12th European IFSA Symposium

12th – 15th July 2016 at Harper Adams University, UK

Social and technological transformation of farming systems:

Diverging and converging pathways

Andrew Wilcox & Samantha Vinall (Eds)
Theme 1: Innovation, knowledge and learning processes

Workshop 1.6 Merits and limits of innovation platforms to promote sustainable intensification in farming systems

Convenor: Bernard Triomphe, CIRAD UMR Innovation (bernard.triomphe@cirad.fr)
Helena Posthumus, Royal Tropical Institute – KIT (H.Posthumus@kit.nl)
Mariana Wongtschowski, Royal Tropical Institute – KIT (M.Wongtschowski@kit.nl)
Jens Andersson, CIMMYT (j.andersson@cgiar.org)

Agricultural innovation platform dynamics: a conceptual framework to analyze knowledge production

Syndhia Mathé1,2, Latifou Idrissou3, Hervé Bisseleua4, Ann Degrande5, Jean-Claude Bidogeza6, Christopher Suh7, Hélène Rey-Valette8
1 CIRAD - Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement, France
2 IITA - International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Yaoundé, Cameroon
3 IITA - International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan, Nigeria
4 ICRAF - World Agroforestry Centre, Nairobi, Kenya
5 ICRAF - World Agroforestry Centre, Yaoundé, Cameroon
6 AVRDC - The World Vegetable Center, Yaoundé, Cameroon
7 IRAD - Institut de recherche agricole pour le développement, Cameroon
8 UM - University of Montpellier, Montpellier, France

Innovation platforms (IPs) appear to be one of the most appropriate tools to operationalize research for development. Increasingly, agricultural research initiatives for development set up innovation platforms to facilitate the management and support of innovation processes. Yet, the mechanisms by which they operate are not well understood. This paper seeks to open the ‘black-box’ and proposes a framework to analyze processes that occur in innovation platforms from inception to maturity. Firstly, we use a New Institutional Economics (NIE) based analytical framework for the M&E of IP performance. Secondly, from a review of the literature, we identify three ways through which research could be done within IPs: 1) soft transfer, when research has readily available results that could help solve jointly identified problems; 2) co-creation, when researchers and IP members develop research objectives and protocols together; and 3) community-based research, when IP members set up experiments on their own. We propose that both frameworks should be used to improve the monitoring of IP dynamics.

Innovation platforms beyond projects and commodities: A case study of Lundazi, Zambia

Jens A. Andersson1, Mariana Wongtschowski2 and Davies Melele3
1 CIMMYT, 2 Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), The Netherlands, 3 Zambia Agricultural Research Institute (ZARI)

Innovation Platforms (IPs) are undoubtedly the most common manifestation of the growing popularity of Agricultural Innovation System (AIS) thinking in Agricultural Research for