

The Delivery of Agricultural Extension Services in Uganda: An Analysis from an Institutional Perspective

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of Masters of
Philosophy in Development Geography**



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2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the farmers, sub-county leadership, local politicians and members of NGOs that acted as my respondents and key informants; this study would not have been possible without their help. I am indebted to Mrs. Grace Katzigati, the District NAADS Co-ordinator, always fitted me into her tight schedule and provided me with the information I needed and also helped set up appointments with sub-county NAADS Coordinators. My special thanks to Sam Mugume who gave me invaluable assistance during my field work. Robert Kamba, my research assistant, your help in the field is really appreciated. Patience Rwamigisa, your initial interest in my work and our subsequent discussions were very helpful.

Many thanks to the Norwegian Educational Loan Scheme and the Department of Sociology and Human Geography whose financial support made it possible to attend my studies in Norway and write this thesis. I would like to acknowledge tremendous support and academic guidance of my supervisor, Prof. Jan Hesselberg. I also benefited from discussions on decentralisation with Øivind Hetland as well as his critical comments on the structure and flow of this thesis; Anders Iversen, your guidance on the methodology was useful in the fieldwork.

To my dear friend and colleague Annika Wetlesen, we became close right from the first time we met; our discussions and your critical comments on the thesis were very helpful, thank you for your encouragement as well. My fellow course mates; Elvire Chi, Kabo Modimootsile; Owusu Boampong; and friends Stephen Babson and Patrick Byakagaba our numerous discussions were very useful. I have no doubt in my mind that we will continue these and many other discussions when we go back to our respective countries.

Finally, I have received a lot of support from the Ugandan, Norwegian, Cameroonian, Tanzanian, Kenyan and Ghanaian student communities. I leave the University of Oslo with memories of the special moments we went through. Thank you for your friendship.

DEDICATION

*This thesis is dedicated to my parents who have loved, supported and guided me in all aspects of
life.*

*And to Charles, who has been a driving force towards my recent change in perception to life and
its challenges.. And for encouraging me to pursue this degree.*

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SYNONYMS & ACRONYMNS

AAMP	Area-based Agricultural Modernisation Programme
ADB	African Development Bank
DDSP	District Development Support Project
ESAP	Environment and Sustainable Agriculture Project
FID	Farmer Institutional Development
HASP	Household Agricultural Support Programme
IDEA	Investment in Developing Export Agriculture
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
JESE	Joint Efforts to Save the Environment
KBA	Kabarole Bee keepers Association
LG	Local Government
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PMA	Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture
SATNET	Sustainable Agriculture Trainers Network
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
ULAMP	Uganda Land Management Project
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

ABSTRACT

A central question in agricultural extension literature is whether service delivery is responsive to the needs of small holder farmers. Previous research has focussed on the role of methodological characteristics in the technology diffusion. In this thesis, I argue that the effectiveness of extension systems is determined by the institutional arrangements within which services are provided and demanded.

Using the new institutionalism theory, I analyse how decentralisation and privatisation policies provide an environment for demand driven service delivery to be effective. Then I make an analysis of interactions between actors as they plan for and provide extension services. In addition to this, I assess the effect of farmer organisations on the way small holder farmers gain access to resources and how they perceive the services that are provided. Data is collected through semi structured interviews with 28 key informants at district, sub county and national levels and a survey of 80 small holder farmers on their attitudes and perceptions toward extension delivery.

Research findings suggest that the policy and legal frameworks relating to decentralisation and privatisation shape the environment within which demand driven extension systems in Kabarole District thrive. Shared norms and values determine the level of interaction between actors and their level commitment to the overall principles of demand driven systems. Furthermore, when small holder farmers are organised in groups they are able to gain collective access to resources and also exercise their “voice” in demanding services.

The strength of the new institutionalism theory lies in its ability to analyse phenomenon as a system. Demand driven systems involve a number of actors whose behaviour is shaped by social, economic, cultural and political factors. These findings are critical to the decentralisation and pro-poor responsiveness debate which argues that increasing access to extension services to small holder farmers empowers to gain access to resource and transform into commercial farmers.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Objective

Strong global trends towards market liberalization have generated increased attention towards the potential for the privatization of agricultural extension services (Umali & Schwartz 1994; Pierre & Peters 2000; Dorward et al. 2004). Proponents of market liberalisation argued that in contrast to the market, the state's collectivist approach to service delivery compromises the effective allocation of resources. These neo liberal reforms pose challenges for governments whose prime objective is eradication of poverty and the market whose driving force is profit maximization. Although the economic rationale for privatisation is to increase efficiency, it is still unclear as to whether private sector service delivery will necessarily lead to greater efficiency and equity (Umali & Schwartz 1994). There is limited empirical evidence of the social and income distributional implications in terms of access for rural and small-holder farmers.

Against this background, the overall objective of this thesis is to assess the effectiveness of demand driven agricultural extension service delivery in Uganda. The analysis takes on two major forms; firstly, it seeks to assess the performance of institutional patterns in terms of implementing assigned responsibilities. By understanding the linkages between various actors and interest groups of agricultural extension systems, conclusions can be made as to whether the systems are demand-driven, creative and pluralistic in nature. Secondly, the study identifies and analyses small holder farmers' knowledge and perception of agricultural extension services. It makes an assessment of the structures and processes that influence their access to agricultural information in order to stimulate desirable agricultural development. It is assumed that if local government decisions reflect their priorities, then, services provided are demand driven.

1.2 Agricultural Strategies in Uganda

The Government of Uganda's strategy for poverty eradication is based on the transformation of the economy through private investment, industrialization and export led growth (MFPED

2004). The agricultural sector presents a great opportunity for poverty eradication because it employs over 80 percent of the labour force. The sector has grown steadily (over 4% per annum) over the last decade (MAAIF 2000). This growth has been accompanied by re-orientation of the public sectors rule to liberalisation of the agricultural economy and institutional reforms that have downsized, privatised and decentralised public agricultural institutions. According to (Bird & Shinyekwa 2005; Kappel, Lay, & Steiner. 2005) Uganda has experienced sustained economic growth for over a decade however, the performance was patchy with some parts of the country lagging behind. The poor are still disproportionately rural and improvements were slower for non-coffee growing households, amongst the unemployed with government employees, traders and cash crop farmers as those most likely to have gained. The agricultural sector still remains challenged by the ever increasing demand for food, declining agricultural productivity, ever increasing competition on the international market and natural resource degradation (MAAIF 2000).

In the year 2000, the Government of Uganda launched the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture, a strategy that aims at transforming subsistence farmers into commercial farmers. Based on the poverty focus and the need to transform agriculture, the vision of the PMA encompasses both the farmer and the sector. The PMA vision is *“poverty eradication through a profitable, competitive, sustainable and dynamic agricultural and agro-industrial sector”*. Achieving this vision will depend on two related processes: transforming the subsistence farmer, and transforming the agricultural sector in general. The transition from a resource-based to a technology based system of agriculture, places greater responsibility on the agricultural extension since it is a vital conduit of new agricultural information and technologies to farmers as well as a conduit back to researchers and policy makers of farmers’ problems, needs and concerns.

The analysis underlying the PMA suggests that the low productivity observed in Ugandan agriculture is attributed to poorly functioning farmer-extension-research linkages and the consequent failure of the research and extension systems to respond to real needs of the farmers (MAAIF 2000). Accordingly, emphasis is placed not only on enhancing extension

and research efforts but doing so under institutional arrangements that have been transformed to ensure increased responsiveness to farmers' needs.

With specific regard to extension, the PMA envisions the NAADS should be;

“Decentralised, farmer owned and private sector serviced extension system contributing to the realisation of the agricultural sector objectives.”

The vision is expected to materialise through pursuit of a mission that will lead to:

“Increased farmer access to information, knowledge and technology through effective, efficient, sustainable and decentralised extension with increasing private sector involvement in line with government policy”

Farmer empowerment is paramount to the success of the programme because it enables farmers to gain access and control the structures and process that transform their natural assets into incomes. It is assumed that when organised in groups, farmers will act collectively in the planning, procurement of extension services, setting quality standards and in monitoring and evaluation of development processes. In addition to this, farmer empowerment is closely linked with interventions related to poverty targeting.

It is widely accepted that growth has to be strong in agriculture, non-farm rural and informal sector activities in order to be pro-poor (Kappel et al. 2005). It must be labor intensive and land intensive and must be concentrated in localities with high poverty rates. The factor pertinent to the conceptualisation of agricultural advisory services is that limited access to services underlies the perpetuation of poverty. Therefore, interventions to address poverty through improving delivery of agricultural services must ensure that member of vulnerable groups-for whom subsistence agriculture tend to be a mains source of livelihood-are empowered to participate and benefit. Considering that women play in important role in agriculture development and yet constitute a huge number of those that are vulnerable, the NAADS programme is guided by a strong national policy that encourages gender mainstreaming through equal rights and affirmative action. These developments mean that the beneficiaries become heterogeneous in nature with diverse needs and expectations that central government may not be able to serve. Moreover, prior experiences showed low levels

of ownership at grass root levels and exclusion of rural communities when programmes were controlled at the district level. Against this back round, deepening decentralisation of service delivery is recommended under the PMA meaning that functions and services are devolved from districts to lower levels of local government. The underlying logic behind decentralisation is that local institutions are given the formal mandate to promote development and national integration through distribution of political power and authority, establishing formal rules of the game to govern the political process (Johnson 2001; von Braun & Grate, 2002; Saito 2002; Olowu et al. 2004)}. Other principles that guide the NAADS programme are commercialisation, fostering participation, managing of natural resource productivity, increasing institutional efficiency, privatisation and increasing market access.

The NAADS programme financed by Government and a multiple of donors through a consolidated fund directed to participant districts and sub-counties, via the Government Poverty Alleviation Fund. NAADS is geared towards a national mechanism for co-ordination of farmers' agricultural advisory service¹ requirements. Under NAADS, financial and administrative control of management of advisory services is held at sub county level and is governed by a Farmers' Fora – comprising of broad-based stakeholders representation, but with small holder farmers as the majority, controlling public funding allocations under the terms of NAADS Act 2001.

1.3 Importance of the Study

The study is important for several reasons. Firstly, the effectiveness of agricultural extension systems is fundamental to poverty reduction strategies, in particular, the extent to which demand driven extension service delivery can have a greater impact on resource poor farmers who are constantly constrained by limited financial and human capacity; in particular women who lack access to physical resources and financial assets (like land titles). Traditionally, governments have taken a dominant role in the provision of agricultural extension services because of its role in agricultural development (Umali & Schwartz 1994).

¹ Advisory rather than extension is central to the NAADS programme

However, the lack of a poverty focus and the state's financial crisis of the 1980s and 1990s meant that donors and governments expressed concerns over the effectiveness of agricultural extension systems (Schwartz & Kampen 1992; Alwang & Siegel 2003; Snapp, Blackie, & Donovan 2003). NAADS programme is an interesting case for the analysis of effectiveness of demand driven agricultural extension in a number of ways because its principles are guided by neoliberal paradigms that emphasise the reduction of the state's role in service delivery.

Secondly, different stakeholders involved in demand driven extension systems present me with an opportunity to deploy institutionalism theories to analyse linkages between them. When power relations are constrained and capacity of actors weakened, services are bound to fail (Burki, Perry, & Dillinger 1999). Successful services for the poor emerge from institutional relationships in which actors are accountable to one another (World Bank 2003). Accountability in pluralistic arrangements tends to be multifaceted, with several stakeholders involved in developing contract terms of reference, competitive bidding, and direct input from farmers in design of indicators. The argument is that the difficulty with institutional pluralism is for central government to adjust to a position of reduced direct control over either program or staffing. Additionally, financial and administrative management may increase in complexity, at least initially, as new systems are developed. Furthermore, additional resources and efforts may be required to monitor service quality. Analyzing the institutional dynamics that shape actors involved in the demand and supply of agricultural extension services would contribute to the study of development because it helps us understand the difficulties that people encounter in their efforts make use of their resources in a rural setting.

Thirdly, limitations in the role of the state in service delivery and the subsequent development of new governance instruments that would improve the effectiveness of the state provide me with the opportunity analyse the institutional arrangements within demand driven systems. The market based reform of the New Public Management Approach to public service production and delivery rejected the bureaucratic culture of public service (Pierre & Peters 2000). The public service was described as a bureaucratic and inefficient

structure that was one of the sources of resource wastage (Feder, Willer, & Zijp 1999; Gary et al. 2000; Davidson, Ahmad, & Ali 2001; and Alwang & Siegel 2003). Therefore, the change from hierarchical institutional arrangements to those that are vertical in nature create a complex institutional environment that provides a basis for understanding the linkages between stakeholders that are pertinent to the sustainability of demand driven extension services.

1.4 Research Questions

The purpose of the study is to analyse two components of agricultural extension: the provision and demand. These components produce four research questions:

1. What is the role of policy and legal frameworks in the delivery of agricultural extension services? Government policy on who should provide extension, what type of extension should be provided, who should pay, and how the extension should be provided plays a critical role in determining the nature and extent of provision.
2. How do interactions between various actors (civil society, private and public sectors) shape the process of extension delivery? Agricultural extension has diverse functions that have to be performed in a complex social, political, cultural and economic environment. Understanding how different organisations and actors working together, share information determines their effectiveness in meeting the advisory needs of small holder farmers. Local relations are important because they determine distribution of power in decision making and understanding how priorities and needs of the local people are addressed is critical to delivery effectiveness.
3. How do small holder farmer organisations influence their access to advisory services? This question deals with how farmers get organised in order to gain access to resources and institutions influence they influence empowerment outcomes.
4. How do farmers perceive impacts of demand driven approaches to agricultural extension? Understanding the perspective of small-holder farmers is a prerequisite

for the success of interventions related to improving their livelihoods. Getting the views of the farmers gives an insight of how they appreciate the extension services.

1.5 Study Area

The study was carried out in Kabarole District which is one of the districts that depends on agriculture as the main source of activity and source of revenue. Agricultural activities account for over 90% of household income. Small holder farmers with farm size ranging from 0.5 – 2.0 hectares, deal with multiple crops, taking advantage of two rainy seasons (average 1200 – 1600mm per year with peaks in April/May and October/November).

A wide variety of food crops are grown (including among others bananas, cassava, maize, sweet potatoes and beans)-with surplus sold for cash. Bananas take up most of the cultivated land and are mainly used for brewing and as a staple edible starch. Beans are grown throughout the district because they act as the major plant protein for most households. Although the district is blessed with fertile volcanic soils, production levels and operating efficiencies are not reaching potential levels.

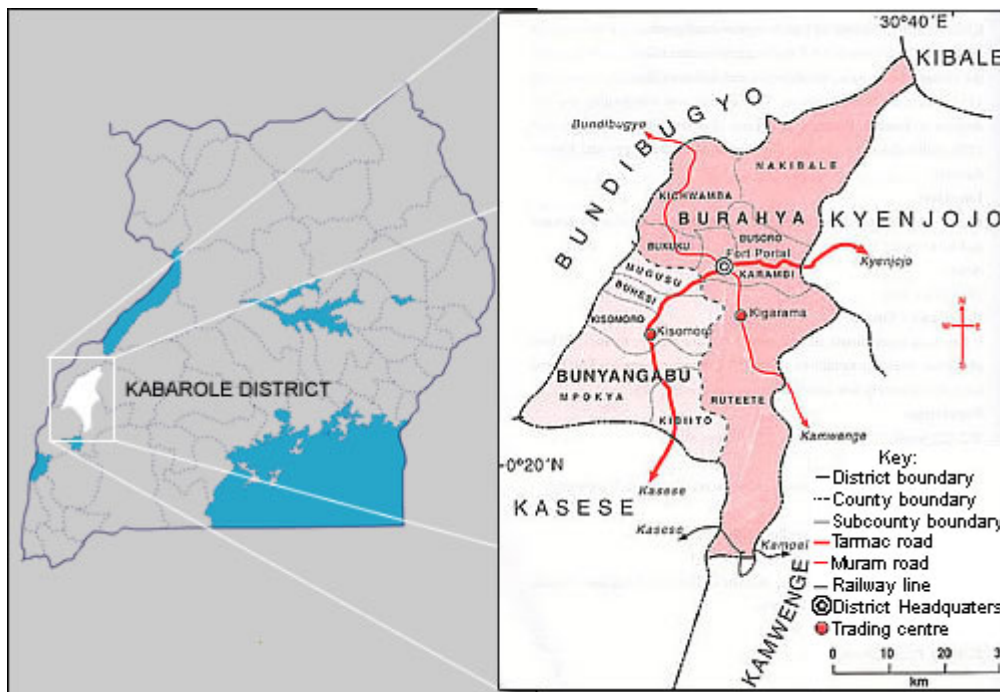


Figure 1: Location of Kabarole District (Source: District Information Portal)

Productivity is rapidly declining due to population pressures on land and soil fertility mined through extractive methods of cultivating short cycle crops without sufficient attention given to nutrient replacement. The district has a diverse ethnic background of Batooro, Bakonjo and Bakiga which diversity provides the study with the variability need to study heterogeneity in perceived needs.

The district is hosting a number of initiatives relating to improving agricultural productivity for small holder farmers. The Household Agricultural Support Programme (HASP) assisted by DANIDA target mainly women and orphan-headed households and is designed to improve agricultural production levels and increase surpluses through a combination of grants, credit, and technical training. ULAMP (Uganda Land Management Project) assisted by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) operates in Rutete sub-county and is designed to raise farm productivity through techniques for sustainable intensification of land and natural resource management. Area-Based Agricultural Modernisation Programme (AAMP) jointly assisted by the African Development Bank (ADB) is designed to increase incomes through a combination of investment in agricultural commercialisation (business development and improved market linkages, technical support, technical support for farming enterprises, rural financial services and institutional capacity building at successive levels of local government); rural infrastructure development; community mobilisation; and programme facilitation. The IDEA (Investment in Developing Export Agriculture) Project assisted by USAID is geared towards the regional export of traditional crops (maize and beans) and identification and promotion of non-traditional, high value crops with export potential.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organised in seven chapters. Chapter 2 provides a theoretical framework for the analysis. It first discusses the gaps in extension literature, then, presents the new institutionalism theory with its variants, assumptions and characteristics; and explains how it

will contribute to the analysis. Chapter Three review literature related to governance, decentralisation and agricultural extension delivery. Chapter four describes the methods used in the study. Chapter five and six contain the analysis of the study. The local government aspects are analysed in chapter five, while aspects related to perceptions of small holder farmers are analysed in chapter six. The final chapter summarises the findings from the study and provides recommendations.

2 THEORITICAL PERSEPECTIVE

Institutional pluralism is meant to make agricultural extension service delivery more responsive to farmers' needs. In this chapter, I argue that the analysis of such systems operating in a complex environment requires an approach that takes into account the social, economic, political and cultural factors that shape the behaviour of individuals involved in the provision and demand of extension services. This new institutionalism theory provides a framework for this analysis.

2.1 Analysing Extension

A review of related literature suggests the debate on the responsiveness of agricultural extension services has been guided by four major considerations: the quality and quantity of the services provided; the scale and complexity of coverage; the budgetary constraints faced by the state and the sustainability of extension systems. Agricultural extension can be analysed on the basis of its four characteristics (Venkatesan & Kampen, 1998). The methodological characteristic of extension which covers the manner in which the extension system interacts with its beneficiaries is probably the most widely written about in extension literature. Organizational characteristics of extension systems relate to its structure, patterns of communication within the organization and its relationship with research institutes, service providers (public or private) and the beneficiaries (farmers). Managerial characteristics cover issues such as the frequency and regularity of training of extension staff and visits to farmers, supervision of extension staff, the linkages between research and extension, the monitoring and evaluation set up and cost recovery of services. Institutional characteristics in agricultural extension relate to the service and in Sub Saharan Africa, governments and parastatal organizations provide the services while in industrialized countries, private companies, input suppliers, NGOs and farmer groups provide the services.

Recent research tends to focus on methodological characteristics (Gautam 2000; Semana 2000 and Rees et al. 2000), yet, there is limited research on how the various characteristics of extension (organisational, managerial, institutional and methodological)

interact. I argue that the institutional characteristics of extension make a major contribution to the responsiveness of agricultural extension delivery. Innovations related to institutional pluralism systems are meant to create extension services that would reach and respond to diverse farmers and farming systems (Venkatesan & Kampen 1998; Feder et al.1999). By involving a variety of stakeholders in forging contracts and collaborative partnerships, pluralistic arrangements help resolve, two fundamental generic problems – linking cause and effect, and accountability or the incentive to deliver quality service.

2.2 The New Institutionalism Theory

In forming a theoretical perspective for study the effectiveness of agricultural extension services, the new institutionalism theory provides a useful model. According to March & Olsen (1984), new institutionalism can be presented and discussed as an epistemological perspective of profound importance to understanding social science and in particular to define in terms of a narrow collection of challenges to contemporary theoretical thinking in political science, a small set of ideas of primary interest to professional students of political life. The behavioural assumption that is made is that actors pursue interests by making choices within their institutional constraints. The theory seeks to apply to non-market institutions the same form of reasoning that neo-classical economics has applied to the analysis of markets (Bates, 1995)

The point of departure for the new institutionalism is the idea that polity depends on complex processes and historical inefficiency as opposed to dependence on society (Ingram & Clay, 2000). Focusing on the law, property rights, bureaucracies, and other non-market structures, the theory seeks to demonstrate how rational individuals might employ non-market institutions to secure (in equilibrium) collective levels of welfare that they otherwise might not be able to attain given their response to market incentives. It also de-emphasizes metaphors of choice and allocative outcomes in favour of other logics of action and the centrality of meaning and symbolic action.

2.3 “Institutions”: Operational Definition

Institutions are defined as formal or informal rules, norms, and patterned behaviour that affects poor peoples’ lives (DIIS 2004). Formal institutions include the laws embedded in state, private sector, and civil society at the local, national and global levels as well as international organisations. Informal institutions include norms of inferior or superior status, expectations of bribes, networks of kin, friends, and neighbours, informal restrictions placed on women inheriting property, or the cluster of practices surrounding treatment of widows.

State policies and the culture of state institutions shapes the actions of all actors. When states are captured by the wealthy and powerful and become mired in a culture of corruption, clientism, exclusion, and discrimination even the well-meaning policies and programs fail to promote investment or reduce poverty. Addressing issues of culture and ethics of institutions can help in promoting the equal participation of all actors and meeting poor people’s needs. In an economic setting, an institution is defined as a set of rules that specify the production and income allocations for each individual in an economic setting (Yao 2004). It specifies the endowment and preference of each individual, the rules of transaction, and the mechanism for price formation, factors that determine the production and income allocation for each individual in the economy. This thesis describes institutions as those formal and informal rules that influence behaviour individuals involved in the provision and demand of agricultural extension services.

2.4 The Variants of the New Institutionalism

The institutional approach to poverty reduction notes that the poor lack political power and that administrative incompetence and corruption hinder the delivery of government (von Braun & Grote 2002). One component of the argument of the new institutionalism is that most political analysis informed by behavioural or rational choice assumptions tends to divorce political life from its cultural and socio-economic roots (Peters 1999). Agricultural extension has diverse functions that include: transferring technology in multiple directions for sustainable agricultural production, transformation and marketing; transferring

management to mobilizing and organize farming, rural groups and communities; transferring capacity to educate, build human resources, and enhance local capacity for example, integrated pest management, market intelligence, farm management, and in negotiating financial input, and market services. Given these diverse functions, that involve a number of actors, the new institutionalism and its variants provide a holistic analysing their effectiveness. The variants of the new institutionalism theory provide insight to factors that shape the processes and outcomes of extension systems.

2.4.1 Rational Choice Institutionalism

Sometimes referred to as the new economic institutionalism (Reich 2000), rational choice models argue that humans always choose behaviours perceived to have the highest benefit-cost ratio. The basis for this analysis is that institutions are capable of producing some predictability and regularity of outcomes that benefit all participants in an institution, and also clarifies the probable range of decisions available to societal actors that are not directly involved in the process of any particular organization (Peters 1999) (Scott 2001). The basic argument of the rational choice approaches is that utility-maximization can and will remain the primary motivation of individuals, but those individuals may realize that their goals can be achieved through institutions. A set of rules can arise within the organization that structures behaviours and establishes the bounds of acceptability. The existence of those rules ultimately benefits all participants and perhaps society. It is therefore micro in approach, working from individual actor upward (Reich 2000). Individuals rationally choose to get constrained by their membership to some institutions. The source of preferences and definitions of personal interests are assumed to be exogenous to the theories, the capacity to produce collective rationality from rational individual actions that might, without the presence of the institutional rules, generate collective rationality as a central feature of the rational perspective on institutions.

Rational choice theory has three major variants: principal-agent, game-theoretical and rule based models of institutions (Peters 1999). Rule based models conceptualize institutions

as aggregation of rules that members of organizations or institutions agree to follow in exchange for such benefits as they are able to derive from their membership with the structure. Among the more important benefits might be some greater predictability of the behaviour on the part of individuals if they are constrained by their institutional membership. Some theorists argue that the leadership has a pronounced interest in having their rules followed, making the setting of rules crucial for regulating the behaviour of individuals. When it comes to decision making, pre-determined decision rules set by institutions enable mapping of preferences into decisions. In this way, institutions act as a means for eluding the fundamental problem of collective action. Principle-agent models of institutions relate to interactions among institutions and between individuals and institutions. It is normally used to analyze regulatory policy, which refers to whether designed structures ensure that the agent fulfils the principal's wishes. Among the strategies that are normally adopted is the use of incentive structures that motivate the agent to comply. The game-theoretical models conceptualize compliance to regulatory policy as a set of games between actors (usually legislators) attempting to ensure compliance of other actors (for example. bureaucrats) as they seek greater latitude for action. In the game, the designers must also create mechanisms to ensure that legislators uphold to their end of implicit or explicit bargain between the set of actors. The difference between the principal agent and the game theoretical models of institutions is that the interactions between actors are unidirectional with the principal in control for the former and bilateral for the latter.

2.4.2 Historical Institutionalism

Theorists of this school argue that policy choices made when an institution is formed or when a policy is initiated will have continuing and largely determinate effect over the policy far into the future. Historical institutionalism is based on the assumption that a historically constructed set of institutional constraints and policy feedback structures the behaviour of political actors and interest groups during the policy making process (Peters 1999; Reich 2000 and Béland 2005). The historical institutionalists in many respects have devoted themselves

to the detailed analysis of regimes and governance mechanisms (Scott, 2001). The scholars emphasise that political institutions are not entirely derivative from other social structures, such as class, but have independent effects on social phenomena; that social arrangements are not only or even the result of aggregating individual choices and actions; that many structures and outcomes are not planned or intended but rather are the consequence of unanticipated effects and constrained choice; and that history is not usually “efficient”- a process “that moves rapidly to a unique solution but one that is much more indeterminate and context dependent (March & Olsen 1984).

Historical institutionalists provide two approaches to the way in which institutions influence individual behaviour; the calculus and cultural approaches. The calculus approach assumes that individuals seek to maximize attainment of goals given by a specific preference function, and in so doing, behave strategically and explore all possible options in order to select those conferring to maximum benefit. The actors’ goals or preferences are given exogenously to the institutional analysis. Institutions affect behaviour by providing actors with greater or lesser degree of certainty about the present and future behaviour of other actors. More specifically, institutions provide information relevant to the behaviours of others, enforcement mechanisms for agreements and penalties for the defection. The cultural approach stresses the degree to which behaviour is not fully strategic but bounded by the individual’s perception. Assuming that human behaviour is rational or purposive, the cultural approach emphasizes the extent to which individuals turn to established routines or familiar patterns of behaviours to attain their objectives. From this perspective, institutions provide moral and cognitive templates for interpretation and action. The institutions provide filters for interpretation, of both the situation and oneself, out of which a course of action is constructed. Thus historical institutionalism emphasized the zero-sum politics of redistribution determining who gets what.

2.4.3 Sociological Institutionalism

According to the sociological institutionalists individuals who have been socialized into particular institutional roles internalize the norms associated with these roles, and in this way institutions are said to affect behaviour. According to Hall & Taylor (1996), sociological institutionalists define institutionalization as a process of creating values and cognitive frames within an organization as opposed to the differences among organization that can predict behaviour of individuals within them. Therefore, institutions can be seen to consist of cognitive, normative and regulative structures and activities that provide stability and meaning to social behaviour.

The principal contribution of this approach to the study of institutions is that it emphasizes the idea that institutions depend on their external environment and their “embeddedness” in the society and economy. It also points out the extent to which institutions are constantly in competition with one another for resources and survival, whether they are in the market or in the budgetary competition of government. Using the biological ecology model as an example, biological systems provides opportunities to a limited number of organisms in order to survive, similarly, the environment of organizations is capable of supporting a limited number of structures. Therefore, the market can only accommodate a limited number of customers and employees and the public sector that has limited funds to support a limited number of institutions. This means that organizations have to formulate their own organizational niche² in order to survive in the environment. For example, the public sector’s niche is defined by budgetary resources, legal mandates, and institutional political support. These combinations will permit certain types and numbers of organizations to thrive while others will not.

A second version of sociological approaches to institutions is concerned with the symbolic and evaluative dimensions of organizations (Peters 1999). In this view, institutions are systems of meaning and the behaviour of individuals within them depends upon the meanings incorporated and the symbols manipulated. An example is the role of training with

² A niche is a particular mixture of resources that enables a specific type or organization to survive.

the use of symbols that act as a means to create a desired pattern of behaviour. The sociological approach also emphasizes the cognitive elements of organizational theory. It is concerned with how members of an institution perceive situations with their structure and frames. Membership to institutions is argued to create the same sort of perceptual frame. Non professional memberships may create a trained incapacity for individuals to perceive problems and evidence in other than professional manner.

Sedimentation reflects the characteristic of human life that current practices reflect on the past and that beneath current practice in an organization, there may be layers of values left from earlier times. Thus if an institution or organization were to be presented visually it would look like rocks drawn from the seabed with layers of deposits that have been deposited and solidified over time. The idea of sedimentation reflects clearly in the historical and cumulative institutionalism. Furthermore, the sociological approach to the study of institutions argues that institutions can only change from one archetype to another. Organizational archetypes refer to the development of ideal types of institutions against which to compare the institutions of the observed world. The change involves the process of de-institutionalization and subsequent re-institutionalization, as one set of structures is replaced by the new alternatives.

2.4.4 Normative Institutionalism

Normative institutionalism reflects the central role assigned to norms and values within organizations in explaining behaviour (Peters 1999). Mystic institutionalism has its roots in the sociological tradition and reflects the importance of organizational myths and stories in defining acceptable behaviour of members of an organization. This school of thought argues that individuals are not atomistic but are embedded in a series of complex relationships with other individuals and with collectives. This complexity means that individuals have to choose among competing institutional loyalties as they act. According to these theorists, institutions are collections of interrelated rules and routines that define appropriate actions in terms of relations between roles and situations. The process involves determining what the situation is and what obligation of that role in that situation is. They

also define an institution as a collection of values and rules that are largely normative as opposed to being cognitive in the way in which they have an impact on institutional members as well as societies that are developed to implement and enforce those values.

According to March & Olsen (1984), good institutions tend to have the 'logic of appropriateness' that influences behaviour more than the 'logic of consequentiality' that might shape individual action. That is if an institution is effective influencing the behaviour of its members, those members will think more about whether an action conforms to the norms of the organization rather than what the consequences will be for him or her. Individuals make conscious choices that remain within the parameters established by the dominant institutional values. Those choices require that each individual makes an interpretation of what the dominant institutional values are. The operation of the 'logic of appropriateness' can be seen as a version of role theory. The institution defines a set of behavioural expectations for individuals in positions within the institution and reinforces behaviour that is appropriate for the role and sanctions behaviour that is inappropriate.

2.5 Implications for Agricultural Extension

The characteristics of new institutionalism theory are relevant to the analysis of demand driven extension systems. It assumes that the role of law is an essential element of governance because legalism constitutes a framework that affects the behaviour of the public sector. Enforcement and regulation are important in ensuring that the needs of small holder farmers are met. In addition to this, the theory assumes that structural aspects of a system matter. The responsiveness of extension systems depends on how structures function together rather than how one structure functions in isolation. The holism of the new institutional approach, tends to draw the analysis of extension systems away from comparison, while its historical foundation, shows that the understanding of extension systems is driven by history. Understanding why patterns in behaviours still persistent after policy changes have been made. Finally, the concerns for norms and values as a driving force behind the perception of stakeholders make the new institutionalism theory relevant to

analysing stakeholder perceptions to the institutional changes in agricultural extension service delivery.

3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Institutional changes in agricultural extension have been the influenced changes in governance structures. The argument is that the type of institutional environment influences the choices and decisions that actors make. In this chapter present the different governance structures and in more detail argue that decentralisation provides the opportunity for actors involved in extension to become more effective. I also argue that farmer empowerment as a development outcome can best be attained when decision-making and accountability mechanisms are horizontal other than vertical.

3.1 Institutional changes in agricultural extension systems

Haug (1998) reviews different agricultural extension stages, systems and approaches in an institutional perspective. According to her, extension theory dates back to the production stage (1900-1975) that characterised extension as a classical or conventional top-down, one-way transfer of technology model where farmers were seen as the recipients of technology. In developing countries, the early colonial emphasis on commodity programs, many of which still exist today, gave way to broader rural development efforts, often set up by colonial powers that sent expatriate 'rural agents' to organize communities and serve as contact points for government authorities, input and credit suppliers, and buying agents(Feder et al. 1999). Their broadly defined roles often extended into human health, census taking, and tax collection. Confidence on the Western technology led to the 'diffusion model' of the Ministry of Agriculture extension delivery – a hierarchical unidirectional process of technology transfer backed by advances in mass media.

The economic period (1975-1985) came with a two-way communication mode in which farming systems research was pioneered by economists and agronomists, and farmers were regarded as a source of information and technology design. The role of extension workers was to establish a two way dialogue between farmers and research institutions in a consultative mode. Although, the economic period had a strong support for agricultural research with success stories, there were concerns for issues related equity and

environmental of the rapid technological change in agriculture. These concerns were highlighted in the ecological stage (1985-95) in which anthropology, agro-ecology and geography were the pioneer disciplines, and farmers contributed their indigenous knowledge to identify what technologies were sustainable or not. The farmers were seen as both the causes and victims of unsustainable development. The role of the extension workers was to facilitate knowledge development and act as catalysts in promoting real participation, recognising farmers as experimenters and equal partners in knowledge development.

Today, agricultural extension going through an institutional phase in which the pioneering disciplines included management specialists, psychologists, organisational sociologists, political scientists, training specialist and educators. In this phase, farmers are full collaborators in research and extension and all actors form institutional alliances in order to produce and disseminate agricultural information. Being part of an overall agricultural knowledge and information system, no single agricultural extension strategy applies to the entire nation; a national extension system should comprise different strategies to meet the needs of varied agro climates and populations. This philosophy of extension pluralism is a conceptual framework for improving extension systems. Among the several principles that underpin institutional pluralism is the unlinking of public funding from public delivery (Feder et al. 1999). In addition to this is the change in governance with the need to change institutions and institutional arrangements such as public-private partnerships. The key governance principle is to open up and democratize extension control so that all stakeholders may express their perspectives and interests and may play an important role in extension design, implementation, and evaluation. Thirdly with pluralism the government must recognize that to meet the diverse needs and conditions of the farming sector, it should invest more broadly in the whole agricultural knowledge and information system rather than in public sector extension services alone. Implied in each of the above principles are significant role changes for ministries of agriculture as they move away from service delivery toward providing an enabling policy environment, coordinating and facilitating the work of

other players, and assisting farmers in negotiating terms of contracts, monitoring quality, and exercising financial control.

3.2 Governance Structures and Processes

The effectiveness of agricultural extension is determined by the governance mechanisms within which it is provided. According to Gray (1994); Turner & Hulme (1997) ; Pierre & Peters(2000); Osmani 2001 ; Grindle(2004), working towards a good governance that it encourages development and reduces poverty means accepting a more nuanced understanding of institutions and government capabilities. Governance has a profound relationship with the neoliberal narrative that emphasizes the inefficiencies of bureaucracy, the burden of excessive taxation, the mobility of capital, and competition between states (Bevir & Rhodes 2001). It also means being explicit about trade-offs and priorities that have to be made in a world in which all good things cannot be achieved immediately while taking the role of government in poverty alleviation seriously. From this perspective, getting good governance falls for improvements in all aspects of the public sector- from institutions that set rules for the game for economic and political interaction, to decision-making structures that determine priorities among public problems and allocate resources to respond to them.

Governance manifests itself in two major forms; as a structure and as a process. As a process, focuses on the contextual approach to political behaviour where government's role is to "steer" and "coordinate" sectors of the economy (Pierre & Peters 2000). Within this arrangement, formal institutional arrangements remain important as they determine what roles the state can play in governance. This definition argues that although failure of the state has reduced the control over the economy, the state is still capable of "steering" or coordinating some sectors or the economy. Therefore, the role of the state is to ensure that it monitors how actors from the public and private sectors control economic activities in order to produce desirable outcomes.

When governance is defined as a structure, four common governance arrangements are identified: *hierarchies, markets, networks and communities*. These government arrangements

assumes that a variety of political and economic institutions have been created over time in order to address the problems of governance. (Pierre & Peters 2000) argues that governance as a hierarchy is conducted through a vertically integrated structure as an idealized model of democratic government and public bureaucracy. Using the Max Weber's model of public service, this governmental arrangement takes on the notion of governance by law. The state is seen as the epitome of collective interest that governs society through the imposition of law and other forms of regulation. Sub national governments enjoy some degree of autonomy but the state does not fully relinquish its legal authority of institutions. This model of governance has been highly criticized as an institutional order that was used the days of highly standardized public services. Albeit this critique, the hierarchical government arrangements remain valid for most economies around the world where central government still exercises control over local authorities. In addition to this, the development towards horizontalization of institutions and organizations has been a spontaneous and organic arrangement that is yet to be confirmed by changes in legal and constitutional and legal frameworks.

Governance as markets is seen as everything that government is not; it is believed to be the most efficient and just allocation mechanism available mechanism since it does not does not allow for politics to allocate resources in the most effective way. Markets are said to empower citizens to become consumers and make public services demand-driven. The networks approach to governance is a contemporary form that comprises of a wide variety of actors with organized interests in a given policy sector. Networks vary considerably with regard to their degree of cohesion ranging from coherent policy communities to single issues. Policy networks facilitate co-ordination of public and private interests and interests tending to enhance efficiency in implementation of public policy. Furthermore, governance as communities departs from the socio-economic homogeneity and common interests that characterize small communities and raises the question as to whether government is required to solve common problems. In a broader sense, communitarian governance builds on a consensual image of the community and the positive involvement of its members in collective matters.

3.3 Decentralisation

Demand driven extension systems require institutions that facilitate the use of local knowledge and information; local participation and ownership; transparency and accountability and those that build local organisational capacity. Many theorists indicate that decentralisation is preferable to centralisation given the inefficiency of central states in carrying out their mandate (Bardhan 1996; Turner & Hulme, 1997; Ribot, 2002). Public administration frameworks argue that decentralisation leads to better decision making hence greater efficiency and effectiveness while economists use the public choice theory, to conclude that the potential of decentralisation arguing that under conditions of reasonably free choice, the provision of some public goods is economically more efficient when a large number of institutions are involved.

Governments, donors and the private sector have supported decentralisation on efficiency grounds for many of the standard public choice arguments; decisions more relevant to local needs and conditions are more likely to be more effective; local coordination is facilitated and transaction costs reduced by making decisions locally; decentralised decision making can be quicker and more flexible, therefore more efficient; local knowledge and preferences can be drawn on to make decisions more relevant and effective; local knowledge and labour can facilitate implementation, management and evaluation; and because local actors will benefit from reducing costs of their efforts, they are likely to spend their resources more efficiently.

Economists argue that broad-based participation in decision making can increase economic and managerial efficiency by “internalising” costs and benefits (Bardhan 1996). It allows local populations who bear the cost of resource-use decisions to make those decisions. This manner of local decision making is more likely to consider the full range of negative and positive consequences by internalising economic, social and ecological costs. External unaccountable locals may only consider direct costs and benefits that accrue to them omitting

from their calculation the negative outcomes they do not feel for example diminished forestry productivity.

Decentralisation takes on six major forms; democratic or political decentralisation, de-concentration, fiscal decentralisation, delegation, devolution and privatisation. Democratic decentralisation occurs when powers and resources are transferred to authorities accountable to local population increasing public participation in local decision making. Increased citizen participation helps local institutions internalise social, economic, developmental and environmental externalities, to better match social services and public decisions to local needs and aspirations; and to increase equity in the use of public resources. This provides an institutionalised form of participatory approach in which locally accountable representative bodies with real public powers help on in applying the ideals of public choice pr community based approaches to development.

Administrative decentralisation is concerned with the transfer of power to local branches of the central state (Ribot 2002; Onyach-Olaa 2003; Land et al. 2003). Local institutions are accountable to the central states since they are appointed bodies are appointed by the centre. This form of decentralisation has been experienced in countries like Benin and Burkina Faso where local institutions may have some downward accountability built into their functions with their primary responsibility is to central government (Land et al., 2003). The benefit of this form of decentralisation to the effectiveness of extension delivery is that the design of public goods and services are designed in accordance with local preferences.

Fiscal decentralisation is the transfer of fiscal resources and revenue generating powers to local actors and institutions (Fauget 2001; Ribot 2002). The implication of fiscal decentralisation for extension delivery is that local government and sub county leadership is able to make timely decisions on when to make payments because they control their own budgets. It also means that the sequence of activities is not interfered with. Devolution is often used to refer to any transfer of powers and responsibilities from central government to local institutions. Delegation occurs when public functions are transferred to lower levels of

government, public corporations or any other authority outside of the regular political-administrative structure to implement programmes on behalf of a government agency. According to (Ribot 2002), theorists believe that the ability of responsiveness to local needs and aspirations is derived from local institutions having better access to information and being more easily held accountable to local populations. When downwardly accountable, local authorities also have a domain of local autonomy over significant local matters ensuring equity and efficiency³. Privatisation may refer permanent transfer of powers to any non state entity, including individuals, corporations or NGOs⁴. It may also refer to the contracting out of public assets (Pallesen 2004).

One of the development outcomes of decentralisation for the poor is empowerment which is about changing unequal institutional relationships. According to (Povertyner, 2004), empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices into desired outcomes. Central to this process are the actions which both build individual and collective assets, and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets. A farmer's individual capabilities are important factors in achieving improvements in his or her own livelihood situation (for example. increased income production or improved service provision (DIIS 2004). However, they alone do not determine development outcomes. These are also dependent on conditions present in engaging in production, for accessing services and resources, for controlling assets. Such conditions are determined by opportunity structures that include policies, rules and practices found in social economic conditions that provide the context in which farmers act and influence the development outcomes.

³ These assumptions must be approached with caution as limited research has been carried out to assess whether the conditions lead to desired outcomes (Ribot).

⁴ (Ribot) Although privatization is normally carried out in the name of decentralization it is not a form of decentralization.

4 METHODS

This chapter is a presentation of the methods that I used for data collection. First, I define the scope of the study by explaining the type of information that each research question is meant to generate. Then, I make a presentation of instruments that were used in data collection and finally, I discuss aspects of trust worthiness and limitations of the study.

4.1 Research Design

The mixed methods approach was used for the study. According to Crotty (2003), the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research occurs at the level of methods. Although each methodology has its potential strength and weaknesses, a combination of methods approach emphasizes their potential strengths that ensure validity and reliability of outputs (Jones, 1997; Golafshani 2003). In order to answer the first research question: *What is the role of policy and legal frameworks in the shaping the planning and implementation process of agricultural extension?* A detailed document review was carried on the policies and legal framework that shape agricultural extension activities. Among the policies that were identified were the liberalisation, decentralisation, privatisation, gender mainstreaming and the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture. These policies helped the researcher identify the different institutional and governance arrangements that shaped the reforms in agricultural extension. In addition to this the Local Government Act and NAADS Act were also used to understand the regulatory mechanisms that were guiding the delivery of services.

The second research question: *How do interactions between various actors (civil society, private and public sectors) shape the process of extension delivery?*, was meant to generate information on the linkages between different structural arrangements and how such arrangements influenced the decisions taken by various actors. Considering that there are a number of programmes in Kabarole district that are involved in agricultural extension, the NAADS programme was selected as a case for this study not only it is a demand-driven programme aiming at empowering farmers in identifying, demanding and paying for

services but also that its activities are implemented at sub-county level⁵. The NAADS (National Agricultural Advisory Services) programme was identified as an interesting case for study because in comparison with other programmes it is within close proximity with the local populations and it also emphasizes good governance principles.

Qualitative methods of data collection were used to answer the first research question because the researcher needed a deeper understanding of the factors that affect working relations between different stakeholders involved with the NAADS programme. The theoretical perspective behind the choice of qualitative methods is constructionism which is the view that all knowledge and therefore all meanings of reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty, 2003). In addition to this, qualitative research allows the researcher to develop an overall picture of the subject under investigation (Jones, 1997). By hypothesizing that decentralized agricultural extension service delivery makes stakeholders more effective and efficient contrary to the traditional extension system, meaning is constructed from different people on how they interpret institutional relationships that influence their organizational success.

The third research question: *How do small holder farmer organisations influence their access to advisory services?*; generated information on the different ways in which farmers were organised. Among the organisations that farmers could gain membership were the farmer's forum and different farmers groups. Chairpersons of farmers' fora were interviewed and asked to give their view on the role of the farmers' forum in empowering farmers to demand for services. Information that was collected was the role of such structures in the procurement process, enterprise selection and marketing.

A survey was identified as being suitable for answering the fourth research: *How do farmers perceive demand driven approaches to agricultural extension?* This question was required information on the attitudes and perceptions towards extension delivery. It specifically, generated information on why farmers joined certain groups and whether their original

⁵ There are a number of programmes involved in agricultural extension service delivery. Among these are the AAMP, HASP, ESAP and NAADS with different principles but carrying out similar activities.

expectations were being met. Using a sample of 80 farmers, a number of variables such as personal characteristics, source of income, social networks and groups were used to find out whether there was a causal relationship with response to training, farmer involvement in extension programmes, farmer empowerment and technology adoption. Considering that the NAADS programme targets poor people, it was assumed that all the members that were interviewed were poor.

The study included both primary and secondary searches; data collection was carried out in four phases which included; review of related literature, unstructured interviews with 25 key informants at district and sub-county level (See Appendix), a farmer survey and unstructured interviews with 4 officials at national level. A clear definition of phases helped the researcher know what type of information was to be generated from each phase and for what research question it was meant to answer. This therefore meant that the researcher was actively involved in each phase and that the information generated through a clearly defined process. The next sections give a detailed account of each of the phases and the methods used.

4.2 Document Review

The overall aim of the document review was to identify that different policy instruments that were guiding public management and extension delivery. In addition to these documents like PMA (Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture), the NAADS master document, different programme reviews (for example, HASP and AAMP), NAADS implementation guidelines, annual reports, baseline surveys, workshop handouts and newsletters on agricultural extension were reviewed. This was very useful because it provided an insight on the development programmes that were involved in agricultural extension and their target groups. In addition to this it helped the researcher define the scope of the study and identify the key stakeholders involved in agricultural extension. Attending annual review meetings provided an insight to the activities of different stakeholders at district and sub-county level.

Having reviewed the documents, the next phase was preceded by with the identification of relevant stakeholders on the supply side of the agricultural extension services within the NAADS context. It was observed that agricultural extension was operating with the public sector, private sector and civil society. Within the public sector, the NAADS activities are carried out under the Ministries of Agriculture, Animals and Fisheries (which is responsible for legal and regulatory framework of extension services) and the Ministry of Local Government (which is responsible for the administration under with the NAADS activities take place).

Under the local government the key informants that were selected were the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, local leaders, sub-county chiefs and sub-county NAADS coordinators. Other selected public sector officials included, District Production Coordinator, District Agricultural Officer, District NAADS Coordinator, District Statistician and District Environment Officer and District Entomologist. Key informants selected from the private sector included officials involved service provision⁶, chairpersons of farmer fora⁷ as well as members from the civil society.

4.3 District and Sub-county level Interviews

The main objective of the in depth interviews was to obtain information on stakeholders' perspectives on the institutional framework within which NAADS interventions take place. Issues such as linkages between the different actors were discussed. It also included constraints and opportunities faced by the NAADS programme and a comparison between traditional extension methods and the present. The instrument that was used was the interview guide and each stakeholder group had a different interview guide (See Appendix). The interview guides were designed to generate a detailed account of the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders involved in the organization chart. A total of 26 respondents were interviewed who included 20 males, 4 females and 1 youth. Each

⁶ Service providers are individual or corporate bodies (consultancy firms, professional companies, academic institutions and parastatal contracted to deliver advisory services.

⁷ A farmers' forum comprises of representatives of farmer groups at sub-county district and national level.

interview took approximately 30 minutes, and in order to ensure clarity on some issues some key informants were visited more than once. The researcher made written notes from the findings of the interview which were reviewed at the end of each day and used to further improve on the scope of the study and the interview guides. In order to ensure that as much information as possible, the objective of the study as well as the intended output were made known to the respondents which helped not only to build trust but also define what sort of information was needed.

4.4 Farmer Survey

The survey was carried out in eight sub counties in Kabarole District that included Kisomoro, Bukuku, Rutete, Karambi, Hakibale, Kichwamba, West Division and Mugusu. These sub counties were selected because they are the target areas for the NAADS activities. The survey was carried out in a period of two weeks with some sub counties being visited more than once. A sample of 80 farmers was used and the sampling technique that was used was cluster sampling. From each sub-county, 10 farmers from different villages involved in the NAADS programme were randomly selected and interviewed. Considering that most farmers are busy, the criteria for selection of villages and farmers was on the basis of availability, given that a impromptu visits were made guided by a gatekeeper was used to identify farmers that were involved in the NAADS programme from the different villages. In Kichwamba and Kisomoro sub counties, farmers were approached at NAADS meeting and asked if they could participate in the survey. In other sub counties, farmers were visited in their gardens or home and requested to participate. In such instances the use of a “gate keeper” in identifying which farmers were involved in the NAADS programme was essential; however s/he was requested to leave the interview in order to avoid biasing the respondent.

The instrument that was used was the semi structured questionnaire and observation. The questionnaire comprised of 5 sections which were:

1. Demographic details
2. Source of Income

3. Farmer involvement in groups
4. Relevance of Advisory Services
5. Farmers' perception of the NAADS programme

Each of these sections was considered as an independent variable meant to generate information on causal relationships that influence the demand of agricultural extension services. The question wording was made as simple as possible and sensitive questions like the amount of income were simplified using standardized formats. Although the questionnaire was designed in English, the questions were asked in the local language. Considering the time and language constraints, a research assistant was used to interview fifty percent of the farmers while the researcher took on the other half. It was necessary for the assistant to clear understand the objective of the survey in order to avoid misinterpretation of the questions and bias answers. Language was important because farmers argued that students, researchers and graduates who address them in English have a negative perception towards them and the general rural setting. In addition to this, the farmers found it easier to express themselves in the local language. At the end of each day, all questionnaires was reviewed and edited by the researcher.

Another instrument that was used for the survey was the observation checklists that were used in the farm visits. By participating in the lives of the farmers, eating with them and chatting with them, the researcher was able generate useful information, that may have been highlighted during the interviews. For example, during the field visits, looking at the way, farmers managed their farms and homes, it was possible for the research to capture information about why farmers make decisions on getting involved with the NAADS programme and why others did not. Photographs were also taken that were used to complement data analysis. In addition to this, the observation technique helped the researcher determine how different stakeholders establish their roles and responsibilities, activities and their perception towards agricultural extension. The information generated was very helpful in complementing information from other sources and was also helpful during interpretation.

4.5 National level Interviews

The main objective of the interviews at national level was to generate information on different programmes involved in agricultural extension and the policy environment within which they operate. Four officials from the Ministry of Local Government and Agriculture were interviewed as well as one university lecturer. An interview guide was used that included questions on extension service delivery, programmes involved and how they relate to poverty reduction strategies at national level. However, due to time constraints not all the stakeholders at national level were interviewed and some issues were too sensitive like the political influence in development programmes which influenced the way in which some views were presented.

4.6 Data Analysis

Questionnaires were reviewed for completeness and consistency and entered into SPSS. Data from survey was categorised into social, economic, political and methodological factors that affect farmers' perception towards extension services. Descriptive statistics were generated and interpreted using the new institutionalism theory.

4.7 Reliability of the Data

According to (Barribeau et al. 2004; Miller & Salkins 2002), reliability is the extent to which an experiment, test, or any measuring procedure yields the same result on repeated trials. In order to ensure that there was consistency in measurement, all measurement instruments like the questionnaire were pre tested on two farmers and necessary changes made before the actual survey started. Changes included question wording and inclusion / exclusions of some questions that were not relevant to the study. Furthermore, in order to ensure that answers were consistent, the questions were organized logically to ensure that there was an association between questions.

Golafshani (2003) argues that because qualitative research uses methods like interviews and observations dominant in the naturalist (interpretive) paradigm, the researcher is viewed as the instrument of data collection. The use of “gatekeepers” was useful because it helped the researcher easily identify with respondents. In the study, the researcher had to build trust with the respondents in order to make it easy to extract information from key informants. For example, it was always easier to conduct interviews with various officials and gain access to certain documents when the researcher was introduced by a member of the district administration. However, the presence of “gatekeepers” during interviews was not allowed due to risk of potentially biasing the respondents. Farmers found it easier to express their views in the absence of fellow farmers and both local government and sun county officials.

Having constant meetings with the district NAADS coordinator enabled the researcher gain more insight on the phenomenon being studied and delimit the scope of the study. This not only improved the researcher’s skills but also made it possible for the researcher to become knowledgeable about the subject; making latter interviews more interesting and more informative.

4.8 Validity of the Data

Validity refers to the degree to which a study accurately reflects or assesses the specific concept that the researcher is attempting to measure (Golafshani 2003; Barribeau et al. 2004). Considering that the study followed a clearly defined process divided into four phases, the validity of data was ensured because the researcher knew at what level the study was and what research question was being answered. The clearly defined process helped ensure that there was a match between the conceptual phase and the operational phase. It also ensures that what was meant to be measured was actually measured.

Miller & Salkins (2002) argues that in order to ensure validity in a sample survey, the researcher will utilize techniques for scaling, pay careful attention to questionnaire wording and presentation and include questions on personal background and other potentially useful

variables. Content validity is important because it forces the researcher define the domains to be studied (Barribeau et al. 2004). In order to ensure that there was content validity, the researcher identified five major variables that would determine farmers' attitudes towards extension service delivery with particular attention to the NAADS programme. For example determining whether there was a causal link between demographic characteristics and perceived relevance of extension services was one of the ways that were used to ensure that variable used were guided by the conceptual / theoretical framework. The use of standardized questions during the survey, especially on attitudes and perceptions helped get answers that were easy to analyze and interpret. Furthermore, questions associated with size of land and income were regarded as being sensitive and asked in a less direct manner that would not offend the farmers being interviewed.

The use of clustered sampling for the farmer survey was not only cost effective but also ensured that farmers were randomly selected from each sub-county that was used in the study. Considering that there was not readily available list of farmers, respondent selection procedures varied from one Sub-county to another. However, in order to ensure that the sample was a true representation of the population, respondents interviewed differed in terms of age, sex, marital status and income levels.

Considering that research assistant was used in the farmer survey, orientation on the objective of the survey and expectations on how to record data were made and prior the beginning of the survey. For example, emphasis was made on recording answers in the exact same words that the farmer used in order to avoid bias in the study. The researcher was always present when interviews were being carried out and issues like misinterpretation of questions were addressed.

4.9 Limitations of the Study

The mixed methods approach that was used in this study provides researchers with the opportunity to maximize the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research (Jones 1997). However, the combining of different methods with a single piece of research raises the

question of movement between paradigms at the level of epistemology and theory (Brannen 1992). Furthermore, different theoretical explanations hold different assumptions that are conflicting in nature. However, such limitations did not affect the study because appropriate methods were chosen based on the research questions.

Due to time constraints, it was not possible to get a fully representative sample of the farmers. With a sample size of 80, there were chances of making an error when it came to generalizing results to the whole district because respondents in some sub counties were not randomly selected but conveniently selected based on who was available at the time of the survey. However, the probability of error was not very large due to the variation of the respondents in terms of age, marital status, sex and education levels. In addition to this, it was not easy to get in touch with some of the actors involved in extension, in particular most of the service providers. However, this does not have a lot of impact on the scope of the study.

5 SERVICE DELIVERY EFFECTIVENESS

The aim of this chapter is to analyse how policy and regulatory frameworks create an environment for the provision of demand driven services. Using the new institutional theory, I argue institutions affect the way in which decentralisation and privatisation policies help create an environment that stimulates demand driven service provision. Furthermore, I analyse the interactions between actors at local level and how they help reduce the costs of service provision. However, shared norms and values, determine how committed actors are to the overall objectives of demand-driven extension systems.

5.1 Policy and Legal Framework

The concept of promoting economic development through providing demand driven extension services is consistent with Government's ambitions of decentralizing economic and political power. On the legislative front, the Uganda Local Government Act of 1997 gives formal transfer of service functions from central government to district (regional), municipal and division (ward) levels of government. The Act specifies the responsibilities and allowable sources of revenue of local government. Demand driven extension services require governance structures that enhance local autonomy and responsiveness. Considering that over 80% of Uganda's population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods, differences in agro-ecological zones, cultural pluralism and diversity in perceived extension needs, transferring of power to local government creates an enabling environment for demand driven services.

The implementation of NAADS required the resolving of three legal and regulatory issues: the establishment of the NAADS Board and Executive as a statutory parastatal organisation; recognition and registration of farmer institutions as key step for farmers to be empowered; tendering and contracting in which under NAADS it was envisaged that contracting of service providers would be undertaken mainly at sub-county level with the decisive involvement of farmer representatives. The NAADS Act 2001 specifies the institutional framework within which the three issues are addressed.

Furthermore, historical Institutionalists highlight the importance of institutions in shaping policy over time. Policy choices are influenced by country's stage in economic development. The failure of the structural adjustment programmes and the adoption of poverty reduction strategies suggest that pro-poor policy making based on the premise of the state failure and adoption of neo-liberal perspectives. According to (Bevir & Rhodes 2001), governance has a profound relationship to the neoliberal narrative that emphasises the inefficiencies of bureaucracy, the burden of excessive taxation, the mobility of capital, and the competition between states.

Privatisation policy objectives include the promotion of competition, improving efficiency and increasing productivity of enterprises. Being guided by the pluralistic nature of intended clients, privatisation policies are meant to stimulate demand for services and enhance the entrepreneurialism of service providers. Assuming that small holder farmers are empowered to identify their own needs, giving them the opportunity to demand extension services driven by economic need makes extension more effective. However, the priorities of privatisation are in conflict with pro-poor responsiveness. When the costs of producing technology are high, it is likely that the small holder farmer may not be able to pay for the services. Moreover, privatisation policies assume that structures to regulate the market. These may not be in place and may result in market failure.

5.2 Decentralisation and Privatisation Outcomes

The implications of the legal and policy framework for agricultural extension are two fold. Firstly, the role of state through its respective ministries becomes that of a facilitator. The transfer of power to local governments has enabled them to perform functions that were formerly handled at the centre. Secondly, technology generation and diffusion is determined by market forces. The sub sections that follow analyse how social, normative, historical and cultural factors influences the outcomes of the legal and policy frameworks.

5.2.1 Allocative Efficiency

Arguments from choice theory is that total welfare can be increased by allocating resources according to local preferences instead of applying a standardized pattern services across board (Lister & Betley 1999). According to GOU (2003), local Governments are now empowered to make and approve their own budgets and development plans. They raise their own revenue from a range of local taxes and allocate expenditure on decentralised and transferred services. They also receive financial support from the Central Government in order to supplement their recurrent and development budgets. In addition to this they allocate funds for extension, becoming the supervisors and evaluators of the extension service, which is accountable to the elected people at the district level. This new approach also enables farmers and their organizations to specify and prioritise their needs. In addition to this, it enables Sub-county administration to allocate resources effectively.

When agents are involved in the delivery of services, their primary motivation is the utility of their personal preferences. However, when constrained by institutions, their behaviours are likely to be driven not by interpersonal historic forces but by strategic calculations based on a range of information flows and enforcement mechanism. The planning process for service delivery begins at the village level, where farmers who are organised in groups select viable enterprises that they wish to venture in (Fig. 2). Alongside the selected enterprises they identify the possible advisory needs. The enterprises are submitted to the sub-county and subsequently to the district where at each stage enterprise selection is carried out using a scoring method. At least three priority enterprises are selected at each level with NGOs assisting farmers in the process while technical staff carries out the technical backstopping. In this way the farmer is involved from the onset in the demand for the advisory services. When the enterprises are selected at district level, then procurement committees comprising of democratically elected farmers and members of the farmer fora at sub-county level define the specifications for services to be delivered. The information is forwarded to the District Tender Board which solicits for “Expression of Interest”. When applications are received, District Tender Boards, shortlists possible candidates based on set criteria. After short

listing, lists of candidates are sent to the sub-county where farmers are asked for their approval. When the shortlists are approved the District Tender Board selects candidate based on the rankings of a weighted matrix.

The selected service providers then offer advisory services under short term contracts through the district and sub-county offices. In a period of 22 days, their activities include theoretical and practical training farmers on land preparation, seed preparation and planting. However, it has been observed that after planting there is no follow up in terms of harvesting and post harvesting. Against this backdrop, the technical and production committees are suggesting that service providers spread the 22 days over they year so that they are available through out the growing season and most parts of the year.

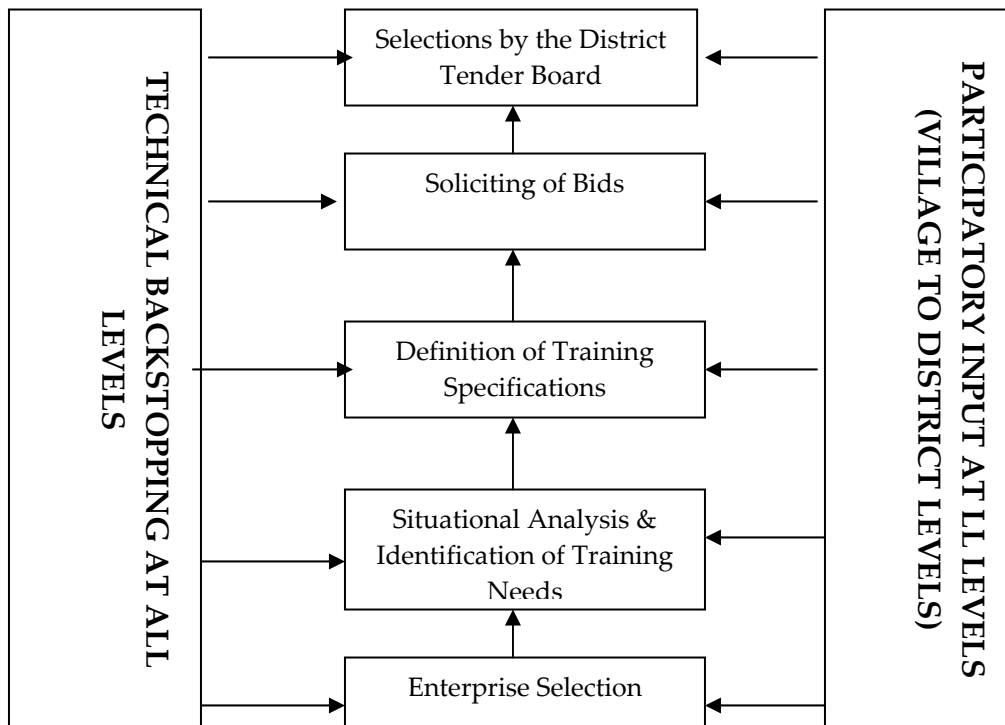


Figure 2: Service Delivery Procedures

Service providers meet farmers at least once a month contrary to prior experiences when extension workers hardly visited farmers. Decentralisation has made it possible for sub-county leadership to get involved in the procurement of service providers and pay for their services

because they now control extension budgets. Furthermore, extension does not have to depend on other agency functions because of the potential for better interaction with local initiatives. Commitment and political support along with responsiveness (as an aspect of accountability) are enhanced if the local government is democratic. To some extent this circumvents the inability to relate cause and effect because client satisfaction is in the interest of locally elected governments.

Decentralisation has also meant that programmes now are more consistent in terms of implementation of activities. Advisory services can be accessed when most needed depending on the season. According to one NAADS coordinator, farmers in most sub counties are active involved in the programme because the flow of funds and the sequence of activities are consistent. Previous experiences showed that in the case of other programmes farmers got mobilised and then in the middle of the programme funds delayed and activities were affected. In such instances remobilisation of farmers after become difficult. Apart from being consistent, NAADS is transparent so everybody in the sub-county is aware of the programme. The farmers' fora is active and we ensure that farmers know how much money is available and plans are made within that framework. On the other hand, programmes like IFAD plans are made at the district and sometimes the flow of funds is inconsistent.

Yet, pro-poor responsiveness remains a challenge to many development programmes in Uganda. In the first instance, there is no clear definition of who is poor and active poor. Respondents from different organisations that were interviewed used different indicators in defining who was poor. Most programmes talk of the active poor; those are the ones that take their own initiative in changing their livelihoods. This means that advisory services are being subsidised for the "active poor" farmer whose enterprise has been selected at the district level as being viable. Enterprise selection at sub-county and district level also used the scoring method with the farmers being represented by members of the farmers' for a. At the district level, decisions are made by stakeholders on what enterprises will be funded under the NAADS programme. In the process, some farmers get disappointed when their enterprises are not selected. Some of these include the cattle enterprises. Considering that livestock is a capital

intensive venture, most poor farmer do not have a lot of land, finances and labour to manage this enterprise. As a result only a few farmers that do not form a critical mass are involved in the enterprise.

Although decentralization is positively associated with pluralist extension systems, demand-driven extension systems are associated with increasing costs of maintaining local level control (Feder et al. 1999 ; Schwartz & Kampen 1992). In addition to this, contractual arrangements for service delivery may overcome other public goods and externality problems, but the cost of bargaining and striking an agreement may be too high. This may not be a problem at the moment because much of the information disseminated is considered a “public good” that heavily depends on direct public funding. In future it will not be easy to recover dissemination costs of individual farmers because of low net benefit value. Farmers under the NAADS programme are still not empowered enough to be able to appreciate that knowledge can be translated into income. One NAADS official said that “We know that farmers will continue to demand inputs. They need constant sensitisation and change their attitudes towards the provision of advisory services.” Moreover, some farmers are not aware of how much the power they have in influencing the type of service they need. Such perception gaps need to be addressed in order for the programme to succeed.

While the private agricultural extension sector will, according to economic theory, have the incentive to supply the “private good” and “toll good” types in agricultural information because of the appropriateness of returns in supplying these goods, the level at which these services will actually be supplied will be determined by the rate of return to private investments in the activity (Umali & Schwartz 1994). The returns to extension service provision are influenced by the nature of the product, the degree of specificity of the information or technology, the size and rate of growth of farmer demand for extension, the level of development of the input and output markets, the degree of development of supporting infrastructure, and the degree of competition in the demand and supply for qualified extension personnel, economies of scale in delivery operations and the availability of publicly generated extension materials. Assuming that poverty reduction refers to the process of utilizing of

resources by any social group in order to improve their livelihoods, then interventions related to market liberalisation are in conflict with poverty reduction strategies. Fee-based extension systems tend to exclude social groups that cannot afford to pay for services.

In addition to this, political structures influence the enforcement mechanisms in place. Adequate planning is essential to translate policies into operational guidelines, to develop capacity for decentralisation implementation and to provide essential support services (Gary et al. 2000). Achieving equity under decentralization is important because it ensures that all local populations are incorporated into new government arrangements and that local authorities have the power necessary to affect either their procedural or distributional equity. The effectiveness of local governance is determined by the downward accountability of local institutions. Caseley (2003) showed how public service providers can deliver improved services within environments where inefficient and corrupt service delivery is the norm.

5.2.2 Technical Efficiency

The argument for shift to competitive service provision is that of cost reduction and increased services for all (Grand 1991). Using the rule-based pillar of institutionalism, the competitive market as an institution for the classical economy specifies the endowment and preference of each individual, rules of transaction, and the mechanism for price formation. Evidence from the field showed that contractual arrangements suggest that private service providers, who are not bound by public service procedures are more flexible in terms of availability when needed by the farmer and are also bound by contracts that have legal implications if breached.

Furthermore, contractual relations are associated with cost reductions which have the effect on consumer welfare increment (Rao 1989). However, such relations assume strong market competition that would help lower the fee for services. Yet, the level of demand between small holder, medium and large farmers vary. Given that a fixed or negotiated fee is paid for the extension information, medium and large farmers find the services affordable because can “spread the cost”, resulting in lower per unit cost of extension. Small holder farmers find extension services less or unprofitable because of their small marketable output values that

result in a higher cost per unit of extension. Moreover, in comparison to prior extension systems, privatised extension services are associated with increasing cost of services because the underlying motive of contractors is to maximise profit.

Service quality judgements are driven by the comparison of consumer's expectations and their perception of the actual service. Regulation and technical auditing of service providers is one of the components of the NAADS programme (MAAIF 2000). At present, technical staff gives advice to the procurement committees at Sub-county level and follows up on the work of the private service providers. The controversy about the economic efficiency effects of privatisation becomes apparent when issues of product market competition are introduced in the form of either the number and/or size distribution of firms or market contestability and regulation (Chirwa 2001).

Furthermore, there is no accreditation for organisations involved in advisory service delivery. While all service providers are registered with NAADS, procedures have not been put in place to give them accreditation. Contracts to NGOs fall under three categories; the institutional development of farmer groups, agricultural advisory service delivery and the management of the overall implementation of the overall implementation of NAADS activities (MAAIF 2000; Byekwaso, 2005). It is assumed that the non governmental organisations involved in advisory service delivery have the capacity. The small non governmental organisations that participate in NAADS work are driven by profit maximisation. Evidence from the field showed that such non governmental organisations take on more work than they can handle. One farmer said that the performance of the service providers is determined by the amount of time available for one sub-county. Yet service providers argue that the time specified in contracts is not enough. According to them, activities like enterprise selection are given a day, time that may not be enough given the participatory nature of the process.

The "logics of appropriateness", is the basis for technical efficiency. When service providers are competing to secure contracts, building their credibility is important. The competitive selection procedures are meant to ensure that non governmental organization meet set requirements. Evidence from the field showed that small holder farmers through their

procurement committees and leadership at the sub-county and district levels have a choice to make from a range of service providers contrary to prior systems where there were choice restrictions. Although most NGOs meet the accountability requirements, some do not meet the financial requirements. One official from the NAADS secretariat said,

“There are a few NGOs with adequate capacity in identified technical areas, but a significant proportion of rural-based NGOs relies on government extension workers and, therefore, do not have their own capacity to provide these services. Moreover, under NAADS, these extension workers are to be phased out, due to the adoption of private service delivery mode”

This extract draws together aspects of regulation and enforcement in service provision.

Regulatory frameworks do not guarantee compliance, economic factors such as access to financial resources to carry out activities and lack of competition between service providers may compromise the efficiency of demand-driven extension delivery.

However, at the moment, the limited number of service providers suggests that they are operating as monopolies.

5.2.3 Local Autonomy and Decision-making

Closely associated with democracy, local autonomy is an essential condition for the devolution or decentralisation of power. In an organisational context, particular positions are defined to carry specified rights and responsibilities and to have varying access to varying resources (Scott 2001). These normative expectations determine how effective local government officials are. The basis for this analysis is that institutions are capable of producing some predictability and regularity of outcomes that benefit all participants in an institution, and also clarifies the probable range of decisions available to societal actors that are not directly involved in the process of any particular organization (Peters, 1999; Scott, 2001).

Semi-structured interviews with NAADS co-ordinators revealed that they now have the power to execute duties that were previously executed at the centre. According to them, service delivery under contract arrangements need adequate planning that is possible now because not only control their own budgets but can also make independent decisions. The District

Production Coordination gives reasons why local autonomy is relevant for agricultural extension:

“Under the reforms, sub-county NAADS coordinators who are public extension servants, control big budgets and are able to plan programme activities making them consistent. In addition to this, they are able to make long term plans because they are more focussed now. They also have more power now because they are perceived as leaders making them get attached to communities and enabling them to respond to their rapidly changing environments. When it comes to interacting with politicians and other development partners, technical staff takes on a collaborative role because they are considered as equal partners in the development process contrary to the prior perception where extension staff were given small budgets that were used to supply inputs to farmers. Furthermore, privatised extension delivery ensures increased responsiveness, greater operational efficiency, greater accountability and quality assurance.”

Routines, procedures and strategies are important because they make service provision consistent. Yet, building local government capacity is a prerequisite for decentralising extension services because local governments (especially in Africa) often do not have the technical and managerial capacity to take on responsibility of managing programmes. These gaps continue to hamper the implementation of the decentralisation while sub-county officials receive training in financial management are still problematic. Local institutions taking on responsibility for extension might require investments in staff development, facilities, and management systems.

Furthermore, institutional capacity development is important in specifying the roles and responsibilities of actors in the different units at local level (Gary et al. 2000). Some members are not aware of their role they play in monitoring and evaluation teams. Furthermore, the objectives of the evaluation exercises are not clearly communicated and most exercises not planned for. The District Statistician said that it was imperative that actors get sensitized on the positive benefits of monitoring and evaluation as well as training in the utilisation of the operation manual on the exercise, if the quality of services is to be improved. Yet, sub-county leadership continues to have a negative attitude toward evaluations and on one occasion, one coordinator said that indicators were not generated in a participatory manner.

One of the promising developments since the process of decentralisation began is the ability of local governments to set priorities that benefit the local people (Egulu & Ebanyat 2000). However, in some cases, district priorities for implementing agricultural policies at local government level may differ from those set at national level. In most case the agricultural sector is not given the first priority when it comes to budgeting. Yet, most coordinators said that they were not allowed to make independent decisions. They argued that because they are employed in the public service, they are constantly assigned with other duties that encroach on extension services. These finding are consistent with those of (Oluwu, 2001; Ribot, 2002; Schneider, 2003; Olowu et al., 2004)}. The argument is that when administrative powers are decentralised, and then flow of information between horizontal structures increases leading to a reduction in transaction costs.

Assuming that private service delivery is the separates politics from production of the service, the role of politicians has changed to that of mobilisation, setting priorities and ensuring that structures are in place to regulate the quality and quality of the service. However, field observations show that politicians feel that they should control the programme resources. Local council chairpersons argue that the success of programmes is determined by how much they gain from the programme. The primary aim of politicians is to use programmes to advance their political interests and get financial benefits. Yet, the NAADS programme is unique because it is demand-driven with most of its budget financing private service delivery. Politicians as well as farmers feel that the money that is being paid out to service providers is too much and that they should be the direct beneficiaries of that money. As a result, politicians are not committed to mobilising farmers because they feel that they are sidelined.

5.2.4 Local Accountability

Contrary to the centralised extension systems, decentralisation has come with changes in norms and values that determine individual behaviour. Using the normative and rational choice analysis, ethics in extension service delivery are guided by the principles of good governance and participation. Principle-agent models of institutions relate regulatory frameworks that

determine to whether designed structures ensure that the agent fulfils the principal's wishes. According to (March & Olsen, 1984; Scott, 2001) the logic of appropriateness stresses the normative pillar of institutionalism where choice is seen to be grounded in a social context and to be oriented by a moral framework that takes into account one's relations and obligations to others in the situation.

The importance of rules and procedures in extension delivery is that they hold actors accountable to their principles by defining what acceptable behaviour is. Individuals involved in extension are aware of their moral obligation either through contracts, or through job descriptions that specify roles and responsibilities. Yet, having strong local institutions that can exert political power, take decisions and be held accountable by the local community for the results is crucial for the success of extension delivery. The NAADS programme works within the local government structure at district level. The DNC (District NAADS Coordinator) reports to the CAO (Chief Administrative Officer) and the SNC (Sub-county NAADS Coordinator) reports to the sub-county chief. Financial management utilises the same structures managed by the CAO and sub-county chiefs as accounting executives. These horizontal levels of governance help increase flow of information in the form of annual reports and improve transparency and accountability mechanisms. Sub County and District annual reviews give an account of annual activities, milestones reached, financial and technical audits.

In addition to this working under the decentralised environment means that there is no job security. The aspects of structure of organisations have important implications on the conduct and performance of staff (Rao 1989). Public servants and NAADS coordinators have to comply to accountability standards otherwise they stand the risk of losing their jobs. Furthermore, human resource management has become important because it determines the effectiveness and efficiency of extension services (Schwartz & Kampen 1992). Staff members need proper incentives to help them adapt to their changing working environment.

5.2.5 Local Institutions and Collective Choice

Institutional pluralism implies collective decision making, therefore, involving all actors in the decision making process makes extension systems more responsive. The planning, budgeting and implementation functions are participatory. One of the driving forces for change is shared commitment between local institutions in order to make collective choices. Overlapping and sometimes competing responsibilities among government ministries at local level frequently jeopardize the formulation of coherent and responsive programmes. In the case of Kabarole, there has been a large expansion in money coming to the district through national programs for particular services of national priority in Uganda. One official at the district commented,

“Leadership is still confused by a number of programmes. There is NAADS, AAMP, and IFAD but at district level, it is ensured that programmes do not concentrate in one Sub-county where there is AAMP there is no NAADS. Many of these NGOs implement agricultural related programmes targeting the same farmers but rarely coordinate with publicly financed programmes. This has the potential of duplicating efforts and wastage of resources. The NGO programmes are rarely integrated in the District Development Plan neither do they report to the District Production Coordinator who heads the agricultural sector in the District. The coordination of programmes affects the success of NAADS because it would help in the creation of complementary programmes involved in marketing, micro-finance, agro processing; components that are not fully developed at the moment. NAADS, PMA on the Ground, IFAD and AAMP are all trying to provide extension services”

This opinion suggests that harmonisation of programmes presented as shared norms are important for the success of extension programmes. The extent to which organisations have shared norms and value determines collective efforts to achieve a common objective. Lack of effectively organized pressure groups, such as national policy makers, donors, farmer organizations or private companies, may hamper cooperation and lead to wastage of resources (Feder et al. 1999).

The linkage between research, extension and the farmer is still far from being mutual. Information sharing in form of feedback between the different actors helps improve the process technology generation. According to a lecturer from the Makerere University, most of research

activities in Uganda are externally funded making research work dependent on the priorities of the donor. These priorities may differ from the goals of the extension programmes. Harmonizing donor priorities and national and local priorities is still a serious challenge to policy makers and development planners. Furthermore, policy makers fail to recognize that research and extension as closely interdependent activities. Historically, the higher status of researchers tends toward patronizing behaviour that is resented by extension agents. Resistance to coordination is perceived as limiting autonomy on both sides. Moreover, the two organizations may not share the same goals.

Furthermore, political commitment which is critical for the successful mobilisation of farmers and financial resources is normally compromised given the short tenures in office. A political leader has a four year term after which there are elections if they come back or not, it has implications for the process. This means that every four years newly appointed leaders have to be sensitised on the principles of the programme; trained in and planning, monitoring and evaluation skills, activities that pose financial constraints on district budgets.

5.2.6 Economic Coordination

Economic development does not result from the sum of isolated actions of individuals (Stockbridge, Dorward, & Kydd 2003). Instead it is a synergetic outcome of coordinated action in which the returns of one party depends on the actions of others. In developing countries investments in one area are not viable because complementary investments have not been made elsewhere. Investment in rural infrastructure produces low returns because of low levels of farm productivity and lack of investment in agricultural technology, whilst investments in from production or marketing are not viable as long as rural infrastructure is poor or non existent.

The concept of farming as a business is still new to new to many local government officials and other actors. According to one official in the private sector, the Ugandan land tenure system does not allow poor farmers to become commercial farmers. As result, traditional enterprise still dominates because farmers are still oriented towards. The vanilla enterprise is popular because the crop thrives very well with bananas which offer 50% sunlight and 50%

shade. However, market for the product still remains a constraint. According to one Kabarole District official said,

“Pushing extension without marketing leaves farmers wondering whether it is worth it to change or adopt any technologies. In the case of vanilla, many people began growing it because they were assured of a market and good price but morale went down when they found out that the price had fallen drastically. The prices of vanilla went down on the world market. Previously, farmers were advised to plant vanilla because of its high demand in the international market. In the event that a farmer has invested all his or her money in this capital and labour intensive venture, they are bound to be negatively affected.”

This extract focuses on how people are oriented to farming as business. Attitudes and perceptions towards the agricultural sector show that it is not prioritised even at district or sub-county level in comparison to other sectors like health. Traditionally, farming was perceived negatively because it was given as a punishment for bad behaviour. Changing the perception of people that do not believe that agriculture is a profitable venture poses serious challenges for vision of the NAADS programme.

6 FARMER EMPOWEREMENT

In many countries, agricultural extension is being reoriented to provide more demand-based and sustainable services, taking into account the diversity, perceptions knowledge and resources of users (Schwartz & Kampen, 1992; Swanson, Bentz, & Sofranko, 1998; Gary et al., 2000; Chapman & Tripp, 2003; Belay & Abebaw, 2004). The competitive market process allocates resources and shapes institutions and at the same time moulds cultural traits and attitudes that prevail in society. The rationale behind contracting advisory services to private service providers is to create a demand-driven extension service system. The idea is that small-holder farmers carry out their needs assessments and prioritise their advisory needs for selected enterprises. However, participatory planning comes with the problems associated with the heterogeneity of farmers' needs.

The effectiveness of demand driven extension systems is determined by the extent to which a small holder farmer, the target beneficiary, is empowered to demand and pay for services provided. In this chapter, I analyse the way in which farmers get organised in order to gain access to resources. I argue that empowerment is influenced by institutions that constrain behaviour and shape the decisions small holder farmers make. Furthermore, socio-economic characteristics and cultural institutions shape their perceptions towards services provided.

6.1 Small-holder Farmer Participation

The roles and rights of farmers have very often in the past been neglected by governments and donors, with farmers having little or no involvement in formulation of national policies for the agricultural sector (DIIS 2004). Participation of poor farmers in the NAADS programme is linked with attempts to increase income while exploiting economies of scale associated with working in groups. Advisory services under the NAADS programme are channelled through farmer organisations. Farmers' groups in Kabarole district and under the NAADS programme are organized along their areas of common interest in what is called 'Common Interest Groups (CIGs) at village level with representation at Parish, Sub-county, district and national levels. The

roles at each level differ from implementation of planned activities at village and parish levels through coordination at sub-county level to monitoring and evaluation at district level.

According to rational choice theorists, the primary motivation for farmers to get involved in the common interest groups is that utility-maximization can and will remain the primary motivation of individuals, but those individuals may realize that their goals can be achieved through institutions (Reich 2000). Respondents were asked why they decided to join their groups. Working in groups also enhances better decision making, better follow up, stronger competition, wider dissemination of ideas, division of labour, regular contacts between extension staff and farmers, easier access to inputs and marketing. Respondents were asked why they decided to join groups under the NAADS programme.

Table 1: Reasons for Joining Groups

	Frequency	Percent
Work together enables pooling resources	45	38
Skills Development & increase income	35	56
Donors target farmers working in groups	5	6
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Results from that 56% of the farmers involved in the NAADS joined the common interest groups because they found that it was more viable to gain access to resources as a group 38% thought that joining groups helped them improve their skills and increase income while 6 % of the farmers thought that groups attracted donor funding. These results suggest the majority of farmers think that a farmer organisation is a platform for joint action, which can change the position of the farmers by helping gain advantages of economies of scale in accessing services and markets, which are otherwise limited to large commercial farmers. In addition to this, collective action is central to livelihood strategies of farmers and that farmer organisations are

central actors in securing changes for farmers. They are also recipients with respect to the empowerment outcomes achieved (DIIS 2004).

The level of involvement of farmers in a programme is influenced by number of factors. Adoption of participatory planning techniques is meant to ensure programme sustainability and increased community participation. Respondents were asked to give reasons why farmers were involved in the programme. 64% of the respondents felt that they got attracted to the programme due to its principles of empowerment, accountability and poverty focus. There is an association between the level of programme ownership and the overall principles of the programme.

Table 2: Opinion on Level of Farmer Involvement

	Frequency	Percent
NAADS' Principles are attractive	51	64
Depends on Value for information	12	8
Orientation towards farming as a business	6	4
Depends on level of sensitization	6	8
Depends on age, youth are not interested	3	4
Lack of Resources	2	3
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Results suggest that 4% of the respondents feel that the level of involvement in the programme is influenced by age, yet members continue to complain that members are not involved in the programme. Very few farmers in the 21 – 31 years age group are involved in the NAADS programme. This could be due to the fact that most of them are not yet economically secure and can not pay the membership fees required. Considering that NAADS has moved away from the provision of inputs, the youth who in most cases think in the short term are not motivated to invest in long term ventures. They do not value investments in capacity building opting for food sufficiency. Yet, concerns for involvement are driven by the availability of family labor. Farmers also argued that education played an important role in the involvement of the youth in the NAADS programme. One chairperson of the farmer's fora commented low involvement is attributed to the fact that agriculture in schools is used as a form of punishment.

According to the sociological institutionalists, individuals who have been socialized into particular institutional roles internalize the norms associated with these roles, and in this way institutions are said to affect behaviour. There has been a shift from a dominantly patriarchal social system to that where family values are rooted in equal participation of men and women in income generating activities. Gender mainstreaming has continued to make an important role in poverty reduction strategies by enabling men to work along side women and creating a sense of unity. Small holder farmers were asked to give their views on the gender mainstreaming in the programme.

Table 3: Opinion on Gender Balancing

	Frequency	Percent
Created Unity among farmers	52	65
Increased women and youth empowerment	16	20
Working together improves family income generating capacity	12	15
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Result suggest that 65% of the small holder farmers interviewed thought that co-operation within their groups was positively associated with achieving their goal of becoming better farm managers by learning from each other. Small holder farmers are aware that improving income levels require increased collaboration with the family and the community. Equal power relations reduce the levels of conflict within groups, reduces time wastage and keeps them focussed on the overall goal of the group. 20% of the respondents positively associated gender mainstreaming as means of empowering women and the youth. Important to note about these to groups is the fact that they may not have access to land as a resource. This means that previously, power inequalities based on gender were influenced by cultural norms and values that left the woman marginalised in terms of access to resources. Traditionally, women do not have access to physical assets and in some communities they do not make independent

decisions carrying out improved management techniques. Although results from the survey show that the 55% of the respondents were men and 45% women, the percentage of women has increased especially now that there are households headed by widows. Having no access to land and no husband to help in the garden, widows are faced with the challenge of meeting their daily need in a cultural setting that marginalises them. When small holder farmers are advised to venture into enterprises that do not require a lot of land and labour, they get an alternative means of increasing their wealth thus empowering them. By acknowledging the important role that women play in the household, the NAADS programme has boosted their confidence and self esteem thus empowering them.

The availability of funds to carry out timely purchases of cash inputs into agricultural production, as well as to buy capital equipment, has long been regarded as one of the critical constraints inhibiting raising the productivity in small-farm agriculture (Ellis & Bahigwa 2003). In Kabarole, small holder farmers deal with cash constraints by either utilizing funds generated from trade activities or by relying on remittances from relatives in the cities. Getting access to financial resources gives them the power to become better farm managers. However, when respondents were asked about how they access credit and most said that they managed to get access to fund through a rotating fund where each farmer contributed at most monthly, funds generated from groups were highlighted. The results suggest that one of the reasons small holder farmer join groups is to benefit from the rotating savings and credit schemes (ROSCAS). According to (Besley, Coate, & Loury 1993), ROSCAS can be understood as a response by a socially connected group to credit market exclusion. The credit market exclusion has been due to high interest rates and lack of collateral.

Table 4: Access to Credit in Group

	Frequency	Percent
Contribute Weekly	3	4
Contribute Bi weekly	7	9
Contribute Monthly	50	63
Don't contribute at all	20	25
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Each of the groups of farmers has these social credit schemes from which a member benefits every month. Results suggest that 63% of farmers said that they contributed monthly. However, it is still not clear whether the size of group matters because if the group consists of 30 farmers, each contributing monthly, it would take thirty months for the last farmer to benefit. This could be the reason why 25% do not contribute at all, or it could be due to lack of trust amongst group members.

The degree to which farmers gain markets access is one of the key indicators of their empowerment. Given the high level of risk and uncertainty in their production outcomes, peasant farmers commonly welcome the opportunity to participate in multiple-market oriented group activities in order to improve their livelihoods (Schwartz & Kampen 1992; Bingen & Rouse 2002). Field observations show that although most farmers are not yet organised into marketing associations, 65% of the respondents feel that they are because they have invested in high value crops like vanilla that require external markets. 33.8% of the respondents felt that their membership into market associations was limited by their levels of income. These results seem to suggest that are willing to use their community based institutions to market their products. Their social-cultural settings attach a lot of value to economic empowerment through institutional relationships and are willing to get constrained by those institutions.

6.2 Information Access

Using the normative framework of analysis, institutions can either act as a conduit or barrier to technology dissemination. Information access is the major benefit that accrues to farmers in the NAADS programme. The involvement of farmers in the procurement process has meant that farmers are aware through enterprise selection of their advisory needs. The process of needs assessment helps the farmers voice their opinions and also provide them with information on counteracting corruption and misappropriation. Results also suggest that, under the current reforms, farmers are able to get information on the issues related to rural development. Respondents say that previously, extension messages did not take into consideration that poverty eradication requires a multi -dimensional perspective. This means that farmers are

aware that eradication of poverty requires the integration of hygiene, environmental management and education issues.

In order for small-holder farmers to become better managers, they need to make significant attitudinal and behavioural changes. According to one chairperson of the farmer fora,

“Small holder farmers under the NAADS programme are not only mobilised and sensitised to form groups because also urged to groups co-finance the programme for issues of sustainability of the programme. They are also encouraged to develop a “saving” culture so that they can gain access to inputs when they need them. Furthermore, health and hygiene in all homes is emphasised because household that is prone to disease cannot be empowered. In addition this, farmers are encouraged to adopt modern seeds that are high yielding and early maturing as well as going into agro forestry in order to ensure soil conservation because forests are almost being depleted due to fuel wood demand.”

Empowerment is now interpreted in terms of improvement in quality of life. Previously, farmers were given inputs which were normally not used for the intended purpose. The strength of the programme lies in its ability to use representatives of farmers to disseminate information. The chairperson of the farmers’ fora is a democratically elected person who mobilises farmers, works with sub county leadership in addressing problems that farmers face and also takes part in the procurement.

Respondents were asked for their opinion on the change in information access since the NAADS programme began in 2002. Results suggest that 63% of the farmers interviewed felt that the type of information that was being accessed was more important than the frequency of visits from extension workers or information on markets. This means that more importantly, small holder farmers in coping and adaptation strategies for their daily livelihoods.

Table 5: Opinion on Change in Access to Information

	Frequency	Percent
More information on rural development	50	63
Frequent visits from service providers	12	15
Access global information (markets)	10	13
Orientation to value for money	8	10.
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Considering that 81% of the farmers interviewed depend on farming as their only source of income it is important for them to know how to deal with shocks related to the ever changing social, physical and economic forces that make livelihood systems more sensitive or less resilient. When it comes to evaluating the performance of private service providers, farmers are able to compare with the baseline that was generated through the situational analysis.

Table 6: Farmers' Perception of Service Providers

	Frequency	Percent
Give Beneficial Information	68	85
Need more training	4	5
Their Performance Varies	4	5
Need to Provide inputs	3	4
Meet specifications	1	1
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Results suggest that 85% of the respondents felt that the information given by the service providers was beneficial and helped them work towards improving their livelihoods. This is an indication that of the positive outcomes of the needs assessment process. This process not only gives the farmers a voice but also gives them the opportunity to become better informed consumers. Results seem to suggest that their involvement in groups under the programme has

lead to farmers getting politically empowered efficacy contrary to previous encounters where they were politically marginalised.

Table 7: Opinion on Methods Used

	Frequency	Percent
Theory and Practicals	36	45
Flexible & Interactive	31	39
More accessible	12	15
Need More Exchange visits	1	1
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Contrary to prior extension methods, 45% of the respondents felt that they were combination of theory and practice. Considering that 84% of the respondents attended primary and secondary level education, this is an advantage for them because the service provider is able to give practical demonstrations which helps in the adoption of technologies. In the case of the tendering process, there is a procurement committee at Sub-county that is not controlled by the district. By increasing adult literacy levels, small- holder farmers now appreciate the value of information. This enables farmers to begin demanding for their services but one problem is that farmers have not reached the level of prioritising their needs and service providers may not be able to give them all they want. But with increased sensitisation and increasing adult education the situation will change.

According to MAAIF (2000), the factors limiting the effectiveness and relevance of technology arise out of inadequate interaction and collaboration between researchers, advisors and farmers. In an ideal situation, the farmers should be the ones that drive the process of technology generation and development. Although farmers do not have the means to determining the agenda of technology development, they have the opportunity to manage technology development sites through a selected farmer who has the resources to manage them. The idea is that NAADS provides inputs for the technology development sites, which are not only used for practical demonstrations but also meant to multiply and be accessed by other

farmers at a fee when they mature. At the time of the survey 56% of the respondents felt that technology development sites provided a means for gaining practical information, while 37% thought the Technology Development Sites helped them adopt the new technologies despite the high costs.

Table 8: Opinion on Technology Development Sites

	Frequency	Percent
Are accessible and provide practical information	38	56
Helps us adopt new technologies despite the costs	25	37
Need to reach farmers' expectations	4	6
Create Conflicts	1	2
Total	68	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

However, some argued that the length of time taken for technology multiplication does not take into account fluctuating changes in the markets. By the time the last farmer, gains access to the improved technology, a lot of opportunities may have been missed. For example one farmer in Kigwengwe sub-county, commented

“The time it takes for vanilla to mature so that she can access the vanilla stalks is too long. I am old, by the time it multiplies, where will I be. Receiving the stalks now would benefit me better, because I know the market for vanilla is available, after a few years , I don’t know whether it will be there.”

The factors affecting the effectiveness and relevance of technology development arises out of inadequate interaction and collaboration between researchers, advisors and farmers (MAAIF 2000). In an ideal situation, technology generation is farmer driven, where, the farmer is contacted by researchers to explore the opportunities for technology development through to technology scrutiny (See Fig. 3).

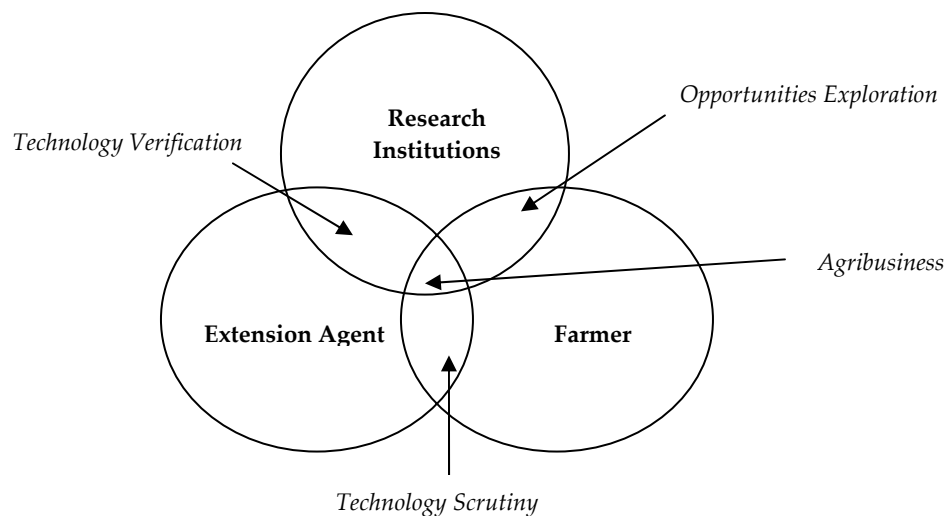


Figure 3: Linkages between research, extension and the farmer

Under the NAADS programme, farmers own technology development sites which act as focal points for technology multiplication, demonstrations, training and dissemination. According to the District NAADS coordinator, farmers who can afford to manage the technology development sites get inputs from NAADS in form of advice and basic technology packages paid for through technology development contracts. The rationale for contracting advisory services to private service providers is that of increasing efficiency of service delivery while meeting the demands of the target population. Respondents were asked to give an opinion on the duration of visits of visits made by current service providers.

Table 9: Duration between Visits

	Frequency	Percent
Weekly	24	30
Biweekly	3	4
Monthly	51	66
	77	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Most farmers said that previously, public extension workers visited farmers at least once a year. However, under the NAADS programme, service providers work a time schedule with the farmers for the training depending on the season. 66% of the respondents feel that a visit every month is appropriate because they need some time to adopt technologies that they learnt the previous month. These results suggest that small holder farmers is now have decision making powers that enable them to determine when the service provider comes to visit.

Although the main aim of the agricultural sector is to increase productivity, it is pertinent that the increment does not compromise environmental sustainability. Kabarole district administration is interested in managing the environment in a sustainable manner. It has an environmental officer whose is in charge of developing and integrating parish, Sub-county and district environmental action plans. Extension staff is a stakeholder in environmental management because they assist in sensitising communities on environmental issues. They also ensure that environmental action plans are implemented by ensuring that all agricultural projects are environmentally compliant. According to the survey, 92% of the farmers interviewed carried out improved management techniques which among other included soil and water conservation techniques. Non governmental organisations like ESAP are working with farmers and training them on better management techniques.

6.3 Increasing Income Levels

Rational choice models argue that humans always choose behaviours perceived to have the highest benefit-cost ratio (Reich 2000). The orientation to farming as a business is very evident as most farmers are involved in at least one economically viable enterprise. Results suggest that most common combination of enterprises is that of banana, vanilla and apiary. These results suggest that farmers will invest in enterprises for which they have access to the market. Although the price of vanilla has fallen to a mere UGX 5,000 per kilo, it is still more productive than other enterprises. Most farmers are also involved in apiary because it does not require a lot of capital and land. At the moment, the NAADS programme is supplying farmers with local and improved bee hives to farmer groups. In addition to this, there is fully functional apiary marketing association (KBA) to which most farmers are members.

Table 10: Common Enterprises Selected

	Frequency	Percent
Banana, Vanilla & Apiary	26	33
Banana & Vanilla	19	24
Banana & Others	12	15
Banana & Animals	9	11
Banana & garlic	6	8
Passion Fruits & Apiary	5	6
Vanilla & Apiary	2	3
Banana & Apples	1	1
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Results suggest that farmers are still interested in food sufficiency. Given that the banana enterprise is considered to be labour intensive, most farmers are not willing to cut down their plantations in favour of high value ventures like orchards. An example is the apples which are still in the trial phase and yet take about two years to fully mature. However, one advantage with the banana crop is that it grows very well with vanilla that requires 50% sunlight and shade.

Table 11: Changes in Production

	Frequency	Percent
Same Production	4	5
Moderately Increased production	37	49
Highly Increased Production	35	46
Total	76	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Although NAADS has only been implemented for two years, 49% have observed a moderate increment in the quality and quantity of production while 46% have observe a high increment in production. The changes vary from the level of maturity of some crops, for example vanilla had

just been planted at the time of the survey. Most of this positive change was observed in the banana enterprise where farmers said that the size of the bunch had more than doubled and that they were able to feed their families sufficiently.

6.4 Accountability

Accountability usually brings responsibility in decision-making and implementation which helps in increasing quality and cost efficiency (Bardhan, 1996; Caseley, 2003; Crook, 2003). By promoting linkages of an agency delivering services with beneficiaries makes these services accountable to beneficiaries, stimulating their control of the services and enhancing their sustainability (Venkatesan & Kampen, 1998). Respondents were asked about their opinion towards accountability in the programme.

Table 12: Opinion on Accountability in NAADS

	Frequency	Percent
Very Appropriate	39	49
Appropriate	32	40
Not Appropriate at all	1	1
Don't know	8	10
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Results suggest that 49% of the respondents thought that accountability was very appropriate while 40% thought that it was only appropriate. These results seem to suggest that more than 50% of the respondents found that decentralisation of extension systems increased their “voice” contrary to previous extension systems where allocation of power was defined and nested in hierarchies. Considering that the majority of people in developing countries are poor and also excluded from elite politics, any scheme that appears to offer greater political participation to ordinary citizens seems likely to increase their voice and hence the relevance and effectiveness of government policy (Crook 2003). One farmer explained that when sub-county leadership gives an account of money spent on different activities gives them the power, to question where

certain activities were relevant or not. Presentation of milestones achieved and financial accountability to stakeholders has helped NAADS coordinators and local government officials to be transparent and accountable.

On inception of the programme the private sector contracted to enlighten the farmers on the principles of the programme, through FID (Farmer Institutional Development). Farmers were taught about group dynamics and were able to get skills on organisational management. Respondents were asked how they felt about the training and 71% of the respondents felt that the training had fulfilled their expectations

Table 13: Opinion on Training

	Frequency	Percent
Fulfilled expectations	54	71
Improved farmers' skills	15	20
Few farmers were invited	6	8
Have Not attended Any	1	1
Total	76	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

These results seem to suggest that most small holder farmers feel that working as a team is fundamental to improving their livelihoods. Groups combine talents and provide innovative solutions to common problems. In addition, group members are aware of their rights and obligations as collaborators in programme. At the moment, the NAADS act gives them powers to terminate contracts of service providers that are not performing to their expectations. This is particularly important for the relevance for the success of the NAADS programme. Improving their organisational capacity has meant that service providers and the farmers agree on a timetable based on their defined specifications so that by the time the advisory service begins, farmers are aware of what to expect. Using the principle-agent model, service providers have to remain accountable to their principles who are the small holder farmers.

6.5 Programme Sustainability

Collective action occurs when one or more individuals are required to contribute to an effort in order to achieve to an outcome (Meinzen-Dick & Gregorio, 2004). The rationale behind empowering the small-holder farmers is to ensure that they are able to pay for their advisory services. Changing the attitudes of farmers towards information access has been attributed to a number of factors. On the political front, decentralization of extension service delivery has meant that farmers have been given an opportunity to voice their needs. Socially, collective action has meant that small-holder farmers are able to gain skills and access which is otherwise not possible on an individual platform. Economically, mixing traditional enterprises with economically viable is meant to reorient farmers to agribusiness. Culturally, giving power to marginalized groups such as women that are discriminated against in terms of access to resources gives them an opportunity to improve their livelihoods. However, perceptions of empowerment vary from one community to another. Small holder farmers agree that increasing access to advisory information is a good thing but without the resources to adopt technology, then the information becomes irrelevant. Furthermore, provisions of inputs still remain the priority for most farmers because the majority is still oriented to the supply driven extension where inputs were given.

The concept of farming as a business is still new and not well understood by small holder farmers. Their primary concern is food security and self sufficiency. Contrary to producing for a market is not priority. Field observations show that 85% of the respondents selected enterprises for both food and sale. The rationale behind farming as a business is that a successful commercial farmer is also has food sufficiency. The majority of small holder farmers are the poor, cannot afford farm inputs or access credit and lack capacity to manage farming as a business. In addition to this, most small-holder farmers are not willing to take risks, making their transformation process into entrepreneurs slow. Yet, demand driven systems need economically empowered farmers will be required to pay for the services that are currently subsidised by government. Setting fees for agricultural extension must take into account the concurrent privatisation of other social services (health and education) that compete for a

farmer's financial resources; otherwise the high levels of social exclusion of many of the poorest farm families may be aggravated(Hoffmann, Lamers, & Kidd 2000). Moreover, the market component of the programme is not well developed and while farmers are involved in economically viable enterprises they do not have a clear plan on how their products will be marketed. Under these conditions, the small-holder farmer may not be able to pay for advisory services.

Respondents were asked to give their opinion on role that NAADS plays in improving their livelihoods. 69% of the respondents felt that it improved farmers' skills in group dynamics as well as making them better farm managers. These results suggest that farmers attach a lot of value to better management techniques because they increase productivity and incomes.

Table 14: Farmers' perception on the role of NAADS

	Frequency	Percent
It has improved farmer's skills and incomes	55	69
Targets poor but no financial support	16	20
Low morale; no inputs provided	8	10
Conflict between leadership	1	1
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Furthermore, 41% of the respondents argued that while access to information plays a vital role in poverty reduction, training should be supplemented with access to loans and funds. These results suggest that advisory services and finances as the most serious issues hindering entrepreneurship levels amongst farmers. This remains a challenge of demand driven extension service delivery because in principle the market should determine the forces of demand but when the target group is operating in an environment characterized by fluctuating market prices, primary production, limited access to resources like credit or land, attempts towards entrepreneurship get constrained. Small holder farmers argue that there are so many good

technologies to adopt; the cost of adoption is high. It is against this background that farmers still rely on the state for provision of inputs.

Yet, demand driven services are meant to increase the scope of coverage however; costs involved in joining groups may limit the scope. Respondents said that the numbers of farmers involved in the programme is still small. 40% of the respondents felt that NAADS in order for NAADS succeed it should increase the number of small-holder farmers involved in the programme. This opinion relates to poverty targeting and the trickle down effect. One farmer in Karambi Sub County said that farmers that are not involved do not take the initiative to adopt technology saying:

“You can see that my garden looks well managed but when you compare it with that of my immediate neighbor, you can see a great difference in the quality of output. I still do not understand why some farmers remain indifferent to opportunities that can help improve their livelihoods”.

The real challenge for the NAADS officials is to find ways of attracting farmers in this market segment. At the moment it is only the “active poor” that are involved but with the use of by-laws and increasing sensitization more farmers would be encouraged to join and form a critical mass needed to market their products. It is interesting to note that only 4% of the respondents felt that continuous follow up and Monitoring and Evaluation were of great importance. Services become more effective when they are evaluated for their impacts and also when service providers make follow up visits after their contracts have ended in order to assess whether farmers are experiencing problems and if they have any questions.

Considering that NAADS supports only those CIGs whose enterprises have been prioritized at sub-county level and district level the list of enterprises for a whole sub-county is narrowed down to at most cases 2-4 enterprises per sub-county. According to an official in MAAIF, this means that a large number of farmers who do not undertake priority enterprises are left out and therefore do not access extension services. Furthermore, it is made even more difficult for some farmers because as NAADS takes over a sub-county, other publicly financed extension programmes pull out to pave way for NAADS. A case in point is the Agricultural

Extension Conditional grant which is automatically terminated once sub counties are taken over by NAADS. Field observations showed farmers whose enterprises were not selected were demotivated by the whole programme. An example is the livestock enterprise, which requires a lot of land and is capital intensive.

Table 15: Proposals to Improve NAADS

	Frequency	Percent
Training & inputs/ provision of loans and grants	33	41
Increase farmer involvement & other stakeholders	32	40
More training & Exchange visits	9	11
More improved seeds and training	3	4
Continuous follow-up and M&E	3	4
Total	80	100

Source: Farmer Survey, 2004

Communal institutions are grounded on principles of trust and reciprocity that are tied to commonly shared physical or natural resources and include a variety of familial-like and “horizontal” institutions including age-based relations and practices, such as age-based work groups (Bingen & Rouse, 2002). Geographic location and ethnic consideration play an important a role in defining these institutions. In areas where soil productivity is low due to natural resource degradation, people value the importance of group working together. People in rural areas and using natural resources engage in collective action on a daily basis when they plant/harvest together or when they use a common facility to market their products.

Although working groups in Kabarole district have been positively associated with increasing income productivity, the levels of success differ from one ethnic group to another. Interview with sub county NAADS coordinators revealed work groups are more successful amongst that the Bakiga ethnic group where group work is part of their social system/behaviour. This means that they are more successful in adopting technologies and implementing programme activities than other ethnic groups where group work is not part of

their social setup. These observations seem to suggest that Such work groups are not successful amongst the Batooro ethnic group either due to lack of trust amongst members or due lack of commitment to the logic of collective action⁸.

The extent to which decentralization is associated with participatory governance can be measured to some extent in the 'quantity' of participation and by changes in social scope (Crook 2003). However it can not be assumed that empowerment and policy responsiveness are a result of increasing participation or inclusion of social disadvantaged or poor people. Often decentralization is virtually a prerequisite for effective local participation but in the case of agriculture more passive forms of participation may lead to elite capture (Feder et al. 1999). Power relations still remain unequal amongst farmers in most of the sub-counties. Development interventions assume that small-holder farmers have equal power relations. The case in point is that most people involved in the NAADS programme have at least primary or secondary education. This in itself is a clear indication that the people with no formal education could be passive participants.

⁸ Collective action occurs when one or more individuals are required to contribute to an effort in order to achieve an outcome (Meinzen-Dick & Gregorio, 2004).

7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Summary of findings

The overall objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of demand driven extension services. The research questions are:

1. What is the role of policy and legal frameworks in in agricultural extension delivery?
2. How do interactions between various actors (civil society, private and public sectors) shape the process of extension delivery?
3. How do small holder farmer organisations influence their access to advisory services?
4. How do farmers perceive impacts of demand driven approaches to agricultural extension?

Guided by the research questions, there are four key themes are stand out clearly: regulation, institutional pluralism, collective action among small holder farmers and responsiveness to the perceived needs of small holder farmers.

7.1.1 Policy and Legal Environment

The policy and legal frameworks relating to decentralisation and privatisation shape the environment within which demand driven extension systems in Kabarole District thrive. They have been instrumental in defining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders involved in agricultural extension. Administrative decentralisation or de-construction has given the power that local government officials need to meet the needs of the local populations. Given the complexity of the planning process and the diversity of actors involved, devolution of decision making powers to the lower level of government gives sub county leadership administrative and fiscal autonomy and allows them to allocate resources effectively. Driven by social-economic objectives of poverty reduction, management based regulation strategies intervene at planning process and ensure that the needs of small holder farmers are prioritised. Furthermore,

the costs of enforcing contracts are kept low, when actors at the local are given the powers to steer the procurement process.

The privatization of advisory services under the NAADS programme is meant to increase the quality of services provided. Contractual arrangements ensure that needs of the farmers have to be met in a within the defined specifications (time, quality, cost and quantity). Although the use of the market to deliver extension services has ensured technical efficiency, there is almost no competition between service providers due to their small numbers. These findings on NAADS are similar to those of (Elliott 2004) who argues that on the service provider side, issues of quality control, adequate numbers for competitive supply and ability to repackage and communicate information arise. Yet, markets work if they have rules, enforcement mechanisms, and organisations promoting market transactions. While some private markets need effective regulation to reduce transaction costs and ensure stable market rules, consumers need regulation that is responsive to and protective of their interests.

7.1.2 Institutional Pluralism

Innovations related to institutional pluralism are meant to increase the effectiveness of extension systems. Evidence from the field suggests that iterative consultations at village, sub county and district levels during needs assessments makes demand for advisory services more participatory. This means that small holder farmers with the guidance of technical staff are able to specify their advisory needs. The implication of these procedures for extension delivery is that the costs associated to terminating contracts are reduced. However, shared norms and values determine the level of interaction between actors. Furthermore, they determine their level commitment to the overall principles of demand driven systems. Focus on financial gains and political control of programmes may hamper programme success.

7.1.3 Collective Action

The rationale behind empowering the small-holder farmers is to ensure that they are able to pay for their advisory services. The organisation of farmers in groups has meant that they are able to gain access to resources and tap economies of scale. Getting organized in groups gives the

farmers have been given an opportunity to voice their needs. Built in their social-cultural setting, groups have been instrumental in helping small-farmers gain access to donor funding, credit and information. They also help them, share experiences and in some cases, share labour. Furthermore, small-holder farmers are able to improve their adult literacy levels and also get information relevant to improving their livelihoods.

Venturing into economically viable is meant to reorient farmers to agribusiness. Culturally, giving power to marginalized groups such as women that are discriminated against in terms of access to resources gives them an opportunity to improve their livelihoods. However, perceptions of empowerment vary from one community to another. Small holder farmers agree that increasing access to advisory information is a good thing but without the resources to adopt technology, then the information becomes irrelevant. Furthermore, provisions of inputs still remain the priority for most farmers because the majority is still oriented to the supply driven extension where inputs were given.

7.1.4 Responsiveness

When development is referred to as empowerment of the poor so that they can be able to manage their livelihoods, social, economic, political and cultural institutions influence poor farmers perception of empowerment. Poor rural areas are typically characterised by a daunting set of generic problems which include poor roads and telecommunications; poor human health; lack of a well developed and diversified monetary economy; thin markets for agricultural inputs, outputs and finance; and a (particularly agriculture) business environment characterised by weak information (on prices, on new technologies, and on potential contract enforcement, high risks; and high transaction costs. In this setting, empowerment perceptions concentrate on provision of inputs rather than access to information. Furthermore, it is still not clear whether empowerment has translated into economic changes. it has not always been sufficient to bring about substantive change for farmers, it has not always been able to sustain whatever gains have been achieved, and it has not always been small-holder farmers, agricultural labourers, those at the economic, social and political margins of a society that have gained.

7.2 Study Conclusion

In light of the findings, this study concludes that demand driven extension delivery is more effective when policies and legal frameworks are in place to guide the service delivery. Decentralisation is positively associated with allocative efficiency because heterogeneity in perceived needs and the cultural diversity of the targeted market segment are better addressed by local leadership. The degree to which decentralisation outcomes like allocative efficiency; local autonomy and decision making; and local accountability is on the basis of reduction in transaction costs. Privatisation is positively associated with technical efficiency because the market is the driving behind demand. However, the implementation of these policy changes requires major institutional changes in order to address the policy gaps that may hinder the sustainability of demand driven extension systems. Such institutional changes are shaped by the attitudes and perceptions of actors and determine their level of commitment to the principles of good governance, poverty focus, empowerment and gender mainstreaming. Nevertheless, these findings are critical to the decentralisation and pro-poor responsiveness debate which argues that increasing access to extension services to small holder farmers empowers to gain access to resource and transform into commercial farmers.

7.3 Theoretical Conclusions

The study used the new institutionalism theory to analyse the effectiveness of demand driven extension services. The strength of the theory lies in its ability to analyse phenomenon as a system. Demand driven systems involve a number of actors whose behaviour is shaped by social, economic, cultural and political factors. In addition to this, the theory assumes that structural aspects of a system matter. The responsiveness of extension systems to small holder farmers depends on how structures function together rather than how one structure functions in isolation. Being eclectic in nature the theory was appropriate for analysing the results on the effects of institutional pluralism. Furthermore, the theory assumes the role of law which was useful in assessing the effectiveness of regulation procedures in service delivery. However, it

assumes equal distribution of power between members of a group. While collective action empowers small holder farmers, their level of satisfaction is determined by age or education level that can result in passive participation and elite capture.

7.4 Recommendations

This study provides evidence on how extension delivery under contractual arrangements is more responsive to the needs of small holder farmers. Given the policy gaps regarding micro finance, markets, research and extension, it is left to future research to determine are sustainable in the long term.

Lack of investment in the marketing component; limited access to credit; limited linkages between research, extension and the farmers and limitations in quality assurance- are some of the policy areas for demand driven agricultural extension. They are issues that government must address in order to improve the effectiveness of systems.

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9 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of key informants

	Name	Designation	Organization
1.	Dr. Nshemerirwe	District Production Coordinator	Kabarole District
2.	Mr. Mugume	District Agricultural Officer	Kabarole District
3.	Mr. Rwabukuku	Deputy Chief Administrative Officer	Kabarole District
4.	Mr. Rubaihayo	District Entomologist	Kabarole District
5.	Mr. Sam Mugume	District Statistician	Kabarole District
6.	Mrs. Grace Katzigati	District NAADS Coordinator	Kabarole District
7.	Mr. Isingoma	Sub-county NAADS Coordinator	Karambi Sub-county
8.		District Environment Officer	Kabarole District
9.	Mr. Bwambale Philip	Employee	SATNET
10.	Mr. Assimwe	Employee	Kabarole Bee keepers Association
11.	Ms. Josephine Kasande	Field Coordinator	Environment and Sustainable Agriculture Project (ESAP)
12.	Mr. Jerry	Sub-county NAADS Coordinator	Kisomoro Sub-county
13.		Chairperson Farmer Fora	Kisomoro Sub-county
14.		Sub-county NAADS Coordinator	Mugusu Sub-county
15.		Chairperson LC III	Mugusu Sub-county
16.		Chairperson Farmer Fora	Mugusu Sub-county
17.		Sub-county Chief	Bukuku Sub-county
18.		Chairperson LC III	Bukuku Sub-county
19.	Mr. Peter Mwesige	Service Provider	JESE
20.	Mr. Businge Micheal	Sub-county NAADS Coordinator	Hakibale Sub-county
21.	Mr. Paul Kasande	Chief Executive Officer	Private Sector Development and Consultancy Centre
22.	Mr. Mugenyi Stephen	Sub-county Chief	Rutete Sub-county
23.		LC III Chairperson	Rutete Sub-county
24.		Sub-county NAADS Coordinator	Rutete Sub-county
25.	Mr. Musinguzi	Youth Farmer	Independent Farmer
26.	Mr. Patience Rwamugisa	Entomologist	Ministry of Agriculture
27.	Dr. Talwana	Lecturer	Makerere University
28.		Official	HASP

Appendix 2: Farmer Survey Questionnaire

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ON DECENTRALISATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO FARMERS

1. INTRODUCTION

Good day. My name is Edith and am a masters student carrying out as survey on decentralized agricultural service delivery. I would like to discuss these issues with you and would be grateful if you spared a few minutes to answer a few questions. All information you give me will be kept strictly confidential. Therefore please answer honestly and feel free to stop the interview at any time you feel like.

2. DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

Items	Categories	Codes
SUB-COUNTY	West Division	1
	Mugusu	2
	Buhesi	3
	Kisomoro	4
	Bukuku	5
	Rutete	6
	Kichwamba	7
	Karambi	8
ETHNIC GROUP	Mutoro	1
	Mukiga	2
	Mukonjo	3
AGE	Less than 20 yrs	1
	21 – 30 yrs	2
	31 – 40 yrs	3
	41 – 50 yrs	4
	50+ yrs	5
SEX	Male	1
	Female	2
MARITAL STATUS	Single	1
	Married	2
	Living with someone	3
	Widowed	4
	Divorced	5
STANDARD OF EDUCATION	Never attended school	1
	Can read and write	2
	Primary	3

	Secondary	4
	Post Secondary	5
	Other (specify)	6
LAND OWNERSHIP	None (Renting)	1
	Less than 1 acre	2
	1 – 2 acres	3
	3+ acres	4

2. SOURCE OF INCOME

(a)	What is your major source of livelihood?	Farming	1
		Off farm employment (trader, factory)	2
		Others specify	3
(b)	Are you a member of any farmer group? Which one?		

3. FARMER PARTICIPATION IN THE GROUPS

(a)	Why did you decide to join the farmer group above? Did you take into account gender considerations?	
(b)	What about getting credit from fellow group members. Are such facilities available to you?	
(c)	What enterprise are you currently involved with?	Banana Vanilla Garlic Apiary Others (specify).....
(d)	For what purpose are the enterprises you are involved in? Is it for sale or for food? Explain Are you satisfied with that purpose above e.g. do you get access to the market or enough food.	
(f)	Have you considered joining	

	any market association? Why	
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4. RELEVANCE OF ADVISORY SERVICES PROVIDED

(a)	How do you determine the agricultural advisory services that your enterprise demands?		
(b)	How does your ensure that your demands are taken into account when procuring service providers? Who makes the decisions within the group? Is every one consulted?		
(c)	Do you think that service providers provide you with the information that you need?		

5. EFFECTIVEESS OF METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES USED

(a)	How do service providers pass information to you?	Technology Development Sites Training and visiting farmers Face to face interaction with farmers Use of progressive farmers On-farm trials Others (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
(b)	What is your opinion on methods used above? Explain		
(c)	What is your opinion on the technology development sites?		
(d)	What about training have members of your group been invited for training? Is it effective?		

(d)	On average how often does the service provider visit?	Weekly Bi-weekly Monthly	1 2 3
(e)	Do you think that this time sufficient? Why		
(f)	What improved production/management practices do you apply	Crops Mulching Weeding Planting Pesticide Use Fertilizers Seedbed preparation Wind Breakers Soil/Water Conservation Livestock Housing Feeding Spraying Disease Management Others..... Post Harvest Grading Storage Others.....	
(f)	Do you apply any improved management technologies	Yes No	
(g)	If not why?		
(h)	Have you observed a change in yield when you put into application the knowledge provided by extension agents?	Yes No	
(i)	In terms of yield what change have you observed (in terms of bags harvested)		
(j)	Are you aware of any improved production technologies? (improved seeds, stock, herbicides, manure etc)		

(k)	How easy is it to get access to these improved farm inputs and why	Very Easy Easy Neutral Not Easy Very Difficult	1 2 3 4 5
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6. FARMERS' PERCEPTION OF THE NAADS PROGRAMME

(a)	What is your opinion of the role of NAADS program?		
(b)	When it comes to accountability appropriated are funds utilized in meeting your advisory needs?	Very appropriate Appropriate Not appropriate at all Don't know	1 2 3 4
(c)	Explain your answer above		
(d)	Do you think that farmers are more involved in the program, is your group able to clearly identify its needs while taking into account farming as a business?		
	What is your opinion about gender balancing within the program?		
(e)	How do you compare access to information and technology today (extension services) as compared to the situation two years ago before NAAD was implemented?	Improved Same Worsened Don't Know	1 2 3 4
(f)	Explain your answer in qn. (f)		

(g)	In your view how do you the program can be improved?		

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for Local Government Officials

1. Local Government is responsible for the administration under which the NAADS activities take place. What structures have you put in place to ensure that NAADS complies with the Local Government Act 1997?
2. In terms of agricultural extension what activities have been decentralized?
3. When it comes to sub-county leadership, do you think that it is capable of managing, prioritizing and implementing activities independently.
4. What decision making mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that sub-county leadership integrates the needs of farmers under the NAADS programme?
5. Regarding accountability, what measures have been put in place to build the capacity of sub-county leadership?
6. What are the major factors influencing the success of the NAADS programme?
7. When it comes to monitoring and evaluation, what are they any systems that have been put in place to ensure that the programme is periodically evaluated on its performance? Explain your answer.
8. On the sustainability of the NAADS programme, what are the shortfall of participatory planning and decentralization of agricultural extension services?

Appendix 4: Interview Guide for District Agricultural Staff

1. The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for the legal and regulatory framework within which the NAADS programme operates. As a public servant, how would you describe the decentralized agricultural extension systems?
2. What are the major policies that are guiding the operationalisation of programs related to agricultural extension sector?

3. The rationale behind decentralizing agricultural extension services is to ensure that services are responsive to poor people's needs. NAADS, among other programmes targets the poorest of the poor farmers. In your view, how would you describe a poor farmer?
4. The Ugandan agricultural sector under the guidance of the PMA is diverting away from the food security focus and orienting towards farming as a business. What structures have been put in place to ensure that NAADS adopts this orientation when reaching its target group?
5. When it comes to quality assurance and technical audits, how do you ensure that services provide through service providers comply to set standards?
6. It is now two years since the NAADS programme was implemented in Kabarole district, how would you describe the performance of the programme since its inception?
7. The vision of the NAADS programme is ensure that at the end of the programme, the poor farmer will be able to demand and pay for extension services. Do you think that this vision can be achieved?
8. On the whole, how do your feel about decentralization of agricultural extension services, do you think that it has made you more effective and responsive to local peoples needs?
9. Thank you for your time!

***Appendix 5: Interview Guide for Sub-county NAADS Coordinators & Chairpersons
Farmer Fora***

1. As a sub-county NAADS coordinator, you are employed as a public servant in the agricultural extension system working at sub national level. How would you describe your roles and responsibilities at this sub-county?
2. Decentralization of agricultural extensions services is meant to ensure that services are driven by poor farmers needs? What is your opinion of a poor person? How does NAADS ensure that the farmer is empowered to demand services?
3. During the implementation of NAADS activities who are the stakeholders that you are involved with and how would you describe how they influence the success of the programme?
4. The district has a quality assurance team that is supposed to backstop sub-county procurement committees, how active is this team in ensuring that farmers know what services they need considering that they may not have the technical capability to define their specification?

5. With the privatization of extension service delivery, how would you describe this sub-county's experiences with service providers? Are there any structures that have been put in place to manage contracts?
6. When it comes to financing of NAADS activities, are funds disbursed on time to ensure that they are available when need especially in planting season when farmers need extension services. How about co financing, the sub-county is supposed to contribute 5% to the total budget while the farmers contribute 2%, how willing are the parties in co financing the programme?
7. Local leaders are supposed to be involved in mobilization of farmers however many complain that they have not been included in the programme, do you think that this will affect the sustainability of the programme?
8. Thank you for your time!

Appendix 6: Interview guide for local leaders

1. As local leaders, how would you describe the role you play in the implementation of NAADS activities?
2. Looking at NAADS' target group, how would you describe the involvement of grass root farmers in its activities?
3. As political leaders, you are part of the monitoring and evaluation team, what is your view on the performance of the programme so far in terms of accountability, farmer empowerment and participation?
4. Do you think that with time the farmer will be able to pay for agricultural extension services?
5. Thank you for your time!