“The Way Forward”: Designing a BSc Programme in Agricultural Extension Education, Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya

Timothy K. Kock  
Doctoral Student  
M. Craig Edwards  
Professor  
Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership  
College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources  
Oklahoma State University  
445 Agricultural Hall  
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078-6032  
Tel. #: 405.744.8143  
FAX #: 405.744.5176  
tim.kock@okstate.edu

Reuben Muasya, Dean & Associate Professor  
Linnet Gohole, Lecturer, Violet Mugalavai, Lecturer  
Caleb Othieno, Professor, Jackson Kitilit, Lecturer  
School of Agriculture & Biotechnology  
Moi University  
Chepkoilel. Campus  
P.O. Box 1125  
Eldoret, Kenya 30100  
rmuasya@africaonline.co.ke  
lgohole@africaonline.co.ke  
vkade@yahoo.com

Abstract  
Agricultural producers the world over face a plethora of challenges; the needs of smallholders and subsistence farmers are especially acute. Most countries allocate some resources to staff Agricultural Extension (or Advisory) services to assist in mitigating farmers’ needs for information and training. However, the efficacy and future orientation of government-sponsored Extension in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) nations, including Kenya, is being closely scrutinized (Davis, 2008; Davis & Place, 2003; Rivera & Davis, 2008, Wallace, 1997). Faculty of Moi University, in collaboration with staff of their National Extension System and ACDI/VOCA, recognized the need to develop a course of study (“BSc Programme”) in Agricultural Extension Education (AEE). Moreover, they perceived a need for Extension personnel to be more highly competent communicators and educators as well as knowledgeable generalists about technical agriculture. ACDI/VOCA supported two volunteers to travel to Kenya to assist Moi faculty in developing curriculum for a BSc programme in AEE. The volunteers included a professor of agricultural education of a USA land-grant institution and a doctoral student with seven years of work experience as an Extension professional. (This allocation complemented Kenya’s existing ACDI/VOCA “Farmer-to-Farmer” program.)
The poster presentation will explain how the volunteers and six Moi faculty developed the programme’s curriculum: Week 1 - Sharing/listening sessions; Week 2 - Describing the content of 10 AEE courses; Week 3 - Determining the overall four-year curriculum, including all required courses for AEE students. The 10 courses and descriptions, developed based on rationale derived from research describing AEE needs in the USA and internationally (e.g., Rivera & Davis, 2008; Scheer, Ferrari, Earnest, & Connors, 2006), will be shared as well. Pending approval by its senate, Moi intends to enroll their first AEE students in fall 2009.

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