



Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

SLUkurs

Syllabus

PNG0037 Participatory Research Methods, 7.5 credits

Syllabus approved

2011-10-20

Subjects

Rural Development

Education cycle

Third cycle

Grading scale

Pass / Failed

The requirements for attaining different grades are described in the course assessment criteria which are contained in a supplement to the course syllabus. Current information on assessment criteria shall be made available at the start of the course.

Language

English

Prior knowledge

To have been accepted as a post graduate student at a university department.

Objective, including learning outcomes

The main objectives of this course are to introduce the learner to the theory and practice of basic field survey research skills. These skills include: qualitative research methodology; Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA),

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA); and other forms of analysis focusing on qualitative study design, data collection and analysis. The course includes hands on practical exercises and a short field assignment.

After completion of this course the learner should:

- be acquainted with the foundations of natural and social science research principles
- be familiar with the concepts of participatory research methodologies
- have acquired skills in selection and application of participatory methods in the analysis of issues
- be able to participate and contribute in interdisciplinary research teams
- be familiar with analysis, interpretation and communication of participatory research findings

Content

The main thrust of participatory research is skills training in designing, communication and interviewing techniques, and in engaging in interactive learning sessions with stakeholders. The course comprises three modules and more specifically students will in:

Module I. Become acquainted with the foundations of natural and social science research principles; how to identify a research question or questions that can be designed as qualitative study designs requiring participatory research methods. The focus here will be on determining the problem and how to phrase it as a research question, or questions.

Module II. Be familiar with the repertoire of tools essential for designing and conducting participatory research studies using semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, participant observation, and developing basic skills in a sample of interactive field survey approaches. Emphasis will be on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Learning and Action, Rapid Appraisal Procedures (RAP), and qualitative research analysis using SPSS and content theme categorisation.

Module III. The course will include case specific examples from researchers either in the core of their PhD research studies or post-doctoral research that in various ways have employed participatory research tools. Group reflections, analysis and discussions with the researchers will be part of the lecture session's group work facilitation. A great deal of the work is conducted in small groups and as fieldwork as a means of imparting group dynamic skills.

The participatory research methods course emphasises interactive learning, group dynamics and experiential learning. The learning sessions include discussions, participatory exercises, and videos of participatory research and analysis of PRA exercises in class and in the field. Students will be coached in the importance of rapport building and group dynamics through practicals. The field assignment encompasses tools from the schools of Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). It is the responsibility of each group to plan, execute and analyse the results of fieldwork. Each group will be expected to hand in a written report not exceeding six pages with one and half spacing; 12 points; including references.

An overall theme is identified as the central focus for understanding the use and application of participatory research methods. This acts as a guide for students to undertake their task as a group assignment. Using all the tools and skills gained in the course, participants design an independent study whereby they define their primary and secondary data collection methods; study subjects, method for collecting information from informants, compile and analyse. The whole study is synthesized and submitted as a written report not exceeding eight pages with one and half spacing; 12 points; including references. The report must be submitted two weeks after the scheduled classes in order to pass.

Requirements for examination

The examination will be composed of several parts: A diary with reflections on the topics covered in the lectures and working sessions, an eight page word report (including maps, diagrams and tables) on the group assignment, oral presentations and active participation in the group assignments and activities.

Additional information

Venue: Ultuna Campus, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Uppsala, Sweden 31 October - 18 November 2011.

Course team 2011;

- Linley Chiwona-Karltun, PhD International Health, Dept. of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU)
- Professor David Gibbon, PhD Agronomy, Rural Livelihood Systems, United Kingdom
- Alex R. Arévalo Vásquez, MSc. Rural Development and Natural Resource Management, Sweden

The course is given as part of the research school Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods in International Development, NRML.

Responsible department

Department of Urban and Rural Development