

International Postgraduate Course Farming Systems and Rural Livelihoods: Vulnerability and Adaptation

7 – 18 October 2013

(Wondo Genet, Ethiopia)



SCOPE AND SET-UP OF THE COURSE

The livelihoods of rural people in sub-Saharan Africa are highly diverse and are strongly bound to the land. Climate change, population growth, and the internationalization of markets increase the stress on these already vulnerable farming and rural livelihood systems. Understanding the drivers, as well as their resilience and capacity to adapt, are key in the viability of these systems.

This postgraduate course provides skills and methods to analyse (the dynamics of) farming systems as embedded in the complex livelihoods of rural people in Africa. Typically, these skills and methods integrate agro-ecological analyses with understandings of the social organization of agricultural production, and the differential ways in which the wider socio-economic environment impacts on farming systems. Special attention will be given to the vulnerability of agricultural production, and aspects of food security in the face of global environmental, social and economic change. Tools for exploration of the adaptive capacity of rural livelihoods and their rural-urban connections will also be reviewed critically.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After the course the students are able to:

1. Understand farming system functioning and explain the theories underpinning farming systems analysis.
2. Use simple (participatory) methods for data collection and characterization of farming systems.
3. Interpret the concept of sustainable rural livelihoods, along with identifying and applying criteria, indicators and methods for its assessment.
4. Analyse the contribution of agriculture to rural livelihoods and assess farm and farming system performance. In this context focus will be on the farm-scale yield gap
5. Identify entry points, analyse trade-offs and evaluate opportunities for sustainable intensification, using scenario analysis and simple optimization models.

COURSE SET-UP

The course will consist of a series of lectures, discussions of these lectures convened by participants, field trips and on-site group work activities. Furthermore, using the DEED cycle (Describe, Explain, Explore and Design) a wide range of methods for description and analysis of farming systems will be introduced and used. These methods include:

- Resource flow mapping, village transects, farm descriptions
- Typologies of fields and farms, on-farm experiments
- Descriptive and multivariate statistics
- Simple simulation models at field and farm scale
- Fuzzy cognitive mapping
- Network analysis
- The course ends with a seminar

COURSE FEE*

PE&RC**, WIAS and WASS PhD's with TSP who have to pay a ticket	No charge They pay their ticket
PE&RC**, WIAS and WASS PhD's with TSP present in the region	€ 700.00
Other PhD and staff of organising institutes	€ 1,400.00
Non WU, Non PhD's	€ 2,500.00

* Includes course material, B&B, local travel, food and refreshments.

** Reduced fee only applies for PE&RC PhD's defending their thesis at Wageningen University

ORGANISERS

Organised by the Wageningen Centre for Agro-ecology and Systems Analysis (WACASA)

REGISTRATION & MORE INFORMATION

See: www.pe-rc.nl/Farming_Systems_and_Rural_Livelihoods.htm

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