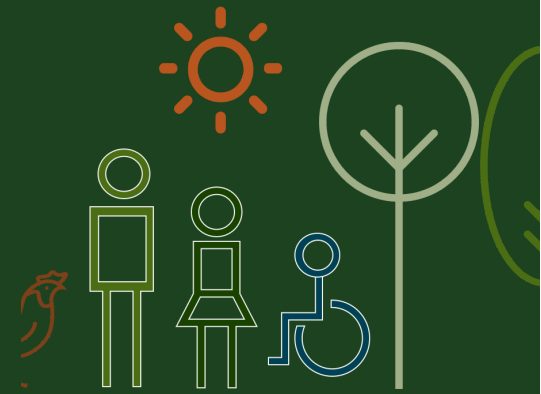


Agricultural extension approaches



Key details

Location

Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines

Duration

Start Jan 2017

End Jun 2018

Budget

AUD 227,198

Commissioned organisation

RMIT University

Partners

RMIT UNIVERSITY

Project Leader

Lauren Rickards - RMIT University

Program

Social Systems

Project code

ASEM/2016/047

change') and new ideas about improved ways forward. It reviewed recent evolutions in agricultural extension around the world, with a focus on ACIAR's priority regions.

Farm households and rural communities face more and bigger challenges because of climate change. Agricultural extension is important to improve farming, reduce rural poverty, and build community capacities. Extension is important as a 'boundary institution' - connecting actors in the rural innovation system - but its effectiveness and suitability are uneven and contested. Although stories of success exist, they do not necessarily define or measure success meaningfully, and much mainstream extension languishes in its attempts to improve farming. ACIAR has implemented agricultural extension among vulnerable farming communities in partner countries, and knows well the challenges involved.

The project critically evaluated academic research about agricultural extension to identify its main assumptions, research objects and implicit theoretical paradigms. It looked outside the agricultural extension literature for potential insights and valuable approaches to agricultural extension. It examined how two areas of literature could enrich our understanding of agricultural extension: 'practice theory', which analyses social life in terms of shared 'practices' (e.g. commuting, emailing, dining, irrigating, or selling grain), and masculinity studies, which look at how different people, ideas, policies and practices are gendered masculine or feminine.

Overview

This project surveyed approaches to agricultural extension ('practice

This project generated useful insights and knowledge about agricultural extension for ACIAR to draw on and share. It synthesised lessons and worked towards new research questions about what agricultural extension is and could be.

Final Report: Review of agricultural extension

This report has been produced by RMIT as the outcome of a small research activity (SSS/2016/047, listed here as ASEM/2016/047) funded by ACIAR. The views expressed in this report are the author's alone and are not necessarily the views of the Australian Government. The Australian Government neither endorses the views in this report, nor vouches for the accuracy or presentation of the information contained within the publication.

This project examined agricultural extension in the context of Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D).

The project aimed to help researchers and research funding organisations like ACIAR increase the positive impact of their research by using the story of agricultural extension to highlight relevant aspects of the historical, socio-political, institutional and intellectual context in which they work.

To comment or supply feedback on this report, please Rebecca.Cotton [at] aciar.gov.au (email ACIAR's Social Science Research Officer Rebecca Cotton).

See also Draft Discussion Paper '[Enhancing positive impact in agricultural research for development: Rethinking the role of "Agricultural Extension" and research](#)'.

