

Minutes of the 7th meeting of the Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services (SFRAS)

Place: Hochschule Luzern – Wirtschaft, Zentralstrasse 9 (close to railway station), Raum 1.12, 1. Stock

Time: Wednesday, 16th of April 2014, 13:15 – 17:00

Main Topic:

Communication with small scale farmers on agricultural knowledge transfer.

The Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services (SFRAS) is an informal group of experts from Swiss development, research, education and private sector organisations, who are all involved in Rural Advisory Services (RAS) in developing countries. This includes Swiss NGOs, academic institutions, private sector and other participants like GFRAS and SDC (the participant list is in the annex).

The SFRAS “enables peer-exchange of information and ideas, dissemination of studies and publications and interaction with GFRAS, the Global Forum on Rural Advisory Services.

More information on SFRAS and its earlier meetings can be found on the Agriculture + Food Security (A+FS) Network website of SDC:

http://www.sdc-foodsecurity.ch/en/Home/Focus_areas/Rural_advisory_services/SFRAS

Programme Time	Theme	Presenter
13:15	Welcome & Programme	Monique Frey
13:30	Tour de table / news from members	All
13:50	Results of a joint research project: Shortcomings of communication with small scale farmers on agricultural knowledge transfer in Kenya – and ways to improve it.	Christoph Spurk, Institute of Applied Media Studies, Winterthur, University of Applied Sciences, Zurich and Multimedia University College of Kenya.
15:15	Break	
15:30	Bangladesh: acceptance of drip irrigation	Caritas Switzerland
16:00	Feedback to the last SFRAS Meeting (embedded services), a side event of the GFRAS conference in Berlin. 5th GFRAS Annual Meeting RAS policies – evidence and practice 23-26 September 2014, Buenos Aires, Argentina	all
16:30	Brainstorming: Measures for a broader private sector participation in SFRAS (pending from last meeting). Integration of EUFRAS (European Forum for Rural Advisory Services) into SFRAS.	all
16:45	Next meetings, closing	

1. News from the members

Participants:

Name	First Name	Email	Organisation
Schmidt	Peter	Peter.Schmidt@helvetas.org	HSI
Fellmann	Felix	felix.fellmann@eda.admin.ch	Deza
Weidmann	Simon	Simon.Weidmann@eda.admin.ch	Deza
Bolliger	Ernst	ernst.bolliger@agridea.ch	Agridea
Huber	Stephanie	s.huber@stiftung-mercator.ch	Stiftung Mercator
Sicks	Andreas	a.sicks@biovision.ch	Biovision
Moser	Miriam	m.moser@biovision.ch	Biovison
Zoss	Marc	Zoss@heks.ch	Heks
Fischler	Martin	martin.fischler@helvetas.org	HSI
Schwitzer	David	d.schwitzer@worldvision.ch	Worldvision
Castle	Paul	paul.castle@syngenta.com	Syngenta Foundation
Ngamine	Jean	jngamine@caritas.ch	Caritas
Schaber	Carole	cschaber@caritas.ch	Caritas
Nicolay	Gian	gian.nicolay@fibl.org	Fibl
Schaltenbrand	Hans	hans.schaltenbrand@bfh.ch	HAFL
Schwarz	Lorenz	lorenz.schwarz@g-fras.org	G-Fras
Kupper	Markus	markus.kupper@swisscontact.ch	Swisscontact
Frey	Monique	mfrey@caritas.ch	Caritas
Spurk	Christoph	skcp@zhaw.ch	ZHAW
Schanne	Michael		ZAW

2. Presentation of Results of a joint research project “Shortcomings of communication in agricultural knowledge transfer in Kenya – and ways to improve it”

By Christoph Spurk, ZHAW

Findings:

- Radio is mostly used channel – should be widely used
- Govt extension most trusted source
 - should not be reduced any more
 - Extension should use radio and radio stations should integrate extension officers
- Farmers want comprehensiveness (enabling own decisions)
- Information needs to be
 - localized
 - just in time
 - Specific
 - Useful and implementable (economic issues)
- Research: Initiate flow of information, adapted to needs

Discussion:

- Integrate farmers knowledge, application to radio programmes -> participatory developed contents, farmers are part of the local radio team, broadcast
- Farmers wish more information about production
- Development projects work on marketing -> integrate more science communication tools
- Extension is not only a one way information to the farmers, extension is more building up a network.

- Adapt skills of extension service for information transfer -> f.e. radio broadcast
Comment: Have the farmer really this trust to gov. extension services? As one of the member of the interview team was from the government, this statement is biased!

Impact: increase the capacity of farmers to make own decisions.

Recommendation: Radio station shall make economic studies about their impact on rural, agricultural development.

3. Bangladesh: acceptance of drip irrigation

By Maja Hürlimann, Caritas

Presenting of various sub-steps how an innovation can be introduced: Demo fields, confidence, knowledge transfer, risk analysis, financing system.

Discussion: It is essential that farmers are the main drivers of an innovation. NGOs can support an already started introducing of an innovation by facilitating different steps.

4. GFRAS Berlin 2013

Side event of SFRAS „Embedded Services as a Modality for Sustainable Rural Advisory Services“. Minutes on http://www.sdc-foodsecurity.ch/en/Home/Focus_areas/Rural_advisory_services/SFRAS

5. GFRAS in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 23-25 September 2014

Information by Lorenz Schwarz. Possible inputs to plenary sessions: poster, share fare (f.e. theatre), side events.

Submit contributions by June, 10

Register side events by July, 18

6. SFRAS network development

SFRAS is a network of NGO working in international cooperation. Not member of the network are the consulting services for the swiss agriculture. With Agridea however, an organization is represented, which offers consulting services to local swiss services.

SFRAS meeting members wish to continue to work the same: informal, focused on rural advisory services in development countries. However, the members wish to extend the forum to participants from the private sector and industry.

SDC, HSI, SF will rethink the concept and invite potential new members (Nestlé, Halba, Coop,.....)

EUFRAS: A European forum is established with members of European rural advisory services.

7. Topic next meeting

Date: October/November 2014

- Communication with new technologies
- Short reporting back from GFRAS, Argentina

14.7. 2014, Monique Frey