

Documentation for building and sharing agroecological knowledge

Jorge Chavez-Tafur, Paulo Petersen,
Frank van Schoubroeck and Edith van
Walsum

IAALD XIIIth World Congress, Montpellier, 26-29 April 2010

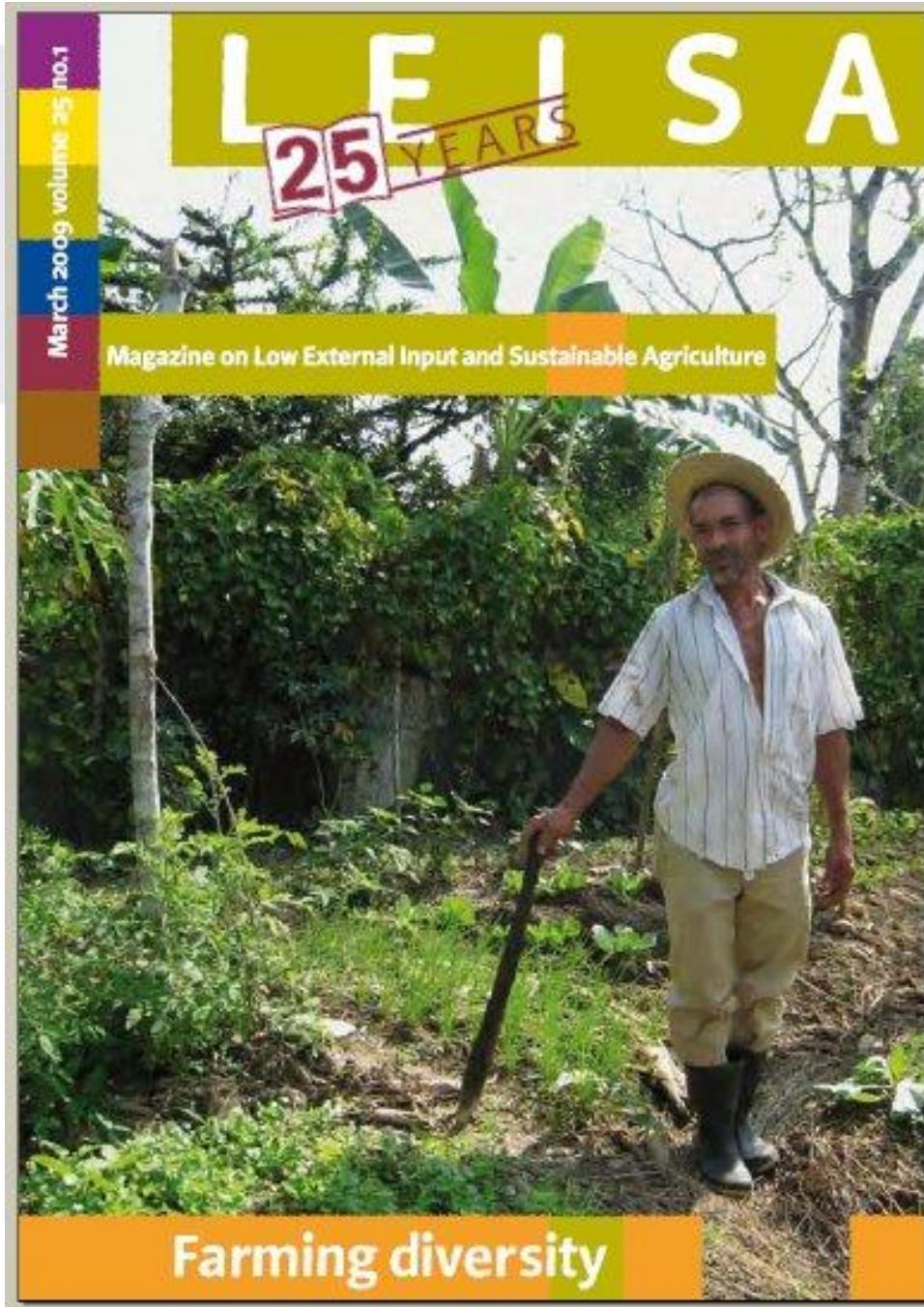
ileia

Centre for Learning on Sustainable Agriculture

- Increasing recognition of the importance of agriculture for development
- Increasing recognition that “business as usual is not an option”
- But practices which are *already* contributing get little visibility

For 25 years, ILEIA has been promoting the exchange of information about small scale farming all over the world

→identifying initiatives and interesting developments taking place at the local level – and sharing them with a wider audience

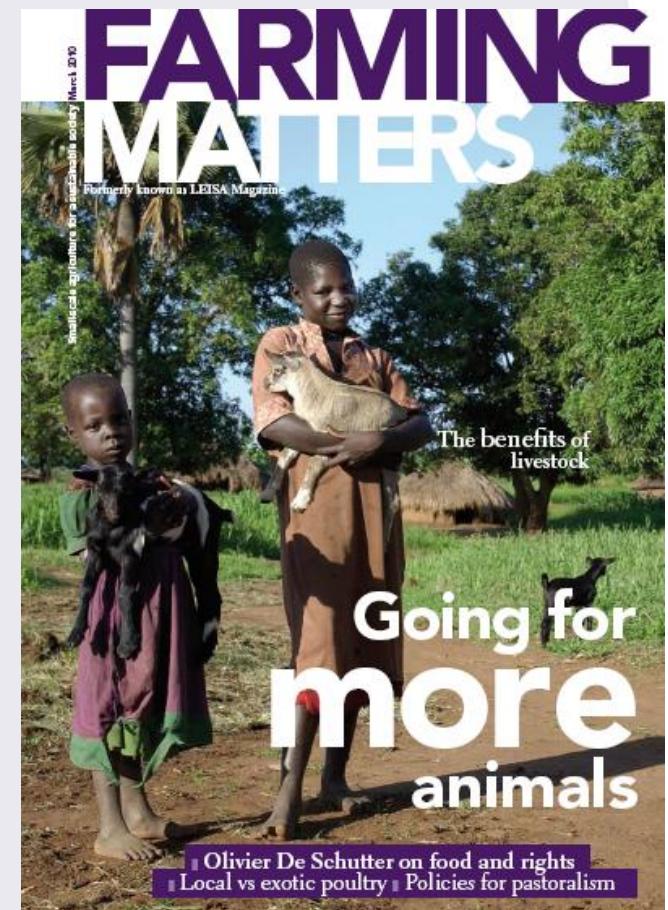


ILEIA Newsletter

→ LEISA Magazine

→ Farming Matters

20,000 subscribers
150 countries



可持续农业

应对气候变化



CENTER FOR BIODIVERSITY AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE
云南省生物多样性和传统知识研究会



- 7 regional editions
- 30,000 more subscribers

AGRICULTURES NETWORK

WELCOME / BIENVENIDO / SALAM / BIENVENUE / BEM-VINDO / 欢

AgriCultures Network

Success stories from small-scale farmers are often hard to find. They do exist, and there is much to be learnt from them. They can help improve productivity, generate income, and empower farmers.

The AgriCultures Network produces magazines and other media to build knowledge and exchange information, and stimulates debate and concerted action among key stakeholders. In this way we promote sustainable family farming, stressing its capacity to address structural global problems such as hunger, poverty, environmental degradation and climate change.



farmers **AgriCultures** **Network**

help farming promote hard stories often success east
small-scale structural information generate stressing incomes
degradation improve debate concerted magazines
degradation stakeholders
news poverty family global produces sustainable
knowledge climate build address problems
media key hunger way much action
fund power environmental
environmental
power
fund

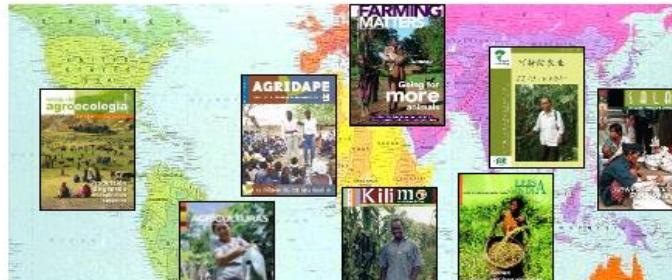
Learning AgriCultures - Module 1 and 2 available for downloading

Call for contributions - The water issue

Found online - new books, quotes and websites

[Check out these blogs](#)

EDITIONS



- ▶ Global edition 
 - ▶ Latin American edition - Español 
 - ▶ Brazilian edition - Português 
 - ▶ Indian edition - English 
 - ▶ Indonesian edition - Bahasa Indonesia 

Results:

- Articles used as training material
- Used for awareness raising purposes
- A source of inspiration

Rajendra Uperty, an agriculture extension officer in Nepal, came across an article in LEISA Magazine on SRI, the System of Rice Intensification. It was new to him and made him curious. He contacted the author for more information, and then decided to try it out. The results were amazing. Now, eight years later, he has successfully introduced SRI in the region where he works, much to the benefit of the farmers he works with. He was also encouraged to write two articles for LEISA Magazine himself, and to participate in a World Bank competition, which he won!



The large impact of a small article

Rajendra Upadhyay

One February afternoon, almost eight years ago, I was going through a copy of the LEISA Magazine, looking for a good story to read. A photo of a rice plant, that seemed unusually big, attracted me to read one of



The article that inspired Mr. Upadhyay was called "Update on the System of Rice Intensification" and appeared in LBSA Magazine, Vol 16.4, December 2000.

the articles. That short story, written by Norman Uphoff and his colleagues at the Cornell International Institute for Food, Agriculture, and Development (CIIFAD), was surprising and particularly interesting to me. I was especially attracted to the possibility of obtaining higher rice yields by using regular varieties, without increasing the use of chemical fertilizers, or without additional investments.



Rajendra Upadhyay (left) shows the results of using SRI (System of Rice Intensification) to technicians and farmers.

the SRI method. I was very surprised when I got a quick response from Mr Uphoff. He sent a lot of detailed information, and also described the experiences seen in other countries. The

article, together with his e-mail, was my first source of information about SRI. At that time I had just returned home after completing my Master of Science degree, and I was looking for a new job. I was initially planning to go to the capital city, Kathmandu, but the SRI information I had found made me think of trying it out somewhere in the field. So I asked the secretary of the Agriculture and Cooperatives Ministry if I could start working at the District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) in Morang. He was happy to hear my ideas, and

The article did not include a detailed description of the SRI method, the System of Rice Intensification. But at the bottom of it I found the e-mail address of Norman Uphoff. I did not have much experience in writing to foreigners, so I was unsure and thought about it quite a bit, before deciding to write a short e-mail to request more information about

A comparison of SRI vs. conventional rice production in the Al-Mishkhab Rice Research Station near Najaf, Iraq

The positive results we found, together with my increased confidence, encouraged me to enter the "Development Market Place 2005 Award" competition organised by the World Bank. We won the top prize, and the money we received helped us disseminate SRI in other parts of the country. We published a booklet and also a poster, and circulated both all through Nepal. These publications motivated individuals

SRI today
SRI is a method of rice cultivation developed more than 20 years ago in Madagascar. It is based on a set of practices which enhance plant growth and development, and increase yields. It does not increase the use of inputs, but rather reduces their use. These principles include using younger seedlings (8-12 days old) and wider spacing (one seedling per hill, with 25 x 25 cm as a starting distance). Another principle is to avoid continuous flooding, to encourage the healthy growth of roots and of micro-organisms.

This method is increasingly being supported by donors and governments. The World Bank has a major project in Tamil Nadu, the southernmost state of India, with a goal of 25 000 hectares over 5 years, while the state government itself has set a target of 75 000 ha for 2008/09 season or (and has already reported 46 600 ha hectares last December). This is the most extensive uptake, although the province of Sichuan in China reports 200 000 ha hectares for the 2008/09 season, and Zhejiang province reports over 130 000 ha hectares. This has grown since three years ago, when the number of farmers practising SWB was estimated at 100 000, and the total area covered under 50 000 ha hectares.

Estimates of this sort need to consider the difficulties in determining who is practising SRI. According to Norman Uphoff, "SRI is a matter of degree—how many of the recommended practices are being used, and how well—rather than kind". So while the number of farmers who are using SRI practices to some extent is probably as high as those who are fully engaged in it, "feel comfortable saying that there are by now over 1 million farmers using the methods in a verifiable way, and on over 5 million hectares". These numbers are expected to increase further in the coming years. (ICT)

Rajendra Upadhyay, Agriculture Extension Officer,
District Agriculture Development Office, Biratnagar,
Morang, Nepal. E-mail: rajanup@yahoo.com

Mr. Uperty himself later wrote an article in LEISA Magazine, 'Performance of SRI in Nepal', which was published as a *Field Note* in Vol. 21.2, June 2005. His second article, 'SRI takes root in Nepal', was published in Vol. 22.4 of the magazine, December 2006. All articles are freely available through www.leisa.org.

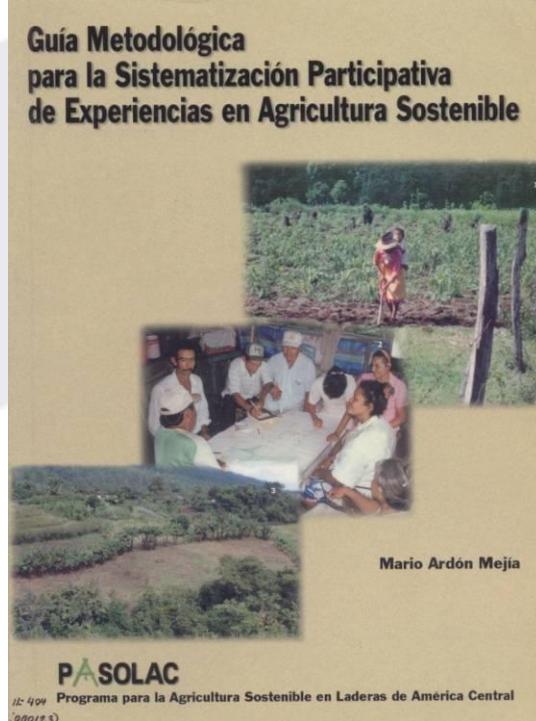


Do you have a similar story to tell?

In this section, Tell us about an article you have read in LBSA Magazine, and how it inspired you to try a new idea, or test out a technology – and then what happened next. We would like to hear about why we should feature you or your community. Send us a 300 word outline about your work to jubilee@lisa.nl clearly marked "Inspired by".

- A learning process resulting from the many activities taking place in the field and from the exchange of information
- But – a process that does not happen often enough, as a result of many different reasons

- Many efforts, many ideas on
capitalisation
sistematizacion
documentation
- And many organisations trying to promote this



JL-404 Programa para la Agricultura Sostenible en Laderas de América Central (PASOLAC)

Documentation Manual

Documentation Manual



Prepared by SAMPARK

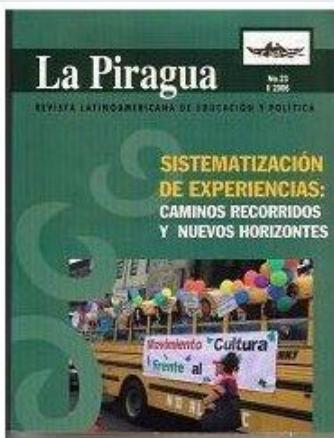
Supported by PACS

Sampark - Advocacy & Communication Consultancy
3051, Second floor, Gilda and D.M.C. Salazar, 70a Mariano Gómez 30a, Managua Central, Managua, Nicaragua
Ph. 5050 0031 Email - sampark@outlook.com.nic



Guía de Sistematización

gtz



La Piragua

REVISTA LATINOAMERICANA DE EDUCACIÓN Y POLÍTICA

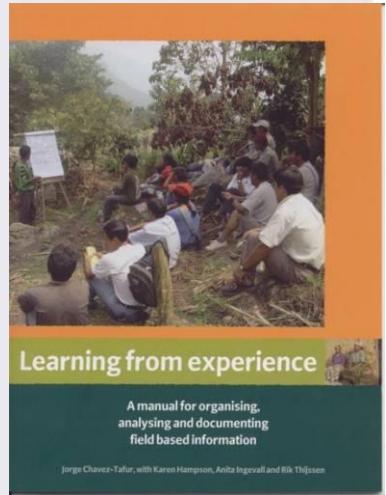
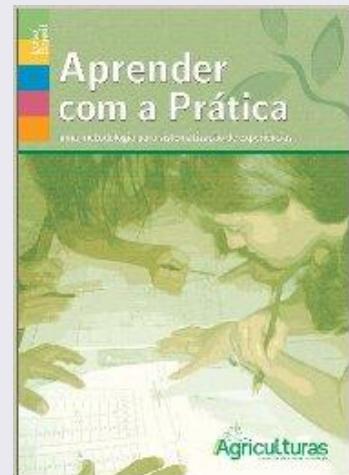
SISTEMATIZACIÓN DE EXPERIENCIAS: CAMINOS RECORRIDOS Y NUEVOS HORIZONTES

Documentando, evaluando y aprendiendo de nuestros proyectos de desarrollo:

Manual de sistematización participativa

Daniel Selener
con Gabriela Zapata y Christopher Purdy

Instituto Internacional de Reconstrucción Rural



Learning from experience
A manual for organising, analysing and documenting field based information

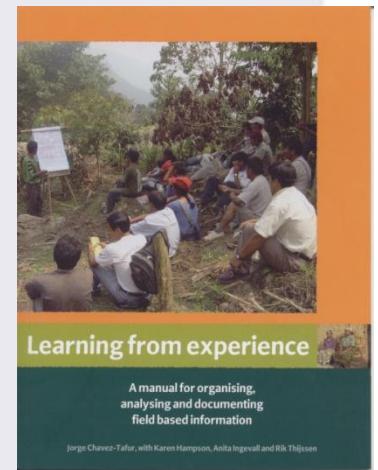
Jorge Chávez-Tafur, with Karen Hampson, Anita Ingewall and Rik Thijssen

Since 2007, ILEIA has been running a documentation programme:

- Capacity building of regional partners
- An increased documentation of field experiences
- Validation of documentation methods and the dissemination of results

Work started with the publication of a short manual / set of guidelines

which was later “tried” in many different contexts (with and without involvement of ILEIA and its partners)



- VETAID, Mozambique
- CONCERN, Tanzania
- SEE, Inner Mongolia, China
- Misereor partners, India and Bangladesh
- DURAS project, Vietnam and Benin
- Intercooperation, Pakistan
- ANA, Brazil

SHA
TA HAO

AKEREMBE
EXPERIENCE

KARI KUBWA CHA MULAA
SI ZAIDI KARIBA AWATAA





- 项目主体 (who)

是否可持续

性

环境影响

资源利用

外部影响 (环境社
会)

可推广性

文化适应性

社会
参与度

These “cases” led to

- several articles published on our magazines
- funding proposals and PR material
- learning: *“it is during this process that I’ve learned most about my project”*
- lessons about documentation

http://documentation.leisa.info/what-for.html

Most Visited Getting Started Latest Headlines

Recently Bookmarked Water ecosystem ser... Contract farming: Par... Finance Alliance for S... Expanding the frontie... Indigenous peoples' f... Business management... CSIS Agricultural productivi...

Documentation index.php (application/pdf Object)

DOCUMENTATION

OVERVIEW
TOPICS
METHODS
PURPOSE
PARTICIPANTS
TOOLS

home > purpose

WHAT ARE WE AIMING AT?

What's the purpose of a documentation process? Even if we all talk about a "learning process", those involved in documentation, capitalisation or in systematization activities mention different reasons for carrying them out. Whatever the reason, it is important that it is clear before a process starts.

Looking in detail at my experience takes lots of time that I cannot dedicate to other important work. Why should I do it?

[Add a comment](#)

No user contributed comments

Facilitate a knowledge-building process

Participants of the ABA workshops, Brasilia, November 2009

The Brazilian agroecology network organised a series of workshops throughout 2009, all of them in preparation for the 6th Congress of Agroecology which took place in Curitiba, in southern Brazil, during the first week of December. During these workshops, representatives of many different extension, research and education organisations got together to discuss their work and share the main lessons coming out from it. If documentation is part of a broader process that aims at building knowledge, then it should encourage dialogue between different types of knowledge. This must be a process which does not follow a blue-print approach, and one in which farmers are the main actors. It requires a thorough understanding of the context in which it takes place (in terms of economy, ecology, culture, politics, etc.), and it should permanently focus "not on what it should show, but rather in what is actually taking place". Its main objective is to lead to empowerment, and to the establishment of a learning network.



Contribute to wider knowledge... and more

Esteban Tapella, October 2009

In "Advocacy for change", a short booklet published by Action Aid, Esteban Tapella presents some basic concepts and considerations. Mr Tapella, an Argentinian social worker specialised in development issues, points that "the decision to systematise lies in the idea that experiences must be used to generate understanding, and that lessons learned can improve ongoing implementation and contribute to wider knowledge". Looking further at the different purposes of a systematization process,



What drives organisations to document their work?

- Their desire “*to show what we do*”
- to understand what happened, and why did that happen
- to “*develop a collective reflection process*”
- to “*help break the feeling of isolation*”

What to document?

- Field experiences
- A social innovation process, such as the establishment of specific partnerships
- “Best practices”??
- Ownership if the information (eg IPRs)
- A process of unexpected results

Who is to be involved?

- A participatory process, many stakeholders
- The “owners” of the experience
- Representativeness
- Time, resources and other issues
- A co-ordination role
- Power issues

And how to go about it?

- Follow some principles, not a recipe
- Setting boundaries and describing
- Analysis and conclusions
- A detailed plan
- Emphasis on the dissemination of results

Documentation / capitalisation / sistematizacion can

- increase visibility
- enhance (collective) learning
- help build knowledge on agroecology and sustainable agriculture

We tried to follow our own advice and learned from practice

Further challenges

- Dissemination of results + lessons
- Promote more documentation processes
- Focus on institutional innovations
- Attention to policy and advocacy issues

Thank you!