



Focus group discussions with farmers about the TV series (Monina Escalada)

Entertainment-education for ecological engineering (Viet Nam)

Cong Nghe Xanh (Vietnamese)

DESCRIPTION

Entertainment-education for ecological engineering involves a series of TV programmes that educate rice farmers about ecosystem services, as well as ecological engineering techniques to conserve biodiversity in rice landscapes.

Aims / objectives: A multi-stakeholder participatory process was adopted in formative research, then designing and developing a soap-opera series, launching the programme, followed by implementing on-the-ground support, and monitoring of progress. The stakeholders involved were from research, extension, a video production company and local government. To make sure the educational content was accurately and seamlessly woven into drama, the collaborating team was composed of technical experts and scriptwriters, nicknamed the “turtles and peacocks”. Each 15-minute episode is composed of 3 parts: a short drama by comedians, an explanation by experts, and then a summary of the lesson portrayed in that particular episode.

Methods: The LEGATO TV series was produced by Viet Idea, a video company based in Ho Chi Minh City, and was broadcast on Long An TV (LA34) weekly for 20 weeks. The 18 episodes were based on the values grid that LEGATO scientists had developed. They covered a range of topics including organic matter decomposition, organisms and microorganisms, straw burning, rural habitats, the food chain, the architecture of traditional houses, the role of silicon in rice production, honey bees, plant health, eco-tourism and eco-engineering.

Stages of implementation: To popularize and enhance the viewership of the LEGATO Ecological Engineering TV series, a “Meet the Actors Day” was organized in Khanh Hau village, Tan An Town, Long An Province. The organisers comprised “Cong Nghe Xanh”, Long An TV (LA34), Y Tuong Viet (Idea Vietnam), and the Southern Regional Plant Protection Centre. The event was attended by the village People’s Committee Chair, farmers, Long An TV staff and plant protection officers. The “Meet the Actors” day is one of the elements in the entertainment-education approach. To track viewership and audience reactions to the TV series, four focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 41 rice farmers in four villages in Long An province. A post-broadcast survey was carried out in January 2015 among 396 randomly selected rice farmers in Long An and Tien Giang Provinces.

Role of stakeholders: The role of the different stakeholders in the approach was as follows: 1) Farmers provided feedback on the relevance and usefulness of the TV episodes and suggested other topics; 2) Plant protection officers worked with TV episode scriptwriters and served as subject matter specialists to simplify the educational content of each episode; 3) Local plant protection experts provided the scientific explanation behind the topics tackled in the episodes; 4) Local government was represented by Dr Nguyen Van Khang, former Director of Agriculture in Tien Giang province who agreed to allocate a portion of the provincial pesticide budget into ecological engineering demonstrations as he required data to be generated locally. Since then, from 2010 to 2014, more demonstration fields were set up.

LOCATION



Location: Tan An town, Tan Tru, Thu Thua, Ben Luc, Chau Thanh, Tan Phuoc, Cai Lay, Long An and Tien Giang, Viet Nam

Geo-reference of selected sites

- 29.14, 56.71

Initiation date: 2014

Year of termination: 2016

Type of Approach

- ☐ traditional/ indigenous
- ☒ recent local initiative/ innovative project/ programme based

Other important information: Preliminary analyses showed no significant differences in farmers' insecticide use, but significant differences were found in beliefs and positions about growing flowers, biocontrol, and silicon use. A follow-up farmer survey was conducted to further evaluate the effects of the TV series on rice farmers in Tien Giang and Long An Provinces.



'Meet the actors' day (Monina Escalada (Visayas State University, Baybay, Leyte, Phil))



Audience watching a taped TV episode (Monina Escalada (Visayas State University, Baybay, Leyte, Phil))

APPROACH AIMS AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Main aims / objectives of the approach

The Approach focused on SLM only (reducing insecticide use, restoring biodiversity in rice landscapes)

Improve farmers' pest management, reduce their insecticide use and improve their land use to include conservation of biodiversity.

The SLM Approach addressed the following problems: Lack of funds to support SLM; Unregulated pesticide marketing continues to negate the gains obtained by SLM.

Conditions enabling the implementation of the Technology/ ies applied under the Approach

- **Legal framework (land tenure, land and water use rights):** The existing land ownership, land use rights / water rights helped a little the approach implementation

Conditions hindering the implementation of the Technology/ ies applied under the Approach

- **Social/ cultural/ religious norms and values:** Educate farmers to appreciate parasitoids that are too tiny to be seen by the naked eye. Treatment through the SLM Approach: As the parasitoids and bees belong to the same insect group, hymenoptera, we associated parasitoids with bees that farmers are familiar with.
- **Availability/ access to financial resources and services:** Funds to support education system. Treatment through the SLM Approach: Encourage local governments to provide support.
- **Institutional setting:** Lack of direct linkage between agricultural and TV broadcast stations. Treatment through the SLM Approach: Use stakeholder meetings and field activities to establish these new links.
- **Knowledge about SLM, access to technical support:** Technical information. Treatment through the SLM Approach: Explore research findings for information.
- **Workload, availability of manpower:** Lack of work force dedicated to this entertainment-education process. Treatment through the SLM Approach: Encourage provincial government to allocate more staff who can simplify and disseminate scientific information.
- **Other:** Unregulated pesticide sales continue to erode gains from education. Treatment through the SLM Approach: Encourage government to review and reform current pesticide sales regulations.

PARTICIPATION AND ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Stakeholders involved in the Approach and their roles

What stakeholders / implementing bodies were involved in the Approach?	Specify stakeholders	Describe roles of stakeholders
local land users/ local communities	Communication specialist (female), regional director of plant protection (male), ecologist (male)	Farmers, male and female, Vietnamese
SLM specialists/ agricultural advisers	Ecologist (male), plant protection director (male)	
researchers	Visayas State University, Leyte, Philippines	
local government	Local government of Long An province	People's Committee chair (provincial)
national government (planners, decision-makers)		
international organization	Center for Agricultural BioSciences International (CABI), Malaysia	

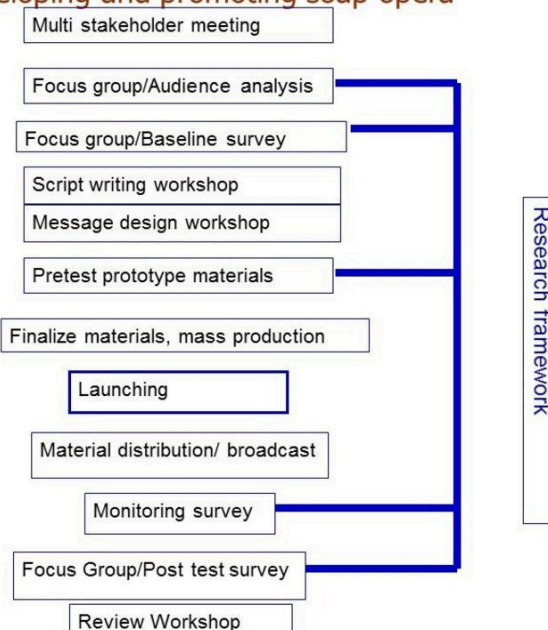
Involvement of local land users/ local communities in the different phases of the Approach

	none	passive	external support	interactive	self-mobilization	
initiation/ motivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SLM promoters
planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All stakeholders
implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All stakeholders
monitoring/ evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SLM promoters and local implementers
Research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SLM promoters

Flow chart

Steps in developing and promoting a soap opera

Steps in developing and promoting soap opera



Author: Kong Luen Heong, Monina Escalada (CABI, Kuala Lumpur; Visayas State University)

Decision-making on the selection of SLM Technology

Decisions were taken by

- ☐ land users alone (self-initiative)
- ☐ mainly land users, supported by SLM specialists
- ☐ all relevant actors, as part of a participatory approach
- ☒ mainly SLM specialists, following consultation with land users
- ☐ SLM specialists alone
- ☐ politicians/ leaders

Decisions were made based on

- ☐ evaluation of well-documented SLM knowledge (evidence-based decision-making)
- ☐ research findings
- ☐ personal experience and opinions (undocumented)

TECHNICAL SUPPORT, CAPACITY BUILDING, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The following activities or services have been part of the approach

- ☒ Capacity building/ training
- ☒ Advisory service
- ☐ Institution strengthening (organizational development)
- ☒ Monitoring and evaluation
- ☒ Research

Capacity building/ training

Training was provided to the following stakeholders

- ☒ land users
- ☒ field staff/ advisers

Form of training

- ☒ on-the-job
- ☒ farmer-to-farmer
- ☒ demonstration areas
- ☒ public meetings
- ☐ courses
- ☒ Communication campaign

Subjects covered

Principles of ecological engineering and pest management

Advisory service

Advisory service was provided

- ☐ on land users' fields
- ☐ at permanent centres
- ☒ Consultation

Monitoring and evaluation

socio-cultural aspects were regular monitored by land users through observations socio-cultural aspects were regular monitored by land users through measurements There were no changes in the Approach as a result of monitoring and evaluation There were no changes in the Technology as a result of monitoring and evaluation

Research

Research treated the following topics

- ☐ sociology
☐ economics / marketing
☒ ecology
☐ technology
- Research was carried out on-farm

FINANCING AND EXTERNAL MATERIAL SUPPORT

Annual budget in USD for the SLM component

- ☐ < 2,000
☐ 2,000-10,000
☒ 10,000-100,000
☐ 100,000-1,000,000
☐ > 1,000,000
- Precise annual budget: n.a.
- Approach costs were met by the following donors: international (German Ministry of Education and Research, BMBF (70,000 USD)); 70.0%; government (30,000 USD); 30.0%

The following services or incentives have been provided to land users

- ☒ Financial/ material support provided to land users
☒ Subsidies for specific inputs
☐ Credit
☐ Other incentives or instruments

Financial/ material support provided to land users

Flower seedlings

partly financed
fully financed

Labour by land users was

- ☒ voluntary
☐ food-for-work
☐ paid in cash
☐ rewarded with other material support

IMPACT ANALYSIS AND CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

Impacts of the Approach

Did the Approach help land users to implement and maintain SLM Technologies?
Reduction in fertilizer and pesticide use

No
Yes, little
Yes, moderately
Yes, greatly

Did the Approach empower socially and economically disadvantaged groups?

Did the Approach improve issues of land tenure/ user rights that hindered implementation of SLM Technologies?
The problem is likely to be overcome in the near future.

Did other land users / projects adopt the Approach?

Main motivation of land users to implement SLM

- ☒ increased production
☒ increased profit(ability), improved cost-benefit-ratio
☐ reduced land degradation
☐ reduced risk of disasters
☐ reduced workload
☐ payments/ subsidies
☐ rules and regulations (fines)/ enforcement
☐ prestige, social pressure/ social cohesion
☐ affiliation to movement/ project/ group/ networks
☒ environmental consciousness
☐ customs and beliefs, morals
☐ enhanced SLM knowledge and skills
☐ aesthetic improvement
☐ conflict mitigation

Sustainability of Approach activities

Can the land users sustain what has been implemented through the Approach (without external support)?

- ☐ no
☐ yes
☒ uncertain

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

Strengths: land user's view

- Our research partners find the use of Entertainment-Education an easy approach to implement as there is often a warm response from the audience - farmers, women's groups and local government officials.

Weaknesses/ disadvantages/ risks: land user's view how to overcome

- The land users would rely on funding to be able to implement this approach as there is a cost in producing the TV series.

Strengths: compiler's or other key resource person's view

- The use of entertainment-education approach has been found to be highly successful in Vietnam. An evaluation survey of a radio drama program we launched in 2004, after completion of the program, showed that farmers who had listened to at least two episodes of the program reduced their insecticide sprays by 60%, their fertilizer and seed rates by 9% and 33% respectively (Heong et al., 2008).
(How to sustain/ enhance this strength: It can be sustained if there is funding to support the activities.)

Weaknesses/ disadvantages/ risks: compiler's or other key resource person's view how to overcome

- An important challenge is the longer-term sustainability of the TV series. The challenge is to mainstream such programs into the TV station's regular programming. To maintain a long TV series will require funding. A further threat to sustain the gains made by the TV series is "advertising piracy" where the TV series is being used to advertise new pesticides.

REFERENCES

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Full description in the WOCAT database

https://qcat.wocat.net/en/wocat/approaches/view/approaches_2613/

Linked SLM data

n.a.

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Project

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