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Supporting Smallholder
Farmers in Asia and Pacific
Islands Region through
Strengthened Agricultural
Advisory Services
(SAAS Project)

BEST PRACTICE NOTES



EXTENSION STUDY GROUP FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

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5 Key Points

1. Challenges and constraints

- Information gaps between extension officers
- Disconnect between central and local government
- Lack of direction and management
- Passive attitude of participants

2. Objective

Extension Study Group aims to establish a voluntarily knowledge sharing and learning environment that fosters professional growth for extension officers at the individual and organizational level, serving as the groundwork for agricultural and rural development.

3. Methodology

Community of Practice (CoP)

4. Highlight of result

The study group was instrumental in developing the capacity of extension workers and contributed greatly in improving the quality of agricultural services.

5. Highlight recommendation

A renewed capability building strategy in order to invigorate the group as well as to strengthen its qualitative aspects.

Introduction

- In 1997, extension public officials in Korea were converted to local officers, resulting to gaps in communication and information exchange between local extension institutes as well as decline in cooperation between the central and local government business systems.
- Acknowledging the increasing impact of extension activities in the agricultural sector, the Rural Development Administration (RDA) formed the extension study group to foster a self-directed and participatory approach to learning and knowledge sharing between extension officers. It is an autonomic study community at the national level that provides an avenue for professional skills improvement while strengthening knowledge sharing and coordination between central and local government.
- Main activities under the program include: project activity (3 times for each study group); education to acquire post-graduate academic degree or professional certificate; fostering and supporting farmer's study community for field application of new technology; providing technology information between and among members; field consultation with farmer; and participation to related seminars to capacitate members.
- The project links RDA government officers across the entire republic of Korea, with a total of 2,536 members from 55 different fields since its establishment in 1996.