



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Plans put in place to boost production

The extension services of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have the duty to enhance efficiency in agricultural production in order to impact positively on its beneficiaries. With declining budgetary support, economic reforms, widespread liberalisation in the agricultural sector and increased service providers, there must be a change in perception regarding delivery of sustainable agricultural extension services.

The reforms taking place in the agricultural sector call for corresponding changes in the design and implementation of extension services in order to provide services, which respond to client demands. Extension policy should aim at transforming production systems beyond subsistence to commercial orientation. These initiatives will support parallel efforts targeted to rural communities under the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Kenya Rural Development Strategy (KRDS). The private sector has increasingly become important service providers that cannot be ignored.

Strategies proposed in these initiatives include determination and response to farmer demands, cost sharing and cost-recovery and commercialisation, privatisation and subcontracting.

Similarly, new strategies are required to address the needs of different agro-ecological zones and sociocultural diversities. The many changes taking place in the sector have necessitated development of an extension policy designed to give direction to the public and private sectors in service delivery. The policy contains strategies for use in both high potential and Arid/Semi Arid Lands (ASAL) areas and proposals on appropriate institutional arrangements.

Vision

The vision of the policy is to provide access to appropriate quality extension services to all Kenyan farmers/pastoralists/fishermen by 2015.

Mission

The mission of the extension policy is to develop and promote sustainable demand-driven extension services.

Objectives

The strategy aims to give direction and operational guide to all service providers; harmonise extension methodology and strategies; prepare the country for sustainable participatory and demand driven extension services, accountable to local farmer communities and their institutions.

Changing extension philosophy/paradigms

Management of extension services must be dynamic to incorporate attributes which improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

In this regard, service providers will use different

MESSAGE FROM THE PS



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systems, approaches and strategies to respond to the demands of the clients depending on their enterprises, agro-ecological zones and prevailing social economic conditions of the communities involved.

This policy has been developed with the understanding that a client must be satisfied with the four basic elements in the operational environment; namely appropriate information, production resources, market access for the produce and systems to income accrued from sales of the produce. These elements

involve many actors.

Within the mandate of the Ministry, extension services will cover farmers, pastoralists, fishermen and the co-operators.

In re-organising ministry extension services, specialisation and relevant disciplines required for each area is considered. The present staff deployment will also be reviewed with a view to strengthening divisional offices by posting some of the qualified staff held at districts and provincial levels. In all cases, the recently concluded recommendations on staff rationalisation and right sizing will be used.

In order to improve efficiency and effectiveness, the ministry will review its management structures to incorporate new approaches and styles that take cognisance of changes in service delivery mechanisms taking place in the public and private sector.

Participatory project planning and implementation with the beneficiaries will be institutionalised while transparency and accountability will be vital. Resource allocation and use will be based on community priorities which will also form the basis of work plans and budgets.

Supervision and backstopping will be done by staff based at districts, provinces and the head office. To enable farmers gain access to appropriate and cost-effective technologies, the ministry will strengthen research-extension farmer linkages. Similarly, applied on-farm

research will be given greater priority.

To increase mobility, staff based at the divisional level and below will be encouraged to own and use bicycles and motorbikes for extension purpose. Subject matter specialists at the district, province and head office will adopt a team approach and tasks oriented management system when carrying out supervision and backstopping activities and be encouraged to share vehicles during these activities. In ASAL districts, divisional-based multidisci-



Young boys take care of kids of a dairy goat.

plinary teams will use vehicles to reach pastoralists.

Information flow and the reporting system in the extension services of the ministry will be improved by sensitising officers on the need to have complete, reliable and verifiable reports containing financial data which can be used for planning and evaluating the performance of extension services. Reporting formats will be redesigned and equipment to improve data storage and accessibility for staff and farmers at all levels procured.

The Agricultural Information Centre is being restructured to become an autonomous body. This is expected to improve its performance by implementing cost sharing on all the services it provides. The Centre will have facilities for documentation, publication and information storage. Farmers and other extension providers will be encouraged to increase its usage. The centre will also operate as a resource centre for training senior staff in extension methodologies, production of visual aids and business skills. These services will also be available to other users on demand and at cost.

This policy also has other important features necessary for a sustainable extension service delivery. It recommends mainstreaming and institutionalising the analysis of gender role in socio-economic and environmental impact studies of extension projects.

It also seeks to strengthen farmer support institutions, regulatory and legal frameworks to cover various pieces of legislation and quality standards, advisory and regulatory bodies etc.

The roles of other stakeholders are defined and proposals have been made to strengthen interactions, partnerships and collaborations in order to reduce competition and duplications.

The policy promotes involvement of the private sector in extension delivery by creating a conducive environment for private sector participation and by identifying services, which must continue to be publicly provided.

The approaches to management and training of all training institutions are being reviewed to bring them in line with requirements of the agricultural sector. In this regard, the curricula for all institutions will be reviewed to conform to the needs of both public and private sector. Farmer training centres (FTCs) will also be revitalised to address local needs and involve local communities in their management.

In the course of carrying out extension services, activities, which support services and farmer operations will be identified and prioritised for development. These include development of input supply, markets and agricultural credit systems, rural access roads, micro irrigation, agroprocessing, regulatory bodies, standards, information management etc.

In recognition of support by other development partners, the policy recommends that consultative fora be established which will allow dialogue to rationalise use resources and reduce incidences of competition, duplication, overlaps and open rivalry.

The challenge posed by the HIV Aids is real and a threat to agricultural sector and the existing ministry personnel is being sensitised to disseminate interventions which are directed at reducing the spread of HIV/Aids in rural areas and interventions to control drug abuse by youth reducing its impact in agricultural development.