

Interact

E-briefing of the **ACU University Extension Network**

Supported by the Development Partnerships in Higher Education (DeIPHE) programme and the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU)

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GOING GLOBAL WITH EXTENSION: BARRIERS TO THE ADOPTION OF A WEB-BASED RESOURCE

(Source: Journal of Agricultural and Extension Education, Vol. 15, No. 2)

The emergence of the Internet as a tool for extension systems worldwide offers previously unimagined opportunities for collaboration and resource sharing. This study determined the perceptions held by extension agents with regard to the potential barriers to the adoption of "eXtension," a Web-based educational resource. A random sample of 237 agents was selected to complete an online survey instrument which measured their perceptions of five potential barriers: a) concerns about time, b) concerns about incentives, c) financial concerns, d) planning issues, and e) technology concerns.

See original abstract at <http://www.aiaee.org/archive/Vol-15.3.pdf> (subscription required for full article)

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KENYA TO HOST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(Source: Research Africa)

The international conference of the Flemish Inter-university Council will take place in Kenya from 2 to 5 February next year, under the theme "research for sustainable development and institutional capacity building".

See original story at [http://www.Research-Africa.net/#main\\$.Data.News.All\\$preview\\$612520\\$](http://www.Research-Africa.net/#main$.Data.News.All$preview612520) (subscription required for full article)

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AFRICAN COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAMME (AFCAP) UNDERWAY

(Source: Research for Development/DFID)

FCAP is a poverty-targeted transport initiative that will operate in Sub-Saharan African countries and aims to improve the sustainable access of poor women and men in rural communities to social and economic opportunities. The programme identifies and supports the uptake of low-cost, proven solutions for rural access that maximise the use of local resources (labour, materials, enterprise, and ingenuity). AFCAP funds applied research to rural access problems, communicates the research outcomes to stakeholders, and supports the mainstreaming of the research results into practice.

See original story at URL

<http://www.research4development.info/SearchResearchDatabase.asp?ProjectID=60571>

(open access)

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ECONOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF THE DETERMINANTS OF PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES; AN EXAMPLE FROM PAKISTAN

(Source: Journal of Extension Systems, Vol 24, No 1, June 2008)

Farmers' participation in agricultural extension services is quintessential for increasing agricultural production. To explore what factors contribute to a household's participation in agricultural extension, this study was carried out in North West Frontier Province of Pakistan.

Using a binary logistic regression model, this paper depicts that possession of land is a key determinant for a household participation in extension services. The variables included in the model have attributes of both individual as well as household level characteristics. However, only land-holding showed significant influence on participation in agricultural extension services. It is concluded that the extension workers visit only large and well situated farmers and do not go to small farmers.

For the long run productivity of the overall extension system, it is recommended that the extension workers should promote regular contacts with small farmers who constitute a large proportion of the farming community.

See original story at <http://www.jesonline.org/current.htm#Jan> (subscription required for full article)

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ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES ISSUES CALL FOR PAPERS

(Source: Research Africa)

The Association of African Universities is calling for papers for its 12th general conference, to be held in Abuja from 4 to 9 May 2009 under the theme "sustainable development in Africa: the role of higher education". Abstracts must cover the sub-themes: teaching and learning; R&D; engaging the community; and greening the campus.

See original story at [http://www.Research-Africa.net/#main\\$.Data.News.All\\$preview\\$611570\\$](http://www.Research-Africa.net/#main$.Data.News.All$preview611570)

(subscription required for full article)

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MORE SUPPORT NEEDED FOR DRYLAND FARMERS

(Source: SciDev.Net)

Despite being the "backbone" of developing economies, poor dryland farmers are often sidelined in terms of governmental support, says William Dar.

Dar, director-general of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), says that in addition to financial support, dryland farmers need better policies, more effective institutions, improved infrastructure and better access to higher quality inputs such as seeds.

Agricultural research, which usually receives less than one per cent of public money, should also be better funded, says Dar, as it plays a crucial role in improving crop yields and farmers' income. The Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research recently found that every US\$1 spent on international agricultural research leads to US\$9 worth of additional food produced in developing countries.

Proactive measures by governments in support of dryland farmers could alleviate the global food crisis, concludes Dar.

See original story at

http://www.bdafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=10922&Itemid=5821

(open access)

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EVENTS: WARIMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE CONCLUDES IN IBADAN

(Source: Research4Development/DFID)

WARIMA, the West African Research and Innovation Association, has held their second annual conference at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, on 10-12th November 2008. The theme of the conference was Institutionalisation of Research Management.

Over 80 delegates, representing Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia and the United Kingdom, attended this conference, including representatives in fields of knowledge dissemination, innovation, and research management from across the region. A half-day seminar on managing collaborations was featured, with a special focus on DeLPHE project application processes and project management.

Full conference proceedings will appear soon at <http://www.warima.org/AnnualConference2008.asp> (open access)

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DeLPHE Project In Focus

In this section, we highlight existing DeLPHE projects that are making a difference. For further information on these projects, please contact the British Council at delphe@britishcouncil.org

Bio-energy for Sustainable Development and Environmental Rehabilitation in Ethiopia (DeLPHE Round Three)

Partner Institutions

- Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia)
- University of Gonder (Ethiopia)
- University of York (UK)

Project Purpose

To develop methods for the production of bio energy (bio diesel, bio-ethanol, and biogas) from biomass, train development workers and make the technology available for rural communities as a means of income generation and for the rehabilitation of degraded lands.

Summary of Activity and Highlights:

- Development of methodologies for production of three biofuels – biodiesel, bioethanol and biogas
- Berbra (*milletia ferruginea*) plant identified as an alternative source for biodiesel production – work taking place on characterisation of Berbera protein as animal feed or food supplement
- Distribution of another source of biodiesel production, Jatropha, mapped – training of farmers to collect seed for biodiesel production will take place in next phase of project
- Isolating and selecting of efficient yeast strains from traditional fermented beverages – to improve yield of ethanol from molasses for bioethanol production
- Negotiations with Gia Association to produce all parts of ethanol stove in Ethiopia – stove used mainly by Somali refugees living in Ethiopia. This stove along with using ethanol produced from molasses could save country huge amounts of money in foreign currency if used in preference to imported kerosene
- Methods developed for small scale production of biogas using plastic containers – cow dung and left over food being used as raw materials. This will be tested in rural settings in the next year after which the process can be optimised and extension workers trained
- Working with local biodiesel company to evaluate commercial production of Berbra – currently used widely as shade trees for coffee growth

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*The **ACU University Extension Network** is a programme of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, in part of its support for the **Development Partnerships in Higher Education Programme**. More information on the programme can be found at <http://www.acu.ac.uk/delphe/delphe.html>*