



Tropentag, October 6-8, 2009, Hamburg

“Biophysical and Socio-economic Frame Conditions
for the Sustainable Management
of Natural Resources”

Contribution of Farmer-to-Farmer Video to Food Security: Evidence from Bangladesh

ATAHARUL HUQ CHOWDHURY¹, PAUL VAN MELE², MICHAEL HAUSER¹

¹*University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences (BOKU), Department of Sustainable Agricultural Systems, Austria*

²*Africa Rice Center (WARDA), Learning and Innovation Systems Programme, Benin*

Abstract

What is the best way to deal with food security and poverty is a major question that agricultural research, extension services, development organisations and donors are currently posing themselves. Video-facilitated farmers' capacity development is a new approach pioneered for scaling-up local sustainable rice seed innovations in Bangladesh. Inspired by earlier experiences CABI collaborated with the Rural Development Academy (RDA) in Bangladesh to build the capacity of the resource-poor rural women for farm-based production and post-harvest management of rice seed. Partnering with two Non Government Organisations (NGOs) Tenganmah Mahila Sabuj Sanhga (TMSS) and Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS), group-based, video-facilitated training sessions had been conducted from 2005 to 2007. Local improved rice seed technologies and knowledge had been internalised through participatory learning and action process. Seven rice seed videos were developed on rice seedling production, rice seed harvest, post-harvest processing and storage with selected experienced farmers who explain and show rice seed innovations before the camera. Unlike conventional training sessions this approach used open-air video shows followed by interactive discussions. This study assessed the development outcome of the farmer-to-farmer video approach from the rice self-sufficiency perspective. From December 2008 to February 2009, 140 randomly selected women farmers were interviewed in 14 villages where RDA and TMSS operated. In addition, two focus group discussions and six qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted in both sites. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistical measures (t-test, chi-square and regression analysis). Analysed data suggest that video-facilitated training sessions increased farmers' knowledge and practice of local rice seed techniques which in turn increased their productivity and rice self-sufficiency significantly as per observed increase of average Rice Self Sufficiency Index (RSSI). After having watched the videos women could produce quality seed, which decreased the seed rate and increased total rice production. Results imply that farmer-to-farmer video has significant implications for organising farmer training and capacity building events at local and regional level. Sharing of knowledge and skills is more effective when farmers watch their peers explain the 'why' and 'how' of a locally grounded technology in the video.

Keywords: Bangladesh, farmer training, innovations, rice self-sufficiency, video

Contact Address: Ataharul Huq Chowdhury, University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences (BOKU), Department of Sustainable Agricultural Systems, Gregor Mendel-Straße 33, 1180 Wien, Austria, e-mail: atahar77@yahoo.com