

Farmer's Field Schools (FFS)

Aymen A. Awad^{1,2}

¹*Agricultural Research Corporation Gedarif Research Station*

²*JST/JICA SATREPS*

Abstract: Farmer's field schools (FFS) is one of the component to fulfill the project objectives "Improvement of food security in semi-Arid Regions of Sudan through management of root parasitic weeds". The schools were initiated to empower farmers with new and/or available production technologies to upgrade their performance. Extension is the focal point in technology transfer. Capacity of extension officers was improved through Training of Trainers (TOTs). Researchers from the Agriculture Research Corporation, Gedarif Research Station, and the director of the state extension service delivered a series of lectures on Farmers Field Schools, Integrated *Striga* Management (ISM), Integrated Crop Management (ICM). Training on farm machinery and equipment was also accomplished. Each of the extension officers was provided with a copy of the lectures, a note book and a motorcycle. The Gedarif State was divided, based on rainfall, into three agro-ecological zones and an FFS was established in each. Each school was supervised by a trained extension officer. The school, constructed from local materials, was located adjacent to a demonstration farm. Each school, comprised of 25-30 farmers, was supervised by an extension officer. The Schools curricula were set by farmers and each school held one or two sessions a week during the season. Each extension officer reported, dates of sessions, attendance, subject discussed and a note on farmer's participation during session to a local committee. Farmers attended and participated in all field operations, starting with land preparation, sowing, weeding and herbicides and fertilizers applications. The importance and timing of each operation and the proper way of doing it to attain maximum benefits were discussed and explained. Farmers follow the development of the crop and were shown how to identify pests other than *Striga* and how to treat them.

Keywords: Farmer's Field Schools (FFS), Training of Trainers (TOT), Integrated *Striga* Management (ISM)