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**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS:
INTEGRATING FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING AND MULTIMEDIA MESSAGING**

Felix Augusto Moreno Elcure (famoren@ut.edu.co)

Jaqueline Chica Lobo (jchica@ut.edu.co)

This paper analyzes an experience developed in nine (9) Farmer Field Schools (FFSs) established within the coffee, cocoa, and avocado value chains in Tolima, Colombia. The methodological process integrates the complementary use of multimedia messaging (WhatsApp) to support the follow-up of collectively developed solutions. The process begins with the characterization and prioritization of problems, existing practices, and local capacities. These results guided the design and implementation of the FFSs as the central learning space, where producers collectively analyzed productive, environmental, and organizational issues and defined courses of action through co-creation processes. The solutions developed in the field were subsequently implemented and adjusted at the farm level, with the support of WhatsApp groups designed for technical follow-up and the exchange of practical evidence. Multimedia messaging functioned as a complementary knowledge management device,

enabling the maintenance of operational communication between face-to-face sessions, the documentation of practice implementation through photographic records, and support for decision-making. WhatsApp groups proved highly effective for activity announcements, logistical coordination, operational decision-making, and the prior dissemination of technical and organizational information, thereby strengthening process continuity and the participation of actors facing time or mobility constraints. The findings show that knowledge exchange through multimedia messaging presents limitations for collective reflection and the shared construction of technical criteria, which continue to depend on face-to-face interaction. In this sense, mobile messaging currently operates as a functional support before and after field-based activities. Based on interaction records, validation interviews, and observation of training dynamics, the study identifies limitations related to differences in digital skills, variable levels of participation, and information flow management. Nevertheless, the results indicate that the integration of multimedia messaging as a complement to FFSs improves knowledge management, facilitates the preparation and follow-up of face-to-face activities, and contributes to the gradual appropriation of collectively constructed learning outcomes.

Palavras-chave: rural extension; situated learning; collaborative innovation; territorial solutions.