**NOTES ON AGRICULTURE EXTENSION POLICIES IN AFRICA**

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**1. PURPOSE OF TODAY’S REVIEW/DISCUSSION**

As part of SOW, identify and review at least three examples of existing agricultural extension policy documents from other countries in Africa and consult with experts who have been involved in preparing those documents.

**2. WHAT IS POLICY?**

* A policy is a formal statement of a principle or rule that members of an organization must follow. Policies address issues important to the organization’s mission or operations.
* At its most basic, policy is “a course or principle of action, adopted or proposed by a government, party, business or individual” (*Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary*). Common to most policies:
  + state matters of principle;
  + focus on action, identifying what is to be done and by whom;
  + provide an authoritative statement, made by a person or body with power to do so; and
  + are a tool which makes administration easier, and allows people to get the core business work of the organization done more efficiently and effectively.

**3. TYPES OF POLICIES**

* interim, provisional, ad hoc
* embodied in larger policies
* decrees and proclamations
* legislated

**4. WHO HAS POLICIES?**

Which African countries have explicit agriculture extension policies? 2010 study by Oladimeh Idowu Oladele, W U Mafikent Casmpus Mmabatho, SA indicates of 26 Sub-Saharan African countries, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Botswana, and Zimbabwe have such policies. [[1]](#footnote-1)

Which of these five could I obtain? Malawi, Kenya (Implementation Framework which operationalizes the Policy), and Ghana. According to this study, Ghana does not have an explicit policy. However, Dr. Gbokie was able to obtain Ghana’s policy.

Uganda – part of agriculture sector strategy.

Botswana – part of 1998 Science and Technology Policy which covers 13 sectors including extension. Regarding extension: establish efficient means for a speedy dissemination and application of research results.

Zimbabwe – within the agriculture sector strategy BUT discussion of proposed policy issues:

* improve working conditions to retain and attract staff
* stakeholders should contribute towards funding extension
* policy should have cost recovery mechanism
* coordination of extension in the field needs to be improved

Also Nigeria – papers on the need to have such a policy and a study of extension staff perceptions of what a policy should include[[2]](#footnote-2) but no such policy.

**5. COUNTRY POLICIES SELECTED FOR REVIEW**

(1) Malawi, (2) Ghana, (3) Kenya, and Nigeria.

Today: Brief on Nigeria and more in-depth on Malawi.

**A. Nigeria**

Although does not have an explicit extension strategy, does have an interesting study where extension agents and supervisors provided input on what areas they believed should be covered in an extension policy.

Albert, C. and Isife, B. (2009). Issues in developing a national policy on agricultural extension service in Nigeria: The perception of extension professionals. *Agricultural Journal*. V 4, Issue 1, pp 22-28.

Components of policy identified:

institutional framework and structures

safety/security

monitoring and evaluation

sustainability, funding

research

ICT

globalization

personnel training,

minimum standard for extension activities, for personnel quality and ratio to recipients

**6. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR REVIEW OF THE THREE EXPLICIT POLICIES**

1. Country
2. Policy Date
3. Policy Title
4. Total Pages
5. Process of Development of Policy
6. Table of Contents
7. Game Changing Context
8. General Approach
9. Mission Statement
10. Major Policy Issues Articulated
11. Follow-up Studies on Policies and Current Status
12. Reviewer and Others’ Comments
13. Additional Items?

**REVIEW OF MALAWI’S NATIONAL AGRICULTURE EXTENSION POLICY**

1. Country: Malawi
2. Policy Date: October 2000
3. Policy Title: Agricultural Extension in the New Millennium: Towards Pluralistic and Demand-driven Services in Malawi
4. Total Pages: 36
5. Development of Policy Process: Change Team lead by Ministry of Agriculture, Director of Agriculture Extension, involving stakeholders; technical and financial support from GTZ

1. Table of Contents
   1. List of Abbreviations
   2. Preface
   3. Acknowledgements
   4. Introduction
   5. Background
   6. Extension Challenges
   7. Vision & Mission Statements
   8. Guiding Principles
   9. Institutional Framework
2. Malawi was in the beginning stages of transitioning from a centralized bureaucracy to a decentralized, pluralistic system during the time the policy was developed.
3. General Approach: Lots of background information and discussion of extension challenges. Guiding principles include:
   1. Demand-driven (different types of information – marketing, farm planning, management)
   2. Accountability (farmers need a voice in extension program planning)
   3. Those who benefit pay (service at cost) – privatize extension where possible
   4. Resources sustainability – limited resources, must improve management of extension and diversify financing of extension (fees-for-service, levies)
   5. Equalization – must consider vulnerable, women, you, people with disabilities
   6. Promotion of pluralism – need for greater choice
      1. Provide conducive environment for the private sector (but what to provide?)
      2. Strengthen farmer organizations to take on role of service providers
      3. Build GOM capacity for coordinating and facilitating the work of other players
   7. Decentralized coordination – decision-making devolved to lower levels; focus for coordination is at the district-level; joint planning & implementation of programs; joint financing via a Development fund for extension

1. Mission Statement of the Policy:

* Set clear policy guidelines
* Promote equalization
* Initiate and strengthen co-ordination
* Promote pluralism
* Encourage market liberalization
* Set and monitor clear standards for the quality of services
* Assess impact of extension periodically

1. Major Policy Issues Articulated: Most within the last chapter on Institutional Framework which gave details of roles of the public sector, farmer organizations, private sector, civil society, etc.
   1. Role of Public Sector
      1. Central Level:
         1. Develop policy guidelines
         2. Coordinate all
         3. Pre-service, in-service, upgrading training for all (training recognized by central level public sector for standards and minimum qualifications)
         4. Provide IEC materials to all
         5. Build capacity at district-level
         6. Strengthen farmer organizations
         7. Develop conducive environment for private sector
      2. District Level:
         1. Local Government Act stipulates that districts are Responsible for extension services!
         2. Interpret and implements policy
         3. Plan with farmers
         4. Allocate locally generated finances to ag ext, supplemented with funds from central government
            1. GOM funds targeted toward the most vulnerable, address HIV/AIDS, and the environment
         5. Strengthen farmer organizations
         6. Provide markets and set standards for quality
   2. Role of farmer organizations
      1. Represent interests of farmers
      2. Provide services to their members
      3. Participate in policy formulation, in planning, and implementation
   3. Role of private sector
      1. An important role in extension service delivery
      2. Participate in policy formulation, in planning, and implementation
   4. Role of not-for-profit sector
      1. Target the more marginalized
      2. Build capacity of various actors
      3. Participate in policy formulation, in planning, and implementation
   5. Build partnerships
      1. With educational institutions, research, religious organizations
2. Follow-up Studies on Policy and Current Status: Some studies reportedly available. (I am trying to access these.) Not known if the policy is being revised or not.
3. Reviewer and Others’ Comments
   1. Did the policy actually meet its own Mission Statement?
   2. Strength in the institutional framework section

1. Angola, Benin, Burina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, Swaziland, Lesotho, South Africa, Ivory Cost, Namibia, Madagascar, Mauritius, DRC reportedly do not have explicit agriculture extension policies. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Albert, C. and Isife, B. (2009). Issues in developing a national policy on agricultural extension service in Nigeria: The perception of extension professionals. *Agricultural Journal*. V 4, Issue 1, pp 22-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)