




Community-based Research

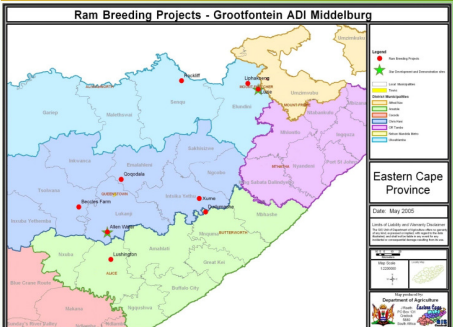

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 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA




Former Transkei and Ciskei

BACKGROUND

- 15 years experience in communal areas
- 5 star projects - involving questionnaires
- M Tech - Farming system for Allan Waters communal area in Eastern Cape Province
- Aloes projects - Ciskei: questionnaires
- Farming systems and rural livelihood survey of Emalaheni Municipality - questionnaires




Main Project

Establishment of ram breeding flocks for different communal farming areas of the Eastern Cape

OBJECTIVES

- Improvement of woolled sheep flocks of rural communal farmers
- Establishment of a group-breeding nucleus in each community
- Community group breeding flocks supply rams to neighbouring communities in the long term
- Adding on this project - legumes, camps, goats




How to start a community project?

- Community must be positive and farmers must be involved - farming agriculture committee
- Involve the extension officer - it is his community
- Arrange a meeting with the chief or headman, explaining project - not a must in E Cape
- Explain the project in full detail to the farmers
Remember the farmers have very little education, but have good farming skills
- Beware of high-tech systems




How to start a community project (2)

- First visit the community - view the animals or crops
- If animals or crops are poor - tell the farmer by taking part in project, his animals/crops will improve
- Take cell number of the farmers - lack of extension officers
- Never promise anything to farmers because these farmers have been made many promises by previous agricultural officers, consultants and government



Second Phase

- Make sufficient copies of the project
- Write the material and methods of project in their home language
- Form a project committee - if project involves sheep (sheep committee)
- Meet with this committee every quarter - discuss problems and achievements
- Visit the project as much as possible - show interest in the project



Local Farmers Day

- Organise a project farmers day once a year
- Invite one or two guest speakers for they can get tired of the same ideas over and over
- Invite a small group of the neighbouring community
- Do not invite politicians - they just make promises
- Farmers must take part in the farmers day
- It is a two way communication - farmers must ask questions and discuss their problems
- Organise a light lunch after the farmers day

Local Farmers Day (2)

- Alternate the farmers day with a tour to another village or agricultural institute
- Start a rural show - let farmers bring their animals (or crops) and show them off
- Organise a video day and show fresh ideas
- Have a practical day



Questionnaires - Problems

- Difficult to get correct answers, especially when asking rainfall figures, number of livestock, weaning percentages and income
- You need an interviewer who speaks the language and understands agricultural terms
- Questionnaire too long
- Getting right people to do questionnaire is difficult
- Double check your answers before you leave the village
- Keep good references so you can go back to the village and do follow up
- Report back on the results

PROBLEMS THAT HAVE OCCURED

- Internal fighting: project members and community
- Non-existence or weak extension officers - Ram breeding project
- Motivational problem in community
- Most of the people who are interested are illiterate and elderly



PROBLEMS THAT HAVE OCCURED (2)

- Lack of infrastructure and equipment - design or make use of few equipment (improvise)
- Limited potential of old farmers - labour
- Animals belong to father, brother or son who is working in city
- Failure of agricultural departments to coordinate extension services
- Communication problems - wrong dates and distribution of information

PROBLEMS THAT HAVE OCCURED (3)

- Camps - local politics, hidden agenda, own interests
- Pastures inside the camp are better than outside
- Camps - sheep and cattle farmers fighting over camps
- Cutting or making holes in the camps
- Cutting fences to make path that go to other villages



Exit Strategy

- Part of our problem was no/ limited exit strategy when project stops - Ram breeding project
- Can the village carry on with project?
- Do they have sufficient practical knowledge to do all the work?
- Can the extension officer assist with project when project team has left?
- Can they call on project team if they need help? (advice or visits)

Conclusions

- Community project can work but requires hard work, plenty of time
- Lot of explaining of new ideas, understanding the community
- Project design, strategy and implementation should be well negotiated, understood and communicated
- Project needs good monitoring
- You must have an interest/love to do community projects



Photos



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Thank you

