

Key Findings

AEAS is not given priority in national development programmes, which is manifested by reduced public investment and expenditure in agricultural extension.

This has resulted into:

- ❖ A low extension worker-to-farmer ratio (1:1800) coupled with functional infrastructure for digitalization.
- ❖ Poor operation, coordination and harmonization of AEAS leading to compromised professionalism.
- ❖ Weak enforcement of most of the guiding laws and delayed enactment of the extension Bill 2017.

Executive Summary

Much as the Uganda's Agricultural extension services have such a strong policy support, the country has not fully reaped the benefits of the sector, due to the issues that were highlighted during the Uganda National Agricultural Extension Week 2023. These issues are concerned with the low priority given to AEAS and the government is called upon to facilitate the enactment of legal provisions and improve systems and coordinated efforts to standardize and harmonize the diverse AEAS actors coordinate and standardize facilitate the delivery of AEAS.

Introduction

The Agricultural sector in Uganda continues to experience a number of structural challenges and shocks (Climate change, Trade, economic, health, and political) that call for innovations in the design and delivery of AEAS to build resilience and the competitiveness of the agri-food system. Despite existing government policies on AEAS, their implementation has been negatively impacted by the ineffectiveness of AEAS delivery. The National Agricultural Extension Week, raised and discussed several key issues relating to AEAS including the value, professionalization, regulation, funding, and digitalization of the AEAS in Uganda. The National Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP 2016) recognizes a pluralistic AEAS system where innovative approaches and support mechanisms by different actors are promoted to address the resilience and competitiveness of AEAS actors for food security and commercialized agriculture. To improve AEAS. In addition, NAEP 2 commits to develop and apply robust digital solutions for increased efficiency in AES delivery. This policy brief seeks to Re-energize Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services in Uganda to build resilience and competitiveness of the agri-food system.



Approach

UFAAS, through the Uganda Agricultural Extension Week 2023 (UGNAEW2023) provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss and explore ways to enhance the resilience and competitiveness of Uganda's agricultural sector. A total of 382 Before the UGNAEW2023, regional events were conducted to debate critical agricultural development issues to feed into the national event. Qualitative data was gathered through Desktop research, Key Informant Interviews, workshop proceedings, dialogue and group discussions. This involved all the AEAS actors and stakeholders along the agricultural value chain, including farmers, and policymakers at the local, district, and national levels. Data gathered was cleaned, collated, triangulated, analyzed and reported based on thematic areas.



Conclusion

Given the disruptions and shocks of natural calamities and economic fluctuations and their effects on agriculture and the food systems in Uganda, the agricultural extension needs to position itself well in this new situation, if it is to remain relevant. This therefore calls for urgency in the prioritization of AEAS in the national development agenda, through increased public investment in agricultural extension, including digitalization, operation, coordination and harmonization, and professionalization of AEAS.

Recommendations

Improve systems that facilitate the delivery of AEAS by

- Increasing investment in Human resources,
- Increasing investment in agricultural extension digital infrastructure,
- Creation of AEAS coordination unit at the ministry
- Support the establishment of an independent professional body for AEAS actors

References

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