

# Positive deviance in adaptation to climate change with sheep fattening: New pathways for farmer-led extension in Ethiopia

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## Introduction

### Linear extension model

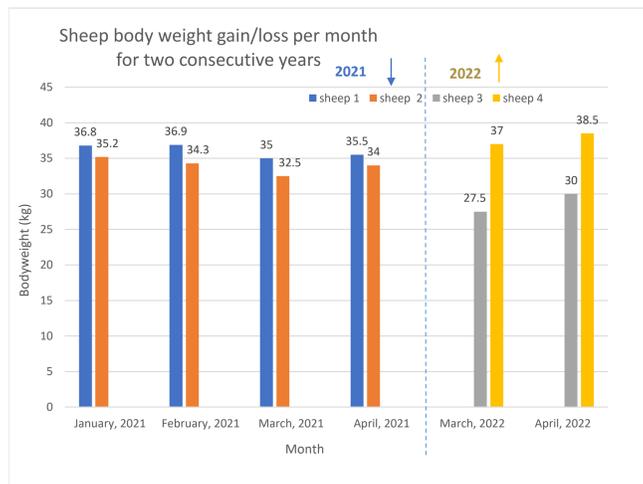
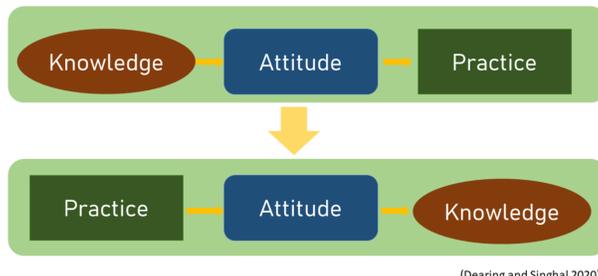
- ⇒ Puts farmers in boxes
- ⇒ Extension focuses on early adopters (model farmers....)
- ⇒ Linear principle: no feedback loop
- ⇒ Omits space for different ways of knowing, learning and endogenous innovations

### Impact of Climate Change

- ⇒ Frost and hail
- ⇒ Shift in seasonality
- ⇒ Rainfall patterns/intensity changed
- ⇒ Crop and livestock diseases
- ⇒ Crop farming unreliable
- ⇒ Need for short-term income generation

## Results

- Positive deviants are pioneer farmers, *not* best adopters (model farmers)
- Iterative and responsive interaction between scientists, extension and pioneer farmers: changes in practice
- Record keeping taken up by pioneer farmers
- Research process helped pioneer farmers to understand what they do is right
- Change of self-perception of pioneer farmers supports farmer to farmer learning
- Practices as a learning ground lead to attitude and knowledge change through observation and reflection by farmers



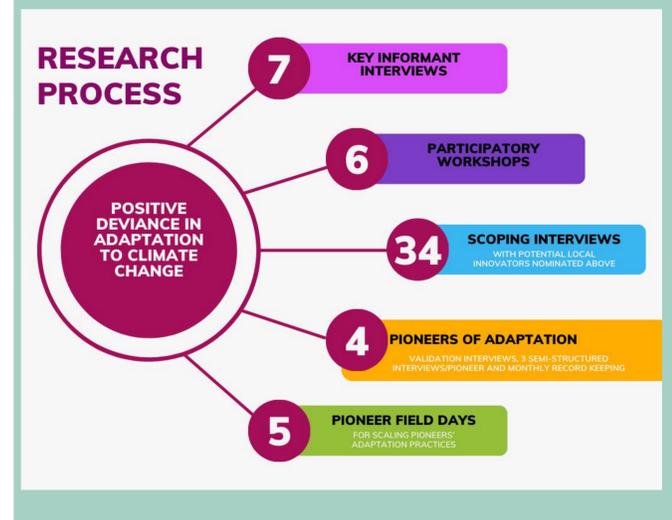
## Conclusions

- PD instigates on-farm scaling mechanism on climate-smart technologies
- Reframing of working for and with farmers through PD in sheep fattening
- Focus to understand how farmers are implementing existing technologies in innovative ways and complement with science
- More interaction, observation and reflection in the field brings sustainable solutions

## Theory & Methods

### Positive Deviance (PD)

- Questions “what is normal”
- Supports alternative ways of thinking, knowing and doing
- Starts with what already works
- Instigates changes in methods and habits spreading (Pascale et al. 2010)
- From linear knowledge transfer to practice-oriented, farmer-led knowledge pathways



This example from a feedback report for a female pioneer farmer shows how she improved fattening from year 1 to year 2. Engagement with other farmers for experience exchange, record keeping and a better understanding of feed quality as well as minimal training by local experts supported her in further improving her practice.

