F-25 Adoption and diffusion of Integrated Pest Management in paddy farming in the Batticaloa District

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Training of farmers on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) has an important impact in its adoption. CARE International introduced the concepts of IPM via farmer training in the Batticaloa district. This paper appraises the impact of training on adoption and diffusion of IPM and constraints to adopting IPM.

The data was collected by interviewing a stratified random sample of 30 trained and 30 untrained farmers from IPM programme implemented localities in Batticaloa District, using structured questionnaire and personal interviews with officials of CARE International and Dept of Agriculture.

Trained farmers reported higher adoption levels on the following IPM practices: timely land preparation, simultaneous cultivation and fertilizer application. Use of resistent varieties and medicinal plants were generally low. Mean number of pesticide applications: (trained 1.2, untrained 1.8). Average cost of pesticides: Rs. 1,532/ha (trained), Rs. 2,300/ha (untrained). Yield achieved: 1,386 kg/ha (trained), 1,320 kg/ha (untrained). Poor knowledge of untrained farmers on IPM may have hindered their adoption.

Identified constraints were lack of farmer co-ordination, non adoption of IPM in adjacent fields, problems in availability of inputs, reluctance of farmers towards new concepts, custom of using pesticides and sales promotion of pesticides. Impact of training on the adoption was substantial. However in some aspects adoption levels were low. Diffusion of IPM was poor. Sustainable adoption may improve the diffusion in future.

The study recommends the following: IPM training to be continued to strengthen farmers' confidence towards the adoption and diffusion; farmer organizations to be setup to facilitate making collective decisions and imputs be made available appropriately.