A) The international agricultural research system</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the CGIAR system? 2. CGIAR and commodity oriented Research Centers: CYMMIT, IRRI, CIP, WARDA, ILRI, WorldFish 3. CGIAR and eco-regional oriented Research Centers: CIAT, IITA, ICARDA, ICRISAT 4. CGIAR and problem oriented Research Centers: IFPRI, IMWI, IPGRI, World Agroforestry, CIFOR 5. Current changes in CGIAR <p>B) Management of transdisciplinary research</p>	
6	December 10 th , 2010	Problem solving in research and extension	
7	December 17 th , 2010	<p>Knowledge Systems analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAAKS 	
8	January 14 th , 2011	<p>Extension: History and theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lewin's field theory • Rogers' diffusion theory 	
9	January 21 st , 2011	<p>Extension: Organisational issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privatisation trends • Public goods extension 	
10	January 28 th , 2011	<p>Extension: Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Training and Visit System • Farmers Field Schools 	