

A+FS Network Newsletter 07/2014

F2F Special Edition

 [pdf](#)  [print version](#)

Dear Agriculture & Food Security Network members

Please find below this year's third edition of our A+FS Network Newsletter.

We very much appreciate all recommendations concerning this newsletter. Please feel free to send us any ideas, news or documents that might be relevant to the network. Your feedbacks will help us to improve the newsletter and to make learning more effective.

With Best Wishes

Felix Fellmann & Simon Weidmann

About the Face to Face 2014



Not long ago almost one hundred members of the A+FS Network coming from almost 30 countries met in Thun (Switzerland) for the third global Face to Face (F2F) meeting. Thank you again for your rich contributions.

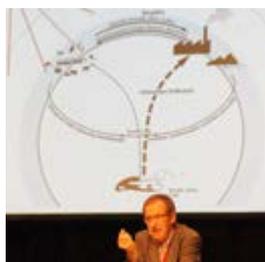


In the past we have not given family farmers enough attention, but this is changing. Their important role in food security and their economic potential is increasingly recognized.

At the F2F we have learned that smallholder family farming is inter-generational, gender-combined team work and that it is deeply rooted in cultural values that shape society. Smallholder farmers are an ageing group and the workforce is decreasing due to the lack of interest of young people to stay on the farm. Despite this smallholder farmers are feeding more than half of the world's population and are giving work to more than 2 billion people, thus being the biggest employer! Hence, smallholder farming has a high importance for food security and livelihood today and in the future.



We had the chance of meeting three Swiss farmer couples that gave us a good picture of how Swiss family farms work in daily life – especially in regards to gender specific roles.



We also have learned a lot on the history of farming in Switzerland – for example:

Pre-industrial society: food security is a state affair (strong regulation / collective regime)

19th century: Food production is transformed from a village affair to a family business and the purchasing power becomes a decisive factor on the market

World War I: vulnerability of highly specialized food production becomes evident. Food security is too important to be regulated by market forces. Sustainable agricultural production, processing as well as the environmental issues related to agriculture are organized as a 'public service'

1950-70': 'green revolution' increases food production in Western Europe, general surplus of food

1990': ecological degradation (use of fossil resources) and GATT/WTO trade agreements (demanding an open access to the food markets, favoring trading over production) call for agricultural reforms



See pictures or read comments on the amazing [field trips!](#)

Re-visit the Face to Face



Go to the [F2F Blog](#) where you will find:

- pictures
- participants' email addresses
- keynote presentations
- summaries of keynotes (also from the gender conference)
- comments by participants
- videos of participants

Post Face to Face



On the final day of our meeting we identified some new topics we want to explore further:

1. Markets, value chains & agriculture

In the discussions on the blog several A&FS members claimed that this topic was one of the most challenging in their daily work. So we decided to design a pilot sub-group where you are invited to set your own goal of what you want to achieve, ask your own questions regarding markets, value chains & agriculture. We will get in touch with you as soon as we have further details on this...

2. User-friendly internet platform for communication

Late summer and autumn we will dedicate some time to update our website/shareweb. Some pilot projects such as the sub-group on markets, value chains & agriculture will help us to develop an internet platform with improved features.

3. Regional networks

As some problems are regional – so are the solutions. We want to give you space for regional discussions. These groups can be in another language than English, so that the language barrier is no problem anymore. Therefore we are looking for regional sub-group moderators – if you are motivated to engage in a pilot sub-group don't hesitate to contact us.

4. Nutrition

By the end of the year we want to connect different stakeholders working in the field of nutrition. Should there be enough motivation a sub-group will be created. If you are engaged in this topic and want to contribute to this group don't hesitate to contact us.

5. Newsletter

The next newsletter will be created by members of the A&FS network. By the end of July we will make a call for participation. A small team of editors will collaboratively write a newsletter on a set of topics defined by the network through an online vote.

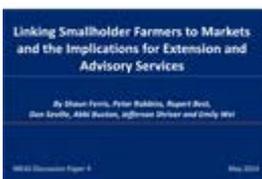
News related to our Face to Face topic



Linking Smallholder Farmers to Markets and the Implications for Extension and Advisory Services

Shaun Ferris et al., MEAS Discussion Paper 4, Mai 2014

 PDF, 2319 KB



This paper explores the changing role of agricultural extension services and the growing focus on the marketing and business needs of smallholder farmers. The paper is useful for development practitioners who are involved, directly or peripherally, in agricultural projects or programs because it outlines how agriculture can, over time, provide a pathway out of

poverty. The paper argues that business oriented approaches can help reducing the dependency of farmers from extension services.

Who is Who?

Some of the A+FS Network members are probably familiar to you, others are not.

In order to give a face to the names on the members list, every Newsletter shortly presents some of the A+FS Networkers:



Fouzia Nasreen

holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Business Administration. She has been working in the development field for the last 10 years focusing on inclusive market development in rural value chains of Bangladesh. Fouzia joined the Katalyst project of Swisscontact in 2004 after working for a reputed national private company for two years. During her work with Katalyst, Fouzia has held key management positions and was involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of market development strategies in sectors such as maize, vegetables, potato, jute, fertilizers, etc. The focus of these strategies has been to ensure inclusive sector growth leading to poverty reduction in Bangladesh.

Later in 2011, Fouzia was appointed as the team leader for the Making Markets Work for the Chars (M4C) project funded by SDC and implemented by Swisscontact and Practical Action in Bangladesh. M4C facilitates market systems for the poor living on the chars, which are vulnerable islands on the major rivers in Northern Bangladesh. Addressing gender and DRR issues are an integral part of the project's strategies especially for the small farming households on the chars.

Fouzia expects to share and learn about strategies that can sustainably address economic opportunities for the small and vulnerable households in weak markets. It would be great to learn from the network about inclusive business models that enable the market actors to reach such target groups with effective products and services.

[A+FS Network members list >>](#)