

# Reflections about the evolution of extension services and technology transference in Latin America



RELASER

Red Latinoamericana para Servicios de Extensión Rural

# The Initiative

IDB, FAO and RELASER made in 2013 a **series of studies to evaluate the reforms** on extension services and technology transference.

The **aim of the studies** was to identify difficulties in extension and technology transference systems, systematize lessons learned and propose new strategies for the future.

Colombia

Uruguay

Chile

Nicaragua

Panama

Paraguay

Costa Rica

Argentina

Honduras

Guatemala

Ecuador

Peru

Dominican Republic

El Salvador

Bolivia (\*)

(\*) in collaboration with GIZ

# Methodology

The **methodology developed by the GFRAS** was applied for the diagnosis of extension systems in two phases:

- a) Country Studies (interviews and surveys) to beneficiaries/ producers and service provider organizations
- b) Consolidation of national data and regional reports.

## **VARIABLES STUDIED**

**Relevance**:% of programs that respond to "demands articulated by clients"; client participation in decision-making.

**Efficiency**: cost per client, educational levels of extensionists, trainings per extensionist; coverage (farmers served for several levels of services); volume and value of production associated with extension services

**Sustainability**:% of funds provided by the Government; % of beneficiaries of funds raised:% of resources from other sources; investment amount per extensionist.

# **Latin American Context**

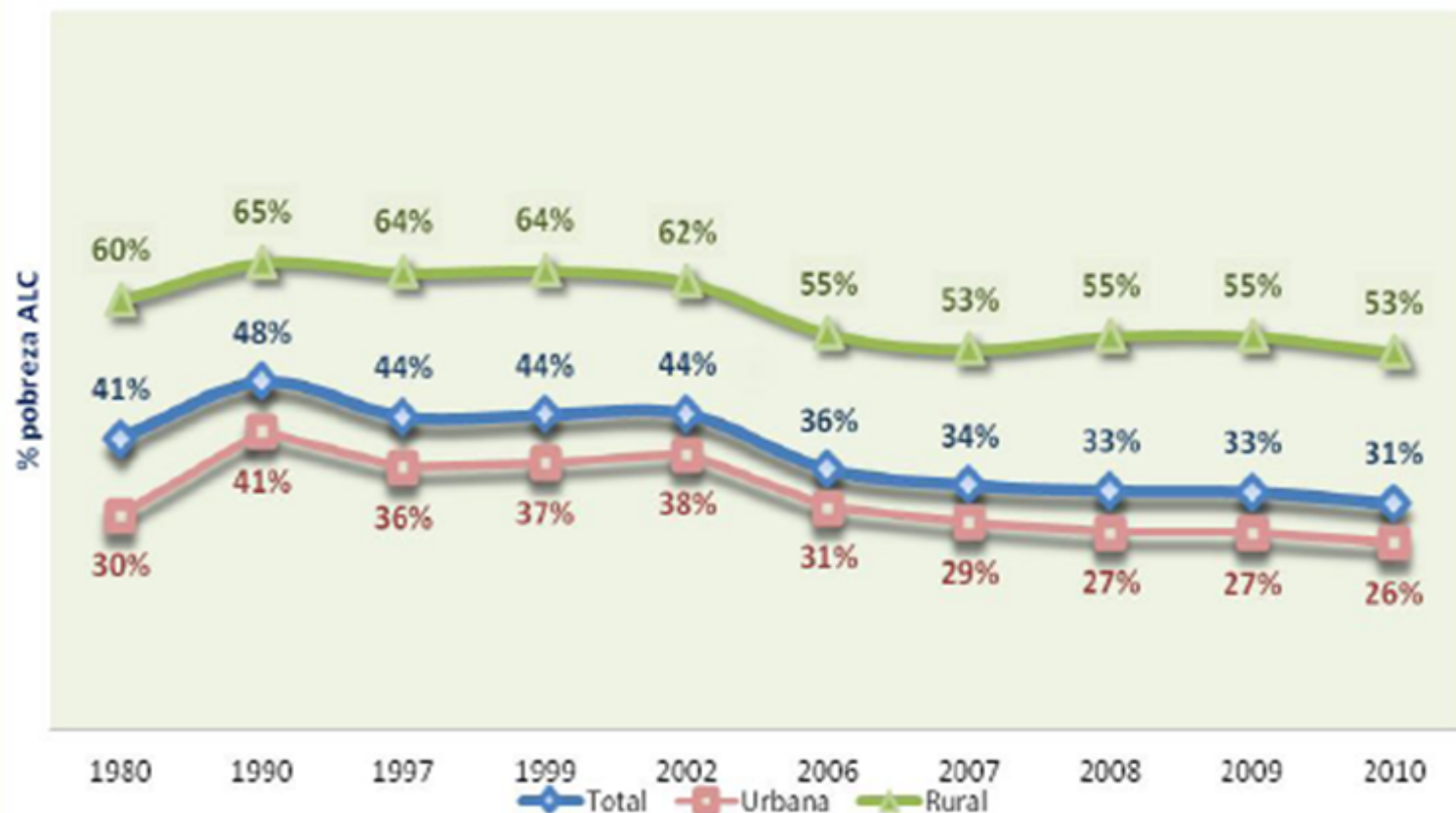
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1. Rural poverty
2. Inequity - concentration - access to natural resources
3. Importance of family farming
4. Effects of climate change
5. Different cultures
6. Environmental Sustainability
7. The importance of production of food and agricultural raw materials



# Rural Poverty

Population below the poverty line. Period 1980-2010 (%)

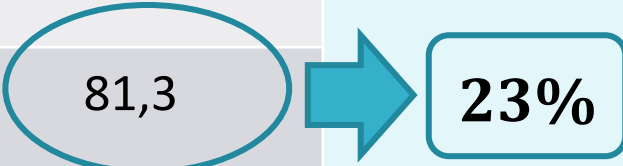


Total population: 610,000,000

Source: Cepal

# The Importance of Family Farming

	Total farmers	# Family Farming	%
Caribbean	1.704.651	1.507.757	88,4
Mesoamerica + Mexico	7.486.831	5.883.205	78,6
Andean	5.078.383	4.051.342	79,8
Southern Cone	6.144.774	5.154.533	83,9
TOTAL	20. 414.539	16.596.837	81,3



Source: FAO ,2013

# Learning

1. More than systems, they are a set of programs; lack of inter-institutional coordination; disconnection between stakeholders
2. When reforms occurred, they were de-contextualized; more coverage than quality and relevance.
3. Approaches of diffusion of innovations , with functional participation of users are still present. There are efforts to apply more participatory and sustainable models.
4. The lack of guided and strategic public policies towards innovation processes have weakened extension services
5. The market does not ensure the complete organization of the system by itself, when it is outsourced or privatized there are fails in the social and environmental dimensions. Public/state support is essential

# Learning...

6. Failures in coordination between research, extension and education
7. There participatory methodologies with successful results: rural promoters, farmer-to-farmer field school, zigzag, learning groups, networks, UMATAS, etc.
8. Lack of knowledge production on extension through multidisciplinary research
9. Weakness in tracking and monitoring the effects and impact evaluation especially with the participation of users
10. Generational renovation of human resources is insufficient, as well as their education, training and updating, in the framework of the "new extension"



# Conclusions

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1. Rural development public policies **must integrate** all political, social and economic stakeholders involved
2. Agricultural development policies, in general, are presented as **a set of fragmented measures** that result of negotiations between various sectors and interest groups. **They rarely respond to comprehensive development strategies**
3. **Inter-institutional efforts are required** for initiatives in the field of infrastructure, education, innovation and development (social, food, agricultural and of natural resources), that promote synergies and supports the complex territorial interactions
4. **Efforts should address** rural poverty, inequality, food security and sovereignty, sustainability of livelihoods of family farming; of natural resources and the effects of climate change

# Conclusions

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5. We need to think of extension development from an **holistic perspective that includes all public and private stakeholders** under agreement schemes (forums, agencies, tables, etc.), according to territories and agro-food chains
6. Strengthening **institutions is an essential element** to improve the scope and quality of policies
7. Policy responses for rural extension should be **endogenous and adapt significantly to each context** in terms of the historical and political configurations
8. Public/state funding should ensure access to extension services and technical assistance **to the most vulnerable sectors**
9. International cooperation **must adapt their strategies**, coherent and coordinated with the policies of each country

# From RELASER's perspective

**RURAL EXTENSION should be part and contribute to strengthening agro-food innovation systems, from the chains and territories, and especially from the changes in skills and attitudes of the stakeholders.**

**RURAL EXTENSION interacts with research, education, financial services and value chains, contributing to the competitiveness of the chains and territories, improving income and quality of life of farmers and rural people.**

# Thanks for your attention and welcome to Argentina!



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