

50 PUBLICATIONS EVERY EXTENSION PROFESSIONAL SHOULD READ



To remain relevant and to support addressing the rapidly evolving challenges in agriculture, extension professionals need to upgrade their competencies. Sreeram Vishnu and Rasheed Sulaiman V have chosen what they think are the 50 best publications every extension professional should read to enhance their knowledge and skills to remain relevant to the changing times.

CONTEXT

The need for performing wider roles by Extension and Advisory Services (EAS) and the need to enhance their capacities to do these well, are well recognized globally (Box 1). Yet there hasn't been much serious efforts in revising the existing extension curricula (both education and training) followed in most countries. Though several new learning resources from the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) such as the *New Extensionist Learning Kit* (NELK) and *Global Good Practice (GGP) Notes* are currently available (as free downloadable resources), new concepts, approaches and tools presented in these publications are yet to find a place in the teachings and trainings of EAS providers. The curricula in most cases remain static and there has been a tendency to continue with the old text books and publications. These to a large extent, constrain the uptake of new and more relevant ideas that could help transforming the extension discipline and develop EAS professionals with skills and knowledge relevant to the current era. The main purpose of this blog therefore is to introduce and promote some relatively newer publications, which we believe every extension professional should read to enhance his/her capacities.



Box 1: New challenges before EAS and new capacities to address these

Extension and Advisory Services (EAS) currently supports farmers in dealing with several new challenges beyond enhancing access to new technologies. Farmers do need support to deal with uncertain markets, changing consumer demands, declining and deteriorating common property resources such as land and water, and adapt better to climate change. International agencies and national governments currently look forward to EAS to support the large number of women engaged in agricultural activities; address nutrition related issues and encourage, support and train rural youth to effectively engage in agriculture. Addressing many of these challenges would mean, supporting farmers to be organized into collectives (farmer groups, producer organizations etc.) at different levels.

Ideas around communication and innovation have considerably evolved over the past two decades. Innovation is no longer considered as a linear process of science developing new knowledge and transferring it on to extension for wider dissemination. Innovation is currently understood as an interactive process through which knowledge is generated, accessed and put to use. If EAS have to meaningfully support farmers in addressing the above challenges, EAS need to widen their agenda and emerge as a “bridging organization” linking several actors in the Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) rather than being an intermediary between research and farmers. Apart from these new insights, EAS providers must be aware of the changing tools and approaches to extension, the use of wide range of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and be able to assess and select the appropriate ones to suit the conditions they work in.

With the increasing participation of private sector and civil society organizations, EAS delivery has become pluralistic in many countries. While pluralism brought new capacities and additional funding for EAS, it has also brought new challenges for EAS, mainly related to co-ordination, knowledge management, policy alignment and sustainable financing. All these would involve developing capacities of EAS at the individual, the organizational and the enabling environment levels as articulated in the GFRAS (2012) Position Paper, “The New Extensionist”. Apart from these, extension professionals need new insights and learning to sharpen and enhance their knowledge and skills for effectively solving both field problems and operational challenges and this would involve strengthening research and evaluation in EAS.

We approached this task by first identifying ten broad themes in extension (relevant to the new challenges and capacities as articulated in Box 1) and then initially thought of selecting one lead resource for each theme. But we realized soon that selecting only one from each theme may result in leaving other equally relevant publications from that theme. So we finally decided to present another four related publications that are also relevant to that particular theme.

While doing this exercise, we noted that some of the publications could be relevant for more than one theme. For instance the NELK and GGP Notes cover a wide range of topics such as gender, entrepreneurship, Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS), use of different ICTs, etc. Some publications have to be adjusted in a related theme as other publications relevant under that particular theme were not found. For instance, the publication *Shaping Change* could have ideally been placed under a theme called NRM (Natural Resource Management) extension, but finally we have to place it under the theme climate change as the book is more about dealing with similar increasingly complex challenges.

While we were looking for more recent publications, we also included relatively older, but equally relevant book such as *Agricultural Extension* by van Den Ban and Hawkins (2002) that serves as a standard text book especially for beginners. With all these challenges, we finally organized the list according to our own professional experience and judgment on the utility and relevance of these publications.



1. Basic concepts, approaches and tools in extension

Lead Resource



The New Extensionist Learning Kit (NELK)

NELK is a learning resource, developed by GFRAS (2017)¹ for individual extension field staff, managers and lecturers. It focuses on functional skills and contains 13 modules that have been identified by the GFRAS Consortium on Extension Education and Training as core competencies for individual extension agents. The aim of this kit is to produce or equip extension professional who can effectively interact and work with all different actors within the AIS with an ultimate aim of benefitting producers and related actors. While the contents of the learning kit will be primarily aimed at self-directed learners, it is also suitable for use in face to face settings. The materials can be downloaded and used for face to face and blended learning. The learning kit can help top up the knowledge of existing professionals, but also be taken up by learning institutions as foundational course material for the certificates or degree.

Other important resources

The Rural Extension Series by Hoffman et al., (2009)² is published in three volumes. The first in the series is *Basics Concepts and Methods in Extension* which gives specialists the opportunity to supplement their training by acquiring the fundamentals of the methodology and theory of agricultural extension. The volume two basically deals with *Examples and Background Material* like case studies, checklists and practical guidelines. Last in the series, *Training concepts and Tools* is dedicated exclusively to the training needs of both staff members at various levels of extension advisory services and students in higher education.

Agricultural Extension by van den Ban and Hawkins (2002)³ is a thorough, practical handbook that explains the purpose, importance and far-reaching effects of agricultural extension throughout the world. It covers a range of topics from different extension philosophies, the functions of extension agencies, strategies and methods appropriate to rural development in less industrialized countries, through theories underlying extension processes to professional ethics for extension workers.

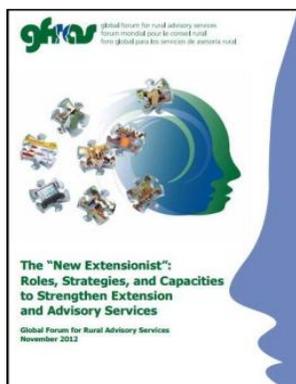
The publication, **What Every Extension Worker Should Know: The Core Competency Handbook**, by Suvedi and Kaplowitz (2016)⁴ is designed as a reference manual for front-line extension staff to use in their day-to-day work. It offers a set of tools for effective communication, program planning and evaluation.

The FAO publication, **A Decision Guide for Rural Advisory Methods** by David and Cofini (2017)⁵ is intended to help extension professionals and their organizations make informed decisions about which extension method and approach to use for providing information, technologies and services to rural producers and to facilitate interactions and knowledge flow. Expected users include field-based rural advisors, extension managers and programme planners.



2. Extension and Innovation

Lead resource



The “New Extensionist”: Roles, Strategies and Capacities to Strengthen Extension and Advisory Services

This GFRAS position paper from Sulaiman and Davis (2012)⁶ presents a global view of extension and advisory services (EAS) and it reinvents and clearly articulates the role of EAS in the rapidly-changing rural context. It argues for an expanded role for EAS within agricultural innovation systems (AIS) and development of new capacities at different levels (individual, organizational and system levels) to play this role. The paper also discusses ways of developing capacities needed for operationalizing this vision at these levels.

Other important resources

Communication for Rural Innovation (Rethinking Agricultural Extension) by Leeuwis with van den Ban (2004)⁷ broadened the traditional communication functions of extension. The role of the communicator has shifted from, initially that of a disseminator of information to subsequently that of a facilitator of interaction and more recently, as a broker or an agent playing a wider range of intermediation tasks at a range of interfaces situated within (and between) networks of stakeholders operating in different societal spheres. The book discusses in detail the major roles communication can play in supporting the three essential processes relevant to innovation: network building, supporting social learning and dealing with dynamics of power and conflict.

Agricultural Innovation System: An Investment Sourcebook (World Bank, 2012)⁸ is an important resource for those interested in understanding the role of extension within the AIS. Module 3 of this of this source book on investment in extension and advisory services as part of agricultural innovation systems” (Davis and Heemskerk, 2012)⁹ describes key principles for developing demand driven, pluralistic advisory services (including the technical, entrepreneurial and organizational aspects of this process) capable of supporting the heterogeneous client base of an AIS.

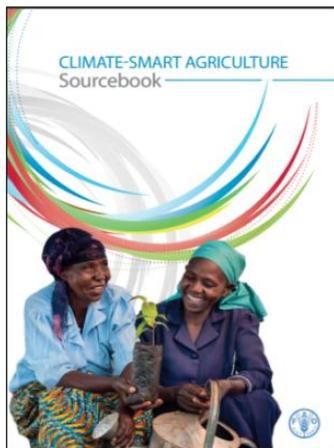
The World Bank publication, **Agricultural Innovation Systems: From Diagnostics Toward Operational Practices** by Rajalahti et al., (2008)¹⁰ presents the emerging agenda for an AIS approach, through a set of case studies and other materials that illuminates the important contextual factors affecting the innovation process. It builds on the World Bank (2006)¹¹ paper, **Enhancing Agricultural Innovation: How to Go beyond Strengthening Research Systems** and the converging views of participants of an international workshop on AIS organized by the Agriculture and Rural Development Department of the World Bank in 2007.

The CTA publication **Innovation Systems: Towards Effective Strategies in Support of Smallholder Farmers** by Francis et al., (2016)¹², provides a collection of papers, commentaries, expert opinions and reflections on state-of-the-art innovation systems thinking and approaches in agriculture. It attempts to respond to perplexing questions which continue to dominate the agricultural innovation agenda, particularly in the context of smallholder farming systems.



3. Climate change and EAS

Lead resource



Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Sourcebook

C-3 module of the FAO (2017)¹³ Climate Smart Agriculture Sourcebook, **Supporting Rural Producers with Knowledge of CSA** by Chuluunbaatar et al., (2017)¹⁴ highlights the key role EAS can play in promoting climate-smart agriculture and provides some guidance on how, through strategic capacity development, they can better carry out this role. Currently EAS is unable to meet these new demands. Access to adequate EAS is crucial for ensuring that agricultural producers are sufficiently informed about changing conditions and can adopt sustainable agricultural practices. EAS will require increased institutional and financial support, and their capacities will need to be upgraded to support agricultural producers in reducing climate-related risks.

Other important resources

Adaptation Under the “New normal” of Climate Change: The Future of Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services by Simpson and Burpee (2014)¹⁵ outlines the nature of the adaptation challenge, identifies past and present points of EAS engagement, and proposes future responses. The paper focuses on the constraints and conditions of smallholder farmers in the tropics, as well as the natural resource base upon which agriculture depends.

The pocket guide, **Extension Practice for Agricultural Adaptation** by Simpson (2016)¹⁶, details out the concepts, information and practices meant to support working with farm families in helping them to reduce their risks from changes in the weather. Also it details practical methods that meet the objectives outlined by the UNFAO for climate-smart agriculture. It provides examples of practices that illustrate important principles and adaptive options that are meant to be used by extension field agents.

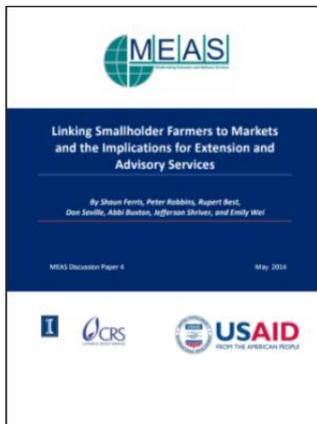
The book, **Shaping Change: Natural Resource Management, Agriculture and the Role of Extension**, by Jennings et al., (2011)¹⁷ provides fresh perspectives and practices to extension professionals who have to adjust to the rapidly changing demands of natural resource management and agro-food industry. Though written from the perspectives of challenges primarily faced in the Australasia Pacific Region, the chapters offer several new insights for students and practitioners of extension on principles and practices for enabling change, and building social capital to deal with the new challenges.

The manual, **Gender and Inclusion Toolbox: Participatory Research in Climate Change and Agriculture** by Ferdous and Spicer (2014)¹⁸ introduces a wide range of participatory strategies and tools for research to guide the implementation of CSA and is intended for NGO practitioners and program designers interested in diagnostic and action research for gender sensitive and socially inclusive climate change programs.



4. Linking Farmers to Markets

Lead resource



Linking Smallholder Farmers to Markets and the Implications for Extension and Advisory Services

The MEAS discussion paper by Ferris et al., (2014)¹⁹ contains a review of EAS best practices drawn from the global body of experience in successfully reaching out to resource-limited farmers. Further, this paper explores the changing role of agricultural extension services and the growing focus on marketing and business needs of smallholder farmers. Key issues in this debate include finding better means of coordinating and sustaining services, and generating policies that build farmers capabilities to raise incomes by linking to various types of markets — including informal domestic and regional markets, traditional cash crop market, formal and higher value markets, and emerging food aid and structured public markets.

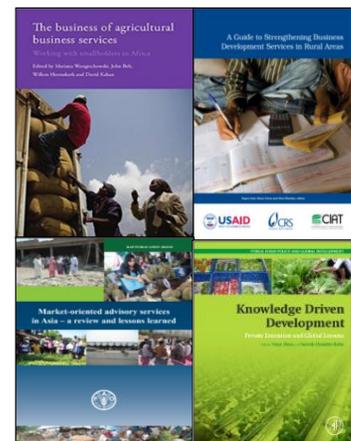
Other important resources

The Business of Agricultural Business Service: Working with Smallholders in Africa, by Wongtschowski et al., (2014)²⁰ identifies different ways that the public and private sectors have been working together and sheds light on the pluralistic extension system. Practitioners working in the value chain and enterprise development, development partners who finance projects and policy makers will find this book useful for orienting their support to the agricultural sector.

A Guide to Strengthening Business Development Services in Rural Areas by Best et al., (2015)²¹ demonstrates how a variety of support services not only improve the performance of individual producer organizations and agro-enterprises, but how they also strengthen entire agricultural sub-sectors and market chains and fuel new employment opportunities in rural areas.

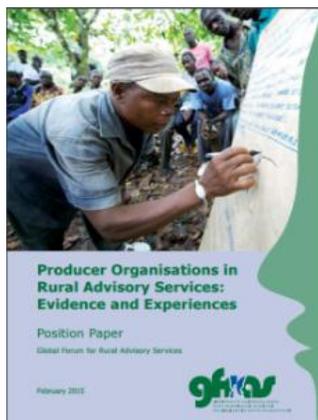
Market-oriented Advisory Services in Asia – a Review and Lessons Learned, by Kahan (2011)²² presents the findings of a regional study in Asia on the design and delivery of Market Oriented Advisory Services (MOAS) to farmers and rural entrepreneurs. The publication is directed at those institutions involved in extension, value chain/market linkages and business development.

The book, **Knowledge Driven Development: Private Extension and Global Lessons**, by Zhou and Babu (2015)²³ uses actual cases written specifically to study the role and capacity of private companies in knowledge sharing and intensification through agricultural extension. Descriptions of specific models and approaches are teased out of complex situations exhibiting a range of agricultural, regulatory, socio-economic variables. Illustrative cases focus on a particular agricultural value chain and elaborate the special feature of the associated private extension system.



5. Producer Organizations in EAS

Lead resource



Producer Organizations in Rural Advisory Services: Evidences and Experiences

This position paper from GFRAS (2012)²⁴ was written to raise awareness on the roles of producer organizations in rural advisory services. Further discussion is built upon, how their effectiveness in these roles can be increased so that they contribute to improved livelihoods and poverty reduction. The position paper also presents examples of the different ways that producer organizations are involved in the supply of and demand for rural advisory services. The paper ends with a series of recommendations to different actors involved in the provision of rural advisory services about how to strengthen producer organizations and make them more demand-oriented.

Other important resources

The MEAS discussion paper, **Farmer Organizations and Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services: A Framework and Reflection on Cases from Sub-Saharan Africa** by Bingen and Simpson (2015)²⁵ discusses cases from sub-Saharan Africa and strives to give a better understanding of the role of farmer organizations in development outcomes which are critical to identifying options and strategies for promoting successful rural advisory services (RAS).

Organizing and Managing Farmers' Groups, jointly published by CRS and MEAS (2015)²⁶ presents an integrated and sequential approach to building vulnerable farmers' capacity to link with markets. The guide is intended for use by development facilitators, field extension agents and community leaders working with poor rural communities and it aims to provide them with a broader understanding and the skills needed to help local people work together, manage their resources and understand how to develop a sustainable and profitable agro-enterprise.

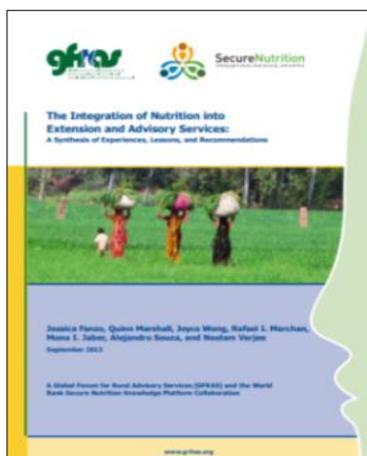
The case study-based publication **Good Practices in Building Innovative Rural Institutions to Increase Food Security** by Herbel et al., (2012)²⁷, presents a collection of thirty-five cases of successful small-scale producer innovative organizations and institutional arrangements, from different regions in the world. While highlighting the success factors for small producer organizations to thrive, these good practices allow development practitioners and other stakeholders to learn from successful initiatives in various countries, to support and replicate them.

The paper, **Making Change Happen - What can Governments do to Strengthen Forest Producer Organizations?** By deMarsh et al., (2014)²⁸ explores the factors that help build constructive relationships with government counterparts, and the policy and institutional conditions that encourage or hinder forest producer organizations (FPO) development.



6. Addressing Gender and Nutrition by EAS

Lead resource



Integration of Nutrition into Extension and Advisory Services: A Synthesis of Experiences, Lessons and Recommendations

The need for nutrition-sensitive agriculture is well recognized and of growing interest to global development players. This report by Fanzo et al., (2013)²⁹ summarizes the current state of knowledge on the role of nutrition in EAS, resulting from an extensive literature review, analyzing survey responses and conducting interviews with actors from worldwide development organizations, governmental agencies, educational and research institutions, and the private sector. Also the paper analyzed and documented past, current and future role of EAS, with regard to human nutrition.

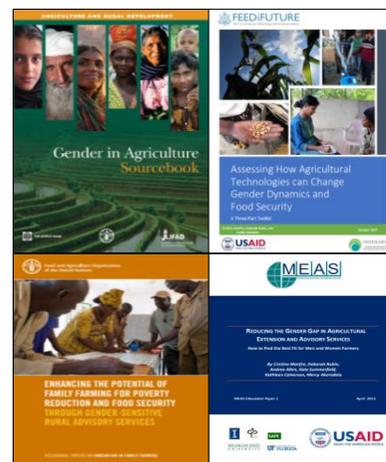
Other important resources

The publication, **Gender in Agriculture: Sourcebook** jointly developed by World Bank, UNFAO and IFAD (2009)³⁰, aims to deliver practical advice, guidelines, principles and descriptions and illustrations of approaches that have worked so far to achieve the goal of effective gender mainstreaming in the agricultural operations of development agencies. Module 7 of the source book is particularly relevant to EAS stakeholders as it covers the topics like *Gender in Extension Organizations*, *Gender and participatory Research*, *Gender Approaches in Agricultural Extension and Training* as well as well documented case studies.

The INGENAES publication, **Assessing How Agricultural Technologies can Change Gender Dynamics and Food Security** by Manfre et al., (2017)³¹ introduces a framework that considers the social context of the agricultural technologies and the specific challenges that women and men farmers face in using the technology. The *first part* of the toolkit discusses the relationships between gender, nutrition and agricultural technologies. The *second part* introduces a framework that considers the social context of the agricultural technologies and the specific challenges that women and men farmers face in using the technology and the *third part* is a guide for facilitators to design and conduct a workshop on the methodology, including slides and exercises.

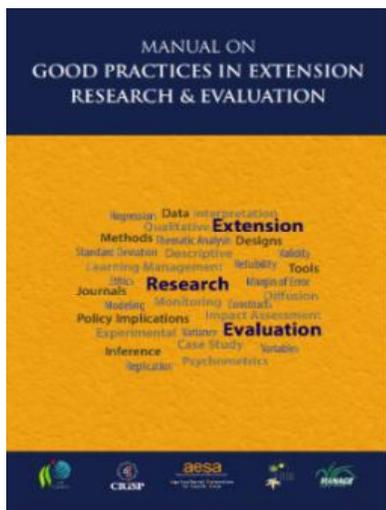
The occasional paper from FAO, **Enhancing the Potential of Family Farming for Poverty Reduction and Food Security Through Gender-sensitive Rural Advisory Services** by Petrics et al., (2015)³², offers a reflection on actions needed to ensure that good practices and lessons learnt, translate into the design and provision of a demand-driven and gender-sensitive RAS, for improved food security and poverty reduction.

The MEAS discussion paper, **Reducing the Gender gap in Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services: How to Find the Best Fit for Men and Women Farmers** by Manfre et al., (2013)³³, talks about the importance of reducing the gender inequalities in EAS, as it is important not only for poverty reduction and food security but also for more efficient EAS practices.



7. Research and Evaluation in EAS

Lead resource



Manual on Good Practices in Extension Research & Evaluation

This joint publication from the ICAR-NAARM, CRISP, AESA, ICAR-CTCRI and MANAGE by Sivakumar et al., (2017)³⁴ is developed as hands on reference manual to help young researchers, research students and field extension functionaries in choosing the right research methods for conducting quality research and evaluation in extension. It covers basic aspects of extension research process, various qualitative and quantitative methods with appropriate statistical tools and advanced modeling techniques with practical guidelines in choosing and using various methods. Researchers could use to refine and update their knowledge on how to approach research in extension in a more systematic and scientific manner.

Other important resources

Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners, by Kumar (2014)³⁵ is written specifically for those with no previous experience of research or research methodology. Written in a logical and accessible style and providing helpful techniques and examples, it breaks the process of designing and doing a research project into eight manageable operational steps.

The book, **Multivariate Data Analysis** by Hair et al., (2009)³⁶, provides an applications-oriented introduction to multivariate analysis. By reducing heavy statistical research into fundamental concepts, the text explains how to understand and make use of the results from specific statistical techniques. In this Seventh Edition, new chapters have been added on structural equations modeling, and all sections have been updated to reflect advances in technology, capability, and mathematical techniques.

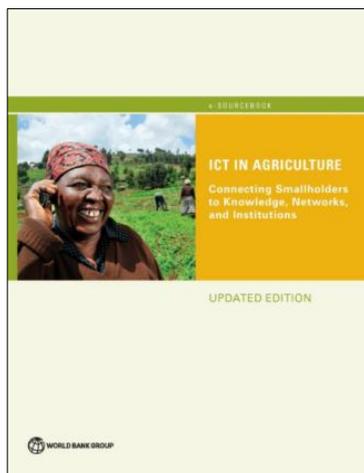
The purpose of the guide, **Evaluating Rural Extension** by Christoplos et al., (2012)³⁷, is to support those involved in extension evaluation to choose how to conduct more comprehensive, rigorous, credible and useful evaluations. It helps the readers to understand different types of evaluation, to make decisions on what is most appropriate for their circumstances and to access further sources of theoretical and practical information.

The purpose of the MEAS training module, **Evaluation of Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services**³⁸ by Suvedi (2011) attempts to expose national level policy makers, project managers and funding agency personnel to various models and theories of program evaluation. With exposure to evaluation methods and procedures, they could contribute significantly in guiding program evaluation and use the results to improve future programs.



8. ICTs and Knowledge management in EAS

Lead resource



ICT in Agriculture: Connecting Smallholders to Knowledge, Networks and Institutions

This World Bank publication by George et al., (2017)³⁹ is designed to support practitioners, decision-makers and development partners who work at the intersection of ICT and agriculture. It is a practical guide in understanding current trends, implementing appropriate interventions and evaluating the impact of those programs. Extension professionals would find Module 6 (ICTs, Digital tools and Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems) of this publication especially interesting. This module discusses the use and impact of ICT and digital tools in research, extension and advisory services, and activities related to agricultural learning.

Other important resources

Improved availability of and access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) – especially mobile phones, computers, radio, internet and social media – has provided many more opportunities for collection, processing, storage, retrieval, managing and sharing of information in multiple formats. However, the high number and rapidly changing availability of ICTs may leave extension managers confused as to which methods are available and when to use them. The GFRAS Good Practice note, **Navigating ICTs for Extension and Advisory Services** by Saravanan et al., (2016)⁴⁰, explains how to navigate the many types and gives tips on when to use them. In addition to this, many other good practice notes are published by GFRAS, on other strands of ICT applications like social media, m-extension and web portals for RAS.

The guide, **Effective Tools for Knowledge Management and Learning in Agriculture and Rural Development** by Bheenick and Bionyi (2017)⁴¹ helps to understand Knowledge Management (KM), various KM methods and tools, providing a useful starting point for beginning KM practitioners. It also complements the resources on KM4ARD which CTA is making available through its knowledge management blog at <http://km4ard.cta.int>.

The paper, **Harnessing ICT for Agricultural Extension** from Royal Tropical Institute by Barber et al., (2016)⁴² summarizes key issues, challenges and lessons derived from literature, case studies and practice, concerning the role ICT can play in extension systems. It elaborates on recurring issues and describes innovative experiences and emerging practices that enhance the delivery of timely information fitting the needs of farmers.

The MEAS publication **Options and Strategies for Information and Communication Technologies within Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services**, by Vignare (2013)⁴³ highlights the important role of ICT in the provision of EAS and give critical insights for practitioners to understand ICT so that they can align technology options and strategies to design effective communication for farmers.



9. Financing, Policy, Pluralism and Governance in EAS

Lead resource



Policy Compendium on Rural Extension and Advisory Services

For all those working on and advocating for an enabling policy environment for RAS, the Policy Compendium on Rural Extension and Advisory Services from GFRAS (2014)⁴⁴ is a very good resource. It is intended to be a one-stop shop for those working on, advocating for and implementing extension policy and provides background information, inputs, ideas and hands-on guidance for decision-making and facilitation of successful policy processes for RAS.

Other important resources

For development planners and analysts, particularly at the level where decision-makers consider agricultural development policy and strategy within a country, it is critical to ask, “How is it best to finance extension activities?” Answering this question well within a given country is key to having a sustainable system of extension that delivers essential extension services to the targeted groups to meet the country's agricultural development goals. The MEAS discussion paper, **A Review of Sustainable Financing of Extension Services in Developing Countries** by McNamara (2014)⁴⁵, attempts to answer this vital question by reviewing various financing options operational in the developing countries.

The working paper **Governance of Agricultural Extension Systems** by Bitzer et al., (2016)⁴⁶, from Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) provides an overview of the governance structure and processes of extension services dominant in many developing countries, including the most governance failures, recent efforts targeted at governance reform and promising processes in strengthening governance (public coordination, public-private partnerships and farmer involvement in extension service provision).

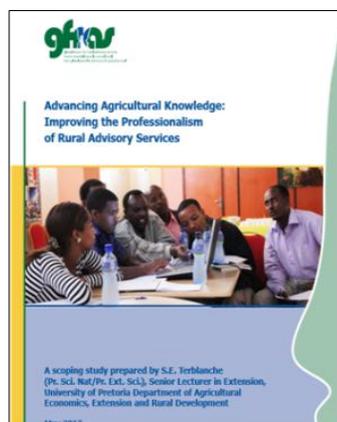
The publication from FAO and KIT, **Towards inclusive Pluralistic Service Systems - Insights for Innovative Thinking** by Bitzer et al., (2016)⁴⁷ examines the need for demand-driven service provision, the diverse providers and approaches to service delivery, the policy considerations and institutional challenges constraining the operation of inclusive pluralistic service systems. FAO and KIT jointly organized an expert consultation on this topic in 2016 and a synthesis of deliberation, policy recommendations and priority actions for strengthening pluralistic service systems are also currently available⁴⁸.

The publication, **Strengthening Agricultural Extension and Advisory Systems: Procedures for Assessing, Transforming and Evaluating Extension Systems** by Swanson and Rajalahti (2010)⁴⁹ discusses about comparative analysis of different extension strategies, organizational models, institutional innovations and resource constraints, and how an extension system might be transformed and strengthened through specific policy and organizational changes as well as needed investments.



10. Professionalism and Capacity Development of EAS

Lead resource



Advancing Agricultural Knowledge: Improving the Professionalism of Rural Advisory Services

Many countries are seeking to professionalize their extension and advisory services and they need strengthened capacities to initiate this process. This GFRAS publication by Terblanche (2017)⁵⁰ is based on a scoping study to examine the current levels of professionalism in its 11 regional networks. The aim was to provide evidence that would guide the activities and tools offered by GFRAS as well as to promote inter-regional learning and information exchange with a specific focus on training, talent and career development, performance incentives, certification and registration and, mentoring and standards.

Other important resources

The CRISP publication, **Assessing Capacity Needs of Extension and Advisory Services: A Guide for Facilitators**, by Mittal et al., (2016)⁵¹ is a stand-alone document / procedure to assist facilitators in conducting a workshop with EAS providers for assessing the capacity needs.

The trainer's manual, **Facilitating Capacity Needs Assessment**, by D'Aquino et al., (2017)⁵² was prepared under the project Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS), a global partnership that aims to strengthen the capacity of countries and key stakeholders to innovate in complex agricultural systems, thereby achieving improved rural livelihoods. Elements of the manual such as the facilitation tools may also be useful in other contexts and the modular design allows for parts of it to be extracted and adapted for use as necessary.

The TAP publication, **Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems** (FAO, 2016)⁵³, promotes a shift of mindsets and attitudes among the main actors and provides concepts, principles, methodologies and tools to understand better the architecture of AIS, to assess capacity development needs and to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate capacity development interventions.

The publication, **Assessment of Core Competencies of Livestock Extension Professionals in India**, by Sasidhar and Suvedi (2016)⁵⁴, operationalized and assessed the core competencies of livestock extension professionals in India through a survey. This publication could be of great interest to those who are keen to do similar type of assessment elsewhere. The key survey questions were on the core areas viz. specific livestock extension and subject matter competencies, technical subject matter application competencies, livestock extension program development, implementation and evaluation competencies, communication, education and informational technology competencies, personal, professional development and diversity competencies.



END NOTE

Though some of you may fault us for not including some publications which you would like to see in a list like this, we believe that there will be very little disagreement on the publications we selected in this blog as a “must-read” for all extension professionals.

Links to the publications

¹GFRAS.2016. The New Extensionist Learning Kit. Available at <http://g-fras.org/en/knowledge/new-extensionist-learning-kit-nelk.html#module-1-introduction-to-the-new-extensionist>

²Hoffmann V, Gerster-Bentaya M, Christinck A and Lemma M. 2009. Rural Extension Series. MARGRAF Publishers GmbH, Wageningen. The Netherlands. Available at https://www.margraf-publishers.eu/en/bookshop/detail-view/?tt_products%5BbackPID%5D=188&tt_products%5Bproduct%5D=631&cHash=e53e3899ee2f7b67d7cb2dfc87335579

³Van den Ban A and Hawkins HS. 2002. Agricultural Extension (No. 3. ed.). Blackwell science. Available at <https://www.amazon.in/Agricultural-Extension-Van-Den-Ban/dp/063204053X>

⁴Suedi M and Kaplowitz MD. 2016. What Every Extension Worker Should Know: Core Competency Handbook. Michigan State University. Department of Community Sustainability. Available at <https://agrilinks.org/library/what-every-extension-worker-should-know-core-competency-handbook>

⁵David S and Cofini F. 2017. A decision guide for rural advisory methods. Rome, FAO. Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i8141e.pdf>

⁶Sulaiman RV and Davis K. 2012. The “New Extensionist”: Roles, strategies, and capacities to strengthen extension and advisory services. In Lindau, Switzerland: Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services. <http://www.g-fras.org/en/157-the-new-extensionist>

⁷Leeuwis C. 2004. *Communication for rural innovation: rethinking agricultural extension*. John Wiley & Sons.

⁸World Bank.2012. Agricultural Innovation Systems:An Investment Sourcebook. Agricultural and Rural Development. World Bank. © World Bank. Available at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTARD/Resources/335807-1330620492317/9780821386842ch3.pdf>

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