

**CONSTRAINTS INVOLVED IN FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS (FFS)
APPROACH IN SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF RICE-IPM IN
KURUNEGALA DISTRICT**

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The concept of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) was originally developed as an extension methodology for Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Indonesia in 1989. Sri Lanka was established FFS to Rice-IPM in collaboration with FAO during the period of 1995 to 2002. Even it was well functioning in its early stage, number of failure cases were high in the latter part. Therefore the goal of this is to assess constraints and to design a mechanism to re-establish FFS program. Study was conducted during 2008/2009 *Maha* season. Six FFS were randomly selected for the study and 10 farmers were randomly selected from each FFS. A questionnaire survey was administered to collect cross sectional data.

Thirty three percent of farmers were well aware of FFS while 32 percent and 35 percent of them had intermediate and low level of awareness respectively. Of them 46.7 percent of farmers adopted the IPM moderately. This result emphasizes the importance of follow up programs. Participation of women Agricultural Instructor as facilitators, tenure condition, problems of land extent, conducting of week day programs, selection of age groups, education level, part time farming and frequency of farmers' participation were the main constraints in the FFS program. Further lack of access to technical inputs of the IPM package also observed.

This result clearly emphasized the importance of careful selection of the farmers and officers to the program and establishing a mechanism to make available the technical inputs and services at farmer vicinity. Networking of functions and effective monitoring of the services of officers involved is necessary. Finally a National policy and external funding are seem to be the pro activities to FFS program to re-establish of Rice-IPM in Sri Lanka.

Key words: Farmer Field Schools (FFS), Integrated Pest Management (IPM)