



action, which uses agro-ecological concepts to analyse problems, carry out experiments, conduct training for other farmers, protect the health of the community and mobilise support from government agencies and the public.

Community IPM emerged from training programs that used the FFS approach. Across Asia, the graduates of FFS have decided to plan and manage 'follow-up' activities involving three interrelated elements: i) training and learning processes; ii) experimentation and knowledge-generation, and iii) organising and group development. Together, these elements enable farmers to *"stand on their own and think for themselves...to do their own field observations, make their own discoveries, make their own decisions, and take action on their own"*. (quote from an IPM Farmer-Trainer in Indonesia)

- farmers are conducting FFSs for other farmers
- IPM is being incorporated into the curriculum of local schools
- Field studies are organised and implemented by groups of FFS graduates
- Action research facilities, involving a number of studies are being carried out by IPM farmers over a number of cropping seasons
- IPM farmer clubs, associations and congresses have been organised by FFS graduates
- advocacy and efforts to mobilise funding from local government in support of community action has been organised by IPM farmers

As part of these community-based activities, IPM often encompasses a number of agro-ecological concerns (bio-control, soils, and seeds) and different social groups (men, women farmers, school children the disabled). Acknowledging that women perform over 50% of the labour involved in intensive rice cultivation in Asia, Community IPM has endeavoured to include women in the implementation and planning of IPM. In China for example, FFS and training of farmers as trainers have been specifically designed for women, with evident benefits in fitting the group's activities to women's timetables and education level, and avoiding male dominance. Greater emphasis is needed on educating women about pesticide poisoning, as in some countries like Cambodia and Vietnam, it is often the women doing the spraying.

During the course of its development, FAO's Community IPM program has covered all the main rice producing developing countries of East, Southern and South East Asia (with the exception of PDR Korea and Myanmar)

- In Indonesia, Vietnam and parts of Bangladesh the majority of rice producers in the major rice growing areas have now been directly or indirectly reached through the IPM FFS. 83% of all Vietnam's rice growing villages have had at least one rice FFS

Community IPM initiatives in Health

Farmer self-surveillance on the incidence of poisoning has been included into some FFSs. The primary purpose of which is education, but also to generate valuable data. This data is shared among farmer groups and with local health authorities to ensure a first-hand understanding of the health effects of pesticides among the community.

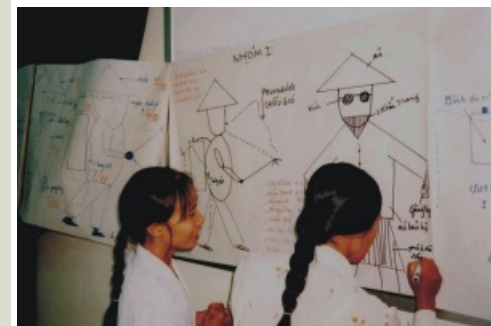
This health component designed to integrate human issues into the IPM ecological paradigm, also includes two other components: farmer-to-farmer health studies and school children health studies. These studies include 5 surveys that farmers conduct among themselves:

- signs and symptoms of poisoning
- classification of the pesticides used by brand and common name, hazard level, and chemical family
- quantification of yearly spray frequency, total litres of pesticide solution exposure, and numbers of pesticide per tank
- observation of pesticide exposure and protection used during spraying
- observation of community pesticide storage and disposal practices.

A survey done on farmers' perception of pesticides in Cambodia revealed that farmers believed pesticides made their crops look healthy and therefore increased its market price. Many thought that they had no choice because the risk of not spraying and possibly losing the crop to pests far outweighed the risk of being poisoned. However, those that have attended IPM classes have uniformly enjoyed the surveys and feel they learn a tremendous amount:

"I always knew pesticides were bad for my health but now I know for sure and what the real effects are."

There is also evidence that trained farmers experience fewer instances of acute or chronic poisoning and that they rely more on cultural practices and the management of natural enemies to control rice pests.



Further Information

www.communityipm.org - this site contains many documents and links to other sites.

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