

REFORM PROPOSALS FOR THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SYSTEM

Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries

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Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

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Introduction

- Agricultural extension has evolved and applied different approaches since colonial times
 - Regulatory/command
 - Educational
 - Participatory
 - Demand-driven/pluralistic
- Neuchâtel initiative proposed a reform paradigm whose core tenets included:
 - private sector participation,
 - farmer empowerment,
 - demand-driven approaches and
 - decentralized extension among others (Neuchâtel Group 1999, 2002).
- NAADS program was the first agricultural extension model in Sub-Saharan Africa to put the ideas of demand-driven into practice

Introduction cont.

- The Program adopted a decentralized, farmer owned and private sector serviced contract extension system;
 - a complete departure from the centralized public extension system!
- This reform model was in line with the neoliberal policies promoted by the World Bank.
 - Focus on involving the private sector!

Problem

- In spite of the high levels of investment in NAADS for more than a decade public outcry on agricultural extension remains
- Extension system serves few farmers (about 10%),
- Its messages and approaches have been less effective,
- Financing and delivery mechanisms have not been efficient and sustainable,
- There is duplication of activities in the parallel institutional arrangements that emerged from the reform,

Prob cont.

- The budget for advisory services has consistently diminished at the expense of program administration and input supplies (37% administration, more than 40% inputs and about 20% service delivery)
- The lack of financial and performance accountability and client ownership further aggravated the situation.
- The under performance of NAADS is evidenced by suspension of program by President as well as the various World Bank evaluation reports and other independent studies/evaluations.

Consultation process

Key Stakeholders consulted

- Local Governments
- Farmer organizations
- Academic Institutions
- Development partners
- Presidential Economic Council
- Members of Parliament
- Civil Society organizations
- NRM Caucus on Agriculture and Trade
- Professional organizations
- Sector Ministries

Elements of a good extension system

- Group-based extension
- Motivated extension workers
- Number and type of extension workers
- Extension manuals, leaflets, brochures
- Cost Benefit Analysis
- Internet-based information service
- Demonstrations
- Independent input distribution system
- Strong linkages with research
- M&E system
- Performance based
- Quality assurance
- Sanction and reward based on performance

Mandates of an effective extension agency

- Extension Coordination
- Skills management and training
- Information and communication
- Agribusiness services
- Primary processing and value addition
- Marketing and market information
- Farmer education
- Technology transfer

MAAIF Reform Proposals

- The technical functions of agriculture extension will be subsumed in the respective technical directorates under the National Agricultural Extension Service
- The core extension science will form a new directorate of Agricultural Extension within MAAIF
- At local government level NAADS will be mainstreamed within the production department at district and sub county levels
- The District Production Coordinator will be the overall responsible officer
- For these reforms to succeed, MAAIF has to undergo structural adjustments

Guiding Principles during reform design

- The existing commitments to multilateral and donor agreements will be taken into account by the proposed reforms.
- Upon expiry of existing commitments to donors and multilateral agencies related to agricultural sector, no commitment shall be undertaken that has potential to undo the proposed reform.
- Upon integrating Agricultural Extension within MAAIF, internal administrative and financial reforms aimed at empowering technical directorates will be undertaken
- The staff of NAADS will have first call on recruitment into the new structure if they have the required qualifications.

Guiding Principles during reform Implementation

- Promotion of institutional efficiency and maximization of existing technical capacities
- Agricultural Extension remains a decentralized function with MAAIF providing technical support and backstopping
- Farmer empowerment concept **will** remain a core component in agricultural extension.
- Nurturing and promotion of private sector service delivery will be a priority in reform implementation.
- Current efforts by ATAAS of strengthening linkages with agricultural research will be promoted.

Guiding principles of reform implementation

- Agricultural extension will be perceived as part of a broad agricultural system and not treated as an isolated component
- Mindset shift away from primary production to value addition, manufacturing and marketing.
- Monitoring and Evaluation will be a permanent feature during reform implementation
- Career growth for extension staff will be an embedded value in the new reform.
- Strengthening professional linkages between central and local government
- Distribution of free inputs will not be part of the “National Extension Service” and input supply will remain a private sector function with MAAIF playing the regulatory function.

Conclusion

- Agricultural extension is the “Heart and Soul” of the knowledge base of the Ministry of Agriculture. It is the vehicle for agricultural sector transformation
- The proposed agricultural extension reforms above are aimed at rebuilding and revitalizing the national agricultural extension system and promoting efficiency in agricultural production and productivity, and thus contribute to the realization of Vision 2040.
- Once this reform is comprehensively implemented with full support of stakeholders, it will spur and reverse the declining agricultural growth in the years to come.
- However, this growth will only occur if matched with increased budget allocation to the agricultural sector that is currently at about 3.4 percent.