



Tropentag, September 14-16, 2010, Zurich

“World Food System —  
A Contribution from Europe”

## Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Systems for Farmer Field Schools in Kyrgyzstan: Optimising Resource Allocation for Higher Impact

IRENE MÜLLER, DOMINIQUE VINCENT GUENAT, INGRID FROMM

*Bern University of Applied Sciences, Swiss College of Agriculture, Switzerland*

### Abstract

With the collapse of the Soviet Union Kyrgyz agriculture went through deep structural changes and the new small subsistence farmers were ill-prepared, lacking technical knowledge and entrepreneurship. Pilot activities demonstrated that Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as topic for Farmer Field Schools (FFS) could effectively fill the gap in extension services and enable farmers to become more efficient and self-reliant managers of their scarce agricultural resources, not so much in the sense of reducing the use of pesticides, but to improve the management of their crops. The objective of this study was to develop an Impact Monitoring and Evaluation System (IMES) to measure the effectiveness of FFS in terms of resources allocation, participation, outcome and impact that could be useful for donors, partner organisations and potential FFS-participants, taking into account the Kyrgyz context and the particular framework of IPM FFS. In the period of 2003 to 2006, 174 Farmer Field Schools were conducted in Kyrgyzstan and altogether approximately 2600 farmers were trained. Since 2006, the IPM Farmer Field School approach in Kyrgyzstan is no longer in the pilot phase. There was a need to prove its effectiveness in improving farmers' livelihoods and conduct an outcome monitoring of the FFS. The existing monitoring system of the IPM programme in Kyrgyzstan focused mainly on results and outputs. However, farmers can best define indicators reflecting their livelihood situation and rating scales realistic to their specific condition, a participatory Monitoring and Evaluation within the FFS-group and a longitudinal (before/after) comparison was proposed. A spider diagram was used as a framework to visualise quantitative, rated core indicators, which were the basis of the qualitative questioning on reasons for changes, making it possible to attribute certain impacts to FFS-trainings. The generated feedback and self-reflection additionally motivates and empowers participants, an effect highly appreciated by the FFS approach.

**Keywords:** Farmer field schools, IPM, Kyrgyzstan, outcome and impact monitoring evaluation