

KFPE Learning Events Programme for Researchers from Developing Countries

WORKSHOP ON AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAIN PROMOTION IN RWANDA

PROJECT LOCATION

Ruhengeri, Rwanda

PARTNERS

Applicant Organization Bern University of Applied Sciences School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences (HAFL) Department of International Agriculture Länggasse 85 3052 Zollikofen Switzerland	Partner Organization Intitut d'Enseignement Superieur de Ruhengeri (INES-Ruhengeri) Interdisciplinary Competence Centre for Regional Development INES-Ruhengeri P.O. Box 155 Ruhengeri, Rwanda
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FOCUS AND OBJECTIVE

In the context of Learning Events for Researchers from Developing Countries, INES-Ruhengeri and HAFL conducted a workshop titled “**Potato Value Chain Promotion in Rwanda**”. The objective was to strengthen the research capabilities and curriculum of both partner organizations. The development of the workshop revolved around two major issues::

- Agricultural value chain promotion instruments for the case of the potato value chain in Rwanda.
- Performance assessment of the sector and analysis of their market linkages.

Different instruments for value chain promotion and performance assessment were used during the 3 day workshop. The first day of the workshop gathered numerous stakeholders in the potato value chain, from farmers to extensionists, NGOs and the Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture. The workshop focused on a deep analysis of the main problems in this sector. The second day was a work session between the HAFL and INES-Ruhengeri staff where the main issues of the potato value chain discussed the day before were studied. Different value chain analysis tools were used to determine what where the right interventions. Along with the different value chain analysis tools, rapid market appraisal, another tool, was introduced. The INES-Ruhengeri staff put into practice this tool in a local potato market and then discussed the results back in class. There was a strong focus on methodology and

Problem-based learning was introduced to the INES-Ruhengeri staff. During the third day, the INES-Ruhengeri staff focused deeper on the methodology and discussed how the approach could be implemented at the institutional level for the benefit of staff and students. The results and the way forward were discussed with staff and administrative body of INES-Ruhengeri. The exchange helped in upgrading skills and knowledge transfer between the two universities. HAFL staff also took back the knowledge gained and the case of the Rwandan potato value chain has since been used as a case study in different modules in the International Agriculture program.

FOCUS GROUP

The focus group was a group of professors and trainers at INES-Ruhengeri. The workshop was attended by 30 local professors and staff. The workshop was jointly organized by both INES-Ruhengeri and HAFL. Two HAFL staff members (one Research Fellow and one Research Assistant) participated in the workshop.

The workshop had a positive learning effect for both parties. INES staff actively participated in the organization of the workshop and during the second day where the problem-based learning methodology was explained, they actively took the role of the students. It was important for the lecturers to adopt the role of students in order for them to understand what the student has to do in a PBL methodology. Otherwise INES staff could fall into the problem of not being able to assess all the work the students have to do. Having a clear understanding of the engagement of both sides (lecturer and student) is critical for the success of PBL (Pictures 1 and 2).



Picture 1: PBL session with INES staff



Picture 2: INES lecturer presents results

On the third day of the workshop, another tool of value chain analysis was introduced. The tool is called rapid market appraisal (RMA). The lecturers had the task of conducting a rapid market appraisal in a local vegetable market in the Musanze district. The tool was first explained in a morning work session at the university followed by a field visit to a local potato market where producers and traders were interviewed (Pictures 3 and 4). All of the workshop participants actively took part in the exercise and in a wrap-up session back at the university, they had the opportunity to conclude the task and present the results.



Picture 3: Local Potato Market in Musanze district



Picture 4: INES and HAFL staff during RMA exercise

EXPERIENCE FOR INES-RUHENGERI

During this session, Jean Pierre Mujarugamba, lecturer at INES-Ruhengeri reminded participants that PBL is an education method for active learning and it fits with learning in real-world problems and makes students responsible for their learning. He explained the characteristics of PBL where challenging problems from professionally relevant context are used in the form of a case study, the role changing (students assume responsibility for their own learning), the structure in small groups and self-study are essential for the success of the learning process. The important question of how to insert the PBL in teaching program of INES was discussed. This approach will help not only students but also lecturers to use available reality problems so that theories are discussed with regard to commonly known problems for all participants. Problem based learning will facilitate to closely keep in touch with community issues with relevant challenges, potential solutions and different views from other sides. This method is good for any applied sciences university and INES-Ruhengeri will try to apply it.

LESSONS LEARNT

As conclusion, the workshop on potatoes value chain promotion in Rwanda was and will always be a memorable event that broadened the scope of understanding, analysis and interaction with different stakeholders in the chain. It was an important moment to get in touch with decision makers, professionals and farmers to discuss reality of the daily life of the local community in order to see how what many Rwandans depend on can be improved and promoted to bring high value and greater profitability. Participants from IFDC CATALYST 2, SPARK Rwanda, CAVM, and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in the Great Lakes Region contributed a lot to the success of the event. Their expertise from the field helped participants (Lecturers) in understanding better challenges, opportunities and the role of every actor in finding out solutions to community problems. The workshop was extremely beneficial for both parties (INES and HAFL). The workshop was jointly organized by the staff of both universities and the learning effect was beneficial for both parties. Both universities agree that joint projects may arise in the near future.