



Features of Evidence-Based Rural Advisory Services Policies

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Introduction

Definition of “policy”

- a course or principle of action
- a principle or rule to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes
- a statement of intent
- A framework for operations and practices, and legal framework

Definition of “evidence”

- facts and knowledge collected through a systematic process

Growing global need to move from “opinion-based policy” towards “evidence-based policy” – including “evidence-influenced policy”.

A **Policy-making process** is inherently political – and current processes for translating evidence into policy options are not optimal.

Policy: Opinion based vs evidence based

Opinion based policies...

- rely heavily on selective use of evidence
- are untested views of individuals or groups
- are often inspired by ideological standpoints or prejudices or speculative conjecture.

Evidence-based policy (EBP)...

- helps people make well informed
- puts the best available evidence at the heart of policy development and implementation

Evidence-based policy

- ...is more rational, rigorous and systematic approach
- ...policy decisions should be better informed by available evidence and should include rational analysis
- ... produces better outcomes
- ... helps to comprehend the policy environment and the dynamics of changes
- ... evaluates the effects of policy changes in order to make informed choices between policy options, and assess their impacts
- ... demonstrates the links between strategic direction, intended outcomes and policy objectives
- ... determine what to be done to achieve strategic goals and objectives

Characteristics of evidence for policy formulation

Quality / accuracy / objectivity - accuracy of the evidence (arithmetically, statistically, representativeness, non-bias)

Credibility – relies on a strong and clear line of argument; tried and tested analytical methods

Relevance- Evidence is timely, topical and has policy implications

Practicalities- Evidence is accessible to policymakers; in a useful form and can be translated into policy. Feasible and affordable.

Extension policy clusters & indicators *(selected)*

Clusters	Indicators
Extension effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Awareness of farmers- Visits to farmers- Number of trained farmers- Research-Extension linkages-
Extension efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Number of farmers adopting practices-
Extension productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Yield per hectare- Number of specialists;
Extension capability & accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Gender, ICT, Finances, ...- Investment, ...

Conclusion

For RAS policy to be evidence –based, the characteristics of evidence should be addressed to extension policy indicators.

The policy indicators should cover the clusters of effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, capability and accountability

As many countries develop their RAS policy the indicators should be interrogated to prove whether such policy are evidence based or otherwise



Thank You



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