**NOTES ON AGRICULTURE EXTENSION POLICIES**

**With Examples from Africa (Nigeria, Malawi, Ghana) and Asia (Bangladesh)**

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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. 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?

**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

**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

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

1. Country: Ghana
2. Policy Date: April 2001
3. Policy Title: Agricultural Extension Policy (Final Draft)
4. Total Pages: 25
5. Development of Policy Process: Draft prepared by consultant in consultation with Directorate of Agricultural Extension Services. Draft subjected to Regional consultation, working group sessions, and a national consultative workshop. Consultations with public sector Ministries of Food & Agriculture (MOFA) and of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), Department of Cooperatives, District Agricultural Sub-Committees; private companies; NGOs; and donors.

1. Table of Contents
   1. Acronyms
   2. Preface
   3. Introduction
   4. General Background
   5. Agriculture Extension in Ghana (history, R&E linkages, COCOBOD-MOFA merger, decentralization, role of private sector/NGOs in extension delivery)
   6. The New Extension Policy (need, vision, mission statement, guiding principles, objectives and strategies)
   7. Institutional and Financial Implications (agriculture extension development fund)
   8. Appendices (structure and performance of agriculture sector; MOFA organogram; main roles of selected categories of extension staff)
2. Game Changing Context: Ghana was moving from commodity-based extension, T&V extension (1990’s) to a decentralized system (late 1990’s). 1990’s saw a withdrawal of MOFA from the procurement and distribution of agricultural inputs, including credit. Late 1990’s, public sector extension funding was shrinking, there was low field staff to farmer ratio, and too great a dependence on donor funding. The private sector (producer organizations, buyers, processors, export companies; particularly in high-value tree crops, cotton, pineapple, vegetables with cost recovery for service through service charges deducted from payments to farmers at the time of sale) was becoming increasingly involved in EAS. Other emerging issues such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic, environmental degradation, and poverty reduction needed to be addressed by extension. In 1998, cocoa extension was unified under MOFA (moved from COCOBOD, Ghana Cocoa Board). Since cocoa extension was largely provided by private cocoa purchasing companies, there was need to establish working relationships between public/private providers. Collectively these factors called for a new extension policy to guide extension delivery in the face of changes in Ghana’s political economy. With decentralization, responsibility for extension service provision moved from central to local government. Role of extension agents changed from only transfer of technology to facilitating learning among farmers. Ghana decided to build on these roles to empower clients to make better decisions about their own activities.
3. General Approach: Lots of background/ contextual information explaining the development of the extension system and constraints to delivery as well as broad discussion of rationale for a new look at agriculture extension including policy.

Guiding principles include:

* 1. Demand-driven, client-focused
  2. Pluralistic
  3. Ensures extension provision to small-scale resource poor farmers with special attention to women, youth, and they physically challenged –with services delivered to small-scale resource poor farmers funded by government
  4. Public funding to establish better planning and prioritization of commitments
  5. Open to new funding mechanisms
  6. Decisions devolved to District Assemblies in consultation with MOFA, farmers, other stakeholders
  7. Involve community in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation of extension
  8. Encourage private sector to finance and engage in EAS
  9. EAs cost effective and ensures accountability
  10. More pro-active in developing farmers’ business and marketing skills
  11. EAS monitored by District Assemblies in conjunction with MOFA and farmers to ensure quality of services provided by the private sector
  12. HRD continuous and intensified

1. Ghana policy included a broad vision statement. Mission Statement of the Policy: MOFA will work with regional and district administrations to ensure that extension services contribute effectively and efficiently to social and economic development through:

* Address needs of farmers, especially the rural poor to reduce poverty
* Ensure that farmers adopt environmentally sustainable approaches
* Raise agricultural productivity
* Create an enabling environment for private sector participation in EAS delivery and funding

1. Major Policy Issues Articulated: The policy identifies seven objectives, each having specific strategies to achieve the objectives.
   1. Promote best farmers practice
   2. Support development and use of different approaches to extension
   3. Empower farmers through formation of FBOs and marketing cooperatives in collaboration with Department of Cooperatives
   4. Will operationalize the roles and responsibilities of the various levels of governance (national, regional, and district) as defined under the decentralization process (no information on what those roles are)
      1. Revise the decentralization handbook to clarify roles/responsibilities
      2. Monitor extension at district level
      3. Ensure that financial decentralization becomes operational
   5. Increase efficiency and cost effectiveness of public sector extension
   6. Ensure relevance of service
   7. Consider HIV/AIDS, environmental degradation, poverty reduction, gender, equity, client empowerment
   8. Continuously build capacity
2. Follow-up Studies on Policy and Current Status: Current information indicates the policy is in process of being revised but written information on this is not available at this time.
3. Reviewer and Others’ Comments
   1. Mix of objectives and strategies to achieve objectives.
   2. Appears that the objectives are meant to capture policy issues – some do but many seem to be goals/objectives of EAS

**REVIEW OF BANGLADESH NATIONAL AGRICULTURE EXTENSION POLICY**

1. Country: Bangladesh
2. Policy Date: 1996
3. Policy Title: New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP)
4. Total Pages: 10
5. Development of Policy Process: Task Force with Secretary, MOA as Chair. Task Force comprised of private, NGO, and public sector extension providers as well as farmers. Task Force developed a draft which was circulated for comment, resulting in the NAEP.

1. Table of Contents
   1. Introduction
      1. Agriculture in Bangladesh
      2. Agricultural Policy and Priorities
   2. New Agricultural Extension Policy
      1. Role of Agricultural Extension
      2. The National Agricultural Extension System
      3. Goal and Components of the NAEP
   3. Implementation Strategy – to be developed (definitions of roles; mechanisms for collaboration; for supply, management and monitoring of resources to extension; for training; for linkage between farmers, extension and research).
2. Game Changing Context: Reinvigorate extension following collapse of T&V (T&V introduced in 1977 and operated until 1993).
3. General Approach: The policy articulates 11 key components which are to be implemented to achieve the goal of the policy**.** No general principles (although at one point the language says the components are actually the principles and the implementation strategy will set the mechanisms for putting the principles into place).

1. Goal statement rather than vision or mission statement:

The goal of the NAEP is to: encourage the various partners and agencies within the national agricultural extension system to provide efficient and effective services which complement and reinforce each other, in an effort to increase the efficiency and productivity of agriculture in Bangladesh.

1. Major Policy Issues Articulated: Framed as components to achieve the goal of the policy.
   1. Extension support to all categories of farmers
   2. Efficient extension services (through training, institutional strengthening, and logistical support)
   3. Decentralization – of extension staff and devolving responsibility for some aspects of planning and implementation of extension programmes
   4. Demand-led extension – identification of farmer problems with farmers at field level
   5. Working with groups of all kinds – focus on existing groups (private could work with public organized groups)
   6. Strengthened extension-research linkage – setting-up a hierarchy of institutional mechanisms between extension and research –
      1. national technical coordination committee of extension, NGO and private sector; and research
      2. regional – research and extension representatives – by agro-ecological zone
      3. review workshops with extension and research
      4. setting-up a contract research system
   7. Training of extension personnel – policy is for government training and training funds to be made accessible to all EAS providers
   8. Appropriate extension methodology (various methods: farm visits, ICT, demonstrations, participatory methods, fairs)
   9. Integrated extension support to farmers – provide advice on all aspects of agriculture – advice to be made available to NGOs and others as requested
   10. Coordinated extension activities (sharing of information and expertise; participation in each others’ extension activities where appropriate); coordinated at five levels
       1. Local – all EAS participate in meetings of Union Councils
       2. Thana – through Thana Ag Dev Committee (reps from government, private, NGO, research, farmers, farmer organizations)
       3. District – through District Extension Programming Committee and District Dev Coordination Committee
       4. Regional – through Agricultural Tech Committee (government, NGO, research) to discuss technical issues relating extension programs
       5. National – National Tech Coordination Committee, all agencies to discuss research and technical issues relating to extension work
   11. Integrated Environmental support (control pollution; promote environment-friendly activities; environmental impact assessments; sustainable agriculture focus)
2. Follow-up Studies on Policy and Current Status. Two follow-up studies are available.

(1) World Bank. 2004. Agriculture and Rural Development Discussion Paper 11 Extension Reform For Rural Development. Volume 4. Revitalization within Public Sector Services. M. Hassanullah, *Bangladesh: Agricultural extension reform initiatives.*

* 1. Major Problems: Extension under different ministries; ministries tend to work independently; EAS supported by numerous donors and projects who also work independently.
  2. Major Successes: Partnership activities: A Partnership Initiative Fund was introduced at various levels with district levels receiving about $1,500. per year to finance local partnership initiatives in providing integrated extension services (public, private, NGO). This built trust among partners and helped to meet demand-based service needs of farmers.
  3. Critical factor for success of policy: continued commitment and support of government and the donor agencies.
  4. Lessons Learned
     1. Requires continuous effort over time to make policy changes
     2. Need is to satisfy beneficiaries
     3. Organizational change is painful
     4. Success of policy depends on economic benefits that accrue to farmers

(2) National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme. 2009. Karim, Zahural. *Study of the implementation status and effectiveness of New Agricultural Extension Policy for Technology Adoption.*

1. Weaknesses
   * Lack of direction on implementation
   * NAEP is an interministerial and interdepartmental policy but no strengthening coordination mechanism outlined in NAEP
   * Weakness of planning processes and development of programs/projects
   * Understand of NAEP by stakeholders very weak
   * Ownership of NAEP – other ministries thought it was just for MOA extension
   * Bottom-up extension and advisory services planning was effective but ended when project funds ended
   * Policy encourages partnerships between different EAS but few examples of working relationships (contrary to other report)
   * Committee structures were weak, often inactive, needed clear TORS
   * Name should be National policy rather than new because many stakeholders
   * Regular funding is needed
2. Reviewer and Others’ Comments
   1. Appears that the components are meant to capture policy issues
   2. Consider lessons learned from and weaknesses of the Bangladesh policy

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)