

ESEE2019: 24<sup>th</sup> Seminar on Extension and Education

Agricultural Education and Extension tuned on innovation for sustainability. Experiences and perspectives

18-21 JUNE 2019, ACIREALE (ITALY)

**FAO side event: AKIS assessment for evidence-based policies and sustainable investments**

18 June 2019, 14.30-16.00h

**Abstract**

Sustainable agriculture and food systems are integral part of the solution for ensuring long-term global food security, rural poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. Innovation is recognized as a key instrument to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Innovation process is the result of a complex interaction between various actors and institutions. The national agricultural innovation system (AIS), in which those actors operate, is an open, evolving and complex system that encompasses relationships within and between organisations, institutions and socio-economic structures which determine the rate and direction of innovation. These multifaceted interactions are triggered by a complex globalized setting, such as market dynamics, challenges of addressing climate change, and making food and agriculture systems more sustainable, resilient and inclusive. This imposes a behavioral change in the actors of AIS, who increasingly undertake new, more and unusual roles and functions, often lacking capacities and incentives for that change, which finally challenges innovation process. Hence, policy makers around the world progressively realize the need for transforming AISs in general, and agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (EAS) in particular, towards a well-coordinated, demand –driven, effective and efficient multiactor system to improve responsiveness to multiple demands. The need to strengthen AIS was echoed during FAO's international symposium on agricultural innovation for family farmers held in November 2018 in Rome. Furthermore, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union for its new programme period has envisaged particular support for strengthening the innovation systems at EU Members States' level. The targeted support shall be based on national AIS policies and strategic plan grounded on solid assessments of national AIS structures, functions and governance, and its multiactor interactions, capacity and investment needs.

This side event will comprise presentations and a panel discussion around FAO tools for both AIS and agricultural EAS diagnostics aimed at supporting decisions on policy, capacity development and investment interventions, particularly linked to FAO's work on agricultural innovation and the new CAP program period in EU. Particular emphasis will be placed on effective integration of advisory services into overall AIS diagnostics at national level. Furthermore, the event will elaborate on monitoring and evaluation approaches for AIS, and would focus on the critical role of capacity development for agricultural innovation, as required capacities to innovate at all levels have to be in place prior investment plans are put in operation. To that end, the TAP Common Framework on capacity development for AIS and its application will be presented for further consideration to EU actors.

The event aims to conclude with identifying opportunities for knowledge sharing between FAO and EU Member States, including drawing lines of future collaborations.