Global Discussion

The “New Extensionist”: Enhancing Capacities of Extension and Advisory Services

Planning the Global and Regional GFRAS Activities 2013 – 2014
14-15 March 2013, Hotel Roodevallei, Pretoria, South Africa

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

Background
The GFRAS working group on capacity produced a document for GCARD-II in 2012. This was an advocacy piece to clarify the roles, actors, and modes of working of extension at the individual, organisational, and system level, focusing on the capacities needed to play an effective role in agricultural innovation systems.

A full position paper and summary were produced, and an electronic discussion and survey took place. A face-to-face discussion was then held at the GCARD-II meeting in October 2012. All presentations, programme, and report are found here.

In 2013 GFRAS made a plan to define a plan of priority activities for the next two years that best contributes to enhancing the capacity of extension and advisory services (EAS) to effectively play their part in agricultural innovation systems and in line with the GCARD agenda.

Selected people from different regions and sectors participated in the discussion. The prioritisation process will build on regional electronic discussions that took place in February 2013.

The objectives of this meeting included:
The objective was to define a plan of priority activities for the next two years that – given available resources and windows of opportunity – best contributes to enhancing the capacity of EAS to effectively play their part in agricultural innovation systems and in line with the GCARD agenda. Steps include:

- Reviewing the priorities stated by the regional e-consultations for regional and national level
- Prioritising the global recommendations made in the “New Extensionist” document
- Defining concrete activities to implement the global priority recommendations and their contribution to regional and national priorities
- Determining ways of measuring progress and results of this action
Key outputs
- A detailed workshop report and bulleted summary
- A shared list of free resources.
- Strengthened regional network through high participation and sharing of activities, lessons and experiences.

Key outcomes and proposed actions as a results of the workshop
- Continued proactive support for GFRAS’s catalysing role in promoting the “New Extensionist”
- The formation of a University Consortium on curriculum reform across all training actors, a detailed comprehensive brainstorming of the new skills needed and an action plan to start by collecting and analysing current curricula.
- A detailed collated regional action plan
- A table of regionally prioritised NE recommended actions (see Annex 1) and documenting the discussion on the gaps at the global level
- A plan to advocate and present the “New Extensionist” at as many key events as the network can reach

Further actions needed
- Finalising and promoting the current long paper at various events and through flyers
- Revising the summary paper to include more on the conceptual framing of the “The New Extensionist” in AIS systems, more promotion of cross cutting issues and to highlight what is really new
- Translating this summary paper into a template presentation that people can adapt to different audiences
- Clear guidelines for setting up country fora and linking them into regional and global activities
- Clear guidelines that create comparable national methodologies for identifying capacity gaps in current EAS delivery systems and services
- A two-page brief on financing EAS