



Tropentag, September 19-21, 2012, Göttingen -  
Kassel/Witzenhausen

“Resilience of agricultural systems against crises”

## Innovative Approaches of Knowledge Management and Capacity Development for Market Oriented Agricultural Development in Ethiopia

FANOS BIRKE, DIRK HOEKSTRA

*International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Improving Productivity and Market Success (IPMS) Project, Ethiopia*

### Abstract

The delivery of extension services in the contemporary environment of developing countries requires innovative and inter-related approaches of knowledge management, skills development and partner linkages. Improving Productivity and Market Success (IPMS) of Ethiopian farmers project has been testing different tools and processes that give emphasis on market demand, knowledge sharing, capacity development and public-private partnership for improving the extension service delivery in 10 pilot districts of four regional states of the country. This paper explains the IPMS approaches, methods and processes used for effective knowledge management, skills development and partner linkages activities during implementation of value chain based development intervention. The lessons learned provide valuable information for scaling up to other areas with similar potential for market-oriented agricultural development.

The IPMS project followed systematic and step-wise approaches of knowledge management and capacity development by support of various ICT and non ICT tools that facilitated multidirectional knowledge flows, empowerment of practitioners and linkage creation to improve productivity, profitability and sustainability of market oriented agricultural development. Major tools and processes that brought the intervention to fruition include; establishment of agricultural knowledge centres for up to date and relevant information resource delivery, enhancement of programme delivery and technical skills through participatory training; establishing partnership with various stakeholders and institutions at all levels; and developing a web based platform, Ethiopian agriculture portal [www.eap.gov.et](http://www.eap.gov.et), for availing agricultural resources relevant to Ethiopian agriculture. A lesson from IPMS on implementing the above components include; the need for an overall understanding of knowledge as a critical ‘input’ to agricultural development being internalised among programme implementers at all levels; importance in building capacity of actors, not only in being implementers but also in forging linkages, identifying needs and managing partnership processes; and the importance of having all actors on the same page of development agenda.

**Keywords:** Capacity development, Knowledge management, market oriented agriculture

---

**Contact Address:** Fanos Birke, International Livestock Research Institute, Improving Productivity and Market Success of Ethiopian Farmers Project, Gurdshola, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, e-mail: [f.mekonnen@cgiar.org](mailto:f.mekonnen@cgiar.org)