



**UGANDA FORUM
FOR AGRICULTURAL
ADVISORY SERVICES**



THE FIRST NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WEEK 2023

Date: 23rd-26th May 2023

WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS REPORT



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ACRONYMS

AAEW	Africa Wide Agricultural Extension Week
AEAS	Agricultural Extension Advisory Services
AFAAS	African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
AMEA	Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CURAD	Consortium for enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development
DAES	Directory of Agricultural Extension Services
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer Field School
FtF ISS	Feed the Future Uganda Institutional and Systems Strengthening
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IKM	Information and Knowledge Management
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MUZARDI	Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute
NaCORI	National Coffee Research Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NITA	National Information and Technology Authority
NOC	National Organizing Committee
NUCAFE	National Union of Coffee Agri business and Farm Enterprise
OWC	Operation Wealth Creation
PDM	Parish Development Model
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
UFAAS	Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
UG-NAEW	Uganda National Agricultural Extension Week
UMI	Uganda Management Institute
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ZARDIs	Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institutes

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services-UFAAS (<https://ufaas-ugandacf.org/>), in partnership with the African Forum of agriculture advisory services (AFAAS), the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and other partners, successfully organised a National Agricultural Extension Week in Uganda (UG-NAEW 2023). The event took place from 23rd -26th May 2023, at Kabira Country Club Hotel, Bukoto, Kampala, under the theme: “Unveiling innovative pluralistic AEAS approaches: Actors’ resilience and competitiveness for food security and commercialized agriculture”. The Sub-Themes were:

1. AEAS interventions and support mechanisms for addressing resilience and competitiveness
2. Women and Youth engagement and opportunities in the agricultural value chain as actors and beneficiaries
3. Leveraging on and strengthening public programmes and projects
4. Viable Business development and support services for farmers and other users of AEAS services
5. Digitalized AEAS in Agriculture as a driver for agricultural growth

The event was attended by different categories of extension actors and stakeholders who participated through various activities, in the regional workshops and the main event physically or virtually. The overall attendance was 342 (106W, 236M). A total number of 202 (77 Females, 125 Males) attended the physical event. The highest attendance was by the Civil Society Organizations and NGOs (30.7%), followed by private sector (18.3%) then public sector (17.3%).

Prior to the UGNAEW2023, regional events were organized in greater Masaka, West Nile, Lango region and greater Mukono, to debate on critical agricultural development issues within their regions. The event itself, involved plenary sessions, parallel workshops, side events and a field visit, where AEAS issues were discussed along the thematic areas. Presentations and participatory discussions characterized all the sessions.

Much as Agricultural extension services have had such a strong policy support, Uganda has not fully reaped the benefits of the sector, due to the issues that were highlighted during the Uganda National Agricultural Extension Week 2023. Some of them have been echoed over time in different fora. The key issues have been categorized as below, together with the proposed recommendations for addressing them.

Much as Agricultural extension services have had such a strong policy support, Uganda has not fully reaped the benefits of the sector, due to the issues that were highlighted during the Uganda National Agricultural Extension Week 2023. Some key issues, also echoed over time in different fora were:

- The declining value accorded to public extension services
- The lack of standardised and harmonised services to the beneficiaries
- The **continuous** disruptions and shocks of natural calamities and economic fluctuations and their effects on agriculture and the food systems in Uganda
- Failure to harmonize interventions and approaches by the different AEAS actors within the same farming communities
- Constantly ever changing government programmes
- There disorganized system of business development services and advisory services delivery to farmers and farmer’s organizations with no data, standards, and market linkages in efficient business development services.
- And the high costs of internet, limited infrastructure (eg. power, broad-band network) and lack of necessary gadgets and equipment being a major hindrance to digitalization of agriculture.

To all the issues raised above, several recommendations were given to address each of them, them at different levels and by different stakeholders.

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO UGANDA NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WEEK 2023

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE EVENT

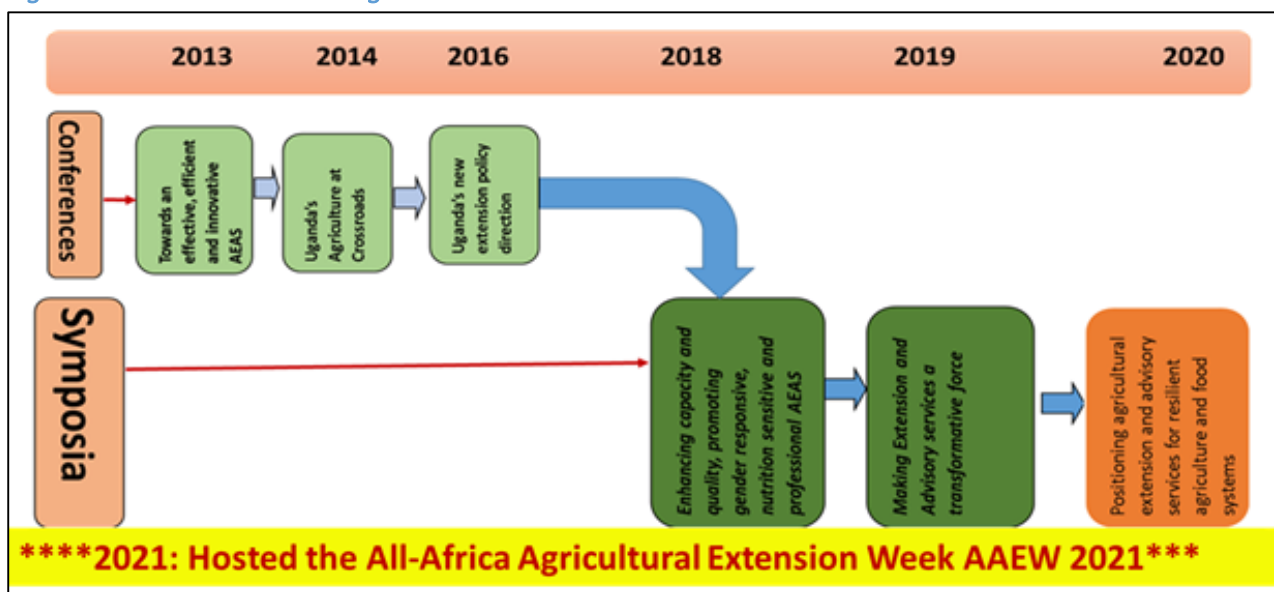
Agriculture remains the key sector of the Uganda’s economy, it contributes up to 23% of the GDP and it employees up to 70% of the National Labour force, most of whom are women located in rural areas. The agricultural sector is envisaged to play a role in achieving Ugandans vision 2040 of transforming from peasant to middle income economy. Under the agro-industrialization agenda of the National development plan III, Quality products and services are expected to contribute to commercialization of agriculture and ensuring food security. The pursuit of these three strategic goals, requires an effective, efficient and an inclusive agricultural extension and advisory system. In its National Agricultural extension policy of 2016, Government of Uganda adopted a pluralistic agricultural extension approach. This approach recognizes the complementary role and relationships between state and non-state actors in the provision and delivery of AEAS to all players and processes in the agri-food system.

Agricultural extension services have been traditionally focused on increasing production and productivity. The needs of the macro- economic transformation agenda have expanded the role of agricultural extension beyond primary production to include; market participation, commercialized farming, agro-industrialization, food security, food safety and nutrition. Furthermore, the sector continues to experience a number of structural challenges and shocks (Climate change, Trade, economic, health, political) that calls for innovations in design and delivery of AEAS to build resilience and the competitiveness of the agri-food system.

1.2 UFAAS AND THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION EVENTS

Since 2013, the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS), in partnership with the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS); the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF); and other partners, have been organizing annual National Agricultural Extension events reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Previous National Agriculture Extension Events



The purpose of these events has always been to stimulate visibility, innovation, and learning in agricultural extension and advisory services provision. This has been achieved through creating a platform for knowledge sharing, exchange and networking among AEAS and agricultural value chain actors. The most recent were:

- The e-symposium that was held in July 2020 that was held during the Covid -19 prevalence, under the theme: **Positioning agricultural extension and advisory services for resilient agriculture and food systems**. The event that was attended by 962 (29%) from all over the world, was characterized by Webinars and media discussion in Uganda. During the same event, the e-Registration of the AEAS providers in Uganda was launched. Report available at : https://ufaas-ugandacf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/UFAAS_Symposium-2020-report-V5.pdf
- The 5th Africa wide Agricultural Extension Week AAEW 2021, hosted by Uganda, was held from 14th to 20th November 2021 as hybrid event, with the physical sessions at Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort, Kampala Uganda. Under the theme **“Effective Agricultural Extension Systems for Sustainable Agripreneurship in Africa”**; the event brought together 365 physical and over 630 virtual participants from over 17 African Countries and globally to deliberate on strategic issues in Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS) in Africa.

1.3 THE UGANDA NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WEEK 2023

The Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services-UFAAS (<https://ufaas-ugandacf.org/>), in partnership with the African Forum of agriculture advisory services (AFAAS), the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and other partners, successfully organised a National Agricultural Extension Week in Uganda (UG-NAEW 2023). The event took place from 23rd -26th May 2023, at Kabira Country Club Hotel, Bukoto, Kampala, under the theme: “Unveiling innovative pluralistic AEAS approaches: Actors’ resilience and competitiveness for food security and commercialized agriculture”

The targeted participants were the public and non-state AEAS professionals/practitioners and stakeholders from: Agriculture and related Ministries’ departments and agencies (including research); policy makers from parliament; Local Governments; Development partners and Heads of UN agencies; Academic institutions; Private sector; civil society; professional bodies, farmer and farmer organizations; and media.

The regional workshops, guided by the theme and sub-themes of UGNAEW2023, aimed at increasing its outreach and ensuring that the regions have tangible inputs into this main event. In each of them; critical regional-context extension issues were explored, priority AEAS policies, practices raised, and recommendations for building actors' resilience and competitiveness.

The purpose of the UGNAEW2023 is to equip Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS) actors with knowledge on how to build resilience and competitiveness for food security and commercialized agriculture.

1. To identify and highlight the various innovative pluralistic AEAS approaches that are building actors’ resilience and competitiveness
2. To deliberate on the resilience and competitiveness capacity gaps and strategies among the different value chain actors.
3. To motivate/stimulate different participating value chain actors and beneficiaries towards greater resilience and competitive actions for food security and commercialization.
4. To raise priority AEAS policy and practice recommendations for building actors’ resilience and competitiveness.

The Sub-Themes were:

- 1 AEAS interventions and support mechanisms for addressing resilience and competitiveness
- 2 Women and Youth engagement and opportunities in the agricultural value chain as actors and beneficiaries
- 3 Leveraging on and strengthening public programmes and projects
- 4 Viable Business development and support services for farmers and other users of AEAS services
- 5 Digitalized AEAS in Agriculture as a driver for agricultural growth

The Expected Outputs were:

- a. Experiences on AEAS interventions and support mechanisms for actors' resilience building and competitiveness shared.
- b. Papers and case stories on strengthened AEAS service delivery mechanisms, digitalization of AEAS services and viable business development models presented and published on the relevant platforms
- c. A policy brief and or a communique on the current AEAS strategies addressing resilience and competitiveness capacity gaps among the AEAS actors' thematic areas and use of e-platforms
- d. Platform (s) for networking and information sharing among the participants created.
- e. Best case studies on engaging and current opportunities for women and youth in the agricultural value chain documented

Outcomes:

- i. Increased recognition of AEAS as a critical service among policy actors and sector stakeholders
- ii. Improved visibility of AEAS professionals by sector stakeholders
- iii. Increased production, productivity, market participation and resilience among farmers and other actors due to improved AEAS models and approaches

1.4 THE PROCESS OF THE EVENT

In order to reach out to a broader range of AEAS actors and stakeholders, the event took a hybrid form (both physical and online) and conducted using a rich and broad range of participatory and inclusive methodologies in three phases:

Preparatory or Preliminary phase:

- Formation and activation of the National Organizing Committee (NOC) and sub-committee's -see *appendix 2 of NOC members who actively attended the meetings*
- Mobilization of resources, partners, participants, presenters, and exhibitors;
- Identification of sites for field visits
- Media Adverts /Promotions/ Media engagements
- Launch of the event
- Preparation for regional events

Pre-events Phase: This was characterized by:

- Regional events in form of workshop organized by AEAS actors and champions in partnership with Zonal agricultural research and development Institutes (ZARDIs) in the Sub-regions of Uganda.
- Confirmations with donors, participants, presenters, and exhibitors;
- Validation of field sites
- Intensified Media engagements

Week Phase: This involved:

- Plenary sessions offering keynote addresses and thematic based presentations, panel discussions and question and answer sessions.
- Dialogue on the Status of Agricultural Extension in Uganda
- Workshops, in form of parallel sessions and side events, focused on each of the Sub-Themes
- These were complimented with other activities, field visits, exhibitions, awarding exemplary AEAS actors and networking. Guidelines will be available for the field visits and awarding ceremony

Post-Events: This was planned to have the concluding activities below:

- Report writing including the proceeding
- Synthesis of the key issues and recommendations to AEAS actors and policy makers and come up with a communique

- Dissemination of the report and communique and follow up on commitments with:
 - The UFAAS board and key partners for validation and approval
 - The Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
 - All participants and partners

1.5 PARTICIPATION

The UGNAEW2023 was attended by different categories of extension actors and stakeholders who participated through various activities in the previous section. These participate in the regional workshops and the main event physically or virtually. The overall attendance was 342 (106W, 236M)

Attendance of the regional meetings

Table 1 show the physical attendance of the pre-event workshops

Table 1: Physical attendance of the extension Week

Region	Female	Male	Total
Central	65	90	155
Eastern	2	13	15
Western	2	10	12
Northern	4	13	17
International	1	2	3
Total Attendance	74	128	202

Physical Attendance of the main event

A total number of 202 (77 Females, 125 Males) registered to attend the physical event. The actual attendance for each day is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Attendance Sector

Sector	Female	Male	Total
Public	10	25	35
Civil Society	35	27	62
Academia	5	19	24
Research	5	6	11
Faith Based Institutions	1	2	3
Private Sector	12	25	37
Farmers Organization	7	16	23
Media	2	5	7
Total Attendance	77	126	202

The highest registration was by the Civil Society Organizations and NGOs (30.7%), followed by private sector (18.3%) then public sector (17.3%). Others were academia (11.9%), farmer organizations (11.4%), research (5.4%), media (3.5%) and faith-based institutions (1.5%).

Online Attendance of the main event

Table 3: Online attendance of the extension Week

Region	Female	Male	Total
Central	22	51	73
Eastern	2	13	15
Western	2	21	23
Northern	2	17	19
International	1	9	10
Total Attendance	29	111	140

2.0 THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE UGANDA NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WEEK 2023

2.1 BRIEF ON PRE-EVENT REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

National events are often organized and conducted with minimal inputs from the regional levels where the actual work is implemented. Given the vitality of the actors on the ground, it is worth bringing together actors at regional levels to understand region-specific challenges and opportunities in AEAS sub sector. Therefore, prior to the UGNAEW2023, regional events were organized where both public and non-state AEAS actors and stakeholders to debate on critical agricultural development issues within their regions. The discussions yielded recommendations for addressing the existential gaps in the delivery of extension and advisory Services in the different regions of Uganda.

2.1.1 Greater Masaka

At Kamenyamigo under Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI): Discussions from greater Masaka region raised concerns over inadequate and poor facilitation of public extension staff, limited knowledge and skills among extension staff, difficulty in accessing reliable agricultural statistics, and conflicting agricultural advisory services provided by myriad AEAS actors. They called for increased funding and facilitation of extension staff at sub county level, investment in e-advisory services, collaborative and participatory design and delivery of agricultural advisory messages, organizing refresher curricula for older extension staff, integration ICT in service delivery and continuous monitoring, evaluation and learning.

2.1.2 Greater Mukono

At MUZARDI: Greater Mukono region identified counterfeit agro-inputs as the biggest challenge facing AEAS delivery. Other challenges that stood out are; failure of the Parish Development Model (PDM) to meet the real needs of smallholder farmer, conflicting advisory messages shared by various AEAS actors, limited funding of agricultural extension staff, and mis communication between extension staff and the farmers. Participants urged government to regulate agro-chemicals that are released on the market, conduct needs assessment studies to evaluate the nature of support required by smallholder farmers, integrate ICT in rolling out government projects, continuous capacity building at farmer level, reduce the cost of data and mobile internet, embrace use of audio-visual approaches in extension service delivery, and tailoring region and enterprise based advisory messages.

2.1.3 West Nile

At Abi Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (AbiZARDI): Participants in West Nile region claimed to be the most hit by the impacts of climate change in Uganda. Due to high levels of land fragmentation, mechanization at farm level has been derailed, advisory message that suits a fragmented landscape is missing and research has neglected land fragmentation in the region as an area of interest. Lack of coordination among AEAS actors and low government participation in regulation of advisory messages were equally voiced. These challenges are further exacerbated by the poor transport infrastructure in the region. According to the participants, climate smart agriculture, irrigation programs, unification of AEAS actors, youth and women involvement in decision making and project implementation, digitalization of agricultural extension and market-led agriculture can alleviate the challenges facing agriculture and agricultural extension service delivery in the region.

2.1.4 Lango Region

At Lira District Headquarters: The challenges in this region did not differ from those that were raised by other regions. However, a few unique cases were; disorganized farmer groups and associations, limited extension staff, inadequate facilitation of extension workers, low adoption of improved technologies, fake agro-inputs, high costs of inputs, declining soil fertility, limited access to water for irrigation, limited access to reliable market information and difficulty in accessing financial services. These can be mitigated through increasing on the number of extension staff per subcounty, retooling extension workers, allocation of more resources to extension service delivery as a sub sector, building the capacity of farmer organizations, inspection of agro-inputs sold by agro-shops, mandatory soil testing, digitalization of agriculture, sensitization of women and youths about their role in agriculture and rolling out education aimed at transformation mindset about agriculture.

2.2 DAY ONE: OFFICIAL OPENING, THEMATIC PRESENTATIONS AND DIALOGUE



The moderator of this session was Ms. Consolata Acayo (Assistant Commissioner, Information and Communication, MAAIF)

2.2.1 Brief on UFAAS and the Extension Week



Beatrice Luzobe (CEO-UFAAS), presented UFAAS as a National Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS) Forum Formed in 2011 by AEAS actors and legally registered in 2013. It is a Country Chapter of the Africa Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), that brings together agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS) actors from all sectors in Uganda. UFAAS works closely with MAAIF through Directory of Agricultural Extension Services (DAES) and other partners to reach out to the AEAS actors. **She mentioned that UFAAS is a membership organisation with 312 paid-up members who make the general Assembly. Two hundred eighty 280 (112F, 168M) of these are individuals, while 32 are organisations and out of the individual members, 54% are youths and 37% of the youth are females. However,** the overall UFAAS reach is over 1,000 AEAS actors nationally. UFAAS acts as a body that links academia (researchers) and other value chain actors. However, due to numerous challenges, a bigger majority of the population seem not to understand and appreciate the role of agricultural extension. She reminded the participants that UFAAS has a vision of effectively contributing to agricultural development in Uganda and a mission of promoting effective and efficient innovative AEAS system through different strategic partnerships, advocacy and capacity building. To achieve these, UFAAS has tailored its objectives towards strengthening the institutions, sustaining effective platforms, support information sharing and networking, develop capacity of agricultural and advisory services, enhance professionalism and lobby and advocate a conducive environment for agriculture extension workers. These are implemented through thematic areas such as institutional development, communication, information and knowledge management (KIM), capacity development, professionalism and lobbying. UFAAS works closely with the ministry since signing the MoU in 2016. UFAAS has mainly supported in areas related to guidelines and standards for AEAS systems in Uganda, ethical code of conduct, procedure for registration and accreditation, e-registration application for AEAS commissioned in 2020 by MAAIF, and sensitization and training non-state actors. She reiterated that Uganda's agriculture is characterized by high vulnerability to climate change, disorganised producers, uncoordinated markets and market actors, unprofessional services, unequipped and unvalued extension service delivery system which collectively affect agricultural productivity thus high poverty levels. To curb these, UFAAS comes in to coordinate and facilitate the process of providing timely and quality services and inputs, effective farmer organisations, professional and motivated extension workers and access to new technologies. These are done

through capacity building by professionally interacting and sharing information, advocacy and supporting professionalism, advocating for a conducive environment for agricultural extensionists.

Since its registration in 2013, UFAAS and MAAIF have been organizing national agricultural events, these events were organised as one day conferences until 2016, from 2017 to 2022 they were called symposia and now called National Agricultural Extension Weeks thus the name “First National Agricultural Extension Week (UGNAEW)”. She reminded participants that the purpose of UGNAEW is to bring out the value and contribution of the pluralistic AEAS in building actors’ resilience and competitiveness for agricultural development. This is built on the fact that national agriculture policy recognises pluralistic, resilience and competitiveness. The major goals of the UGNAEW are to identify and highlight various sustainable Pluralistic AEAS interventions, to stimulate different participating value chain actors towards greater contribution resilience and competitiveness, to deliberate on capacity and operational gaps among the different value chain actors, raise priority policies and practice recommendations for AEAS. The main outputs expected from the UGNAEW were sustainable pluralistic AEAS ways and approaches that are building resilience of actors, the capacity and operational gaps, communicate on AEAS strategies for addressing the value and contribution of pluralistic AEAS in building the actors resilience.

2.2.2 Keynote Address



The event opened with a keynote address which was delivered by Prof. Margaret Najjingo Mangheni of Makerere University. Reflecting the key theme “**Unveiling innovative pluralistic AEAS approaches: Actors’ resilience and competitiveness for food security and commercialized agriculture**”, the speech brought to light a myriad of concerns that were crucial for a vibrant extension system in the country. Among these were the following: As the country is driving towards Agro-industrialization, sustainable and productive benefits from the same will emanate from the institution of a sound AEAS strategy and that this ought to start with capacity building of the several partners in the sector. She advocated for a strong collaboration with policy makers and the civil society in a bid for crispy advocacy regarding improving the legal framework guiding AEAS for increased and improved competitiveness. She emphasized the need for open-mindedness through refreshing strategy and rebranding for better resilience and competitiveness regarding extension given the changing terrain within which the same is practiced. This could be achieved through adoption of digital advisories, harmonization of extension content, careful planning, implementation and monitoring to ensure successful outcomes. In her closing remarks, Prof. Margaret acknowledged the role of the Private sector for their support to AEAS but emphasized that it is important to empower them so as to do business better. She alluded to this by stating that private sector is more leaned towards making business for instance in seed, but not necessarily providing of AEAS services.

She noted that agriculture is vulnerable to shocks which can be climatic, economic and trade related which calls for innovations within AEAS to be resilient and focus on the agri-food system as a whole. She emphasized the reluctance of paying for services at farmer level emanating from a long history of subsidized public good. She advised that while subsidies are good, there is a manner in which they can be pursued that does not undermine the thriving of the private sector especially as we pursue commercialized agriculture. She equally attributed this to the governments’ weak regulations, human capital deficiency in terms of number and competence, and funding that is dwindling. Interestingly, she highlighted the opportunities within the sector that can be harnessed including local, regional and international markets, young and active population, diverse agribusinesses linking farmers and other actors to input and produce markets and financial service providers. She applauded other academic institutions such as Gulu, Busitema and Kyambogo universities and Bukalasa agricultural college that have deeply engaged themselves in building qualified agricultural personnel. The governments’ commitment to transform

Uganda from a peasant to a middle-income economy, create jobs in agro-industry, increase export value of selected agricultural produce, increase labour productivity and proportion of households that are food security offers opportunities that can be harnessed. However, it is important to note that the above-mentioned government goals can be achieved only when the national agricultural and advisory system is effective, efficient and inclusive. The role of agricultural extension traditionally involved human capital development for increased production and productivity with emphasis on smallholder farmers. Currently, the scope has expanded to include other value chain actors for socioeconomic transformation. A synopsis of innovative AEAS approaches such as village agent model, digital extension, market-oriented agriculture and farmer business school were highlighted. Government on the other hand was recognized as an important player in the sector and its contribution towards formulation of policies and programs such as the National agriculture Policy, Fertilizer Policy, Seed Policy, Trade Policy, Research Policy, Coffee Policy, Parish development model etc. were appreciated. However, it was questioned whether these policies and programs speak to the challenges and opportunities that exist, or whether they are aligned to each other and implemented. In relation to agriculture extension, the government formulated the National Agricultural Extension Policy of 2016 which streamlines Pluralism in the sector, developed guidelines and standards to guide pluralism, accreditation and registration of service providers and ethical conduct of AEAS. Much as a lot has been done, she called upon the government to develop a legal framework for regulation of public and private actor activities in commodity value chains, extension and advisory services; Harmonization, alignment, integration of public investments and public-private investments; Coordinated, integrated aligned investment by government in both agriculture extension and Parish Development Model (PDM).

2.2.3 Highlights from Feed the Future Uganda Institutional and Systems Strengthening Activity



The chief of Party (Mr. Didas Nkwesiga) highlighted the fact that Feed the Future Uganda Institutional and Systems Strengthening Activity works with over 11 (eleven) ministries, departments, and agencies in Uganda. He noted that Feed the Future Uganda Institutional and Systems Strengthening Activity streamlines internal processes for institutions engaged in agriculture to respond to the needs of actors within the sector. The institution has been engaged in improving policy frameworks for institutions within the sector to thrive, strengthening capacity elements and promoting vertical and horizontal linkages. He urged the government to re-enforce aspects of the regulatory

frameworks such as the National Agricultural Extension Strategy which require a bill for enactment. He noted challenges in accessing agricultural statistical data from the government and the country as a whole due to lack of a system that can capture and store agricultural data for continuous dissemination. Much as, Feed the Future Uganda Institutional and Systems Strengthening Activity participated in the development of the National Food and Statistical System with the MAAIF, there is need for a faster roll out of the system to guide in planning and decision making. Streamlining the communication strategy for the agricultural sector was deeply emphasized for better alignment and coordination to have a greater impact not only in the country but also across the region.

2.2.4 Highlights from the Africa Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS)



Dr. Silim Nahdy, Executive Director-AFAAS, highlighted that the organisation operates in 40 countries within Africa with 26 countries being active and 10 very active. AFAAS is anchored in the African Union and within the context of the CAADP processes. He reminded the participants about the Maputo declaration where African heads of state committed to allocate 10% of their national budgets to agriculture and a re-commitment in Malabo in 2014 which have not been realized yet. He highlighted the rapid shift in agriculture extension in Uganda from public based to a pluralistic approach bringing in actors from the private sector, NGO world and CSOs. According to AFAAS, the provision of motorcycles and vehicles to extension workers by government is not enough, there is need to support communication and information sharing by providing airtime and data bundles for internet access. Obstacles to agricultural extension in Africa are crosscutting, mainly in terms of policy, institutional systems, funding, capacity, orientation, approaches, methods

and tools used, and basic application of digital systems. He concluded by thanking UFAAS for organizing the event and development partners for funding the organization of the event.

2.2.5 The Opening Speech from the Minister MAAIF



The opening speech was given by the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), who was represented by Dr. Patience Rwamigisa (Assistant Commissioner for Agricultural Extension Coordination). The Minister's message focused on the need to improve the existing system with better policies and operating environment as well as building an effective and efficient labour system among the AEAS providers. The current leadership at MAAIF set out a six-point agenda to achieve between 2021 to 2026. In a bid to reduce the lapse and rigors in reaching out to farmers, the Minister encouraged both private and public domain to embrace the first agenda which is digital agriculture services such as the E-voucher system as a tool for cascading agricultural extension to more farmers. Other areas of emphasis are pest and disease control, appropriate mechanisation and irrigation technologies, farmer education, building partnerships with

commercial farmers and affirmative action on fisheries and aquaculture. In order to achieve the fourth agenda related to farmer education, the government created all critical positions at local governments required to offer agriculture extension services to farmers. Local governments have about 9,245 established extension staff positions, however, due to budget constraints, only about 4,000 extension staff are already occupying those positions. He also emphasised the need for collaboration and minimising competition between extension actors because the government of Uganda allows a multi-stakeholder participation in the AEAS sector. He however advised that let there be concerted efforts for mainstreaming and strengthening extension reforms by linking state and non-state actors in addition to increasing access to agriculture credit and agriculture insurance so that farmers are not discouraged by production constraints that mainly emanate from the changing catastrophes in production space, especially climate change and variability uncertainties. He appreciated UFAAS for mobilizing and coordinating the regional agriculture extension dialogues that brought out voices that complement agriculture extension agenda. Finally, he officially opened the Uganda National Agriculture Extension Week 2023 (UGNAEW2023).

2.2.6 Thematic Overview Presentations (Plenary)

The thematic overview presentations that focused five key themes highlighted in section 1.3, aimed at providing an overview and setting a scene for each of the themes.



Harrison Kaziro (AMEA), Dr. Juliet Ssentumbwe (Former MAAIF) and Dr. Sam Luzobe (Learn Enterprises Ltd) giving their comments

The audience reacted to the points presented in each of the thematic papers. Table 5 summarizes the key points from each of the themes.

Table 4: Summary points from each thematic area

Thematic area	Key action points
<p><i>Leveraging on and strengthening public programs and projects:</i> by Adeline-UFAAS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making effective use of the few human extension providers. • Assessment so we can ably advocate for more extension humans. • Continued needs assessment of the advisory services providers. • Continued farmer field schools so as to reduce the time constraints of AEAS providers. • Improved infrastructure development and access to financing to farmers for increased productivity • Continuously support to Research and Development for better technologies and practices • Encourage policy support and enabling environment. • Need to regulate the type, amount and quality of information received by farmers. • Continuous monitoring and evaluation of the sector actors and the extension workers on the ground.
<p><i>Viable Business development and support services for farmers and other users of AEAS services.</i> By Harrison Kaziro-AMEA:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local networking is key for all stakeholders in to benefit from synergies and opportunities. • There is need for support of the agribusiness actors through financing but this should be guided by MAAIF. • Professional farmer organizations need to be accorded legal status if the member farmers are to benefit. • Need for professionalization of all VC actors in agriculture sector for efficient service delivery. • Need for agriculture extension service delivery bill to standardize and certify the process and actors involved.
<p><i>Women and Youth engagement and opportunities in the agricultural value chain as actors and beneficiaries</i> By Jude Tibamanya-UMI:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for women and youth in SSA is minimal due to susceptibility to pandemics and wars. • Need to increase interaction of AEAS actors with communities to create awareness among women, men, and youth about policy, effective control of productive assets.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEAS actors ought to introduce technologies as part of the culture of the farming communities. • Inclusivity and joint participation in agricultural policy formulation and implementation need to be given attention. • Strategic placement of agricultural extension workers in farming communities. • Innovate e-agricultural extension systems that includes farmers at grassroot level. • Deliberate engagement of women and youths at input delivery node. • Mobilize women and youth in community-based organizations to enhance access to services. • Involve men in enhancing gender responsiveness since decision making and resource allocation is based on patriarchal system. • Dissemination of policy and research outputs at grassroot level. • Regular review of agricultural policies to include provisions for gender responsiveness.
<p><i>Digitalized AEAS in Agriculture as a driver for agricultural growth</i> By Julian Rweju, NITA:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEAS should take advantage of the infrastructure available for digitization to improve efficiency and timeliness in information dissemination -through NITA • Academia and research should support knowledge dissemination by considering cultural and language hiccups/aspects of the society for enhanced digitization of AEAS info. • Careful planning and monitoring ensure successful outcomes with help of ICT. • Personalize advisory services to farmers using technology and information that is available. • Digital skills and awareness need to be emphasized at the farmer level.

Note: The overview on Leveraging on and strengthening public programmes and projects, was not presented.

The presentation drew a lot of concern and contentious issues arose from the audience as follows.

- **AMEA-** is a report available on the research on the value accruing from agriculture and if available how is the dissemination planned, whom you are collaborating with, break down the agriculture part you are targeting.
- Why science has failed to contribute to agriculture; costs of the seeds are high thus making the whole process costly, pest and disease control is poor, no cost benefit balance from the technologies available. The extension workers have become lazy, they are not enticing people to participate.
- **Digitalization:** how do we involve the low-income farmers adopt to innovations that require use of smart phones.
- What can we do to ensure access to agro inputs sustainable?
- How can we be practical in our work?
- Where is the second agriculture extension strategy, what should we do to smoke it out?
- Extension workers are very lazy, what can we do about this?
- Where is our second agricultural extension strategy (taking extension



The summary key points from the discussions were:

- a) The absence of a Legal framework for regulation of public and private activities which calls for rapid and strategic enactment of the same so that there is coordination between the diverse AEAS providers;
- b) The need for all AEAS providers and policy implementers to be open-minded so that they accommodate the changing landscape of AEAS and this would call for refreshing strategy and rebrand for better resilience & competitiveness;

- c) The need for embracing Digital AEAS as a tool to cascade AEAS to more farmers in a bid to improving efficiency, time, and information dissemination;
- d) The need for consolidation of structural sensitivity to women and youths in agricultural sector was not spared and this would involve MAAIF reviving the debate to AEAS to arrive at this in addition to creation of awareness of among men, women and youths about policy, effective control of productive assets among others;
- e) A bid to strengthen the digital outreach campaign of AEAS to farmers, there was a need to work on Infrastructure & connectivity, Digital illiteracy, Affordability & accessibility, Data privacy & security, sustainability and maintenance as these proved to be major challenges to cascading digital Ag-information services.

2.2.7 Dialogue: Perspectives on the state of Agricultural Extension in Uganda



The panellists included Beatrice Luzobe (CEO-UFAAS), Noelina Nanyunja (Farmer from Mukono district), Dr. Mpiira (Change agent -Buvuma District), Racheal Ajambo (Kilimo Trust), Denis Tebenkana (Youth Representative), Tony Ojok (World Vision Uganda).

Beatrice Luzobe (UFAAS)

She mentioned that one of UFAAS's focus is to advocate and lobby a conducive environment for AEAS in Uganda. She stated that the current real problem is the declining appreciation of the contribution of agriculture extension services to the national development. All the other things we see are just the symptoms, which include but not limited to: low funding to public AEAS operations and staff recruitment and the delay to approve the extension bill. Most of the agricultural related policies are not being implemented. This is attributed to the delay in approving and disbursement of funds for implementation. All these are slowing down the performance of AEAS and the realisation of full potential of the system in the country. The low staffing of the AEAS providers is also appalling with less and time the extension personnel has towards the farmers. Her concern was that without extension, agriculture will not move and thus advocated for more investment in the AEAS system across the country.

Noeline Nanyunja (Farmer)

The farmer wondered why public AEAS providers were not on the ground. She gave credibility to the NGO staff, who she said are always on ground to support those, especially females, who have less chances to receive technological transfers from the government AEAS. She lamented on the fact that much as technologies and innovations are being released on a daily basis, none of those technologies is specifically targeting women. Her submission ended with an argument that farmers should embrace organic agriculture, which is less dependent on inorganic inputs reduce.

Tony Ojok (World Vision Uganda).

He stated that the role of civil society in extension service provision is tremendous because they work closely with farmers using participatory methodologies. He mentioned that the NGOs are very mindful to the Extension: farmer ratio while employing their workers in the field. He cited challenges to public extension workers as: limited facilitation; limited capacity enhancement; poor coordination with other actors involved in extension

service delivery; as well as insufficient human capital. He mentioned that when the NGOs cover some of these gaps, the public extension workers effectively support their operations. NGOs tend to live and regularly engage with farming communities, this allows them to reach their individual needs with cite specific solutions unlike government implemented blanket project and models. The failure of government to coordinate activities at community level has made NGOs look as if they are replacing the government on extension service delivery. The biggest challenge with government extension service delivery is limited staff, ill facilitation and failure to access up to date agricultural knowledge and information.

Racheal Ajambo (Kilimo Trust)

Her contributions related to the rationality farmers possess in deciding with enterprises they should invest money. She stated that that farmers are rational and therefore you can't impose a technology on them for as long as they are not technically efficient. However, she noted that agriculture extension cannot be dissociated from value chain development and agricultural growth. There is no way a smallholder will improve quality of their produce and exploit the existing market opportunities if they have no contact with extension workers. Thus, any investment made at smallholder level by smallholder farmers depends on the quality and type of information they have at hand. This is one of the greatest roles that agricultural extension workers need to play. She emphasised the role of promoting post-harvest technology and urged the need to incorporate AEAS in the agricultural value chain. She ended by agreeing to the fact that agriculture extension is very critical to agricultural value chain development.

Denis Tebenkana (Roots of Africa-Youth representative)

He was concerned about the irrelevance of the education sector to the needs of the youths who are involved in agriculture. He lamented about the big skills gap (inappropriate skills) which don't address farmers challenges. The current agriculture extension system is not fully representative of the youth and their needs. Much as 78% of Uganda's population is made up of youths, policy formulations in regards to agriculture and agriculture extension tend not only to sideline youths but also exclude them in policy discussions. It is true that extension workers are few, but the skills that most of them possess is not what the smallholder farmers require.

Samuel Mpiira (Local Government-Buvuma District)

He acknowledged the fact that there are very thin on the ground as extension workers. He pointed out an example of Buvuma district where the ratio of Extension worker to farmers is 1:1800 and thus an inability to reach an individual farmer twice a year. At some point, the priorities of the farmers differ, when extension workers visit them without invitation, they are hesitant to listen to them, yet, the times they individually need an extension worker, they are in different places attending to other farmers. Under the Parish Development Model, the farmers receive funding only after presenting a viable business plan which are developed by extension workers. Unless the government provides an affirmative action and continuous support to extension workers, farmers and the public will not see the value of agriculture extension. He ended by stating that extension workers are critical and are the drivers of mindset change and agricultural growth that the government intends to use to transform Uganda to a middle-income country.

Reactions from audience:

The audience yielded a lot of important insights to explain the poor performance of the public AEAS system in Uganda.

- Various stakeholders in the agriculture ministry have failed to defend the position of agriculture in the country and during policy making, thus government is seeing no value for extension workers.
- The policy makers were cited as being the centre of failing extension service delivery in the country. This is characterised by the rampant scrapping of interventions before they achieve the intended objectives was cited among the aids to failure of extension programs for instance Entandikwa, PMA, OWC, emyoga etc.

- Lack of regulation in extension service delivery has resulted in everyone, including non-professionals, becoming an expert.
- Poor attitude of academia towards extension
- Fake agricultural inputs in the market
- Station based extension workers who do not reach out to farmers.
- The liberalisation of agricultural training institutes has greatly affected the quality of the extension who come out.

Recommendations

- Increasing budgetary allocation to agricultural extension
- Standardisation of Agricultural extension curriculum at tertiary training institutions
- Mind-set change among all actors and stakeholders in order to bring back the value of Agric extension.
- Investing more incentives into crop extension, the same way it is done in veterinary. For instance, the veterinary department delivers because they are facilitated, and they have the market for the produce from their industry.
- We should work as a team to make government to see our value in agriculture.
- Government should come up with sustainability strategy, to avoid the confusion to the extension delivery. The policy makers should always allow time for the implementation of government programmes and projects.
- Work on the issue of poor-quality inputs in the market, which is killing the trust of farmers towards extension services.
- The curriculum for agriculture training should be regulated.
- Equipping of the input dealers with the rightful knowledge should be seriously taken into consideration, because in many places they play the role of front-line extension workers.

2.3 DAY TWO: PARALLEL THEMATIC WORKSHOPS AND SIDE EVENTS

The day began with a recap of the previous day and linkage of these to the day's activities. The key items reviewed were: the keynote address, minister's speech, plenary and dialogue. A summary of the day's harvest can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28Aw992Vjig>.

2.3.1 Parallel Thematic Workshops

2.3.1.1 Workshop I. AEAS interventions and support mechanisms for addressing resilience and competitiveness.

Presentations:

1. *Community based participatory research extension farmer model - Dr. Godfrey Kagezi (NaCoRI)*
2. *AEAS approaches tested and adopted by World Vision – Mr. Tony Ojok (World Vision)*

Issue: There are many interventions and approaches that are currently being implemented by the different AEAS actor within the farming communities and a

Introduction

The workshop on Agriculture Extension and Advisory Service Interventions aimed at exploring the role of AEAS interventions and mechanisms, in enhancing the resilience and competitiveness of agricultural systems. The workshop had two main presentations. This report summarizes the key points discussed during the workshop.

Presentation Overview: Understanding Agriculture Extension and Advisory Services

The workshop began with an overview of agriculture extension and advisory services. Participants explored the concept of extension services, their objectives, and their significance in agricultural development. Extension services play a vital role in disseminating information, facilitating technology transfer, and providing technical assistance to farmers and other stakeholders in the agricultural sector.

Enhancing Resilience through Extension Services

The presentation emphasized the importance of building resilience in agricultural systems to cope with various challenges, including climate change, market fluctuations, and resource constraints. The workshop highlighted how extension services can contribute to resilience-building through:

- a) **Climate-smart practices:** Extension workers can educate farmers about climate-smart practices, such as crop diversification, water management techniques, and conservation agriculture, to enhance the resilience of farming systems in the face of climate variability.
- b) **Risk management:** Extension services can provide training and resources on risk management strategies, such as crop insurance, early warning systems, and disaster preparedness, to help farmers mitigate and recover from potential shocks and crises.
- c) **Access to information and technology:** Extension workers can bridge the information gap by providing farmers with timely and relevant information on weather forecasts, market trends, and new technologies, enabling them to make informed decisions and adapt to changing circumstances.

Improving Competitiveness through Extension Services

The presentation also highlighted the role of extension services in improving the competitiveness of farmers and agricultural enterprises. Key interventions discussed included:

- a) **Market linkages:** Extension services can facilitate market linkages by connecting farmers to potential buyers, promoting value-added products, and supporting market intelligence initiatives. This helps farmers access higher-value markets, increase their income, and compete effectively.

b) **Business and financial management:** Extension workers can provide training and guidance on business planning, financial management, and access to credit and grants. These interventions empower farmers to enhance their business acumen and make informed decisions to improve competitiveness.

c) **Skills development:** Extension services can offer capacity-building programs and workshops on modern agricultural practices, post-harvest handling, value addition, and quality standards. This equips farmers with the necessary skills and knowledge to produce high-quality products that meet market demands.

Discussion and Q&A Session

The workshop included an interactive discussion and Q&A session, allowing participants to share their experiences, challenges, and success stories related to agriculture extension and advisory services. Participants engaged in conversations about the best approaches for delivering extension services, strategies for engaging farmers effectively, and ways to measure the impact of extension interventions on resilience and competitiveness.

Conclusion

The workshop on Agriculture Extension and Advisory Service Interventions provided a platform for participants to explore the crucial role of extension services in enhancing the resilience and competitiveness of agricultural systems. The presentation and subsequent discussions emphasized the need for tailored extension interventions that address local challenges, promote climate-smart practices, and foster market-oriented approaches. Participants left the workshop with renewed enthusiasm to strengthen extension services, collaborate across sectors, and support farmers in building resilient and competitive agricultural systems

2.3.1.2 Workshop 2: Women and Youth Engagement and Opportunities in the Agricultural Value Chain

Presentation:

1. *Food rights Alliance experiences with women and youth engagement and opportunities in the agricultural value chain as actors and beneficiaries – Ms. Agnes Kirabo*

Introduction

The workshop aimed at exploring the promotion of the active participation of women and youth in agricultural value chains, identifying the opportunities for their engagement, and discussing strategies to overcome the challenges they face. The event brought together stakeholders from government agencies, agricultural organizations, women and youth groups, financial institutions, and development partners.

Key Discussions and Findings:

Challenges and Barriers

- a) *Limited access to land and productive resources:* Women and youth often face challenges in accessing land, capital, inputs, and technologies, which hinders their participation in agricultural activities.
- b) *Gender disparities:* Gender norms and cultural biases limit women's access to decision-making processes, resources, and market opportunities.
- c) *Limited technical skills and knowledge:* Women and youth require training and capacity building to enhance their agricultural and entrepreneurial skills.
- d) *Inadequate market linkages:* Women and youth often face difficulties in accessing markets and obtaining fair prices for their agricultural produce.
- e) *Financial constraints:* Limited access to affordable credit and financial services restricts the ability of women and youth to invest in and expand their agricultural enterprises.

Opportunities for Engagement

- a) *Value addition and processing:* Women and youth can engage in value addition activities such as food processing, packaging, and branding, which can increase the value of agricultural products and create additional income streams.
- b) *Entrepreneurship and agribusiness:* Encouraging women and youth to establish their own enterprises and engage in agribusiness activities can create employment opportunities and contribute to economic growth.
- c) *ICT and digital solutions:* The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) and digital platforms can empower women and youth with access to market information, financial services, and extension services.
- d) *Farmer cooperatives and associations:* Promoting the formation of farmer cooperatives and associations can provide women and youth with collective bargaining power, access to inputs, and market opportunities.
- e) *Training and capacity building:* Providing targeted training programs on agricultural practices, financial management, and entrepreneurship can enhance the skills and knowledge of women and youth in the sector.

Strategies and Recommendations:

- a) *Gender mainstreaming:* Policies and interventions should prioritize gender equality and ensure that women have equal access to resources, decision-making processes, and market opportunities.
- b) *Access to finance:* Financial institutions should design tailored financial products and services that cater to the specific needs of women and youth in agriculture, including flexible loan repayment options and lower interest rates.
- c) *Market linkages and value chains:* Efforts should be made to establish efficient market linkages, strengthen value chains, and provide market information and networking opportunities to women and youth.
- d) *Capacity building and mentorship:* Training programs, mentorship initiatives, and vocational education should be provided to enhance the technical and entrepreneurial skills of women and youth in the agricultural sector.
- e) *Policy support:* Government policies and programs should focus on creating an enabling environment that supports and promotes women and youth engagement in agriculture, including targeted incentives and supportive regulations.

Conclusion

The workshop highlighted the importance of promoting women and youth engagement in the agricultural value chains in Uganda. By addressing the challenges they face and leveraging the available opportunities, women and youth can contribute significantly to agricultural development, food security, and economic growth. It is essential to implement targeted strategies, including gender mainstreaming, access to finance, market linkages, capacity building, and policy support, to create an enabling environment for their active participation. By empowering women and youth in agriculture, Uganda can unlock their potential, reduce poverty, and achieve sustainable development in the agricultural sector.

Recommendations:

- a) Prioritize gender mainstreaming in agricultural policies and interventions.
- b) Develop tailored financial products and services for women and youth in agriculture.
- c) Strengthen market linkages and value chains to create market opportunities for women and youth.
- d) Provide targeted training programs and mentorship initiatives to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- e) Establish an enabling policy environment that supports and promotes women and youth engagement in agriculture.

- f) Encourage the formation of farmer cooperatives and associations to enhance collective bargaining power and access to resources.
- g) Promote the use of ICT and digital solutions to empower women and youth with market information and financial services.

2.3.1.3 Workshop 3: Leveraging Public Programs and Projects

Presentation:

1. *Scaling up NARO technologies and innovations – Ms. Hilda Adage*
2. *Contribution of decentralized public extension – Dr. Richard Miiro*
3. *Drivers of innovations in facilitating agricultural innovations – Mr. Douglas Otoo*

Introduction

The workshop focused on the role and potential of public programs and projects in promoting market-oriented farming and enhancing the agricultural sector's competitiveness in Uganda. The participants included key stakeholders from government agencies, development partners, private sector organizations, farmers' associations, and agricultural experts.

Key Objectives:

1. To discuss the importance of decentralized public extension services in promoting market-oriented farming.
2. To explore successful public programs and projects that strengthen value chains and enhance agricultural competitiveness.
3. To identify strategies for enhancing the capacity and collaboration between public extension services and the private sector.
4. To generate recommendations for leveraging public programs and projects to enhance the agricultural sector in Uganda.

Summary of Discussions:

Importance of Decentralized Public Extension Services:

The participants emphasized the crucial role of decentralized public extension services in promoting market-oriented farming. They discussed the need for extension services to be tailored to local contexts and challenges. The importance of providing farmers with timely and relevant information, training, and technical support was highlighted. The participants also recognized the need for effective coordination and collaboration between various stakeholders involved in public extension services.

Successful Public Programs and Projects

Several successful public programs and projects were discussed during the workshop. The Feed the Future project was cited as an example of a climate-smart initiative that strengthens value chains and enhances agricultural productivity. The participants shared experiences and best practices from various projects that focused on capacity building, market linkages, and access to finance for farmers. These programs and projects showcased the potential for public interventions to transform the agricultural sector in Uganda.

Enhancing Capacity and Collaboration

The workshop emphasized the need to enhance the capacity and collaboration between public extension services and the private sector. The participants discussed the importance of training programs for extension workers to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge. They also highlighted the need for partnerships and collaborations between public and private entities to leverage resources, expertise, and market opportunities. The workshop identified the role of technology, innovation, and digital solutions in strengthening collaboration and information sharing.

Conclusion

The workshop on Leveraging Public Programs and Projects in the Agricultural Sector in Uganda provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss and explore strategies for utilizing public interventions to enhance the competitiveness of the agricultural sector. The discussions highlighted the importance of decentralized extension services, successful public programs and projects, capacity building, collaboration, and the adoption of technology. The recommendations generated during the workshop will serve as valuable inputs for policymakers and stakeholders to shape future interventions and initiatives in the agricultural sector in Uganda.

Recommendations

Based on the discussions held during the workshop, the following recommendations were generated:

- a) **Strengthening Decentralized Public Extension Services:** The government should allocate adequate resources and support to decentralized public extension services to ensure their effectiveness in reaching farmers and addressing local challenges.
- b) **Enhancing Collaboration:** Public extension services should forge partnerships and collaborations with the private sector, research institutions, and farmers' associations to leverage resources, knowledge, and market opportunities.
- c) **Capacity Building:** Training programs should be developed and implemented for extension workers to enhance their technical skills, knowledge, and competencies. This will enable them to provide quality extension services to farmers.
- d) **Access to Finance:** Public programs and projects should prioritize providing farmers with access to finance, including tailored financial products and support for agricultural entrepreneurship.
- e) **Information and Communication Technology:** The adoption of digital solutions, such as mobile applications and online platforms, should be promoted to facilitate information sharing, market linkages, and farmer engagement.

2.3.1.4 Workshop 4: Viable Business Development and Support Services

Presentations:

- 3 *Showcasing CARS's successful Farmer Field and Business Schools plot in Southwestern Uganda – Mr. Okello*
- 4 *Applying Enabling Rural Innovation approach to support transition from subsistence to market-oriented agriculture – Ms. Nambozo and Mr. Griesauer*
- 5 *NUCAFE's experience with viable business development and support services for farmers and other users - Mr. Joseph Nkandu*

Introduction

The aim of the workshop was to explore strategies and solutions to foster the growth and sustainability of agricultural businesses in Uganda. The event brought together stakeholders from the government, agricultural organizations, farmer cooperatives, financial institutions, and entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector.

Key Discussions and Findings:

Current Challenges in Agricultural Business Development:

- a) **Limited access to finance:** Participants highlighted the difficulty in accessing affordable credit and financing options for agricultural ventures.
- b) **Inadequate market linkages:** Many farmers and agribusinesses face challenges in connecting with reliable markets and accessing fair prices for their produce.
- c) **Lack of value addition and post-harvest management:** Insufficient infrastructure and knowledge in value addition techniques limit farmers' ability to maximize their profits.

- d) Limited access to information and extension services: Farmers expressed the need for improved access to market information, technological innovations, and extension services.

Business Development Support Services:

- a) Financial services: It was emphasized that financial institutions should design tailored financial products for the agricultural sector, including flexible repayment options and lower interest rates.
- b) Market linkages: Participants discussed the importance of establishing effective market linkages through partnerships between farmers, cooperatives, and agribusinesses. Creating platforms for direct engagement with buyers and promoting collective marketing initiatives were also highlighted.
- c) Training and capacity building: Workshops, training programs, and mentorship initiatives were identified as crucial for equipping farmers and entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge to run successful agricultural businesses.
- d) Access to technology: Participants emphasized the need for improving access to modern agricultural technologies, including digital platforms for market information, precision farming tools, and post-harvest management techniques.
- e) Value addition and processing: Participants recommended the establishment of more processing facilities and the provision of training on value addition techniques to enhance the quality and marketability of agricultural products.

Policy and Institutional Support:

- a) Strengthening policy frameworks: Participants emphasized the need for supportive policies that address the specific challenges faced by the agricultural sector. This includes incentivizing private sector investments, promoting value addition, and enhancing market access for farmers.
- b) Collaboration between stakeholders: Participants highlighted the importance of collaboration among government agencies, financial institutions, research institutions, and the private sector to create an enabling environment for agricultural business development.
- c) Farmer-centered approach: It was recommended that policies and interventions be designed with a focus on the needs and aspirations of smallholder farmers and agri-entrepreneurs, particularly women and youth.

Conclusion:

The workshop highlighted the critical role of viable business development and support services in promoting the growth and sustainability of the agricultural sector in Uganda. Addressing challenges such as limited access to finance, market linkages, and value addition requires a multi-stakeholder approach, involving the government, financial institutions, agricultural organizations, and farmers themselves. By implementing the recommendations discussed during the workshop, Uganda can create a conducive environment for agricultural businesses to thrive, thereby contributing to food security, employment generation, and economic growth in the country.

Recommendations:

- a) Develop tailored financial products for the agricultural sector, including flexible repayment options and lower interest rates.
- b) Establish effective market linkages through partnerships and collective marketing initiatives.
- c) Conduct regular training programs and capacity-building workshops for farmers and agri-entrepreneurs.
- d) Improve access to modern agricultural technologies and digital platforms for market information.
- e) Promote value addition and establish more processing facilities.
- f) Strengthen policy frameworks that incentivize private sector investments and address sector-specific challenges.
- g) Foster collaboration among stakeholders to create an enabling environment for agricultural business development

2.3.1.5 Workshop 5: Digitalized Agricultural Extension Services

Presentations:

1. *Knowledge gain, challenges, and lessons of promoting mobile massive open online courses – Mr. Daniel Ninsiima (m-Omulimisa)*
2. *Charting the path of sustainable agriculture through digital advisory services – Ms. Rachel Ajambo (KT)*

Introduction

The objective of the workshop was to explore the potential of digital technologies in transforming and enhancing agricultural extension services in Uganda. The event brought together stakeholders from the government, agricultural organizations, technology providers, researchers, and farmers to discuss the opportunities and challenges of adopting digital solutions in the agricultural sector. The focus of this workshop was on leveraging digital technologies to drive agricultural growth. Some key players were around to showcase their digital products. These included:

- Research projects like Agripath and FarmBetter tested different digital agricultural services delivery models were part of the
- The Mobimoo App pilot project facilitated knowledge sharing and training on orange flesh sweet potato cultivation.
- Axiom data center which works around digitization of agriculture maps in Uganda mainly capturing the soil conditions of the country.

Key Discussions and Findings:

Current Challenges in Agricultural Extension Services:

- a) Limited reach and access: Traditional extension services face challenges in reaching remote and marginalized farming communities, limiting the dissemination of knowledge and best practices.
- b) Lack of timely and relevant information: Farmers expressed the need for real-time access to information on weather patterns, market prices, pest and disease management, and agricultural practices.
- c) Inadequate training and capacity building: Extension workers highlighted the need for continuous professional development and training to stay updated on the latest agricultural technologies and practices.
- d) Limited resources and infrastructure: Insufficient funding, inadequate connectivity, and lack of access to necessary tools and equipment hinder the effectiveness of extension services.

Potential of Digitalized Agricultural Extension Services

- a) Mobile applications and SMS platforms: Participants discussed the potential of mobile applications and SMS platforms to deliver timely and customized agricultural information to farmers, including weather updates, market prices, crop management techniques, and advisory services.
- b) Remote sensing and satellite imagery: Remote sensing technologies can provide valuable data on crop health, soil moisture, and vegetation patterns, enabling targeted interventions and early warning systems.
- c) Interactive voice response (IVR) systems: IVR systems can be used to disseminate pre-recorded agricultural information, allowing farmers to access extension services through their phones without the need for internet connectivity.
- d) Online platforms and social media: Online platforms and social media channels can serve as hubs for knowledge sharing, farmer networking, and virtual training programs.
- e) Farmer helplines and call centers: Setting up dedicated helplines and call centers can provide farmers with immediate access to expert advice and support.

Challenges and Recommendations:

- a) Connectivity and infrastructure: Participants acknowledged the existing gaps in internet connectivity and recommended investments in rural broadband infrastructure to ensure widespread access to digital extension services.

- b) Digital literacy and awareness: Farmers and extension workers need to be equipped with the necessary digital skills and awareness to effectively utilize digitalized extension services. Training programs and capacity-building initiatives should be implemented.
- c) Data privacy and security: The collection and management of farmer data should adhere to strict privacy and security protocols to protect farmers' information.
- d) Sustainability and funding: Sustainable funding mechanisms should be established to support the development, maintenance, and scaling of digitalized extension services.
- e) Collaboration and partnerships: Stakeholders emphasized the importance of collaboration between government agencies, technology providers, agricultural organizations, and farmers to design and implement effective digital extension solutions.

Conclusion

The workshop highlighted the immense potential of digitalized agricultural extension services in Uganda. By harnessing the power of digital technologies, the agricultural sector can overcome the limitations of traditional extension services and reach a wider audience with relevant and timely information. However, challenges such as connectivity, digital literacy, data security, and sustainability need to be addressed through collaborative efforts. By investing in digital infrastructure, providing training and support, and fostering partnerships, Uganda can unlock the transformative benefits of digitalized agricultural extension services, leading to increased productivity, improved livelihoods, and sustainable agricultural development.

Recommendations:

- a) Invest in rural broadband infrastructure to ensure widespread internet connectivity.
- b) Implement training programs and capacity-building initiatives to enhance digital literacy among
- c) farmers and extension workers.
- d) Develop robust data privacy and security protocols to protect farmers' information.
- e) Establish sustainable funding mechanisms to support the development and scaling of digitalized

2.3.2 Side events

Introduction: Key stakeholders in attendance included government representatives, farmers, financial institutions, NGOs, and academia, to discuss and address the challenges faced by farmer organizations, agri-SMEs, and extension services in the country. The conference included two side events, focusing on privatization of extension service delivery and enhancing business development and support services. This report provides a summary of the discussions and recommendations made during the side events.

2.3.2.1 Side Event I: Privatization of Extension Service Delivery

Overview The first side event focused on the privatization of extension service delivery and its impact on agricultural development. Ms. Justine Nayiga, a village-based agent, shared her success story and highlighted the importance of holistic approaches and evidence-based solutions in supporting farmers. She emphasized the need for removing free handouts by the government to farmers and encouraged partnerships with private service providers for effective implementation of projects. Financial institutional support for the private sector was also emphasized.

Panel Discussion The panelists discussed various challenges and recommendations related to privatization of extension services. They emphasized the need to harness the trust and worthiness of women in agriculture, engage the youth, and address the storage facility challenges faced by agri-SMEs. The importance of scaling such programs to other areas and focusing on organic agriculture and nutrition was also highlighted. The value of trust, patience, and commitment in the village agent model was acknowledged, along with the challenges of limited extension workers and transportation.

Recommendations Based on the discussions, the following recommendations were put forth:

- a) Remove free handouts and encourage farmers to invest in agricultural inputs.
- b) Foster partnerships between private service providers and farmers to implement successful projects. c) Provide full financial institutional support to the private sector in agriculture.
- d) Strengthen storage facilities for agri-SMEs to reduce costs and enhance efficiency.
- e) Promote the role of women and youth in agriculture and provide them with necessary support and resources.
- f) Scale up programs focusing on organic agriculture and nutrition to other areas.

2.3.2.2 Side Event 2: Improving and Scaling Business Development and Support Services

Overview

The second side event focused on improving and scaling business development and support services for farmer organizations and agri-SMEs in Uganda. The discussions revolved around the need for a systemic approach to bring all actors together, the lack of funding for extension workers, and the value of data and standards in efficient service delivery.

Panel Discussion: The panelists discussed the challenges faced by various actors in the agriculture sector and emphasized the importance of data, standards, and market linkages in efficient business development services. The need to provide farmers with business management skills, access to finance, and diversified services was highlighted. The role of NGOs in supporting development services and the importance of regulation and coordination among stakeholders were also addressed.

Recommendations Based on the discussions, the following recommendations were put forth:

- a) Develop a national business development services roadmap for Uganda.
- b) Initiate evidence-building efforts to support decision-making and effective service delivery.
- c) Consider the cost implications of extension services and explore models where farmers pay for knowledge and services.
- d) Strengthen institutional development and coordination in training farmers.
- e) Foster mindset changes among farmers and stakeholders towards profitability and sustainability.
- f) Encourage collaboration and continuity in projects and service provision.
- g) Emphasize the application of the National Development Plan (NDP) and promote financial self-sufficiency.

2.3.2.3 Side Event 3: Farmer Field Schools

Introduction

The workshop on Farmer Field Schools (FFS) aimed to provide participants with an in-depth understanding of the FFS approach, its benefits, and its application in agricultural development. The workshop brought together farmers, extension workers, researchers, and policymakers to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices related to FFS. This report summarizes the key points covered during the workshop presentation.

Presentation Overview

Introduction to Farmer Field Schools

The presentation began with an overview of FFS, highlighting its origin, objectives, and key principles. FFS is an interactive and participatory learning approach that enables farmers to acquire practical knowledge and skills through hands-on field activities. It emphasizes experiential learning, group discussions, and farmer-to-farmer exchanges.

The presenter discussed the essential components of FFS, including:

- a) Farmer-led learning: FFS promotes active participation of farmers in the learning process, enabling them to analyze and solve problems collectively.
- b) Field-based activities: FFS sessions take place in farmers' fields, allowing participants to apply new techniques and innovations directly in their own contexts.

- c) Season-long curriculum: FFS follows a curriculum tailored to the specific crop or farming system, covering various topics such as crop management, pest and disease control, soil fertility, and sustainable practices.
- d) Facilitator role: FFS facilitators play a crucial role in guiding discussions, encouraging critical thinking, and fostering a supportive learning environment.
- e) Participatory methods: FFS incorporates participatory methods, such as group discussions, demonstrations, and practical exercises, to enhance learning and knowledge sharing.

Benefits of FFS

The presentation highlighted the numerous benefits associated with FFS implementation: these included the following.

- a) *Enhanced knowledge and skills*: FFS enables farmers to acquire practical skills, scientific knowledge, and innovative techniques directly applicable to their farming practices.
- b) *Empowered decision-making*: Through FFS, farmers gain the ability to make informed decisions based on evidence and field observations.
- c) *Strengthened community networks*: FFS fosters cooperation and knowledge exchange among farmers, leading to the formation of strong community networks.
- d) *Improved productivity and income*: By implementing improved agricultural practices, farmers can increase crop yields, reduce losses, and ultimately enhance their income.
- e) *Sustainable farming practices*: FFS promotes sustainable and environmentally friendly farming practices, such as integrated pest management, organic farming, and soil conservation.

The presenter shared case studies and success stories from different regions where FFS has been implemented. These examples showcased the positive impact of FFS on farmers' livelihoods, crop yields, and community development.

Discussion and Q&A Session

Following the presentation, a discussion and Q&A session allowed participants to engage with the presenter and address their queries and concerns. Key topics discussed included monitoring and evaluation of FFS, scaling up the approach, financial sustainability, and policy support for FFS implementation.

Conclusion

The workshop presentation on Farmer Field Schools provided participants with valuable insights into the principles, components, and benefits of this participatory learning approach. It emphasized the importance of empowering farmers, fostering community networks, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. The presentation and subsequent discussion generated enthusiasm among participants to explore and implement FFS in their respective regions to support agricultural development and improve farmers' livelihoods.

2.4 DAY 3: FIELD VISITS

Introduction

Four site visits were organized i.e., Kyakuwa farm along Entebbe Road, Mityana Dairy Hub, CURAD Namanve as well as NUCAFE and Kayunga District Farmers Association. The rationale for the site visits was to explore various extension approaches applied in those farms and neighboring communities, assess how youths and women are involved but also how they can be supported to produce standard products. The general characteristics of the visited farms/study sites as below:

Kayunga DFA: Model farming with multiple enterprises and value addition; Biogas system for cooking and lighting; Lessons: Dealing in one enterprise is risky, inadequate government extension support; action insights were: Training on certification processes is important, market support is needed.

Kyakuwa Farm: On-farm training and field outreach; Media presentations for knowledge sharing; Lessons: Farming requires honesty, commitment, and starting small; action insights were: Farming is profitable though regulation of fake inputs is needed.

Mityana Dairy: Business-oriented innovation and extension services; Digitalization with AGRENES app for communication; Lessons: Traditional practices must change, farmers need AEAS; action points were: Women and youth can make small-scale land productive, use waste materials, and join cooperatives.

CURAD/NUCAFE: Hub approach for value chains, nutrition support, bulking, and farmer organization; Digitalized services for farmer engagement and information sharing; Lessons: Training specific to value chains, farmers' market negotiation; action insights included: Support certification processes, promote value addition, collaborate for business synergies.

Approaches to extension

It is important to report that in as much as the different places visited used context-specific extension approaches, many of these pointed to the need for a coordinated method of reaching out to farmers. Use of hubs for instance by CURAD and NUCAFE brings out this clearly. The number of farmers to be reached for a particular value chain are many which may overwhelm the resources available and therefore, if they are gathered at one place where there is both production and marketing, it increases the resource efficiency which benefits both farmers and the project coordinators. The use of community model farmers also helps to deliver extension messages to farmers timely but also in a way that enhances productivity because fellow farmers tend to learn from each other when they see what their friends/colleagues are doing unlike when they get this from a visiting extension agent who probably has less knowledge of what happens in the communities.

Key lessons and take-home messages from the approaches

In as much as government is mandated to provide extension services to farmers, one key thing to learn here is the fact that out there are a number of potential service providers who probably haven't been tapped to help their communities. A farmer stationed in a community could best be tapped with even minimal support from government to offer advisory services to the neighboring farmers. Instead of continuously lamenting about the absent AEAS providers, synergies could be built to help farmers to become centers of excellence for some particular technologies. For instance, Kyakuwa Farm could be a center of excellence for hydroponics and dairy feeds manufacturing for the best of urban farmers.

Key takeaways for youths and women

There is a lot that youths could learn from these approaches. Viewed from the point of limited resources to the point of low production techniques, such farms and community establishments could help youth realize their potential for bigger prospects using such opportunities. Urban farming which needs small spaces but also the hubs where the youths can be gathered to learn production are best options where the youths can be gathered. Youths can tap into postharvest handling and service provision but also in providing go-to services such as marketing and inputs support services. In the horticultural sector, we can tap youth potential in small-scale processing for instance in making juice; the dairy sector can be a profitable venture if youths are involved in processing starter products in creameries. However, this cannot be done out of reflex but through thorough preparations involving equipment of technical knowledge, provision of low-cost starter kits but also institutionalization into youth groups to benefit from the economies of scale that accrue from working in teams.

Key policy recommendations relevant to AEAS

- a) In order to boost extension service provision, let there be intentional tapping of resource-rich community farms. Relying on only government extension is not feasible and sustainable at all.
- b) Standardisation of production and training for tapping international markets. There should be a deliberate effort to support community farmers to learn the export market requirements. This could be initiated through efforts by government to sensitize and ease access to the export market for farmers by simplifying and reducing fees attached to the certification of products for export.
- c) Need to setup proper regulations for higher charges and scumming extension workers and
- d) Multi-sectoral approach in extension support.
- e) Boost extension services for youth and women enterprises.
- f) Sensitize and ease access to export markets.
- g) Setup regulations for extension workers and agro-input prices.
- h) Support start-ups, processing, packaging, and branding activities.
- i) Create awareness for agricultural facilities and services.
- j) Collaborate with partners for business growth

Table 5: Summary of key findings

Site	Approaches to support AEAS	Key lessons from the approaches	Take home messages	Key takeaways for youths and women	Key policy recommendation relevant to AEAS
Kayunga DFA	<p>Model farming: Farm is operating a model mixed farm and was supported by the government to install an irrigation system. They also train farmers at a fee of about 20,000 per head, and farmers visit from different places.</p> <p>Multi line farming: She deals in many enterprises including Friesian dairy cattle, Coffee, Fish farming, and goats.</p> <p>They also do value addition and transform milk to yoghurt.</p> <p>From animal waste they also built a biogas system which support in cooking and home lighting.</p>	Dealing in one enterprise is risky as losses are unavoidable.	<p>Inadequate extension support from the government. We have nearly given up on extension support from the government because the extension workers are there but they don't work.</p> <p>Need for multi-sectoral approach in extension by using both government and private extension.</p>	<p><u>Training of youths and women on certification processes is important in production.</u></p> <p>Once youths have been supported to SMEs, it is possible to produce for a lucrative market.</p>	<p>There is a need for market support so that they can earn better. Apparently, they sell to the locals only.</p> <p>Value addition training and guidance</p> <p>Boost extension service provision for youth and women enterprises</p> <p><u>Training on good manufacturing and processing practices to produce standards products</u></p> <p>Support to the installation of better facilities and equipment to promote cleaner and better quality products.</p> <p>Government to sensitize and ease access to the export market for farmers by simplifying and reducing fees attached to the certification of products for export.</p>
Kyakuwa Farm	<p>On-farm training hosts for groups and visitors</p> <p>Field outreach by the staff and the youth volunteers.</p>	The footsteps of the farmer are his/her best fertilizer. (What a farmer does is what leads to what he/she harvests.	<p>Farming does not require much and it is important to begin small</p> <p>Farming needs honesty and commitment.</p>	<p>Farming as a business does not require a lot of land.</p> <p>Farming can be practiced by anyone, it is not a poor man's job.</p>	Need to setup proper regulations for higher charges and scumming extension workers and agro-input price addition for example the cost of Artificial

Site	Approaches to support AEAS	Key lessons from the approaches	Take home messages	Key takeaways for youths and women	Key policy recommendation relevant to AEAS
	<p>Media presentations like through NTV and Bukedde TV, New Vision, and Daily Monitor.</p> <p>Train her service provider on the type and quality of service she needs for example the Hey sellers.</p> <p>Offers hired silage chopping services with her silage chopper.</p>	<p>The closer he/she is, the easier she will be able to know what is needed at the farm and how to address them).</p> <p>"Avoid Telephone farming"</p>	<p>People should save for the future and have better retirement plans.</p> <p>How the youths can be active and successful in farming if mentored, shown by her presenter Peter Mpozza as a Primary Seven pupil.</p> <p>Free knowledge sharing and professionalism and better resources and domestic waste is the source of livelihood, wealth, and food security.</p> <p>The best milkers sustainable Dairy are the crosses as they have higher butter fat content which milk buyers need and have a higher feed conversion rate.</p>	<p>Trust, Honesty, and commitment are a wealth</p> <p>Farming is profitable, she gets about 30 to 120 liters of milk per day and sales at 2000/= per litter</p>	<p>Need for regulation of fake inputs, one extension worker sold her OMO detergent instead of Copper sulfate for</p>
Mityana Dairy	<p>Business oriented innovation</p> <p>Providing extension services to farmers.</p>	<p>Traditional practices must be changed and increase productivity.</p> <p>Farmers need AEAS</p>	<p>100% organic, no chemical and no waste.</p> <p>Agricultural officer from MAAIF must sign on the</p>	<p>Women and youth can hire small scale land and make it productive.</p>	<p>Go down to the grassroot to empower the farmers since farmers have passion for agriculture to improve their livelihood and help them be business oriented.</p>

Site	Approaches to support AEAS	Key lessons from the approaches	Take home messages	Key takeaways for youths and women	Key policy recommendation relevant to AEAS
	<p>Digitalization is in process – coming up with AGRENES app for easy communication with the farmers.</p> <p>Demonstration approach</p>		<p>products before taking them to the market.</p> <p>The AGRENES do marketing for the products of their farmers. They have a sure market</p> <p>It is better to be with a high yielding cow than many cows</p>	<p>Women and youth should join village cooperative in order to get extension services.</p> <p>Women and youth can use waste materials to make their farmers productive even when they don't have money for buying fertilizers.</p> <p>Women and youth should work hard and be involved in agriculture.</p>	
CURAD/NUCAFE	<p><i>Hub approach:</i> They operate in 4 hubs and each hub is representative of a value chain.</p> <p>Makerere hub (Coffee value chain). Here they do advisory services on coffee value chain and emphasis is put on the quality of coffee. CURAD trains extension officers in coffee specific issues.</p> <p><i>Nutrition support approach:</i> They have food scientists who go down to the farmers and gives guidance on market productivity.</p>	<p>CURAD trains their extension workers on the specific value chains eg coffee they are going to handle so it's not general extension knowledge.</p> <p>CURAD is a non-profit organisation so in cases where it cannot afford to train its extensions, the exporters are mandated to do the job since at the end of the day they know the market requirements.</p> <p>CURAD supports the farmers to negotiate for the markets and ensure that the</p>	<p>The cost of extension is donor based, done based on the available projects from the donors, exporters are mandated to train the farmers providing them with produce and the farmer is required to invest his time and be available.</p> <p>CURAD supports the certification processes of the farmers and produce. They support registration of entrepreneurs, both individuals and companies with URBS. Value addition is key in extension services</p>	<p>CURAD supports start up that are related to agriculture and the facilities can support in the processing, packaging and branding activities. They also support registration of SMEs, mentoring and growing entrepreneurs both groups and individuals.</p> <p>CURAD works with a set of licenced exporters therefore can facilitate linkages of the various agricultural products.</p>	<p>Awareness creation for our products is key: CURADs presence on the market is not felt, people out there are not aware that there are such facilities/services they can work with to grow their businesses.</p> <p>Collaboration is very important in business for business synergies: Working in partnership with Sasakawa Africa, there is an award meant to boost agriculture entrepreneurs.</p>

Site	Approaches to support AEAS	Key lessons from the approaches	Take home messages	Key takeaways for youths and women	Key policy recommendation relevant to AEAS
	<p><i>Bulking approach:</i> They have a mandate to produce and export coffee given by UCDA, so they buy green beans from the farmers and store them at CURAD awaiting exportation and further processing.</p> <p><i>Farmer organisation:</i> The facilities are in Kapeeka, here they organise farmers into groups, support their production and link them to exporters.</p> <p><i>Digitalised services:</i> They have a farmer's platform where they engage farmers and in cases of those farmers who do not own smart phones, they use SMSs to reach out to them. This platform also enables networking and information sharing among the farmers, CURAD and the market.</p>	<p>availed market pays the farmer within the specified time frames.</p> <p>MAAIF certifies the agronomists they use in the field.</p> <p>CURAD deals with both individuals and cooperatives and the mode of enrolment of farmers is walk in, referrals, information sharing, symposiums and exhibitions.</p>			

2.5 DAY FOUR: CLOSURE OF THE EXTENSION WEEK

This closure day had two main activities i.e., writing the communique which would make a call to action but also a speech from the Honourable minister of Agriculture, Frank. Tumwebaze.

2.5.1 Call to action speech by the Facilitator

Introduction:

The conference on "Unveiling Innovative Pluralistic AEAS Approaches: Actors' Resilience and Competitiveness for Food Security and Commercialized Agriculture in Uganda" provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss and explore ways to enhance the resilience and competitiveness of Uganda's agricultural sector. The conference highlighted the importance of innovative and pluralistic approaches to agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS) in achieving food security and promoting commercialized agriculture. As the conference concludes, it is essential to outline a call to action to guide future initiatives and drive meaningful change in Uganda's agricultural landscape.

Call to Action:

1. **Strengthen Collaboration and Partnerships:** We call upon all stakeholders, including government agencies, farmers' organizations, researchers, private sector entities, and civil society organizations, to strengthen collaboration and partnerships. By working together, we can leverage the expertise, resources, and networks of each stakeholder to develop and implement innovative AEAS approaches. Joint initiatives should focus on knowledge exchange, capacity building, and the development of inclusive and participatory programs that address the diverse needs of farmers.

2. **Foster Innovation and Technology Adoption:** Innovation and technology play a vital role in transforming Uganda's agricultural sector. We urge policymakers, researchers, and private sector actors to prioritize the development and dissemination of innovative technologies, practices, and digital solutions. This includes investing in research and development, promoting access to affordable and sustainable technologies, and creating an enabling environment for technology adoption. Furthermore, partnerships between tech companies, agricultural experts, and farmers' organizations should be fostered to ensure that innovative solutions are tailored to local contexts and effectively reach farmers.

3. **Enhance Access to Information and Knowledge:** Access to reliable and up-to-date information is crucial for farmers to make informed decisions and improve their agricultural practices. We call upon government agencies and development partners to invest in strengthening extension services, including the training and capacity building of extension workers. Additionally, the use of digital platforms, mobile technologies, and farmer-centered communication strategies should be prioritized to enhance information dissemination and knowledge sharing.

4. **Promote Climate Resilience:** Climate change poses significant challenges to Uganda's agriculture. We urge policymakers and development partners to prioritize climate-smart agriculture and build resilience among farming communities. This includes supporting the adoption of climate-resilient practices, promoting access to climate information and early warning systems, and developing risk management strategies. Investments should be made in climate adaptation and mitigation measures, including sustainable water management, soil conservation, and agroforestry practices.

5. **Enhance Market Access and Value Addition:** To promote commercialized agriculture, it is essential to improve market access and value addition opportunities for farmers. We encourage the private sector, government agencies, and development partners to support farmers in accessing markets, both domestically and internationally. This includes strengthening market linkages, providing market information and intelligence, and

supporting farmers in meeting quality and standards requirements. Furthermore, investments in infrastructure, post-harvest handling, and value addition facilities will enable farmers to maximize the value of their produce.

Conclusion:

The call to action outlined above emphasizes the importance of collaboration, innovation, knowledge sharing, climate resilience, and market access in driving the transformation of Uganda's agricultural sector. By collectively taking action, we can enhance the resilience and competitiveness of actors within the agricultural value chain, ensuring food security and contributing to the commercialization of agriculture. We urge all stakeholders to embrace this call to action and work together towards a sustainable and prosperous agricultural future for Uganda

2.5.2 The Closing Speech Minister –MAAIF

The conference was closed with an inspiring speech by the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Frank Tumwebaze), emphasizing the importance of innovation, collaboration, and resilience in achieving food security and promoting commercialized agriculture in Uganda. The Minister highlighted on:

- The challenges faced by the agricultural sector, including climate change, limited access to modern technologies, market fluctuations, and inadequate extension services.
- The need for innovative and pluralistic AEAS approaches was emphasized.
- The importance of fostering collaboration and partnerships among various actors, including farmers, extension workers, researchers, private sector entities, and policymakers. This collaborative approach is crucial for leveraging the collective strengths and expertise of these stakeholders to build resilience and improve the competitiveness of Uganda's agricultural systems.
- The need to revise the agricultural extension bill to reflect rewards and punishments to extension staff who over and underperform respectively.
- And the standardizing messaging of agricultural advisory services per enterprise across each individual value chain is critical. Specifying the body that will hold individuals and organizations that disseminate wrong information will curb the increasing vice in the private sector.
- Holding extension officers accountable by a pronouncement of an oath before taking office has the potential to eliminate quack extension service providers.

2.5.3 Key Points Discussed at the closing

1. Innovation for Agricultural Transformation: The workshop emphasized the transformative potential of innovation in agriculture. Participants discussed the importance of embracing new technologies, practices, and approaches to revolutionize agricultural production, processing, and marketing. Digital technologies, precision agriculture, and data-driven decision-making were identified as key areas for leveraging innovation in agriculture.

2. Pluralism in AEAS: Participants recognized the value of pluralistic approaches to AEAS. The workshop highlighted the need to foster collaboration and dialogue among various actors, including public institutions, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and the private sector. By promoting knowledge exchange, innovation, and effective dissemination of best practices, the workshop emphasized the potential for pluralistic approaches to enhance farmers' access to information and support.

3. Building Resilience: Climate change emerged as a major concern affecting agricultural productivity. The workshop emphasized the importance of equipping farmers with tools, knowledge, and support to adapt to changing climatic conditions. Climate-smart practices, access to climate information and early warning systems, and risk management strategies were identified as crucial components for enhancing the resilience of farming communities.

4. Enhancing Competitiveness: To promote commercialization, participants discussed strategies for improving the competitiveness of farmers in domestic and international markets. Strengthening market linkages, value addition, and enhancing business acumen were identified as key areas for intervention. Access to market intelligence, finance, and credit, as well as capacity-building programs for post-harvest handling and quality standards, were highlighted as crucial elements to enhance farmers' competitiveness.

Conclusion:

The workshop provided a platform for stakeholders to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices in innovative pluralistic AEAS approaches. The Minister of Agriculture expressed the government's commitment to creating an enabling policy environment, investing in infrastructure, and providing necessary resources to support these approaches. The workshop concluded with a call for continued collaboration and commitment from all stakeholders to achieve the shared vision of food security and a thriving commercialized agriculture sector in Uganda.

The workshop's outcomes and recommendations will serve as valuable inputs for policy formulation and the development of AEAS interventions that address actors' resilience and competitiveness in Uganda's agricultural sector.

2.6 GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS ON THE PROCEEDINGS

2.6.1 Summary of day one

On the first day of the event, Prof. Margaret Najjingo Mangheni from Makerere University delivered a keynote address focused on innovative pluralistic approaches to Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS) for enhancing food security and promoting commercialized agriculture. She emphasized the significance of capacity building and collaboration with policymakers and civil society to improve the legal framework and foster competitiveness in the sector. Prof. Margaret highlighted the importance of adopting digital advisories, aligning extension content, and implementing well-planned strategies to achieve successful outcomes.

Dr. Patience Rwamigisa, representing the Minister of Agriculture, emphasized the need for improved policies, a favorable operating environment, and the utilization of digital agricultural services such as the E-voucher system. Thematic overviews presented during the event covered various key areas, including AEAS interventions, women and youth engagement, viable business development, leveraging public programs, and digitalized AEAS. The discussions revealed the importance of establishing a robust legal framework, embracing digital AEAS, and addressing challenges related to infrastructure and connectivity.

During the event, the audience raised concerns regarding the role of policymakers, limited facilitation and coordination, the relevance of the education sector, and the issue of counterfeit agricultural inputs. The recommendations put forward included increasing the budget allocation for AEAS, standardizing the curriculum, fostering a mindset change, and garnering government support for sustainable strategies.

Overall, the first day of the event provided valuable insights into innovative approaches for AEAS, highlighted the importance of collaboration and capacity building, and identified key areas for improvement and action to promote a thriving agricultural sector in Uganda

2.6.2 Summary of day two:

Day two mainly focused on and comprised of a series of workshops conducted to address key issues in the agricultural sector in Uganda. The workshops focused on topics such as agriculture extension services, women and youth engagement in the agricultural value chain, leveraging public programs and projects, viable business development and support services, and digitalized agricultural extension services.

In the workshop on agriculture extension services, participants discussed the role of extension services in enhancing the resilience and competitiveness of agricultural systems. They highlighted the importance of climate-smart practices, risk management strategies, and access to information and technology in building resilience and improving competitiveness. The workshop emphasized the need for tailored extension interventions that address local challenges and foster market-oriented approaches.

The workshop on women and youth engagement in the agricultural value chain aimed to promote their active participation and identify opportunities and challenges. Participants discussed the limited access to land and resources, gender disparities, and the need for technical skills, market linkages, and financial support. The workshop recommended value addition, entrepreneurship, ICT solutions, farmer cooperatives, and capacity building as strategies to empower women and youth in agriculture.

The workshop on leveraging public programs and projects highlighted the importance of decentralized public extension services and their role in promoting market-oriented farming. The Feed the Future project was discussed as an example of climate-smart initiatives and partnerships that strengthen value chains. The workshop emphasized the need to enhance the capacity and collaboration of public extension services with the private sector.

The viable business development and support services workshop focused on strategies to foster the growth and sustainability of agricultural businesses. Challenges such as limited access to finance, market linkages, value addition, and information were addressed. The workshop recommended tailored

financial products, effective market linkages, training programs, access to technology, and supportive policies to overcome these challenges and promote agricultural business development.

The workshop on digitalized agricultural extension services explored the potential of digital technologies in transforming extension services. Participants discussed challenges related to reach, timely information, training, and resources. They highlighted the potential of mobile applications, remote sensing, IVR systems, online platforms, and farmer helplines as digital solutions. The workshop emphasized the need for connectivity, digital literacy, data privacy, sustainability, and collaboration in implementing digital extension services.

Overall, these workshops provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss and address critical issues in the agricultural sector in Uganda. They generated recommendations such as tailored interventions, improved access to resources and markets, capacity building, policy support, and the adoption of digital technologies. Implementing these recommendations can contribute to the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainable development of the agricultural sector in Uganda.

2.6.3 Summary of day three

The study tours conducted in Mukono, Wakiso, Kayunga and Mityana shed light on the importance of adopting a coordinated approach to reach out to farmers effectively. The use of hubs and community model farmers emerged as valuable strategies for engaging various service providers, including farmers themselves. These approaches demonstrated the potential to enhance agricultural practices and outcomes.

Furthermore, the tours underscored the significance of involving youth and women in agriculture, presenting them with opportunities for learning and entrepreneurship. Recognizing their contributions and empowering them in the sector can lead to increased productivity and sustainable development.

To improve agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS), several policy recommendations were put forward. Firstly, tapping into resource-rich community farms for extension services was suggested as a way to leverage existing knowledge and resources within communities. Secondly, standardizing production and training for international markets can help farmers meet quality standards and access global markets. Thirdly, regulations for extension workers and agro-input prices were proposed to ensure fair practices and protect farmers' interests.

Supporting youth and women enterprises was identified as another crucial aspect. This involves providing them with targeted resources, training, and opportunities to establish and grow their agricultural ventures. Additionally, promoting start-ups, processing, packaging, and branding activities can add value to agricultural products and create new market opportunities.

Creating awareness about agricultural facilities and services was highlighted as a means to ensure that farmers are aware of available support and resources. Collaboration with partners was emphasized as a way to foster business growth and enhance the overall agricultural ecosystem.

In conclusion, the study tours provided valuable insights into extension approaches, youth and women empowerment, and policy recommendations to enhance agricultural productivity and market access in Uganda. The experiences and lessons learned from these visits hold the potential to bring about positive changes and improve the agricultural sector in the country. By implementing the suggested recommendations, Uganda can foster sustainable agriculture, empower its youth and women, and create a vibrant and prosperous agricultural industry.

2.6.4 Summary of day four:

This day focused on two key items i.e., the call to action as well as the minister's speech and to officially close off the function.

The call to action focuses on five crucial areas:

1. **Strengthen Collaboration and Partnerships:** All stakeholders must collaborate and form partnerships, prioritizing knowledge exchange, capacity building, and inclusive programs to address farmers' diverse needs.
2. **Foster Innovation and Technology Adoption:** Policymakers, researchers, and the private sector should prioritize developing and disseminating innovative technologies and digital solutions. Collaboration between tech companies, agricultural experts, and farmers' organizations is essential.
3. **Enhance Access to Information and Knowledge:** Government agencies and development partners should invest in strengthening extension services and training extension workers. Leveraging digital platforms and farmer-centered communication strategies will improve information dissemination and knowledge sharing.
4. **Promote Climate Resilience:** Policymakers and development partners must prioritize climate-smart agriculture, supporting farmers in adopting resilient practices, accessing climate information, and implementing risk management strategies.
5. **Enhance Market Access and Value Addition:** The private sector, government agencies, and development partners should support farmers in accessing domestic and international markets. Strengthening market linkages, providing market intelligence, and facilitating post-harvest handling and value addition will enhance farmers' competitiveness.

The Minister of Agriculture emphasized the importance of innovation, collaboration, and resilience in achieving food security and promoting commercialized agriculture. Challenges including climate change, limited access to modern technologies, market fluctuations, and inadequate extension services were acknowledged. Pluralistic AEAS approaches involving stakeholder collaboration were highlighted as key to building resilience and improving competitiveness.

In conclusion, embracing collaboration, innovation, knowledge sharing, climate resilience, and market access is vital for transforming Uganda's agricultural sector. Stakeholders are encouraged to implement the call to action, using the workshop's outcomes and recommendations to inform policy formulation and AEAS interventions, ultimately enhancing resilience and competitiveness in Uganda's agricultural sector.

3.0 SYNTHESIS OF THE ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OUT OF THE UGANDA NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WEEK (UGNAEW2023)

3.1 BACKGROUND

In June 2014, the Government of Uganda adopted an agricultural extension reform dubbed 'Single Spine Extension System' and restructured the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) that had hitherto been implementing a demand driven agricultural extension and advisory services delivery model for more than a decade. The National Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP2016) and the National Agricultural Extension strategy (NAES2016) were formulated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). The NAES2016 was reviewed last year and the NAES 2022 draft exists, yet to be commissioned.

The overall policy goal is to establish and strengthen a sustainable farmer-centered agricultural extension system for increased productivity, household incomes and exports. The new policy provisions as provided for in NDPIII necessitates that the new strategy puts into consideration. The policy advocated for a pluralistic approach to extension services delivery with the public extension system at the heart of the delivery system. The policy was adopted to address the underlying agricultural development challenges linked to production, markets and governance. It is a recognized fact that no country has undergone an agricultural revolution without a well-functioning agricultural extension system and strong farmer organisations. The pluralistic extension approach was to reinforce the relationships between public and Non-state actors that had been and continues to be weak and, in some instances, non-existent.

Over time, many other strategies, documents and applications were put in place to aid the unpacking and implementation of the NAEP2016. For example:

- Supporting / complementary policies and strategies on: inputs, youth, Gender, Communication, and more.
- Professionalization documents for coordination and regulation: Extension Guidelines and Standards; The Ethical Code of Conduct for Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services Providers; and the Process of Registration and Accreditation of AEAS Providers
- Guidelines on the harmonization of agricultural extension materials
- Thematic manuals on Agricultural Extension, Value Chain Development, Sustainable Land management, etc.
- Specific enterprise manuals, like on: Maize, beans and more by different partners
- E-Extension applications like: the e-Diary, the e-Registration of Agricultural extension workers, E-Knowledge Management, E- Advisory, E-Weather Advisory, Outbreaks & Crises, E-Grievance Redress Mechanism and E-profile
- And many more

Much as Agricultural extension services have had such a strong policy support, Uganda has not fully reaped the benefits of the sector, due to the issues that were highlighted during the Uganda National Agricultural Extension Week 2023. Some of them have been echoed over time in different fora. The key issues have been categorized as below, together with the proposed recommendations for addressing them.

3.2 KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.2.1 CROSS-CUTTING POLICY RELATED ISSUES

3.2.1.1 Value of Public Agricultural Extension

Issue: There has been a declining appreciation of contribution of the public agricultural extension to the national development by the policy makers and beneficiaries. This has been manifested through a number of factors like: reducing public investment in agricultural extension to facilitate operations; failure to recruit the appropriate number of extension workers to reduce on the high extension: farmer ratio; failure to defend the relevance of the extension; pronouncements of how useless ag-extension is to farmers; farmers branding

extension workers “lazy” and non-existent on the ground; and much more. Furthermore, the incentives given to the beneficiaries by some of the Civil Society organisations, affects the operations of the public workers who don’t have anything to give.

Recommendations:

- i. There is need to benchmark with African countries that have effective and efficient public Agricultural Extension and Advisory Systems (AEAS), to facilitate the improvement and bringing back the glory of Uganda’s system as a country. For example, South Africa, Rwanda, Ethiopia.
- ii. Measure performance and outcomes of Extension and Advisory Services along the agricultural value chain (using the FAO developed indicators, scoring tool) This will facilitate the in showing the empirical evidence of the benefit of extension to the farmers.
- iii. Evaluate the contribution of agricultural of extension to national development.
- iv. Re-instate the extension fund and support to facilitate operations at district and national level, respectively.
- v. Recruit more extension workers to reduce the Extension: farmer’s ratio and fully facilitate them with the relevant skills and equipment.
- vi. Work on the mind-set change of the different stakeholders, including the farmers to bring back the value of Agric-extension and also recognise the presence of the non-state actors within given localities.
- vii. Remove free handouts and encourage farmers to invest in agricultural inputs
- viii. Provide full financial institutional support to the private sector in agriculture for sustainability of agricultural interventions.

3.2.1.2 Professionalization and Regulation of Extension Services and inputs

Issue 1: Despite the little efforts to coordinate and regulate the extension services of the pluralistic AEAS system, there is still lack of standardised and harmonised services to the beneficiaries. This has resulted into compromised professionalism and quality compliance, leading to everyone becoming an expert in extension service provision. There is a weak enforcement on most of the guiding laws and also the extension bill 2017 has not been passed.

Issue 2: Despite existence of policy guidelines on inputs, science is failing to effectively contribute to agriculture through improved technologies. This is due to the failure to effectively implement the policies as well as the high costs of the inputs especially seeds and poor control of pest and disease control. This is making the whole process costly with no cost benefit balance from the technologies available and an increased amount of fake Agricultural inputs on the market.

Issue 3: The liberalization of agricultural extension education and lack of regulation of the agriculture training curriculum at tertiary level, is significantly compromising the quality of agricultural extension services delivered.

Recommendations:

- i. Strengthen the AEAS policy implementation towards professionalism and accountability of the extension and advisory system, through capacity building, awareness and advocacy campaigns.
- ii. Review and fast track the enactment of National Agricultural Extension Bill 2017 to foster institutional governance.
- iii. Register all categories of AEAS providers at the appropriate levels, in order to create a database of their profiles that can be used by government and other stakeholders for coordination and regulation.
- iv. Support the establishment of an independent professional body to take on the responsibility of regulation and professionalization as guided in the registration and accreditation document that was commissioned by MAAIF.
- v. All organisations and individuals involved in AEAS need to be accredited, basing on their key areas of operation and qualification, respectively
- vi. Standardise and regulate the Agricultural Extension curriculum at tertiary training institutions
- vii. Review the standardised production and training content for enhanced extension information Dissemination

- viii. Establishing well-defined roles and responsibilities between political personnel, who provide policy direction and strategic oversight, and technical personnel, who offer specialized expertise and advisory support, is crucial for effective and efficient AEAS

3.2.2 THEMATIC ISSUES

3.2.2.1 Resilience and competitiveness for food security and commercialized agriculture

Issue: Given the disruptions and shocks of natural calamities and economic fluctuations and their effects on agriculture and the food systems in Uganda, agricultural extension needs to position itself well in this new situation, if it is to remain relevant. AEAS providers and policy implementers have to be open-minded so that they accommodate the changing landscape *and this calls for refreshing strategy and rebranding* for better resilience & competitiveness. However, very few AEAS actors (organisations and individuals) are well equipped to address and cope with various challenges, including climate change, market fluctuations, and resource constraints.

Recommendations

- i. Create a comprehensive training program for agricultural extension workers and practitioners focused on building resilience and adaptive capacities. The training programs should be always tailored to the needs of extension workers to enhance their technical skills, knowledge, and competencies providing climate smart extension services so as to enhance their resilience and competitiveness.
- ii. Implement policies and initiatives that facilitate market access for farmers and encourage diversification of agricultural products.
- iii. Allocate resources to develop and scale digital extension services, leveraging mobile technology and digital platforms that enhance beneficiaries' ability to adapt to changing agricultural conditions efficiently

3.2.2.2 AEAS interventions and support mechanisms for addressing resilience and competitiveness

Issue: Several interventions and approaches are being used by the different AEAS actors within the same farming communities. However, some of them tend to be either similar or a modification/ rebranding, while others are completely conflicting. This scenario of events, definitely confuses the targeted beneficiaries who receive them.

Recommendations

- i. MAAIF should come up with a mechanism of validating and managing the harmonization of the several extension messages that go to all agricultural value chain beneficiaries, especially farmers.
- ii. Establish a platform or forum where Agricultural Extension service providers, farming communities, and value chain beneficiaries can come together to share information, align their efforts, and avoid conflicting interventions. This platform should facilitate regular communication and collaboration, promoting a cohesive and coordinated approach to agricultural extension activities
- iii. Encourage Agricultural Extension service providers to adopt the already existing approaches and orientate them to their own programmes

3.2.2.3 Leveraging on and strengthening public programmes and projects

Key Issues I: Constantly ever changing government programmes: The rampant scrapping of strategic interventions before they achieve intended objectives, coupled with lack of accountability mechanisms, fails extension service to deliver tangible results and creates loss of trust among the NSA actors and beneficiaries. For instance Entandikwa, PMA, NAADS, OWC, Emyooga, etc. Currently, the extension workers are involved

in the promotion of the Parish Development Model (PDM), but they are not sure whether it will last the test of time. Furthermore, scenario creates a dependence/ expectancy syndrome among the beneficiaries, limiting their potential to be creative and productive.

Key Issues 2: Parish Development model (PDM) and Extension Services: The current efforts of PDM seem to be concentrating more on Pillar 3 (Financial Inclusion) where the beneficiaries are selecting enterprises and forming SACCOs. All the selected enterprises are agriculture in nature and the extension workers are currently facilitating the development of business plans. However, the government has withdrawn the extension grant which would enable them to further support the PDM.

Key Issues 3: Decentralized Public Extension Services: Given the crucial role of decentralized public extension services in promoting market-oriented farming, the system still has issues having, limited funding, weak coordination, collaboration and monitoring of the various stakeholders involved in the pluralistic extension services.

Key Issues 4: Strategic direction: The actors are concerned about the delay in the finalizing and commissioning of the second National Agricultural Extension Strategy (NAES 2022-2026)

Recommendations to Government:

- i. **Sustainable programmes:** Come up with sustainable strategies and accountability mechanisms, that allow the programmes initiated achieve their intended goals and outcomes in order to: also avoid confusion of extension messages at the grassroots; and effectively contribute to resilience and competitiveness of the beneficiaries.
- ii. **Strengthening decentralized public extension services:** Allocate adequate resources to support the decentralized public extension services to ensure their effectiveness in reaching their clientele to address challenge and enhance their opportunities.
- iii. **Enhancing Collaboration:** The actors in the pluralistic extension services should forge and sustain partnerships and collaborations with the private sector, research institutions, and farmers' associations to leverage resources, knowledge, and market opportunities.

3.2.2.4 Viable Business development and support services for farmers and other users of AEAS services

Issue: There is a disorganized system of BDS and advisory services delivery to farmers and farmers organizations with no data, standards, and market linkages in efficient business development services. Currently the quality of these services and the professionalization of the service providers are not streamlined.

Recommendations

1. MAAIF and registrar of cooperatives should provide guidance on the operationalization of BDS.
2. The MAAIF-UFAAS arrangement of registering all AEAS actors and eventually forming a professional body, should ensure that BDS service providers are included and recognised. Note: This is already outlined in the AMEA-UFAAS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
3. Develop training programmes and resources to educate farmers and agricultural enterprises on international market requirements, quality standards, and certifications.
4. Public programmes and projects should prioritize providing farmers and farmers organizations with access to tailored financial products and support for agricultural entrepreneurship.

3.2.2.5 Women and Youth engagement and opportunities in the agricultural value chain as actors and beneficiaries

Issue: The lack or limited access to land and productive resources, affordable credit and financial services, decision-making processes, technical and entrepreneurial skills and market opportunities continue to be key factors that affect the full engagement of women and youths as actors and beneficiaries in the agricultural value chain. These limit their ability to invest in and expand their agricultural enterprises.

Recommendations:

All government policies and programs should always focus on creating an enabling environment that supports and promotes women and youth engagement in agriculture. They should prioritize gender equality ensure that women have equal access to resources, decision-making processes, and market opportunities. The private sector, government agencies, and development partners, who target to enhance the engagement of women and youths as actors and beneficiaries within the agricultural value chain, should promote some of interventions below.

- i. Value Addition and Market Access to domestic and international markets. This should include: Small-scale processing (eg. Juice making, dairy sector); strengthening market linkages; providing market intelligence; and facilitating post-harvest handling and value addition will enhance farmers' competitiveness.
- ii. Urban farming because it requires small spaces and targets high value enterprises.
- iii. Setting up of women and youth hubs that can be used as learning centres for incubation, as well as boosting their technical capacity in agricultural practices, financial management, and entrepreneurship.
- iv. Assist women and youth to establish their own enterprises and engage in agribusiness activities can generate income, create employment opportunities and contribute to economic growth.
- v. Facilitate access to financial products and services that cater to the specific needs of women and youth in agriculture, including flexible loan repayment options and lower interest rates.

3.2.2.6 Digitalization AEAS in Agriculture as a driver for agricultural growth

Key issues related to digitalization for extension service providers include:

- The cost of internet is still high and erratic in many parts of the country.
- There is low dissemination of knowledge and best practices especially in the remote and marginalized farming communities, due to limited reach and access to internet connectivity.
- Limited access to timely and relevant information on weather conditions, market prices, pest and disease control, and effective agricultural techniques due to low adaptation to new technological innovations and inappropriate method of relaying it to the last mile. This hinders them from making informed decisions and effectively planning their farming activities.
- Insufficient facilitation, limited infrastructure (eg. power, broad-band network) and lack of necessary tools and equipment hinder the effectiveness of the delivery of extension services in agriculture.

Recommendations

- i. NITA-U should improve on the existing digital infrastructure (eg. power, broad-band network) to improve efficiency and timeliness of AEAS information dissemination
- ii. Enhance digital inclusion by lowering/ subsidizing the costs of internet and phones, especially for low-income farmers for effective use and widespread adoption of digitalization.
- iii. Promote development and scaling up ICT4Agri. solutions through innovative engagements, for example organising Hackathon, promoting AEAS digital connectors to ensure competitiveness and easy reach of rural communities
- iv. The adoption of digital solutions, such as mobile applications and online platforms, should be promoted to facilitate information sharing, market linkages, and farmer engagement

ANNEX I: PROGRAMME OF THE FIRST NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WEEK 2023 AT KABIRA COUNTRY CLUB HOTEL

Dates: 23-26 May, 2023

DAY ONE: Tuesday, May 23, 2023		
08:00 – 09:00 am	Arrival and registration	UFAAS Official
	Session 1	Mc. Ms. Connie Acayo
9.00	Arrival of the Guest of Honour and VIPs, and Tour of the Exhibition	Grace Musimami
09:20-09.30	Anthems, Prayer, Brief Introductions	Facilitator
09:30 – 09:40	A brief overview of the Extension Week	CEO-UFAAS
09.40-09.50	Video on perspectives of ag-extension	Grace Musimami
09.50-10.20	Keynote address: “ Unveiling innovative pluralistic AEAS approaches: Actors’ resilience and competitiveness for food security and commercialized agriculture ”	Prof. Margaret Najjingo Mangheni, Makerere University
10.20.10.30	Remarks from USAID-FtF ISSA and AFAAS	Dep. Chief of Party USAID-FtF ISSA and AFAAS
10.30-11.20	Overview of Public Extension and Collaboration	Dr. Nakalet Henry Opolot-Comm. MAAIF
	Speech from the Hon. Minister/ MAAIF	Hon. Frank Tumwebaze (Minister-MAAIF)
	Official opening of the Event	
	Group Photos	Grace Musimami
11.20-11.50	TEA/COFFEE BREAK AND NETWORKING	Hotel Management
	Session 2: Sub-Theme Presentation and Discussion (Plenary)	
11.50-12.10	Extension Week Process	
12.10 -13.30	Thematic Overview Presentations (Plenary)	Thematic Presenters
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AEAS interventions and support mechanisms for addressing resilience and competitiveness.</i> • <i>Women and Youth engagement and opportunities in the agricultural value chain as actors and beneficiaries</i> • <i>Viable Business development and support services for farmers and other users of AEAS services.</i> • <i>Leveraging on and strengthening public programs and projects.</i> • <i>Digitalized AEAS in Agriculture as a driver for agricultural growth.</i> 	Ms. Adeline Muheebwa- UFAAS
		Mr. Jude Tibemanya- UMI
		Harrison Kaziro - AMEA
		Beatrice Byarugaba- UFAAS
	Question and Answer	
13:30 – 14:00	LUNCH BREAK AND NETWORKING	Hotel Management
14.00-16.00	Dialogue on the Status of Agricultural Extension in Uganda	Agnes Kirabo- FRA
16:30 – 17:30	Touring and synthesizing exhibitions and posters and registration for the next day’s parallel sessions	All Participants
17.30	TEA BREAK AND END OF DAY	Hotel Management
DAY TWO – Wednesday, 24th May 2023		
08:00 – 08:30	Arrival /Day’s registration	UFAAS Official
08.30-09.00	Harvesting the previous day /Recap	Rapporteurs

09.00-9:30	Overview of the parallel Sessions and the guidelines for next day/ registration for field trips	Facilitator
9:30- 11:30	Touring and synthesizing exhibitions and posters	All participants
	TEA BREAK AND NETWORKING	Hotel Management
	Session 3: Parallel Workshops –Paper and Case Stories Presentations	
	Workshop 1. AEAS interventions and support mechanisms for addressing resilience and competitiveness <i>Community-based Participatory Research-Extension-Farmer Model for Managing Invasive Coffee Pests in Uganda: A Case of the Black Coffee Twig Borer. Godfrey H. Kagezi, et al.</i> <i>Stakeholder-Focused Coffee Variety Product Development Approaches for Transforming Lives of Farming Communities: Achievements and Plans. Sseremba, G.</i> <i>iii. Agricultural extension and advisory services approaches tested and adopted by World Vision in Uganda. WVU.</i> Case Story (BALLROOM)	
	Workshop 2. Women and Youth engagement and opportunities in the agricultural value chain as actors and beneficiaries. <i>Dr. Omuvubuka: How to best engage youth in agriculture projects? - Best practice of agricultural extension services in Greater Masaka, Uganda. Kyambadde, T.</i> <i>Gendered benefits of upgrading in pig value chain: An agricultural extension pathway to food security and commercialized agriculture in Uganda by R. Birungi, F.K. Birungi, F. B. Matsiko, et al.</i> <i>Food Rights Alliance experiences with Women and Youth engagement and opportunities in the agricultural value chain as actors and beneficiaries by Ms. Agnes Kirabo (PINE HALL)</i>	
	Workshop 3. Leveraging on and strengthening public programs and projects. <i>Scaling-up NARO Technologies and Innovations: Success Stories in Coffee. Hilda Adage, et al.</i> <i>The contribution of decentralized public extension to market-oriented and commercialized agriculture in Uganda, Miiri Richard, John Jagwe, George Jjagwe and Yunia Nalweyiso</i> <i>Drivers of Innovation in Facilitating Agricultural Innovations Amongst Extension Workers: The Case of Northern Uganda, Douglas Otoo, Walter Odongo, Stephen Wamala Kalule (ACACIA HALL))</i>	
	Workshop 4. Viable Business development and support services for farmers and other users of AEAS Integrated community led and market-based agriculture extension services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcasing CARE's successful Farmer Field and Business School (FFBS) pilot in Southwestern Uganda. Okello S.B.T et al. • Applying the Enabling Rural Innovations (ERI) approach to support the transition from subsistence to market-oriented agriculture. Nambozo S. and Griesauer. C (Virtual Presentation) • NUCAFE's experience with Viable Business Development and support services for farmers and other users Joseph Nkandu • University-induced innovations for nurturing farm-based micro-enterprises: Experience from promoting micro-enterprises among refugees and host communities Walter Odongo, Stephen W. Kalule et al. (JACARANDA HALL)	
	Workshop 5. Digitalized AEAS in Agriculture as a driver for agricultural growth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. New trends in drones' utilization in precision crop production Ategeka S., and Attila B.</i> <i>ii. Knowledge gain, challenges, and lessons of promoting mobile massive open online courses among host and refugee Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato farmers in the West Nile region of Uganda, R. Miiri, Otim J., D. Ninsiima et al.</i> <i>iii. AGRIPATH: Charting the path to Sustainable Agriculture through digital advisory services. Rachel Ajambo, KILIMO TRUST (OAK HALL)</i> 	
12:00 – 1:00pm	Feedback into the plenary from each of the Rapporteurs	Rapporteurs
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH BREAK AND NETWORKING	Hotel
	Session 4: Side Events	

14:00 – 16.30	Side Events	Convener	Room
	Side Event 1- Privatization of extension service delivery	AGRA	PINE HALL
	Side Event 2- Improving and scaling Business Development and Support Services for Farmer Organizations and Agri-SMEs in Uganda	AMEA	ACACIA HALL
	Side Event 3- Farmer Field School	AFAAS/ CARE/ FAO	JACARANDA HALL
	Side Event 4- National Coffee Research Institute	NACORI	OAK
17.00	TEA BREAK AND END OF DAY		Hotel Management

DAY THREE – Thursday 25th May 2023

	Session 5: Field Visits		
07:00 – 08:30	Arrival /Day's registration/ and Breakfast		UFAAS Official
7.30-	Departure for the Field with Packed Lunch		Trip Coordinators
	Field Site	Responsible	Location/ Link
	Trip 1 –Kayunga District Farmers' Association,	Prudence Ayebare	Kayunga
	Trip 2 –Mityana Diary Hub	Gerald Kasiita	Mityana Municipality
	Trip 3 –Kyakuwa Urban Farm	Rosemirta Birungi	Seguku, Entebbe Road
	Trip 4 –CURAD,	Harrison Kaziro	Namanve, Mukono
15.00	Back from the Field		
15.00-16.30	Touring and synthesizing exhibitions and posters and Side meetings		

	Activity/ Topic	Responsible	Room/ Link
18.00-21.00	CULTURAL DINNER AND PRESENTATION OF AWARDS	MC: Grace Musimaami	Kabira Country Club Hotel
	Inspiring Stories Telling (Youth + Woman)		
	Cultural Dinner		
	Entertainment interlude	
	Messages		
	Presentation of Awards	Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, Min.	
	Closing remarks by:	MAAIF	

DAY FOUR – Friday 26th May 2023

08:00 – 09:00	Arrival /Day's registration	UFAAS Official
09:00 – 10.30	Plenary Cross-Pollination: Share, synthesize and apply	Chief Rapporteur
10:30 – 11:00	TEA BREAK AND NETWORKING AROUND EXHIBITIONS	
	Session 4: Official Closing	
11.00-12.00	Presentation of the week outputs/ Products, including the dialogue	Facilitator
	Closing remarks (UFAAS, USAID, AFAAS, MAAIF)
	Official Closing address	Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, Min. MAAIF
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH BREAK AND DEPARTURE OF DELEGATES	
		Hotel Management

ANNEX 2: NATIONAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (NOC)

Name	Organization	Phone	email
A. Chairing			
1) Adeline Muheebwa (Overall)	UFAAS	0772415029	ademuheebwa@gmail.com
2) Connie Achayo (Protocol)	MAAIF	0772562459	pismaaif@gmail.com
3) Dr. Richard Miiro (Technical)	UFAAS/MAK	0772378185	rfmiiro@gmail.com
4) Samuel Mpira (Regional)	UFAAS/LG	0772683455	smpiira@gmail.com
B. Secretariat Sub-Committee			
5) Beatrice Luzobe (Head)	UFAAS	0776801091	
6) Esther Michala (logistics)	AFAAS	0774837225	emichaala@afaas-africa.org
7) Scovia Ojoru	UFAAS	0758777831	scovialindyway44@gmail.com
8) Maurice Egessa	AFAAS	0703035480	megesa@afaas-africa.org
9) Jackie Ikee (logistics)	AFAAS	0751604534	jikee@afaas-africa.org
C. Technical Sub-Committee			
10) Dr. Robert Mulebeke (Head)		0772517024	rmulebeke@gmail.com
11) Dr. Jolly Kabirizi	Kyakuwa Farm	0777912716	jmkabirizi@gmail.com
12) Omongot David (+Regional)	Kalangala-LG	0704237114	omongotdavid@gmail.com
13) Choice Agaba	NARO	0782793579	choiceagaba@gmail.com
14) Henry Galiwango	Kilimo Trust	0773982840	galiwangohenry2005@gmail.com
15) Catherin Adowa	Ripple Effect	0776282689	Catherine.Adowa@rippleeffect.org
16) Agnes Kirabo	Food Rights Alliance		agneskirabo@frauganda.org
17) Jerry Egessa	AFAAS	0782590449	jegessa@afaas-africa.org
D. Finance Sub-Committee			
18) Godfery Mayambala (Head)	UFAAS/ ZAABTA	0782393753	mayambalagodfrey256@gmail.com
19) Dr. Patience Rwamigisa	MAAIF/ UFAAS	0772457842	rwamigisa@gmail.com
20) Beatrice Byarugaba	UFAAS-Patron	0772592050	byarubeatrice@yahoo.com
21) Ande Okiror	SAA	0755609016	okiror@saa-safe.org
22) Bashir Benbela	AFAAS		bbenbela@afaas-africa.org
E. Publicity Sub-Committee			
23) Grace Musimami (Head)		0782383504	gmusimami@gmail.com
24) Elizabeth Asimwe	UFAAS/ MAK	0774123865	alizeff@yahoo.com
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