

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**  
**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY**

**DECENTRALIZATION OF  
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES**

**DURING THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS  
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## DECENTRALIZATION OF EXTENSION SERVICES

### 1.0 Introduction

The Agriculture and Livestock policy of 1997, define Agricultural Extension Services as **the transfer of agricultural technology from experts (including progressive farmers) to farmers, livestock keepers and other stakeholders. The experts are the link between the farmers, livestock keepers and research where agricultural technologies are developed, tested and modified.** (URT 1997:15-16) Experts have three roles first to transfer the readily usable technologies, Secondly to simplify technologies which cannot be transferred in the form produced by the research institutions and thirdly to transfer farmers problems to research institutions. Currently there are 22 research stations for crop and livestock development nation wide.

Agricultural Extension aims at improving the productivity of agricultural systems, raising the incomes of farm families and improving of life of farm households.

If the objectives of agricultural extension services are achieved, the country will go a long way to reduce rural poverty because agriculture is the backbone of the economy, this is clearly reflected by statistics provided in the Economic Survey Documents. For example in 1999 the agricultural sector contribution to the overall Gross Domestic Product (at constant 1992, prices) was 48.9 percent, out of which Crops contributed 36.4 percent, Livestock 6.5

percent, Forestry and Hunting 3.1 percent and Fishing 2.9 percent (URT 1999: 15).

Furthermore agricultural products contribute well over half of Tanzanians exports earnings, provide employment for over 80% of the rural population and provide raw materials for industries and more important it provides food for the nation.

## 2.0 Brief Historical Background

The evolution of the agricultural extension services in Tanzania has a long history. It started during the colonial era when its aim was to boost agricultural production so as to provide raw materials for the expanding industrial sector in the metropolitan countries.

The period between 1961-1967 was characterized by capitalist commercial agricultural companies and settlers who co-existed with progressive farmers and focused mainly on cash crop production. The period was also patterned along the notion of modernization. In an effort to effect the changes several extension approaches were practised including **improvement approach** and **transformation approach**.

In 1967 the Government launched the Arusha declaration which placed more emphasis on supporting peasants. A lot of structural changes in the set up of the Ministry of Agriculture were introduced focusing on serving the peasant farmer.

In 1972 the Government introduced the decentralization policy which transferred the administration of extension services from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Prime Minister's Office, through the Regional and District Development Directors. With decentralization, a number of extension workers were greatly reduced as professional extension staff were re-assigned some administrative posts. The decentralization also resulted in indirect administration of professional staff at the regional and district levels by the Ministry of Agriculture from Dar es Salaam.

In 1978 crop marketing parastatals were established after dissolution of co-operative unions. These parastatals also ran parallel extension services. After experiencing some setbacks several approaches such as; **frontal approach, commodity extension approach, integrated agricultural development and Integrated Rural Development** were attempted. However the approaches did not deliver significant results.

In 1983 the Government centralized the agricultural sector including the extension services. Subsequent reviews revealed that centralization by itself did not solve the problems of the past thus extension remained ineffective. To address the observed shortfalls, the Government through the Ministry of Agriculture launched the National Agriculture and Livestock Extension Rehabilitation Project (hereafter NALERP) in 1988/89.

The NALERP was implemented in 16 regions of Tanzania using **Training and Visit** (hereafter T & V) extension approach. In 1991 the remaining four regions of Mbeya, Iringa, Rukwa and

Ruvuma were covered by the Southern Highlands Extension and Rural Financial Services Project (hereafter SHERFSP) using T & V extension approach.

The NALERP results showed that it had achieved its goal of increasing agricultural output given the number of farmers covered by the extension staff. Nevertheless, it was vivid that agricultural extension was more **supply driven** than **demand driven** and that issues of relevance, cost effectiveness, ownership and sustainability beyond the project life were not adequately addressed.

Thereafter in 1996, NALERP was succeeded by the National Agricultural Extension Project Phase II (hereafter NAEP II) with the main objective of continuing to improve the delivery of extension services to smallholder farmers for increasing their incomes and productivity, while improving its relevance, sustainability and cost effectiveness. NAEP II, was envisaged to follow the essential elements of the T & V while using the participatory approaches.

Subsequently during 1997/1998 the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (hereafter MAC) again started to decentralize its extension service as part of the implementation of **Local Government Reform Programme** whose objective is to decentralize responsibilities and resources from the centre to the local authority institutions. The Regional Administration which is the extended arm of the Central Government was restructured and its size trimmed down to small Secretariats as spelt out in the Regional Administration Act, No, 19 of 1997 (URT 1997).

According to the reform, the relations between Central and Local Government are as stipulated by the Civil Service Circular No. 1 of 1998, which spells out the functions and responsibilities between the Central Government and Local Authorities. In the circular, Central Government and its institutions are responsible for policy development, regulations, setting standards and quality assurance while local authorities are the major implementers and providers of basic services at the local level.

In parallel to the Local Government Reform, the MAC was restructured in order to establish a small, manageable organization, more efficient and responsive to farmers problems and needs. To that effect, functions of the MAC were rationalized and thus remained with core functions of Agricultural policy formulations, Professional guidelines and regulatory framework to local Authorities while hiving off commercial activities to the private sector. Furthermore, during the recent Government reorganization which took place during November 2000, the new Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (hereafter MAFS) has been assigned new roles and responsibilities.

Consequently, issues related to Cooperative Development and Marketing are now the responsibility of the newly formed Ministry of Cooperatives and Marketing. In addition functions related to livestock development are under the new Ministry of Water and Livestock Development. From now on the MAFS is vested with the responsibilities of increasing crop production, ensuring food security for the Nation and to add value to crops through agro-

processing in line with the inaugural speech in Parliament at Dodoma by His Excellency President Benjamin William Mkapa, on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2000.

“Kwenye jambo hili la kusindika mazao  
ya kilimo sitakuwa na **Mswalie Mtume**  
nitakaowakabidhi kazi hiyo watapaswa  
kuelewa hivyo”.

(URT 2000: 30).

Thus in the context of the above reforms, the extension services have been decentralized to the Local Authorities Councils with the objective to have the services well nested at the local level of Government where active participation of beneficiaries and other actors can be enhanced.

### **3.0 Status of the implementation of the decentralization of Extension Services**

The implementation of extension service decentralization is guided by the Regional Administration Act No. 19 of 1997 and Civil Service Circular No. 1 of 1998 which spells out the structure, roles and manning levels at Regional level as well as working relations with local Authorities and other sector Ministries. The decentralization of extension services performed by MAFS involved principally transferring of roles and resources (staff and facilities) to Local Authorities, and particularly to Urban and District Councils by June 2000, the process has been concluded as follows:-

### **3.1 Transfer of Staff**

The majority of the Professional Staff, that is 7,906 who served as extensionists through the Central Government were transferred to the Local Authorities and re-deployed to perform extension services at local level, that is Wards and/or Villages. However, our new Ministry in collaboration with UTUMISHI have yet to effect the long overdue promotions before July 2001 for most of the re-deployed staff.

### **3.2 Transfer of Facilities**

All the extension facilities which used to be at Regional and District levels were handed over to Local Government Authorities. The facilities included vehicles, motorcycles, bicycles, staff houses and communication equipment. Each region and district has been provided with a vehicle; while each ward and village was provided with a motorcycle and a bicycle respectively. In addition, there are some houses for Ward extension staff.

### **3.3 Financial Transfers**

Since July 1996, 95% of funds, from NAEP II have been financing extension services. Furthermore, national wide, effective July 1999, each district council has opened a special extension service account which is administered by the relevant District Executive Director. From then on NAEP II funds from MAFS are being transferred directly to the District Councils. Unfortunately, the (NAEP II) donor funding will be phased out in December, 2001.

From then on funding beyond NAEP II Project life will squarely rest on the local authorities. In addition effective July, 2000 Local Authorities extension services started receiving 70% of other charges (OC) funds directly from the Treasury.

### **3.4 Technical working Modalities**

To strengthen linkage and coordination of agricultural activities, MAFS and the Regional Administration and Local Government, (thereafter RALG) are collaborating in finalizing the preparation of a document which will highlights technical working modalities between the two Ministries and local authorities in respect of :

- Establishing/introducing and improving extension methodologies.
- Establishing/setting standard for extension delivery.
- Providing technical guidelines and backstopping to district councils on agricultural extension.
- Carrying out research and develop technical extension packages and disseminate to extension providers.
- Coordinating extension services by various providers.
- Coordinating National agricultural events/festival e.g. Farmers Day (Nane-Nane), World Food Day, etc.

### **3.5 Organization Structure and staffing requirement of the Agricultural department in local Authorities**

Though staffing requirements may vary from district to district, MAFS has prepared guide lines on organizational structure and staffing.

#### **4.0 Emerging Issues which have affected the Delivery of Quality Extension Service**

Although in the process of decentralization of Extension Service, a number of steps have been taken there are still other issues unresolved which makes extension service less effective. For an extension service to be effective it should be participatory, demand driven, carefully targeted, cost-effective, gender sensitive, collaborative and coordinated in a way involving various stakeholders and beneficiaries. In sum the unresolved issues include:

##### **4.1 Redeployment of Extension Staff**

One of the objectives of decentralization was to increase the number of extension staff at the field level in all local Authorities. However, since July 2000, six months later, MAFS notes that there is great disparity in numbers of the extension staff redeployed in various local councils in the regions. For example Mtwara and Lindi have 177 and 174 Extension staff respectively while Mbeya and Arusha have 504 and 555 respectively. The disparity is much more conspicuous between councils within regions as the case is in Arusha Municipal Council which has 62 Extensionists while Simanjiro District Council has only 19 Extensionists.

Also staff strength in terms of qualifications also differ from one council to another. For quite sometime there have been no staff recruitment and training, while retrenchment, abscondment and

deaths have continued to deplete staff without replacement. Currently, the Government is experiencing an ageing staff cadre.

In order to bridge the gap, human resource development is essential. Redistribution of the existing extension staff basing on numbers and qualifications is considered to be mandatory which is in line with the CCM Party Manifesto of October 2000 (CCM 2000: 12). However, this will require both in-service and pre-service training programmes, as well as new recruitment of young and competent staff.

#### **4.2 Staffing at the Regional Secretariat level**

At the Regional Level, the agricultural professional is designated as **agricultural advisor** to the Secretariat. However, it will be noted that agriculture is such a vast field with so many technical fields of specialization, that one person cannot be deemed skilled enough to advise competently in all the fields of agriculture such as Extension, Entomology, Plant Pathology, Irrigation Engineering etc.

#### **4.3 Working Relationship with Regional Secretariat**

The Regional Administration Act. No. 19 of 1997 and the Civil Service circular No. 1 of 1998 stipulates the working relationships between Central and Local Government. As a result all correspondence between sector Ministries and Regional Secretariats is restricted through RALG in the President's Office.

However, the circular is quiet on professional correspondence between sector Ministries and Local Councils.

#### **4.4. Poverty**

Rural Development is an important and major component of social economic development policy in Tanzania. Its importance hinges on the fact that the majority of Tanzanians still live in rural areas estimated at 80% of the population. The rural poor have not benefited much from extension because they lack capital with which to acquire agricultural inputs and modern technologies. The new Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security is of the opinion that if state input subsidies plus rural low credit interest facilities were readily available to farmers production would be increased substantially. The Ministry's "Empowerment" strategy under consideration is aimed at alleviating poverty. And so does HIPIC

#### **4.5 Poor Infrastructure**

The rural infrastructure such as rural roads, communication systems, transport system etc. are poor, thus hinder inputs, access to social services and modern technologies.

#### **4.6 Low capacity of rural institutions**

Most of the rural institutions such as cooperatives, villages councils, farmers Associations and groups etc. have a low capacity in terms of planning, knowledge and skills management, consequently affecting the quality of delivery of extension services.

#### 4.7 Low investment in rural areas

Lack of appropriate incentives to producers, lack of credit facilities such as Banks in rural areas, low producer prices, too many taxes for the farm, also removal of state inputs subsidies, all have been a disincentive to poor farmers or the private sector participation.

#### 4.8 Gender issues

Though the extension services has been gender sensitive, women and the youth have least benefited from the services because they do not have access to productive resources such as capital and modern technology.

#### Weak and inappropriate legal land tenure system

Before the 1999 Land Act and 1999 Village Land Act were enacted, women were inhibited to fully exploit land because they could not legally own or inherit it. At present, Tanzania is endowed with 43 million of erable land, of these, only 7 million hectares (about 16 percent) are fully exploited as shown in the following table.

Table on Land use in Tanzania

<u>Type of use</u>	<u>Area (in 000ha)</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Forest	2,723	2.9
Woodland	37,436	39.6
Bushland	17,316	18.3
Grassland	19,360	20.5
Land under Cultivation	7,144	16.0
Open Land	139	0.2
Water bodies	7,352	7.8
<u>Urban Area</u>	65	0.1

Source: Ministry of Land and settlement (National Resource Mapping Project 1997)

#### **4.10 Food Security**

Most rural people are food insecure due to low production, post harvest losses, poor storage facilities and lack of purchasing power. Consequently some villagers found it hard to have time and resources to benefit from the extension services.

#### **4.11 Effect of HIV/AIDS**

Young people in the productive age group of between 15 to 40 years and rural women have been the most affected groups leading to low life expectancy, high dependence ratio, slow growth in GDP, decline in productivity, increasing poverty etc. all these had a negative impact on the delivery of Extension Services.

#### **4.12 Technical Progress Reports**

One of the functions of the Regional Secretariat is to coordinate and evaluate the local councils extension activities. Since decentralization in 1998 MAFS has not been receiving periodic general field operation **reports**.

#### **4.13 Financial Sustainability of Extension Services**

Most of the Extension Service Projects such as NAEP II are donor funded, thus financial sustainability beyond project life is of major concern to MAFS. It is because of this reason MAFS recommends strategies of partnership between public and private funding of extension, in the future as follows:

#### **4.13.1 Mix of Public and Private Financing for Extension Services Delivery**

MAFS consultations with stakeholders, active participation of the private sector could possibly take place in commodity oriented extension service of high value cash crops and/or livestock, like tobacco, coffee, cashewnuts, tea and dairy cattle. In addition, private sector could take part in areas of seed production and multiplication. Further, it is proposed that NGOs/CBOs and other extension providers be encouraged to forge partnership with Central and Local Government. Also MAFS recommends that Local Authorities use part of the produce cess to finance extension services.

#### **4.13.2 Skills and Business Empowerment of farmers**

Empowerment of farmers in organizational and business skills is seen as one of the key strategic options for sustaining agricultural extension activities, as it helps beneficiaries to know where they are, decide where they want to go, develop and implement plans to reach their goals based on self-reliant endeavours. Emphasis on demand-driven, community based, cost effective, and sustainable extension service can only be realized if communities or farmers/pastoralists are truly empowered. With empowerment, it is possible for farmers/pastoralists to demand or question, if need be, anything they see happening contrary to their expectations.

Field observations and past studies have revealed that lack of farmer empowerment has mainly been due to:

- Lack of strong farmer groups/associations/organizations such as cooperatives etc.
- Weak research-extension-farmer linkages.

Thus, farmer empowerment can only be realized if the above constraints are addressed through participatory approaches and skills training.

As a result empowered farmers / pastoralists can help them hold extension and research personnel more accountable and make extension services truly demand driven.

#### **4.14 Work Programme Plan**

When Decentralisation of Extension Service was effected in 1998 to Local Authorities, that is at the village or ward levels, the Extensionist area of field operation became either the village or ward. Often execution of Extension Programmes required District Council co-funding. Therefore, to hold the Extensionist accountable to its clientele and make the extension service truly demand driven, the Extensionist should have his/her work programme plan approved at village or ward level before it is submitted to the District Council Finance and Planning Committee for funding and for personal allowances.

#### **Conclusion**

The goal of decentralization of Agricultural Extension Service is to improve the productivity of agricultural systems, raising the income of

farm families and improving the life of farm households at the village level.

To make the Extension Service more effective, it has to be: participatory, demand driven, carefully targeted, cost effective, gender sensitive, collaborative and coordinated in a way involving various stakeholders and beneficiaries

However, other emerging issues in the delivery of Extension Service for the past forty years, plus the frequent organizational changes in response to policy reforms, the Extension Service has been adversely affected thus impacting on the performance to get agriculture moving faster.

In conclusion, MAFS wishes to acknowledge the immense contribution of Tanzania Government and local Authorities leaders, donor nations and International Organizations in respect of advisory personnel, equipment and finance which has assisted us in the delivery of quality Extension services. And last, but not least, the peasant farmers for their continuous contributions in their partnership with our Ministry in lieu of time, tireless efforts and scarce savings.

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