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Farmers' and academia's views"

Rapid appraisal of innovation support services in agricultural innovation systems for agroecological transition: the Raissa approach

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Abstract

The agroecological transition (AET) has never been so crucial than our current dispensation. First, we witnessed COVID-19 and just when one thought, we were out of the woods, the Russia -Ukarian war has further deepened and complicated the woes. The disruptions to supply chain for agricultural inputs, specifically fertiliser is worrying. Indeed, producers using very few inputs or locally produced organic inputs were less affected in their production practices than those heavily dependent on synthetic agricultural inputs. Developing countries were particularly affected due to the scarcity of these inputs and the cyclical increase in their prices as a result of the slowdown in international trade. There is therefore an interest in strengthening the support to the actors (farmers,farmer based organisations, processors, advisors, policy makers….) engaged into AET. This transition anticipates that agroecological innovations (AE) are developed at niche level to enable the breakthrough of the novelties in the regime when windows of opportunity are opened by the landscape. For that to happen, agro-ecological innovation niches should be supported. The Rapid Appraisal of Innovation Support Services in Agricultural Innovation Systems for Agro-ecological Transition (RAISSA) aims to produce an innovative approach and tool for performing diagnoses of support service ecosystems that constitute subsystems of the agricultural innovation system (AIS). The RAISSA approach will complete the range of existing AIS diagnostic tools by identifying and prioritising existing and missing innovation support services (ISS) dedicated to supporting AE. This rapid diagnosis mobilises the Q methodology which is a powerful and statistically rigorous tool. The aim of this paper is to present the RAISSA approach and its interest for decision makers to formulate and orient innovation policies toward AET. The approach has been applied to the Ghanaian context where the AIS concept is being increasingly mobilised for political decision support. The

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results show that having an insight into the range of perceptions about the ISS within the actors evolving in a given system, and how these perceptions differ or converge contributes to the formulation of recommendations to decision-makers on the services to deploy or implement relevant policies.