

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Communication for agricultural development in South East Asia

Description:

Communication for agricultural development in South East Asia: pathways, problems and possibilities. This study will investigate the relationships, constraints and opportunities that affect information flows between domestic and international agricultural scientists in selected SE Asian countries, and highlight the current status of the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in formal and informal networks used by these scientists. Possible solutions using ICTS will be suggested to overcome identified communication barriers between these scientists.

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Objectives:

To redress the imbalance of communication research into the sociology of science in developing countries, and investigate possible uses of ICTs to improve communications within and between agricultural scientists in SE Asia. This could have important implications for the ways in which scientists in international agricultural aid projects function in developing countries.

Research Questions

Specific questions to be investigated are:

1. How does agricultural scientific information flow formally and informally between agricultural scientists in SE Asia?
2. What factors influence the flow of agricultural information, particularly between domestic and international scientists in this region?
3. What roles do ICTs play in the formal and informal flows of agricultural scientific information in the region?
4. How could the flow of agricultural scientific information be improved between domestic and

international scientists?

5. What future role could ICTs play in improving the formal and informal flows of agricultural scientific information?
6. What are the research implications for national agencies, international research centres and donor organisations?

Research Methodologies A multimethod research methodology combining a number of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used in the research project. These include:

- Key informant interviews (held initially to decide on case studies and inform remaining research)
- Quantitative studies of selected institutions in the case studies from SE Asia, including assessment of their ICT resources,
- Citation analysis of selected domestic agricultural journals, matching selected case study areas,
- Online, email and face-to-face surveys in case studies,
- Social network analysis (using responses from surveys in case studies),
- Content analysis of network communication, and
- Interviews and group discussions with key respondents identified in surveys.



Meeting of international and domestic agricultural scientists in Laos

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