

Diagnostic workshops

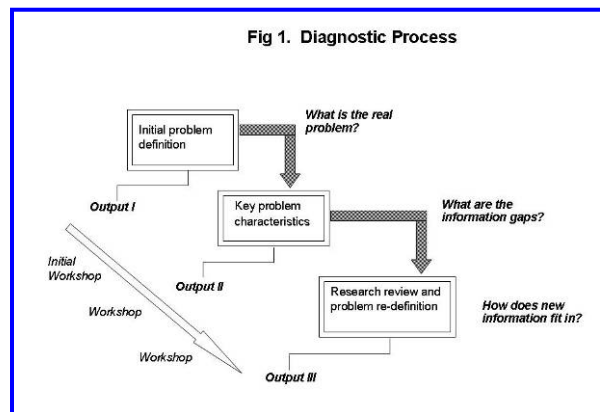
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The diagnostic approach is used to build quality partnerships among stakeholders and promote shared objectives to finding solutions to a given problem. The approach starts with a diagnostic workshop with stakeholders.

In the workshop, analytical techniques are used to facilitate achieving shared views of the problem and objectives in research, extension, and policy. Descriptive techniques are also employed in the workshops to gain a common understanding of the management perspectives of the problem. These include the use of decision trees illustrating interactions between time and management options, pay-off matrices, and cause-effect analysis. Another important activity in the workshop is the on-farm dialogue with farmers to better understand their perceptions of the problem. Follow-up workshops are conducted to review and redesign research and extension activities (see Fig. 1).



A diagnostic workshop builds quality partnerships with stakeholders.



A typical workshop consists of about 30 participants from research and extension with a mix of specializations in resource management (crop, pest, weeds, postharvest, water, etc.) and the social sciences. Wherever appropriate, farmers, NGO representatives, and local government officials are included. The main objective is to build a consensus and obtain a shared view of the problems and consequently develop a shared strategy for action. The workshop serves as the platform to introduce new ideas and methodology and recent research findings as well as to gain support from national agricultural authorities. Throughout these workshops, four basic points are used to guide the discussions:

- Separate the people from the problems
- Focus on interests, not positions
- Generate options
- Develop objective criteria and make judgments based on them



Box 1 presents a typical workshop program. On the first day, an opening ceremony is organized, following local protocols, and is attended by local dignitaries and officials. Invited presentations on new ideas, methods, and recent research are usually delivered on the first day. Presentations and discussions on current scenarios are scheduled on day two and an on-farm dialogue with farmers is held the following day. On the fourth and fifth days, brainstorming sessions are held to develop action plans, methodology, and budgets.

Box 2.3. A typical workshop schedule

Day 1	am	Registration Introduction to workshop Official opening by dignitary Group photo followed by coffee break Two or three key presentations to set the scene
	pm	Team status reports Discussions Official welcome dinner
Day 2	am	Plenary session to introduce workshop objectives Workshop divides into sub groups to address specific tasks
	pm	Plenary session for sub group reporting Discussions and sub groups resume work Briefing and preparations for field visit
Day 3		Field visit Workshop divides into sub groups to solicit information from farmers on various issues.
Day 4	am	Plenary session for sub groups to report field visit findings Workshop divides into sub groups to address more tasks
	pm	Plenary session for sub group reporting
Day 5	am	Plenary session for activity planning and budgeting Country teams develop activity plans and budgets Presentation of work plans and budgets Closing ceremony

References

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