

**Melike Bahçeci**✉

Bati Akdeniz Agricultural Research Institute

## Key issue succes in Extension and types of participation and factors

**Summary.** The purpose of extension is to raise the standard of living of farmers and their families in rural areas. Extension studies are often described as “helping people to help themselves”. This approach is valid for many countries in the world and has traditionally focused on farmers and rural communities. The basic model for agricultural extension include: technology transfer, farmer first and participatory approaches. Participation is the active participation of the local community in setting and determining agendas for their communities, rather than allowing them to decide on their needs and priorities, using the skills of foreign donor organizations. The level and type of this involvement directs the development process in society and affects its sustainability. This study aims to address basic understanding and concerns about participation. This work, which has become an important tool for developmental interventions, will try to answer the questions that the participation realizes and aims to reach and the traps of the method in practical and theoretical practice.

**Key words:** Participatory extension, extension system

### Introduction

Approximately 75% poor people, who are living in developing countries, are based on livelihoods of agriculture. Since Economic growth depends on agriculture in this societies, for fighting against poverty thus participation seeks to help farmers by creating themselves a space for knowledge to be shared, created and acted upon. Farmers should be provided for innovation by the government, local institution and private extension agents<sup>1</sup>.

Variety of private sector organizations supply information’ transfer and advice to farmers with aims to develop solutions and solve their problems. For example, in Agriculture extension; transfer of technology based on how farmers learn new information and ideas. Because awareness of knowledge is so important for farmers, they are the

---

<sup>1</sup> A. Cornwall, R. Jewkes: What is participatory research? Social Science & Medicine 1995, no. 41(12), p. 1667–1676.

✉ melikebahceci0721@hotmail.com

key factor of livelihoods in risky and uncertain environments. The capacities, preferences, and resources of farmers need to be considered for participation to be effective.

According to Gartforth<sup>2</sup> four key elements are so important; the resourcing and motivation of extension staff, the 'message' focus, poor implementation and lack of communication channels. Especially main problem is low level of contact between farmers and field assistants. Limitation of staff at field level were compounded by low levels of motivation and priorities and conflicting incentives.

Public extension services have significant role in natural resources and sustainable management; especially in effective materialization of programs pertaining to rural development due to lack of human resources and financial constraints. Humanhood needs a basic food which is convenient and reliable for people. Indeed, the Governments which aim on raising the life standard of their citizens should both provide basic necessities to farming community and also, facilitate and involve people from all streams of life including health, education, public administration, and industry. As a matter of fact, a very basic concept of Extension work is "helping people to help themselves"<sup>3</sup>.

### **Participatory Agriculture Extension**

Agriculture extension models are a farmer first, technology transfer, and participatory approach. First model is a top-down approach, that involves taking the thoughts, plans and schemes from researchers down to the farmers' community. Contrariwise, a bottom top model takes the opinion, problems and suggestions of the farming community up to the researchers so as to aid them in making practical and result-oriented research programs.

Besides these approaches is added an another approach the participatory approach; which involves integrating and expanding of the first two models from some angles. The participatory approach model involves both farmers and the researchers and bring on-board stakeholders from other streams of society<sup>4</sup>. Nowadays participatory approach is being adopted by a large number of organizations<sup>5</sup>. Government and non-government organizations increasingly recognize the need of direct participatory approach to identifying and acquiring farmers and rural communities from their development goals through top-down instruction and pure technology transfer.

According to Chowa interaction actors can improve coordination teams at different levels. This is based not only on farmers' livelihoods but also the interests of actors in various businesses to help them reach their goals in their organizations. Local gov-

---

<sup>2</sup> C. Garforth: The challenges of agricultural extension. Starter packs: a strategy to fight hunger in developing countries? Lessons from the Malawi experience 1998–2003, 2005, p. 175–191.

<sup>3</sup> O. Özçatalbaş, I. Boz, K. Demiryurek, D.B. Budak, B. Karaturhan, H. Akçaöz: Developing participatory extension applications in Turkey. African Journal of Agricultural Research 2011, no. 6(2), p. 407–415.

<sup>4</sup> A.D. Foster: Learning by Doing and Learning from Others: Human Capital and Technical Change in Agriculture, Journal of Political Economy, University of Chicago Press, December 1995, no. 103(6), p. 1176–1209.

<sup>5</sup> O. Özçatalbaş, I. Boz, K. Demiryurek, D.B. Budak, B. Karaturhan, H. Akçaöz: Developing..., op.cit.

ernments need to strengthen their role as a tool in decentralized extension. It shows a weak mechanism of monitoring by the local government to ensure that the behaviour of the actors is responsible of actors' actions to provide the farmers with the tools they show they need. A decentralized extension can be built up by policy interference to fund multi-stakeholder learning platforms and fund farmers' marketing needs which would enhance the interaction and improve coordination of various actors in innovation system<sup>6</sup>. Participatory extension, contrary to conventional extension services, does not merely communicate new research and technologies to the farmers. Moreover, in participatory extension knowledge and skills are provided to farmers to develop an understanding of their problems and enhance their problem-solving capacities. Thus, sustainable agriculture and sustainability of the farming community largely depends on how skilful and independent are the farmers in solving their problems at the basic levels and participatory extension plays a major role in achieving this aim<sup>7</sup>.

Participation has many definitions; one point participation is to increase efficiency 'people are more likely to show agreement and support for the new developments and services if they're involved in the process and other review of participation as a fundamental right, in which the main aim is to initiate mobilization for collective action, empowerment and institution building'. Indeed, awareness of participation is increased by development projects because "participation" is one of the key issue of success.

The policy promotors and project beneficiaries should be associated with an increased mobilization of intellectual property, understanding and social cohesion, more efficiency; more cost-effective services, Greater accountability and transparency, strengthened capacity of people to learn and act, increased empowering of the poor and disadvantaged<sup>8</sup>.

Thus, the concepts, "popular participation" and "people's participation" became widespread in many non-government organizations (NGOs), development agencies, financial bodies and government agricultural departments<sup>9</sup>. Common idea is that participation look as part of their work and has been used to justify external decisions to devolve power and decision-making away from external agencies, as well as to build local capacity and self-reliance. It has been used for data collection as well as for interactive analysis. However, "more often, people are asked or dragged into partaking in operations of no interest to them, in the very name of participation"<sup>10</sup>.

For this reason, one agricultural support organizations' aim, is threatened for sustainable agriculture, and must be further strengthened and incorporated into various

<sup>6</sup> C. Chowa, S. Cardey: Farmer experience of pluralistic agricultural extension, Malawi. *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension* 2013, no. 19(2), p. 147–166.

<sup>7</sup> J.M. Diop, M. de Jong, P. Laban, H. de Zeeuw: Building capacity in participatory approaches. PROLINNOVA Working Paper 4. Leusden: PROLINNOVA International Secretariat c/o ETC EcoCulture, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> J.N. Pretty: Participatory learning for sustainable agriculture. *World development* 1995, no. 23(8), p. 1247–1263.

<sup>9</sup> J.C. Aker: Dial "A" for agriculture: a review of information and communication technologies for agricultural extension in developing countries, *Agricultural Economics* 2011, no. 42(6), p. 631–647.

<sup>10</sup> J.N. Pretty: Participatory..., op.cit.

groups of people. The dilemma of the union's authorities is even the people need participation, they are afraid. But this fear decreases the chance of promoting knowledge or skills be printed on farming communities.

This highlights the fact that it is all but important that the relevant decisions should be made keeping in view the type of participation in use. The conventional or traditional rural development plans and schemes focus on the participation of local community and encourage them to trade their goods in exchange for other basic goods and services. Such approaches are harmful to farmers by deteriorating perceptions, developing addictions. This paternalism undermines sustainability goals and produces rarely continuing effects after the end of the progeny.

However, rural development programs keep on justifying subsidies and incentives because they are faster, because more people can win, or because they provide a mechanism for distributing food to poor people. When little effort is made to create local skills, interests and capacity, local people have no responsibility to sustain structures or practices after the incentives' end. According to participation's issue types, development organizations are ranged from manipulative and passive participation; to self-mobilization in which people are engaged in initiatives independently of external institutions, where people can fulfil their members' roles (Table 1). This typology suggests that the term "participation" should not be accepted without an appropriate explanation.

Regarding the benefits and costs of participation, the World Bank's "Learning Group on Participatory Development" distinguishes different types of participation: many Bank's activities called "participants" are not in line with because it is only through development that passive recipients informers or workers. The participation's success will not have a positive effect on human lives (ibid) such, participation can be used without being confident the act can be used in action.

Therefore, the term participation should be thorough and careful in sustainable agriculture as it threatens to support the objectives, the participation must always be qualified by the initiative. Previously, the more common passives, counselling and incentive-focused participation are the better ways to set a better transition method to the end of the spectrum.

Firstly, the Department of Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX) developed the participatory extension approach (PEA) in Zimbabwe. 'Participatory technology development stresses partnerships between farmers, researchers and extensionists develop adequate farm technologies for sustainable development'<sup>11</sup>. According to Cornwall and Jewkes<sup>12</sup> participatory research has the assumption that working with the "community" and local communities exist for separate entities: limited, small, homogeneous and integrated. These values, needs, emotions, and ideologies are shared. It has been discovered that a "community" is a very heterogeneous group with a large number of interrelated axes, including wealth, age, gender, ethnicity, religion and indirectly power

---

<sup>11</sup> R. Chambers, A. Pacey, L.A. Thrupp: Farmer first. Farmer innovation and agricultural research. Intermediate Technology Publications, London 1989.

<sup>12</sup> A. Cornwall, R. Jewkes: What is..., op.cit.

**Table 1.** A typology of participation: how people participate in development programs and projects

Typology	Characteristics of each type
Manipulative participation	Participation is simply a pretence with “people’s” representatives on official boards but who are unelected and have no power.
Passive participation	People participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened. It involves unilateral announcements by an administration or project management without any listening to people’s responses. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals.
Participation by consultation	People participate by being consulted or by answering questions. External agents define problems and information gathering process, and so control analysis. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision making, and professionals under no obligation to take on board people’s views.
Participation for material incentives	People participate by contributing resources, for example, labor, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Farmers may provide the fields and labor, but are involved in neither experimentation nor the process of learning. It is very common to see this called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging technologies or practices when the incentives end.
Functional participation	Participation seen by external agencies as a means to achieve project goals, especially reduce costs. People may participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project. Such involvement may be interactive and involve shared decision-making, but leans to arise only after major decisions have already been made by external agents. At worst, local people may still only be coopted to serve external goals.
Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local institutions. Participation is seen as right, not just the means to achieve project goals. The process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systemic and structured learning process. As groups take control over local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structure of practices.
Self-mobilization	People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Self-mobilization can spread if governments and NGOs provide an enabling frame work of support. Such self-initiated mobilization may or may not challenge existing distribution of wealth and power.

Source: adapted from J.N. Pretty: Alternative Systems of Inquiry for Sustainable Agriculture. “IDS Bulletin” 1994, no 25(2); D.D. Satterthwaite, R. Bajracharya, C. Hart, D. Levy, J. Ross, Smit, C. Stephens: Children Environment and Sustainable Development. UNICEF, New York 1995; S. Adnan, A. Alam, S.M. Nural, A. Brustnow: People’s Participation, NGOs and the Flood Action Plan. Research and Advisory Services, Dhaka 1992; R.A. Hart: Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship. UNICEF, Florence 1992.

(in *ibid*). In Latin America, “community involvement contributed to the cultural deprivation of the poor and contributed to political violence and also the destruction of grass-rooted organizations”, that the poor produced additional exploitation by free labour.

The agriculture extension’s aims have included the farmer’s productivity and is based on ‘technology transfer’ approach. This approach for example has been implemented in Turkey, from Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs on ‘general agricultural extension approach’ which was used until the 90s and the T&V approach is dominated after the 1984s until now. Technology transfer involves a top-down approach to generating innovations that scientists believe will be useful to farmers, setting research priorities, and providing results to extension agents <sup>13</sup>.

In addition, other agriculture extensions approaches are Farming System Research(FSR), the Participatory rural appraisal also called participatory learning and action approaches, and the Participatory group-based learning approach namely called the Farmer’s Field School(FFS) <sup>14</sup>.

### **Agricultural extension systems factors**

According to Aker<sup>15</sup> many agricultural extension systems related to the following these factors:

1. Limited scale and sustainability: small-scale farmers, extension clients usually live in geographically spread over a wide area. This means that in high cost, unsustainable services and restricted geographical coverage (*ibid*).
2. Policy environments that decrease to the value of information supplied through extension services are due to trade habits, primarily based on agriculture, inadequate infrastructure, and poor input sources.
3. Poor connections between universities, research centres, and agricultural extension systems. Extension services in the United States and Europe are often linked to the university system, while in developing countries can be the different system. As a result, the incentives of these institutions are not in line with the agricultural priorities in the country (*ibid*) and the technologies are not always adapted locally.
4. Low motivation and accountability of extension staff. It is difficult to monitor the existence and motivation of the extension staff as it is for all civil servants, which is particularly problematic when agriculture is based on field agents working in different geographical regions and whose performance indicators are difficult to verify (i.e., number of training, number of participants). Failure to track can result in poor or poor quality field personnel and further reduce the use of agricultural publishing services.
5. Little evidence of the prosperity effects of such an extension. Inadequate credible evidence of the effects of agricultural extension has strengthened violence with re-

---

<sup>13</sup> R. Chambers, A. Pacey, L.A. Thrupp: *Farmer first...*, op.cit.

<sup>14</sup> R. Chambers, N. Kenton, H. Ashley: *Participatory Learning and Action 50: Critical reflections, future directions II*ED, October 2004.

<sup>15</sup> J.C. Aker: *Dial “A”...*, op.cit.

spect to funding, motivation and the availability of appropriate technologies. It is also not known whether or not agricultural extension systems are functioning in this environment, but it is not only unclear, but it is also unknown whether or not they come from the top of information irregularity for small ones related to system models.

6. Gender continues to be the main concern of participatory development projects. Gender plays a major role in determining the achievement of participation goals. It shapes the procedures and practices adopted for the implementation of participatory initiatives. Some cultures where women take sides with men are vulnerable by the social norms of a society or a society. For example, men and women have a division of labour that determines their role in development work. Women will be allowed only to undertake tasks specific to women, and men will enter tasks that are considered men's tasks. Participation of women's groups can also be restricted to other issues such as patriarchal society, discrimination of male personnel, traditions of male domination, and the tendency of men and women on their tasks<sup>16</sup>. It should also be noted that being a heterogeneous group has different interests depending on the women's status, race, class, religion, ethnicity and other factors<sup>17</sup>.

Because of all these complexities, it is difficult for women to participate in a development project; because it does not mean that the problems of being are represented or accepted. Therefore, appropriate tools and methods are needed to work with women to achieve their participation goals.

## Conclusion

As a result, gender discrimination, poverty, education, and sustainability are more significant because women have a significant role in all societies. Indeed, the lack of gender-inclusive participation has resulted in less effective solutions; poverty and lack of education results in low capacity and resources of farmers.

Gender gap should be reduced to reach success and it can reduce poverty and it sustain development. In addition, education has the significant role of the extension and participation and can be sources of innovative and open-minded.

In developing countries, participatory approaches' implementation has been limited and focused more on a local scale. Many studies suggest that participatory approach can be practiced on rural farmers cooperatives, unions of farming communities, non-governmental organizations and also in universities researches. Rural areas are encouraged by initiatives by enlargement organizations in developing countries, and it is useful to implement participatory approaches to think about their own problems and suggest solutions.

---

<sup>16</sup> N. Kabeer: Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal 1, *Gender & Development* 2005, no. 13(1), p. 13–24.

<sup>17</sup> J. Kehler: Women and poverty: The South African experience, *Journal of international women's studies* 2001, no. 3(1), p. 41–53.

## References

- Aker J.C.: Dial "A" for agriculture: a review of information and communication technologies for agricultural extension in developing countries, *Agricultural Economics* 2011.
- Adnan S., Alam A., Nural S.M., Brustnow A.: *People's Participation, NGOs and the Flood Action Plan*. Research and Advisory Services, Dhaka 1992.
- Chambers R., Pacey A., Thrupp L.A.: *Farmer first. Farmer innovation and agricultural research*, Intermediate Technology Publications, London 1989.
- Chambers R., Kenton N., Ashley H.: *Participatory Learning and Action 50: Critical reflections, future directions* IIED, October 2004.
- Chowa C., Garforth C., Cardey S.: *Farmer experience of pluralistic agricultural extension, Malawi*, *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension* 2013.
- Cornwall A., Jewkes R.: *What is participatory research?* *Social Science & Medicine* 1995.
- Diop J.M., de Jong M., Laban P., de Zeeuw H.: *Building capacity in participatory approaches*, PROLINNOVA Working Paper 4. Leusden: PROLINNOVA International Secretariat c/o ETC EcoCulture 2001.
- Engel P.G.: *Facilitating innovation: an action-oriented approach and participatory methodology to improve innovative social practice in agriculture*, Engel 1995.
- Foster A.D.: *Learning by Doing and Learning from Others: Human Capital and Technical Change in Agriculture*, *Journal of Political Economy*, University of Chicago Press, December 1995, no. 103(6), p. 1176–1209
- Garforth C.: *The challenges of agricultural extension. Starter packs: a strategy to fight hunger in developing countries? Lessons from the Malawi experience 1998–2003*, 2005.
- Hart R.A.: *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. UNICEF, Florence 1992.
- Kabeer N.: *Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal 1*, *Gender & Development* 2005.
- Kehler J.: *Women and poverty: The South African experience*, *Journal of international women's studies* 2001.
- Özçatalbaş O., Boz I., Demiryurek K., Budak D.B., Karaturhan B., Akçaöz H.: *Developing participatory extension applications in Turkey*. *African Journal of Agricultural Research* 2011.
- Pretty J.N.: *Alternative Systems of Inquiry for Sustainable Agriculture*. "IDS Bulletin" 1994, no 25(2).
- Pretty J.N.: *Participatory learning for sustainable agriculture*. *World development*, 1995.
- Satterthwaite D.D., Bajracharya R., Hart C., Levy D., Ross J., Smit, Stephens C.: *Children Environment and Sustainable Development*. UNICEF, New York 1995.