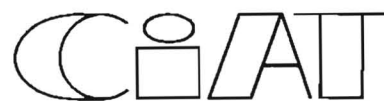


**VIDEO:
"THE IPRA METHOD"
A STUDY GUIDE**



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**VIDEO:
"THE IPRA METHOD"
A STUDY GUIDE**

by
Jacqueline A. Ashby
María del Pilar Guerrero

**IPRA Projects
CIAT**

Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical
Apartado Aéreo 6713
Cali, Colombia

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~~VIDEO~~ "THE IPRA METHOD" Participatory Research in Agriculture

STUDY QUESTIONS

In this video, you will see an agronomist and an anthropologist, members of an on-farm research team, involved in various encounters with scientists and small farmers. After watching the video, answer the following questions:

1. Identify five different types of information obtained by the agronomist and the anthropologist before establishing on-farm trials with farmers:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

2. What do the agronomist and the anthropologist do with this information, that is, how do they make use of it?

3. What type of information do the researchers obtain from farmers during the on-farm trials?

4. What do the researchers do with this information obtained from farmers during the experiments? What result is emphasized in the video?

5. What type of information do the researchers give farmers?

6. Why do they give this information to farmers? How does sharing this information help the researchers?

7. What attitude toward farmers do the researchers convey? What image of themselves do they try to present to farmers?

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____

VIDEO "THE IPRA METHOD"

Notes For Discussion of the Study Questions

These notes were prepared for use by instructors on the basis of experience using the video to stimulate discussion during training activities.

Note to the instructor: You may want to review the questions with the audience before showing the video.

1. **Q:** Identify five different types of information obtained by the agronomist and the anthropologist before establishing on-farm trials with farmers.

- A:**
- (1) Information about local practices and local technology.
 - (2) Information about farmers' own experiments, or experiences in trying out new ideas on their own initiative.
 - (3) Information about farmers' problems and priorities.
 - (4) Farmers' reactions to proposed innovations.
 - (5) Farmers' ideas about how to test the proposed innovations.

Note: The audience may list very concrete elements, such as information about weeding, ploughing, or plant practices, etc. The instructor needs to encourage discussion to go from the particular to the general with the question: What type of information does this represent? What ideas do researchers get from farmers?

2. **Q:** What do the agronomist and the anthropologist do with this information, that is, how do they make use of it?

A: They use this information to plan research with farmers and with station scientists: the ideas generated from discussions with farmers are incorporated into scientific designs for replicated trials (the same trial is planted on several farms to obtain comparable results).

Note: Discussion of this question can clarify that interaction with farmers, before trials are planted, involves not only **diagnosis of farmers'**

problems but also active involvement of farmers in **prescreening** technology components before these go into trials. Prescreening enables farmers to contribute ideas towards defining trial objectives (e.g., comparing different types of fertilizers) and non-experimental variables (type of plot, trial management).

3. Q: **What type of information do the researchers obtain from farmers during the on-farm trials?**

A: This information includes farmers' opinions of technology components (varieties are shown) and reactions to possible advantages or disadvantages (e.g., weeding the cassava). Farmers are selecting promising components. In the process, researchers are learning concretely about what farmers are looking for: what makes a technology (e.g., variety) useful from the farmers' point of view.

Note: The instructor can point out that the video shows researchers learning from farmers (the farmer is the visual center of attention; the farmer speaks and the researcher listens). The audience may pick out specific elements (this variety is good, poor, tastes good, etc.) and the instructor needs to encourage discussion to go from the specific to the general with the question: "What does knowing this about the varieties tell the researchers?"

4. Q: **What do the researchers do with this information obtained from farmers during the experiments? What result is emphasized in the video?**

A: The researchers take the information on farmers' reactions to the technology back to the research station scientists, where it is incorporated into further improvements and new research. The result emphasized in the video is **feedback to research**.

Note: Discussion should highlight that the video does not tell you whether farmers adopt any of the technologies tested in the trials, because the focus is on involving farmers in **research**. The objective of the researchers, which is highlighted in the video, is to obtain information useful for the future development of technology which incorporates farmers' ideas and criteria for what is likely to be useful to them. Transfer of technology is not explicitly shown.

Implicit in the closing shots is that farmers obtain information and ideas which stimulate their own discussion, evaluation, and perhaps experimentation with new ideas for technical improvements.

5. Q: **What type of information do the researchers give farmers?**

A: The researchers give farmers information about the **proposed technology components** (when prescreening them).

6. Q: **Why do they give this information to farmers? How does sharing this information help the researchers?**

A: The researchers share this information because it is essential for farmers to understand the proposed technology in order to contribute ideas about how to test it.

Note: Discussion should emphasize that the researchers do **not** give information about the technology to farmers in order to persuade or convince farmers to adopt it. The communication process shown in the video is not oriented toward extension or technology transfer. The researchers' objective is not to teach farmers to use the technology. Their objective is to enable farmers to actively contribute to decisions about how to test innovations. In order to do this, they have to give farmers relevant information.

7. Q: **What attitude toward farmers do the researchers convey? What image of themselves do they try to present to farmers?**

- A:
- . Respect for farmers' expertise in local technology and circumstances.
 - . Farmers' ideas are worth listening to.
 - . Respect for farmers as people (their social customs).
 - . Researchers are not afraid to show they do not know everything; they actively demonstrate desire to learn and their own lack of expertise in local practices.
 - . Willingness to accept criticism and negative feedback from farmers about the technology.

- Researchers are not afraid to get their hands dirty, and they share manual tasks to actively convey respect for farmers' labor as socially worthwhile.

Note: In our experience, there is often a discussion in a training situation on whether this image causes researchers to lose face with farmers. The instructor can explore this issue. How does this image differ from the image traditional extension agents are supposed to project to farmers? If the professionals in the video don't lose face, why not?