



Module 6: Basic Knowledge Management and Extension

Lead Author Laurens Klerkx

Summary

MODULE OVERVIEW

Extension from the perspective of the 'new extensionist' has moved beyond a technology transfer paradigm, and is more broadly about enhancing different ways of fostering communication between relevant players in agriculture, in order to enhance knowledge sharing, learning, and ultimately innovation in terms of practices and technologies. Extensionists should thus be able to facilitate flows of knowledge between relevant players in the agricultural innovation system, making use of different methods and media. They also should manage knowledge to keep themselves up-to-date in order to deliver the best possible support to farmers.

The success of agricultural innovation systems (AIS) are greatly dependent on effective communication of knowledge. This module outlines the different types of knowledge that you as an extension agent will need to deal with as well as the different sources through which knowledge can be gained. You will learn that different situations may require you to take on different intermediary roles in order to facilitate the transfer of knowledge. This module also describes the different communication media and tools available to you to support your role in stimulating the flow of knowledge.

Module Performance Outcomes

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. Distinguish between and describe different types of knowledge relevant to agricultural extension and innovation;
2. Describe the basics of knowledge management and the different intermediary roles needed to foster knowledge flow.
 - Employ the most appropriate intermediary role for a particular situation;
3. Distinguish between different communication media and tools that can support knowledge management.
 - Employ the most appropriate one for a particular situation.

Units

Unit I: Different Types of Knowledge

- Innovation as a process of collective learning and knowledge exchange
- Different sources and types of knowledge
- Innovation as a process of collective learning and knowledge exchange

Unit II: Different Communication Models and the Intermediary Role of the Extensionist

- Different communication models to transfer or exchange knowledge
- Adapting communication models and intermediary roles to levels of complexity
- Extension as a knowledge management system

Unit III: Communication Media and Tools in Support of Knowledge Management

- Different forms of communication media
- Using ICT to enhance knowledge management by extensionists