Innovating with rural stakeholders in the developing world
Action research in partnership

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Action research in partnership combines knowledge production, transformation of social realities and the building up of individual and collective skills. This book provides the foundation for understanding the theoretical background to action research in partnership in the field of agriculture and putting it into practice. The key intermediate steps and milestones of the approach are presented and discussed. The initial step – defining the problem and structuring the team that brings together all stakeholders – is crucial to the success of subsequent activities. The processes and methods that allow all stakeholders to be actively involved in the design, planning, monitoring and evaluation of results are described, as are those related to assessing the relevance of the results in terms of knowledge produced, capacity building of the actors or problem solving. The book draws on a wide range of experiences in agriculture and rural development in developing countries, and especially in Africa and Latin America. Together, they illustrate how practitioners have responded to the challenges of implementing an approach that has to be tailored and fine-tuned to the specificities of each situation.

This book is intended for researchers and professionals working in the field of rural development. Representatives of rural and farmers’ organizations in developing countries, often dealing with complex development challenges, will also find it useful.

About the authors:
Guy Faure, economist at CIRAD, conducts research on supporting producers and producer organizations through partnerships in Africa and Latin America.
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Ludovic Temple, economist at CIRAD, focuses his research on institutional and organizational determinants of technological change in food chains, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.
Henri Hocdé, system agronomist at CIRAD, has dedicated many years to building up farmers’ capacity for innovation in Latin America and Africa.
Governance mechanisms

10.8. Governance mechanisms

The ComMod network thought this charter necessary to guard against the risk, conscious or unconscious, of the instrumentalization of research or even of manipulation of the decision-making process. In this way, situations which may be considered undesirable by the stakeholders are avoided.

Box 9. An example of ethical commitment (extract from a project document)

*M. Dulcire*

“At the start of our research activities in partnership, during the intervention phase, we commit to discussing and building an ethical framework with our partners for our involvement, both for the ‘means as well as the ends.’ This relates to: (1) each participant’s role, (2) use of data, (3) publication or presentations at meetings, seminars, etc. of documents concerning the experience, (4) back reporting of results to partners, (5) valorization of results obtained by citing the concerned and involved stakeholders, and (6) withdrawal of researcher teams at the conclusion of the program.”

Box 10. Material transfer agreement between Sintraf and Embrapa

*A. Toledo Machado*

Sintraf will transfer genetic materials to Embrapa without guaranteeing their purity or quality.

Embrapa:
– Undertakes it will never claim intellectual property rights on all or part of these materials;
– Assumes legal responsibility for all losses, if any, caused by these materials;
– Undertakes to inform Sintraf if any harmful effect of these materials is detected;
– Undertakes to mention Sintraf by name in any publication relating to these materials.

Signature Sintraf          Signature Embrapa