Centre for Development Innovation

Report
Open Course Programme Wageningen UR, 2010

Wouter Hijweege
Marianne van Dorp

Project Report



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Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation (CDI) works on processes of innovation and change in the areas of secure and healthy food, adaptive agriculture, sustainable markets and ecosystem governance. It is an interdisciplinary and internationally focused unit of Wageningen University & Research centre within the Social Sciences Group.

Through facilitating innovation, brokering knowledge and supporting capacity development, our group of 60 staff help to link Wageningen UR's expertise to the global challenges of sustainable and equitable development. CDI works to inspire new forms of learning and collaboration between citizens, governments, businesses, NGOs and the scientific community.

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The Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation (EL&I) co-finances this programme of short courses in support of capacity development. This co-financing is applied for the preparation and organisation of the courses, and is not applied to finance the course costs of participants. Participants to these courses are no regular students in Dutch Universities. The EL&I funding was committed under number 1400002642 as communicated by letter ref. TRCDK/2010/540 of 2 August 2010.

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February 2011
Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation

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Annually, the Wageningen UR open course programme for mid-career professionals provides some six hundred individuals with the opportunity to update their competencies and insights. EL&I co-finances this course programme with the aim to maintain close linkages with international policy priorities and to support course innovation and development. This report provides an overview of the outputs over 2010 in relation to the commitment number 1400002642. The demand driven programme was highly successful with over six hundred participants in some 23 courses. Individual course developments are indicated and the annex provides a strategy update indicating how the programme addresses the new government's policy priorities on international cooperation.

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Table of contents

Executive summary ..... **iv**

List of abbreviations and acronyms ..... **v**

1 Introduction **1**

2 Enhancing policy linkages **3**

3 Course Innovations **5**
3.1 Course updating and policy alignment 5
3.2 New course initiatives 9

4 Management of the open courses programme **11**
4.1 Implementation 11
4.2 Participation 11

Annex 1 ..... **13**

Annex 2 ..... **17**

Executive summary

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

BOCI	Cluster International of the Research Programme for Policy Support
CBD	Convention on Biological diversity
CBM	Community Biodiversity Management
CDI	Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation
CIFOR	Centre for International Research on forestry
DGIS	Directorate General International cooperation
EKN	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
EL&I	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
INREF	Interdisciplinary Research and Education Fund
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KB 7	Kennis Basis funding programme
MSSRF	MS Swaminathan Research Foundation
NAM	Netherlandse Aardolie Maatschappij
NFP	Netherlands Fellowship Programme
NICHE	Netherlands Initiative for Capacity development in Higher Education
NIVAP	Netherlands Potato Consultative Foundation
NRM	Natural Resources Management
NUFFIC	Netherlands Organisation for Collaboration in Higher Education
OS	International Cooperation
RAMSAR	Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Centre
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
Wageningen UR	Wageningen University & Research centre
WRR	Scientific Council for Government Policy

1 Introduction

Annually, the Wageningen UR open course programme for mid-career professionals provides some six hundred individuals with the opportunity to update their competencies and insights. The courses provide an intensive 2 to 4 weeks programme with a mix of up to date scientific concepts, reflection and exchange of experiences. The course topics are chosen on the basis of policy relevance and market demand.

Over recent years, International Development Cooperation has been under debate and is being questioned for its effectiveness. Critical reviews by international studies and publications as well as the Dutch WRR report have fed the debate. The Dutch government has responded by formulating new policy directions in the field of international cooperation that aim to further enhance its effectiveness. The emerging key elements of this policy reformulation include a.o.:

- a stronger emphasis on economic aspects of development processes;
- seeking a more prominent role for private sector involvement, both from the Netherlands as well as in the South;
- seeking mutual benefits for recipient countries and the Netherlands in international collaboration;
- stronger focus of development activities through a limited number of partner countries and concentration on key expertise areas such as water and agriculture.

As clarified in a recent strategy paper (January 2010) the Wageningen UR open course programme aims to contribute to these new policy directions while recognizing the complex dynamics of development processes[1]. Increasingly, international policies and interventions in the agri-food sector and rural development are intertwined with national and local policies and interests. Effective and efficient policy development and implementation processes therefore often require active participation and ownership among key private and public sector stakeholders and the targeted dissemination and utilisation of knowledge. Consequently policy implementation often requires the development of capacities at individual, organisational and institutional level.

For 2010 the agreed priorities for the open courses programme focussed on two major concerns:

The maintenance of the policy linkages. This is undertaken on the one hand by maintaining close working relations and active involvement of EL&I contact persons from relevant departments within EL&I and on the other hand by on linkages with relevant EL&I policies and programmes such as BOCI and KB[2].

The updating and innovation of the course programme. As EL&I is co-funding the open course programme, its innovative character, together with its policy linkages require up to date programmes and the development of new courses on upcoming issues taking into account NUFFIC co-funding conditions as well actual market demands.

[1] The strategy paper can be found in annex 1

[2] BOCI stands for "international research and capacity development programme on policy support" to the ministry. KB stands for the Wageningen UR strategic knowledge development (Kennis basis) programme

In the following these priorities are reflected in:

a) specification of the linkages between specific course programmes and EL&I problem holders (champions) within sectoral policy directorates and within the regions (Agricultural Councillors), with the aim to secure up to date course content on relevant policy information; and
b) a review of the course programme's development during 2010 ensuring innovation in course content and materials in line with EL&I's international policy priorities.

2 Enhancing policy linkages

Intensification of EL&I staff involvement in a number of course programmes enhanced the policy linkages with the open course programme. This involvement varied from participation of EL&I staff in course openings/closures and seminars (e.g. the Market Access course), to taking part as resource person. Generally the existing contacts between the relevant EL&I staff and course programmes consolidated. Details are provided in table 1 below.

In the following some examples are provided as illustrations of course linkages with research, policy and practice.

Regional course linkages

The topic of Community Biodiversity Management (CBM) and empowerment became an integrated part of the India based course on Plant genetic resources and seeds. This topic relates to the experiences of a project under the DGIS-Wageningen UR partnership programme, the "Global study on CBM and empowerment". The Indian MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) is a partner in the study as well as our partner in the coordination and implementation of the training. The work of MSSRF in Jeypore (India), which we studied in the field during the training, is an excellent case to understand and work with community organizations, agro biodiversity, in situ conservation and empowerment.

A new international project, which will be implemented under the FAO Benefit Sharing Fund, in which both Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation and MSSRF will be partners, will allow the further exploration of the topic genetic resources management and farmers' adaptation strategies in the context of climate change.

The regional course on "Landscape approaches" has further strengthened its linkages with the learning platform of the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration in which EL&I represents the Netherlands. This learning network includes over 20 partner sites in Asia, Africa and Latin America where the concepts of landscape approaches are applied in practice. The regional training course included case materials, and several partner organisations were represented among the course participants. The learning network, with the course participants facilitated a.o a discussion about the application of ten principles of landscape approaches.

BOCI and KB linkages

A number of courses adopted more specific attention to the role of private sector players in economic development. For example this year's Market Access course included new course elements on business planning and the financing of chain actors. The new course on seed potato technology, certification and supply systems gave explicit attention to public private partnerships through the use of several real life case studies through the involvement and support of NIVAP (the Netherlands Potato Consultative Foundation). And the course on Contemporary approaches to genetic resource conservation and use included a new element of seed business development, based on the experiences of the ongoing project on integrated seed sector development and local seed business development with EKN Ethiopia under the umbrella of the EL&I-OS agenda.

In 2010 the training “Climate Change adaptation and mitigation” is linked to the BOCI project on climate change adaptation in East Africa (BO-10-009-003 Climate and Adaptation, and BO-10-009-107: Development of feasible sustainable agriculture strategies in a climate change context in Ethiopia). In 2009 this project developed a conceptual framework for assessing climate change adaptation policy options which was consequently used in the course. Furthermore through the course a regional network of experts on climate change adaptations was formed, which worked on action research in 2010.

The course on “Competing claims to Natural Resources” established a link with the BOCI Competing Claims project through a joint mini-seminar. The curriculum for this new course was developed with inputs from both EL&I and WUR resource persons, including case experiences from the INREF (Interdisciplinary Research and Education Fund) and WUR/DGIS partnership projects.

3 Course Innovations

The open courses programme as specified in annex 2, addresses course innovation in two ways: a) Course updating and policy alignment and b) New course initiatives

3.1 Course updating and policy alignment

Table 1 Course Developments Overview

Project title	EL&I Budget 2010 (K€)	Developments & Policy alignment	Participants	EL&I involvement
Market access & sustainable development	28	The emphasis on private sector development was further strengthened through the inclusion of a basic business planning model and new resources on financing chain actors. Based on strong market demand for this course, the EL&I budget is phased out in 2011	48	Ms Koopman and Mr Neeteson of International Affairs arranged an afternoon course program hosted by EL&I with contributions of IZ (Neeteson), DK (Wagemakers), Nuffic (Langeveld) and MinBuZa (vd Heuvel).
Food & Nutrition Security	76	Two three week short courses were offered as stand alone courses rather than as modules in a 3 months course. The 'Right to Food' course was completely new and will, from 2011, allow a limited number of Law MSc students to take part. The Monitoring and Evaluation of Food and Nutrition programmes was adapted from the existing module, using outcomes from the 2009 BO programme on food and nutrition security.	50	Teddy Muffels has been kept informed about these course developments through various informal briefings in the margins of BO and KB related meetings.
Governance of food safety in international food chains	45	New course elements included the identification of options to improve national control systems, making use of Multi Stakeholder Approaches and institutional change process tools.	26	Ludo Vischer participated in the course (role WTO & SPS/Codex Alimentaris Committee) VWA experts (Frits v Vugt, Ron Dwinger and Sjaak Blaak) participated on issues on food safety policy and implementation of EU policy. Experiences of BO projects on food safety inspections in Indonesia were used and vice versa.

Project title	EL&I Budget 2010 (K€)	Developments & Policy alignment	Participants	EL&I involvement
Conservation & sustainable use of plant genetic resources in agriculture	113	The specific focus on integrated seed sector development and seed business development was enhanced through the new topic on empowerment based on WUR-DGIS project experiences[1]. The Wageningen training module united professionals working in plant and animal genetic resources; the focus on the conservation and sustainable use of animal genetic resources is new. New in the programme in India was the organization of a seminar, open for the course participants as well as other interested professionals and partners in the global CBM empowerment study. The seminar addressed farmer rights addressing the linkages between international agreements, national policy and local practice. In the Wageningen based course the seminar on climate change was well received (see above).	77	Close cooperation with Geert Westenbrink EKN Addis to link the course with the ongoing EL&I-OS seeds programme. Staff of the Local Seed Business Development project and regional partners in the EL&I OS funded project participated in the training.
Water courses (Water resources, water management)	100	The 2010 Course is seen as a transition to the fully renewed course modules in 2011. 30kE of the budget was invested in developing course curriculum and training materials. This years' course was centred on the issue of dealing with change. Climate change, variability and resilience in relation to agriculture were introduced in the course. Although the new elements were appreciated, there is a need for a more clear focus for the course in 2011.	6[2]	Mathieu Pinkers (LNV) was involved in the preparation of the topics for the course 2010 and for the course renewal 2011. Linkages with LNV Maghreb office (Mrs Homa Ashtari) to support the course's Maghreb focus. Furthermore linkages exist with the BO Water scarcity & drought theme (Christy van Beek) and the new KB project "water management for bridging the yield gap within sustainable production thresholds at basin level" within the new KB theme "Mondiale Voedselzekerheid". Further linkages with relevant BO programmes (e.g. Saudi Arabia) are to be developed in 2011

[1] This WUR-DGIS project completed a global study on Community Biodiversity Management and empowerment.

[2] This number of participants to the six weeks course was too low. An FAO delegation (Iran) was supposed to join the course but was cancelled at the last moment, when the decision to go ahead with the course was taken. Course marketing efforts will receive extra attention in 2011 to raise the number of participants to at least 15 for each of the two new courses. Below such numbers the course will not be allowed to proceed.

Project title	EL&I Budget 2010 (K€)	Developments & Policy alignment	Participants	EL&I involvement
Training of trainers on wetland management	45	The course was conducted in the Netherlands to allow a global audience. This resulted in a high number of course applications. Several RAMSAR resource persons took part as participant in the course. Specific attention was given to issues of power and conflict and conflict management. The curriculum development part of the course was updated, with added attention to higher education.	21	Gerard van Dijk and Matieu Pinkers were actively involved in the course programme, as well as taking part in opening and closing of the course (and giving feedback on participants' action plans). The assistant of the agric. Councillor in Algiers is involved in efforts to fund one of the participants action plan in the MENA region. The Lake Ayata quick scan wetland management project under the BO programme 2009 had a follow up through two Algerian colleagues as participants in the course.
Leadership and adaptive management	30	Most emphasis for innovation was addressing the closer involvement of the KNUST partners. The Adaptive Management course is gradually handed over to regional partner in Ghana. EL&I support is phasing out in 2012.	18	Poor communication limited EL&I involvement in this regional course programme.
Governance for forest, nature and people	30	Close link with FLEGT and REDD programmes in SE Asian region, with a stronger contribution from CIFOR scientists. Strong emphasis on competing claims and resource related conflict management.	16	Direct involvement from EL&I was limited due to poor communication. Direct use of materials developed under the KB programme on competing claims.
Participatory fisheries management	70	The module on fisheries governance introduced a visual problem appraisal (VPA) in a film based learning strategy. The revised course programme was exceptionally well evaluated by the participants.	34	Reinder Schaap and Leo Hagendoorn were involved in course preparations.
Multi-stakeholder ecosystems management	30	Two one week workshops on issues regarding community forestry practices and on forest governance were conducted in close collaboration with Tropenbos International. The strong focus on linking policy with practice was extremely useful for both practitioners and policy makers in the group. Demand for these courses in this remote province of a 'fragile state' was overwhelming.	25	Close coordination was maintained with Rob Bussink. EL&I support for this course will be phased out in 2012 .

Project title	EL&I Budget 2010 (K€)	Developments & Policy alignment	Participants	EL&I involvement
Transition to sustainable livestock systems	36	This year the course developed new materials on the implications of climate change for genetic resources. A successful field trip was included. A discussion on the future handing over of the course is ongoing with the partner, the University of Los Banos.	27	Content of course discussed with Sicco Stortelder. One of the involved partner organisations is the AgsPart 2020 foundation which is a spin off from the BOCI supported livestock expertise centre Philippines projects.
Landscape functions and people	30	Link up with network of pilot sites of Global Partnership Forest Landscape Restoration was established. Various EL&I relevant policy themes such as landscape approaches, integrated land use management and climate change were included.	12[1]	Regular information exchange with Rob Bussink (e.g. On the EL&I climate change conference "down to Earth" in Nov 2010).
Integrated pest management and food safety	38	New course elements included a role play on biological control agents whereby experts from the private industry, researchers from WUR and a policymaker from the PD (nVWA) were present. The field work in noord Limburg whereby participants were exposed to Dutch agriculture and how IPM is implemented and being offered to evaluate the Dutch IPM policy.	29	Ludo W.A. Vischer, Department of Food Quality and Animal Health presented WTO & CODEX Alimentarius: SPS measures and technical assistance Folkert Folkertsma (EL&I Directorate Agriculture Plant Protection) presented "Towards sustainable plant protection: Policies to support IPM in the Netherlands".
Improving the performance of rural people's organizations	35	The key focus of this course was further sharpened and can be summarised as "organised farmers as partners in agri business". Course marketing and material development dominated activities. Material development benefitted from BO projects in Kenya (Equator Kenya) and the Agriprofocus work in Rwanda on promoting rural entrepreneurship. The course is developed in close collaboration with Agriterra and AgriproFocus.	12[2]	The course programme was discussed with Nicolette Koopmans and a lunch presentation and discussion meeting is to be held in March 2011at the Ministry to share experiences of both BO programme and the course programme.

[1] This course topic is still rather innovative among biodiversity managers, Only recently the concept is starting to be implemented in practice which explains the low number of course participants. Numbers have remained stable over the last few years at this level (12pp) which is considered the minimum number for a course to proceed. The adoption of landscape approaches as a strategic priority for more integrated land use management approaches (see recommendations "down to Earth Conference" Nov 2010) is promising, and numbers are expected to rise over the coming years. Increased marketing efforts will remain necessary for the next couple of years.

[2] This course was organised without NFP fellowships as it is held for the first time in Wageningen It is recognised that marketing results fell short of expectations and should have placed stronger emphasis on the farmer entrepreneurship focus of the course.

Project title	EL&I Budget 2010 (K€)	Developments & Policy alignment	Participants	EL&I involvement
Competing claims in land use for food, fibres and biofuels	35	This was a new course, drawing a remarkable high number of participants. The course content drew from a variety of sources including the KB1 programme and cases including the Wageningen UR-DGIS programme on competing claims (Southern Africa) and illegal logging (Ghana) A start was made with a Wageningen UR wide web portal on competing claims, which is to be further developed in 2011.	28	Content development in coordination with Hayo Haanstra who also opened the course and delivered a key note address on "competing claims from a Dutch international and national perspective". The course was linked with the BO programme on competing claims.
Seed Potato technology, certification and supply systems	35	Global standards for seed potato (UNECE) was introduced and a private sector initiative for protection of varieties was used as a new case. The private sector through NIVAP (the Netherlands Potato Consultative Foundation) has been supportive throughout the course preparations.	25	Mr. H Bonthuis, until recently with EL&I and currently with NAK presented on variety protection and use. BOCI project experiences are used through inputs of Wageningen UR colleagues.
Coping with Climate change	35	Course material development, portal and conduct pilot course in Ethiopia. This is a new course, which builds on expertise from Wageningen UR and local resource persons (Addis Ababa University, National Meteorological Agency, among others). It is also hosted and co-facilitated by the Horn of Africa Regional environmental centre and network (HoA-REC).	19	Hayo Haanstra: input to design of the course, participate in the course seminar (presentation), facilitated a role play on climate change negotiations. Geert Westenbrink (Agric Councillor): participated in course seminar.

3.2 New course initiatives

Three new course initiatives were planned for 2010.

The **Competing Claims** course was extremely successful in attracting 28 participants to its first edition. The course programme draws strongly on concrete project experiences in the BO and KB1 programmes. The course draw on the multi stakeholder approaches but adds a strong element of power analysis and conflict management to natural resources management. This was well appreciated by participants as it made the training highly relevant to their work practice. For next year more attention to valuation of functions is to be included to provide more of an economic basis to the course.

The course on **Rights Based Approaches in Food and Nutrition Security** was developed in close collaboration with the Law and Governance department of Wageningen University. From 2011 the course will be open to regular MSc students from this department as well. Feedback from participants indicated a high level of appreciation for linking concepts with applied tools and methods illustrated in a variety of cases (e.g. the voedselbank) advocacy and lobby. The course programme requires some further streamlining in 2011.

The course on "**Seed potato technology, certification and supply systems**" was organised in close cooperation with NAK and NIVAP. Because of their worldwide activities and reputation, both organizations provide excellent inputs and suggestions to the course programme in line with worldwide developments in the seed sector. This resulted for example in a strong module on quality control, seed inspection and seed certification.

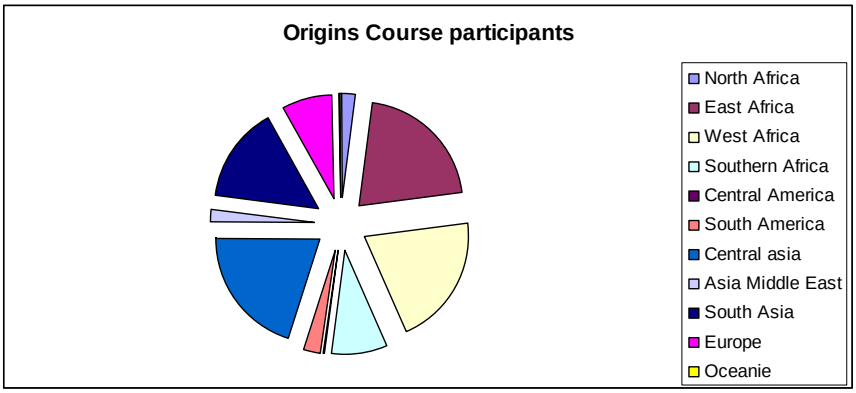
Furthermore, the global standards for seed potatoes developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe have been introduced and an initiative by the private sector related to dissemination and protection of varieties was presented. Experiences and insights from BOCI projects are used, through the cases of various DLO resource persons in the course programme.

4 Management of the open courses programme

As in the previous year, two coordination meetings were held with representatives from EL&I-DKI Education (Stegehuis), the WUR programme coordinators and the EL&I BOCI cluster management secretary (Wagenmakers) as chair. The Wageningen UR BO Cluster International management representative (Louwaars) is "agenda lid" to these meetings. This allowed for the monitoring of progress and the necessary linkages between the BO Cluster International theme priorities and developments in the open course programme.

4.1 Implementation

The course programme implementation went according to plan without major changes. Details per course are provided in annex 1. With a total of well over 630 course participants to the overall programme[1] a considerable growth (15%) was realised for the fourth year in a row. This underscores the relevance of the course programme for the target groups of development practitioners, policy makers and researchers as the NUFFIC/NFP fellowship allocation is demand driven.



4.2 Participation

Course participants draw from a variety of academic, government and civil society organisations, proportions vary with the course subjects. The regional origin of course participants is influenced by the criteria for NFP fellowships which require at least 50% of fellowships to be allocated to African participants.

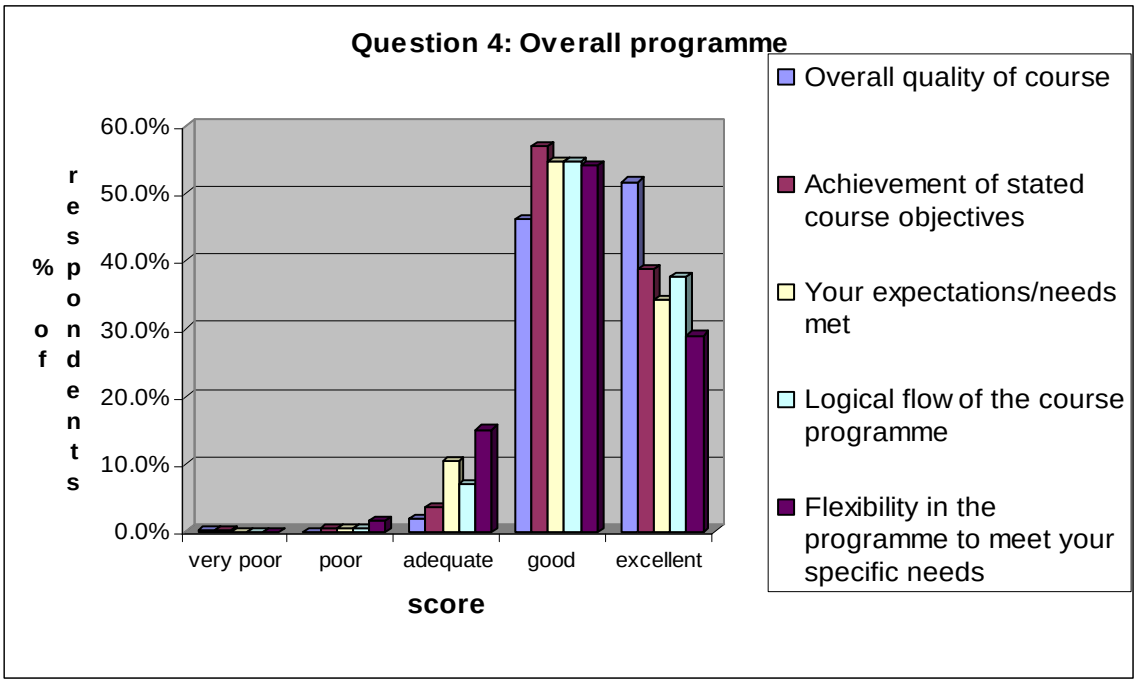
Table 2 Number of course programme participants 2006-2010

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
NFP	172	255	323	478	533
Self financing	121	120	124	68	98
Totals	293	375	447	546	631

[1] Out of this total LNV supported courses addressed just over 520 participants

Feedback and Quality issues

The overall level of satisfaction of course participants regarding the courses is very positive with well over 90% of respondents rating the course good to excellent for most questions (see graph below). Feedback from MSc students and University lecturers indicate a high level of satisfaction as well, specifically mentioning the balance between theory and practice.



Annex 1

Strategy Update Open Course Programme Wageningen UR 2011

Introduction

Annually, the Wageningen UR open course programme for mid-career professionals provides some six hundred individuals with the opportunity to update their competencies and insights. The courses provide an intensive programme with a mix of up to date scientific concepts, reflection and exchange of experiences. The course topics are selected on the basis of policy relevance and market demand. With growing numbers of participants over the last four years (168%), the programme proved its relevance and is internationally recognised and appreciated for its quality[1].

Over recent years, International Development Cooperation has been under debate and is being questioned for its effectiveness. Critical reviews by international studies and publications as well as the Dutch Scientific Advisory Council's (WRR) report 'Less pretention, more ambition'[2] have fed the debate. In its coalition agreement of 30 September 2010[3] the Dutch government announced that development co-operation will be fundamentally reformed and renewed, taking the WRR recommendations as a guideline. This means in essence: more emphasis on entrepreneurship, private sector development and economic self-reliance, with focus on less countries as well as on themes where the Netherlands has international added value in terms of excellence and expertise.

The Basisbrief OS[4] gives a first elaboration of the consequences of these ambitions. In the Basisbrief new themes are chosen, based on the following two sets of criteria:

1. relevance for poverty alleviation, growth and therewith for self-reliance of developing countries;
2. strategic importance for The Netherlands, in terms of interests as well as potential added value.

This results in an explicit choice for the themes of food security and water, to be elaborated with relevant other ministries (EL&I in the case of food security) and with specific attention for the role of the private sector.[5] In the elaboration of this policy it became clear that the five pillars of the 2008 policy paper on Agriculture, Rural development and Food Security remain central elements.

[1] See annual reports on the Wageningen UR open course programme 2008, 2009 and 2010

[2] http://www.wrr.nl/content.jsp?objectid=5516

[3] http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/rapporten/2010/09/30/regeerakkoord-vvd-cda.html

[4] http://www.minbuza.nl/dsresource?objectid=buzabeheer:268080&type=org

[5] Idem, page 4.

Five pillars of the policy paper on Agriculture, Rural development and Food Security (Verburg Koenders 2008)

1) *Improved Productivity* through research and local innovation by rural producers.
2) *Enabling Environment*: with a right balance of public service and institutions set by government to allow private sector players a more prominent role.
3) *Sustainable Value Chain development*: chain improvements in production, trade and consumption with due attention to *People*, *Planet,* and *Profit*.
4) *Improved Market Access* for producers to local, regional and international markets to increase the economic incentives for development.
5) *Food security* and pro-poor transfer mechanisms.

In the remainder of this briefing note we will indicate how the Wageningen UR open course programme is taking the above policy developments into account.

Course Programme Evolution

The Wageningen UR open course programme is well placed to support these new policy changes as its content has evolved over recent years. The EL&I support to the open course programme and the strong policy linkages through its connections with the BOCI programme have enabled regular updates of course content, inclusion of new case materials and the regular inclusion of a one or two day seminar for a wider audience as part of the courses. A striking example is the restructuring of the Food and Nutrition Security course programme from a 11 weeks diploma level course into a number of three week course modules with a new curriculum including modules on Monitoring food and nutrition programmes, the rights based approach to food and nutrition programmes and policies and HIV/Aids and food and nutrition security.

Two major developments applying to the overall course programme need mentioning:

– Recognizing the complexity of development processes and the changing roles of governments, private sector and civil society in market led development processes, has stimulated the inclusion of multi stakeholder approaches and social learning methodologies in many of the course programmes. Increasingly issues of scarcity, equity and competing claims are explicitly addressed. This process strongly benefitted from the KB 7 programme on innovation and transitions for its conceptual development and the publication of methodological materials.
– The growing demand for accountability and effectiveness in development, and the recognised uncertainties in social innovation processes stimulated a growing practice of project and programme monitoring and evaluations. The courses[1] that evolved out of these practices have grown in popularity. The demand is especially strong among civil society organisations and academia.

As a result the Wageningen UR course programme has developed a particular strength in combining strong subject matter expertise with methodologies supporting the necessary change processes in organisations and society. Applying conceptual frameworks, in the specific policy setting and work context of course participants is seen as one of the strong points of the programme.

[1] Since 2005 this course programme on monitoring and evaluation methodologies is no longer financially supported by EL&I

Course Programme Strategic Developments

Implications of the new policy priorities are emerging in for example the significant budget reductions (>25%) in the Netherlands Fellowship Programme (NFP) and the related NICHE programme for institutional strengthening of higher education in the South. The Wageningen UR course programme will necessarily intensify its course marketing and explore new avenues to finance course participation. Private sector funding, and identifying new markets and target groups need to be identified. In the following we indicate for each of the new policy areas the course programme's strengths and opportunities for strategic development.

Economic Development focus and Private Sector involvement:

The agricultural focus of the programme has intensified over the last couple of years as reflected in a number of highly successful course programmes such as: "plant genetic resources", "Integrated Pest Management", dairy and potato sector development and "agriculture in transition". Furthermore, these courses take a strong market orientation by addressing elements of the value chain, the role of local business development and rural innovation networks. Newly developed courses on climate change adaptation strategies, agro-production under conditions of water scarcity and landscape approaches are equally strong in addressing new techniques and concepts in response to changing environmental and economic conditions in the agricultural sectors. The validity of such change strategies was confirmed in the recommendations of the recent EL&I "Down to Earth" conference on climate change and food security (The Hague, Nov 2010). Furthermore, courses on effective farmer organisations and local economic development address both market developments and the organisational support necessary to support growing market involvement of small farm producers in sustainable and more equitable pro-poor development strategies.

In terms of mutual benefits for recipient countries and the Netherlands the open course programme has a number of favourable characteristics: besides the general favourable attitude and 'good memories' to the Netherlands among upwardly mobile course alumni, the course topics are chosen with a strong view to Dutch international policy priorities and for example support the implementation of international environmental agreements to which the Dutch Government is strongly committed. During courses, a considerable number of participants establish linkages with scientific staff and succeed in arranging follow up studies (Masters or PhD) at Wageningen University. Similarly the course alumni networks are effective in establishing follow-up collaboration in project tenders, training of trainers and research initiatives.

Opportunities: The open course programme has traditionally attracted more participants from government, UN/multilateral organisations, civil society and academia than from the private sector. This is explained by the fact that the NFP fellowships are not open to private sector staff, and many of the course topics address public policy and development issues rather than commercial topics. Exceptions are some of the more economic development oriented and value chain courses.

However, private sector involvement in course delivery is much more common in a broad variety of courses. This varies from farm visits and excursions and field practice at NAM (Vlieland) to seminars on food safety with keynote speakers from the private sector to lecture on specialist topics. In line with the advice from AWT (adviesraad voor innovatie en technologie beleid), a balanced approach will be followed with keen attention to the role of private sector players in addressing public policy issues.

Concrete follow-up is envisaged through the following:

- While direct involvement of private companies may not be easy, collaboration with umbrella organisations such as IFDC, Agriterra, AgriProFocus has shown potential for developing innovative training programmes with some linkages to a growing number of private sector projects.
- The growing number of international projects by private sector operators creates a new audience of business oriented staff requiring competencies for local situational analysis, culturally sensitive networking, etc.
- Building on a growing awareness of the impact of biodiversity losses for business (see TEEB report, 2010), new course curriculum development specifically addressing private sector players as a new target group. Close linkage of the course programme on public policy priorities, such as on (international) environmental agreements (CBD, RAMSAR, REDD) and sustainability initiatives from business community are to be explored.

Stronger focus in development activities:

A majority of the open courses do fit well in the two priority areas mentioned so far: agriculture for market development, and water in agro-food production with food security in the broadest sense (from producers to consumers) as a linking pin between the two.

The Natural Resources Management oriented courses may have to make a stronger case to justify their relevance in terms of supporting sustainability concerns. Yet, in view of the accountability and effectiveness concerns few will question the policy relevance of governance aspects of agro production and NRM. The course's integrated approach to NRM, including urban and landscape concerns is well placed in the various transition processes.

Opportunities: The course programme offers a mix of courses both in Wageningen and some in collaboration with partner institutions in Africa (Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, South Africa) and Asia (Thailand, Indonesia, India). While the Wageningen based courses draw more heavily on up to date research findings, the partner based courses in the South offer more regional specific cases. These latter will always be placed in a wider partnership collaboration containing knowledge exchange and capacity development.

- The envisaged focus on a small number of concentration countries could open new opportunities for strong multi-year partnership development including training and (organisational) capacity development. Ghana and Ethiopia for example offer excellent starting points.
- Over recent years, some courses have gradually increased their linkages with larger capacity development partnership projects. While effective in these partnership settings, the continuity and financial sustainability of these local course programmes is far from self explanatory. Institutional blockages, such as reward systems are frequent causes for limited local involvement. Where possible such regional courses will continue to be developed, especially with longer term partner organisations. Strategic collaboration agreements with partner organisations, supporting specific and time bound capacity development objectives, will provide the basis for such regional courses.
- The use of web supported learning tools and materials has grown over recent years. A variety of pre-course preparation materials, web portals and community of practices for course alumni have become common elements of most courses. These experiences can be applied in developing new business models for such partnerships with a stronger role for CDI on innovation and course development and quality assurance in course implementation by partner institutes.

Annex 2

Course Overview and EL&I champions 2010

Course title	Budget 2010 kE	Policy Theme	EL&I Contact person	WUR Course coordinator	Partner organisation	Country of Implementation
Market access & sustainable development	28	Duurzame Ketens	Nicolette Koopman	Jan Helder jan.helder@wur.nl		NL
Food & nutrition security	76	Schaarste & Verdeling	Teddy Muffels	Fannie de Boer fannie.deboer@wur.nl 481404		NL
Governance and food safety in international food chains	45	Duurzame Ketens	Niek Schelling	Camiel Aalberts camiel.aalberts@wur.nl 481410		NL
Conservation & sustainable use of genetic resources in agriculture	113	Robuste Systemen	Leontine Crisson	Marja Thijssen marja.thijssen@wur.nl 486865		NL
Integrated water resource management	100	Robuste Systemen	Matieu Pinkers	Claire Jacobs claire.jacobs@wur.nl		NL
Training of trainers on wetland management	45	Schaarste & Verdeling	Gerard van Dijk, Matieu Pinkers	Ingrid Gevers ingrid.gevers@wur.nl 486868	RAMSAR	NL
Adaptive management for NRM	40	Schaarste & Verdeling	Rob Busink	Nico Rozemeijer nico.rozemeijer@wur.nl 481389	Univ. of Science & Technology Kumasi Ghana	Ghana
Competing claims in rural development	35	Schaarste & Verdeling	Hayo Haanstra/ Rob Bussink	Nico Rozemeijer nico.rozemeijer@wur.nl 481389		NL

Course title	Budget 2010 kE	Policy Theme	EL&I Contact person	WUR Course coordinator	Partner organisation	Country of Implementation
Governance for forest, nature and people	35	Schaarste & Verdeling	Rob Busink	Cora van Oosten cora.vanoosten@wur.nl 481397	CIFOR	Indonesia
Participatory fisheries management	70	Schaarste & Verdeling	Reinder Schaap	Peter van der Heijden peter.vanderheijden@wur.nl 481394		NL
Multistakeholder ecosystems management	30	Schaarste & Verdeling	Rob Busink	Arend Jan van Bodegom arendjan.vanbodegom@wur.nl 486864	Tropenbos Int.	Central Africa
Transition to sustainable livestock systems	36	Robuste Systemen	Jochem Porte	Jan van der Lee jan.vanderlee@wur.nl 481348	UPLB-SESAM, UPLB-ADSC	Philippines
Landscape functions and people	35	Schaarste & Verdeling	Rob Busink	Cora van Oosten cora.vanoosten@wur.nl 481397	Regional Community Forestry Training Centre (RECOFTC)	Thailand
Integrated pest management and food safety	38	Robuste Systemen	Chantal Baas	Huub Stoetzer huub.stoetzer@wur.nl 481396		NL
Improving the performance of rural people's organizations	40	Duurzame Ketens	Nicolette Koopman	Ted Schrader ted.schrader@wur.nl	Agriterra	NL

Course title	Budget 2010 kE	Policy Theme	EL&I Contact person	WUR Course coordinator	Partner organisation	Country of Implementation
Coping with climate change	35	Robuste Systemen	Hayo Haanstra	Irene Koomen irene.koomen@wur.nl 482986	IUCN	Ethiopia & Uganda
Seed potato technology, certification and supply systems	35	Robuste Systemen	Chantal Baas	Siert Wiersema siert.wiersema@wur.nl	NIVAP	NL
	831					

Annually, the Wageningen UR open course programme for mid-career professionals provides some six hundred individuals with the opportunity to update their competencies and insights. EL&I co-finances this course programme with the aim to maintain close linkages with international policy priorities and to support course innovation and development. This report provides an overview of the outputs over 2010. The demand driven programme was highly successful with over six hundred participants in some 23 courses. Individual course developments are indicated and the annex provides a strategy update indicating how the programme addresses the new government's policy priorities on international cooperation.

More information: www.cdi.wur.nl



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