



UGANDA NATIONAL FARMERS FEDERATION

FARMERS FIREPLACE CONVERSATIONS

Action Research to Audit Effectiveness of NAADS and proposals for Reform: The NAADS that farmers want



Progress Report

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Executive Summary

Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE) remains the only farmers' platform with a national, highly networked presence at grassroots and with a membership of millions of farmers across all agro-sectors in Uganda. The foregoing means that efforts geared at transformation of farmers and entire agriculture architecture in Uganda are of keen and strategic interest to UNFFE. As part of our ongoing fireplace conversations/research series, this action study focuses on the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), a heavily capitalised program of government that aims at transformation of public delivery of agricultural extension services into a largely private sector-led delivery system under a client or farmer controlled arrangement. For NAADS first phase that covered the financial period from 2001/2002 through 2007/2008, the cost for the first phase of implementation cost Uganda US\$108 million.

NAADS has been around for over 10 years, however, majority farmers continue to remain at the bottom of wealth pyramid. To this extent, this action research intends to excavate what went wrong, discover the fault line, and generate proposals on what needs to be done to ensure that NAADS fully empowers the farmers. This process is expected to facilitate a data driven consensus on the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of NAADS from the farmers' point of view.

Preliminary findings are interesting; there is foreexample limited understanding of NAADS operations amongst farmers, inadequate focus on farmer constraints like labour, access to inputs, ineffective extension services for crop and animal farmers, unresolved market access issues, unclear NAADS farmer credit schemes among others!

Eight districts have so far been covered; the next phase will target 40 subcounties in the entire country. This progress report highlights key insights from the field (captured in photographs and draft narrative) that will be distilled in the final report. The final report, will detail specific proposals for NAADS reform. These proposals will be the fodder for **The farmers Green Print on NAADS**.

1.0 Introduction

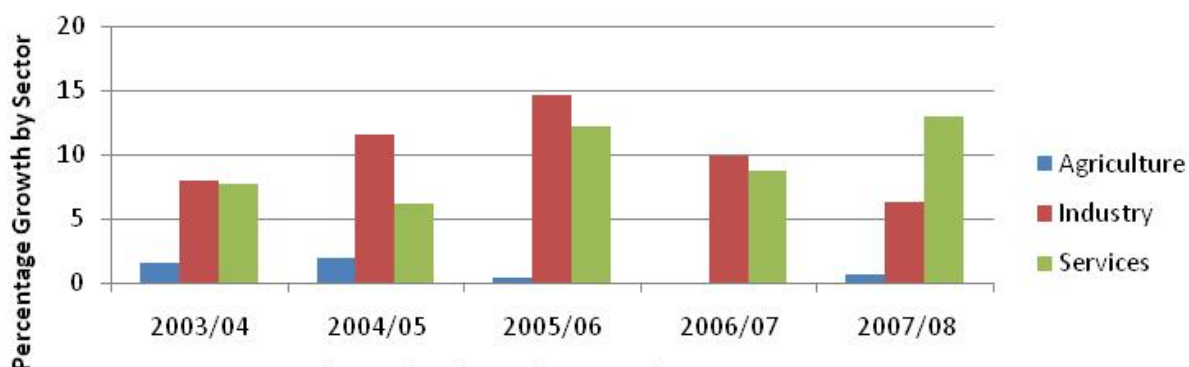
About Uganda National Farmers Federation

Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE) is a home to over six million (6,000,000) farmers across Uganda. The Federation draws its history from farmers' agricultural competitions which were organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government from 1988 - 1993. As a spontaneous need emerged to institutionalize these competitions, the Ministry facilitated the formation of Uganda National Farmers Association (UNFA) on 22nd January 1992. The Association later metamorphosed into Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE) in 2002 to incorporate large National Farmers enterprise specific groups and corporate enterprises. Membership has since grown from 39 in 1992 to current 91 comprising of mainly the District Farmer Associations. UNFFE structures run up to the parish level, with a parish farmers association being the lowest unit with registered individual farmers as members. All UNFFE branches have elaborate capacity and are institutionally sound with operational offices run by farmer coordinators at district and sub county level whereas parish farmer associations are run by parish extension link farmers.

2.0 Background to the study

Uganda's agricultural sector employs over 77% of Uganda's population, with 75 percent of Uganda's 3.13 million households engaged in agriculture, while an estimated 68 percent derive their livelihoods directly from the agricultural sector¹. Yet in spite of heavily capitalized programs like National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), for the past 10 years the agricultural sector has lagged behind other sectors, registering a growth of just 1.3 percent (see figure 1). The paradox of this trajectory is that we are witnessing a most dramatic shift in the transfer of wealth from the majority of Ugandans who are mainly engaged in agriculture, to a minority portion of those engaged in services and industry sectors.

Figure 1: Annual Growth of Selected Sectors (2003-2008)



Source: Background to the Budget 2008/09. MoFPED, June 2008

¹ Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2005). 2002 Population and Housing Census: Main Report. March 2005; See also, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2007). Uganda National Household Survey 2005/06: Report on the Agriculture Module. April 2007. UBOS estimates from the survey showed that there were 4.2 million agriculture households, constituting 78.8 percent of all households in the country.

NAADS was established in 2001 aimed at overcoming institutional constraints that were perceived to be undermining farmers' access to quality knowledge and productivity enhancing technologies. The key objective was transformation of public delivery of agricultural extension services into a largely private sector-led delivery system under a client or farmer controlled arrangement. It was expected that the farmers would be empowered to demand and control the delivery of agricultural advisory services through guided enterprise selection, technology promotion, and contracting private service providers. For NAADS first phase that covered the financial period from 2001/2002 through 2007/2008, the cost for the first phase of implementation cost US\$108 million. 2010/2011 financial year, NAADS is funded to the tune of 120 billion Uganda Shillings! Yet its impact on fortunes of farmers has continued to ebb! Therefore this action research seeks to audit the performance of NAADS to find out what went wrong, what is the fault line, and what needs to be done to ensure that NAADS fully empowers the farmers. The study objectives are thus;

- a) To facilitate a data driven consensus on the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of NAADS from the farmers' point of view
- b) To benchmark and analyze different extension model scenarios with a view of recommending progressive models that deliver what farmers want
- c) To deliver a farmers' NAADS blue print detailing a road map for reform.
- d) To provide evidence so that UNFFE can conduct effective advocacy.
- e) Map the power /influence matrix to underpin reforms in NAADS

3.0 The New Naads Policy 2010

New NAADS targets 20 households per village as food security category of beneficiaries. Each village is budgeted two million for food security beneficiaries (these referred to as the ones who lack kick-start in-puts to carryout production). Each village is supposed to form groups of 18-25 people. A village forms about five groups and each group is to receive 200,000 shillings, to be given to 2 selected beneficiaries. Each group is to form a procurement committee of 3 people who are mandated to identify enterprises as chosen by the group for which the beneficiary within their group intends to take. The beneficiary from a particular group is expected to pay back 75% (in kind) worth of inputs. In a revolving model, the returned inputs are to be passed on to another member within the same group. Beneficiaries under this category are exempted from co-funding.

The second category is the Market oriented group, the government is expected to spend She 875000= on every beneficiary under this category. Market oriented farmers are supposed to be the on-going well to- do farmers (in comparison to food security category) selected at the parish level. These are beneficiaries who wish to expand the size of their farms/ enterprise in order to produce for the market. They are projected to be 5-7 people per parish and this category is supposed to pay co-funding of 25%, and 75% worth the money/in-puts is advanced by government.

The commercial farmers category, are the sub-county based farmers who are supposed to receive a minimum of shillings 1million. They are selected by the sub-

county committee and are supposed to co-fund 25% and advanced 75% worth in inputs.

The last category is the national based beneficiaries. These are not more than 10 people country wide and they can apply for not more 200million Uganda shillings.

4.0 Issues from conversations with National Agriculture Advisory Services

- NAADS phase 1 covered an estimated 25% of the farming households, but phase 2 aims at covering all the farming households (4-5 million) and cover the gaps left by phase 1.
- Phase 2 was supposed to kick off in July 2010 but was temporarily suspended by the President following corruption complaints and pending review. January 2011, new NAADS guidelines were sent to districts countrywide. Development partners have not yet signed up.

5.0 Issues from conversations with national stakeholders on NAADS and the entire Agriculture policy in Uganda

- NAADS and sectors should stop doing things because the constitution mandates them to do so; but rather the citizenary need them for their well being. The problem with NAADS is not money, but rather lack of proper partnerships and everybody in the agriculture sector engaging in scattered activities on their own.
- The 31% decline in coffee exports in 2010 is a big issue that is mainly attributed to coffee wilt. Other crop and animal diseases like banana wilt, cassava streak virus disease, east coast fever in poultry, pneumonia in cattle, African swine fever in pigs etc are all big issues affecting agriculture performance. Investment in research and eradication of diseases is important for re-engineering the agriculture sector.
- Coffee wilt resistant varieties which were developed by National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) at Kituuza have not been multiplied and distributed country wide due to lack of funding yet the same disease continues to terrorize coffee shambas day in day out. Therefore NAADS should work closely with NARO, SCIFODE and other research firms to provide producers with resilient seed, breeds and other planting materials.
- Extension service delivery should be improved through farmer field schools, for this has worked in Karamoja area. The UNFFE farmer to farmer extension approach should be revived and supported.
- With the Ugandan population now 32million and growing at a rate of 3.2 per annum, it is ironical that there continues to be a shortage of human labour to participate in extensive agriculture production needed to feed the country. There should be bye-laws that compel all family members to engage in farming or at least contributing to family feeding; in an effort to shift from the conventional practice of women catering for the entire family's feeding.

- Environmentalists should also be integrated in the planning phases for agriculture policy. Issues like clearing land, agrochemical use, massive obtaining of cuttings/planting materials should all be looked at using a lens of conservation and sustainable natural resource use.
- Given the large number of small scale producers, bulk marketing through farmer groups should be promoted. NAADS should therefore target strengthening farmer organisations and cooperatives.
- Urban agriculture should be considered and this may require a different approach from rural agriculture. A look into crops that are area-specific i.e. prioritization versus zoning should be considered. NAADS should also specifically focus on small scale urban farmers

6.0 Highlights and reflections from the field

Eight districts spread across all regions of Uganda have been visited by the research team. Gulu and Oyam in northern Uganda, Budaka and Jinja in eastern Uganda, Mityana and Mukono in central Uganda and Kamwenge and Rukungiri in western Uganda. District Farmers Associations were strategic gate keepers to farmers and vital in identifying the NAADS beneficiaries considering those that benefited in the NAADS phase 1 and those that have benefited in the current phase. We held fireplace conversations in two homesteads per sub-county in each district we visited. At the fire place, a mayraid of beneficiaries from the neighboring parishes consisting of members of the food security and market oriented categories joined in for honest conversations. We were amazed at the ingenuity of these farmers who work hard, in hard circumstances to carve out a living. Their willingness to openly talk about issues that affect them, in a way indicated an emerging powerful farmer agency.

Conversations with farmers focused on the following;

- Perception on NAADS phases 1 and 2; of the two which one is more focusing on the farmers' needs?
- Formation of groups and enterprise beneficiaries; the level of influence of NAADS coordinators, local politicians and the sub-county leadership.
- The Procurement process of in-puts
- The co-funding issue
- The extension services (Accessibility of crop and animal service providers)
- Key issues for reform

6.1 Strategy for conversations with farmers

- Group Discussion with the team guiding the discussion on the above key areas and then do the listening and writing.
- Interviewing key informants (the community based facilitators, the sub-county NAADS coordinators, sub-county chiefs, sub-county farmers forum chairpersons, procurement committee chairpersons at the sub-county, parish level and village levels and the service providers)

- Reviewing the available documents at the sub-county and at the village level groups.

6.2 Perception about NAADS Phase 1 and 2

Farmers have limited information on the entire NAADS architecture. NAADS beneficiaries have mixed feelings about the design and implementation of the NAADS phases. During our conversations, most farmers gravitated to NAADS phase 2 design though quite pessimistic on efficacy of its implementation; the program has a big target group of approximately 100-125 farmers compared to NAADS phase 1 which targeted only 6 households at every parish and yet they received almost inputs of equal amount.

The phase 2 major undoing lie in the fact that only 20 farmers out of the targeted 125 are covered per year are too few. If you look at it deeper, it would take 6.25 years to cover the 125 beneficiary target! According to majority farmers, the rollout component of paying back 75% of received inputs is not realistic because of the fraudulent behaviors being witnessed in the procurement of the enterprises.

“We were told that we shall identify our suppliers and negotiate the price. Our Village Procurement committee identified Mr. Odwany Daniel who is known for having good banana suckers in this area and his name was recommended to the sub-county NAADS Coordinator for consideration, but to our surprise Ms Angella Kidega a service provider for crops delivered 260 suckers and I was told to sign and start planting immediately. I don’t know the type of the suckers but I was just told that they are kawanda made suckers. I paid Shs 113,800= for co-funding and I will pay back 75% of Shs 875,000= worth the value these suckers cost.” says Mr Patrick Okello a market oriented beneficiary of Lacen OtingVi, Lapainat West, Kolo Sub-county.



At the Farm of Mr Patrick Okello (in white T-shirt with words on his back), his neighbor Mr Odongo George- in a blue shirt (goat beneficiary); amidst is the banana sucker delivered two and a half weeks ago by the NAADS Extension officer. About 70 suckers had come out of the soil. Present was the Community based Facilitator Mr. Opiyo Abire Francis, Mr. Keneth Katungisa and Sunday Emmanuel of UNFFE

Mr. Clement Olongo; the sub-county NAADS Coordinator Kolo sub-county however says the sub-county intervenes in the village procurement when the village team has written and requested for their help. In turn the sub-county advertises and identifies the highest bidder. Putting the two perspectives together, the asymmetry of information is huge. Farmers seem not to understand the position advanced by Mr. Clement Olongo, the Kolo sub-county NAADS coordinator!



Show us the documents: On the chair is Mr. Clement Olongo (s/c NAADS coordinator for Kolo s/county with UNFFE team, Beneficiaries and extension workers.

“We only intervened in villages where they couldn’t get inputs for themselves. Actually they wrote to us...” says Olongo.

Secondly, NAADS phase 2 empowers farmers to procure enterprises’ for themselves. However, the selected 3 people as group procurement committee are often manipulated by the sub-county NAADS coordinators and extension workers to sign documents authorizing them to procure inputs they identify. Most often, the committee identifies sub-standard enterprises that do not meet NAADS standards.

Few farmers who gained from NAADS phase 1 however, argued that phase 2 guidelines have compromised technological transfer of agriculture because the big number of beneficiaries at village level simply receive inputs without any technical knowledge to look after them. Besides, the two extension staff at the sub-county level can not cover such big number as a result, farmers have lost most of the enterprises given to them because of lack of adequate knowledge and skills, unlike in previous NAADS where farmers were given enough training and then enterprises which helped the sustainability of the program. The key question here is; Was phase one design appropriate and only limited in scale? Are neighbour farmers of phase 1 beneficiaries copying and adopting NAADS technologies by proxy? Our findings reveal that the case of Ndimukika of Buwagi village is only an exception! Neighbour adoption in other areas we visited is not evident and visible. What can also explain this experience is that, Mukono district is largely peri-urban and its proximity to Kampala (Uganda’s capital city) allows infusion and buzz of information.

“You see my bananas I planted with NAADS Knowledge? Compare them with these ones I have been with 30 years ago. The ones for NAADS are well spaced and they have big bananas compared to mine” My neighbors have now copied from my

plantation and are doing well, though they never benefited from NAADS” Says Ruth Ndimukika of Buwagi Village, Budondo sub-county, Mukono District.

6.3 Formation of groups and selection of beneficiaries

In almost all the sub-counties groups were formed. However, the team observed that groups were formed purposely to select beneficiaries to gain from NAADS after distributing inputs group members ceased to know each other any more! What was very interesting was that the 20 people who gained at village level actually regard themselves as group members in the village now. They call themselves ‘NAADS group’ at the Village they no longer recognize their original groups and this means that even when they are ready to pay back 75% to the other group members they will not actually trace them. Group formation in NAADS activities is not an organic process. It is benefits from NAADS (Government) that beneficiaries target. The process is incentive driven. Benefits of co-operation and group action are not well articulated and explained.

“In my village we all received inputs. My self I got 2 goats valued at 100,000= and so were 18 other friends. Our friends whom we had formed groups together were rejected by NAADS and they took only us. I will send back two goats to NAADS soon as my two goats deliver.” Says Mr. Odongo George

Secondly we found discrepancy in farmers’ selection. In some districts, it was revealed that the same beneficiaries who gained from phase 1 were still beneficiaries of phase 2, and yet in a group of 25 people almost 20 have never received anything from NAADS.

6.4 The Procurement process of in-puts

The team observed that there still exist problems with procurement. The farmers’ power to procure is just on paper, much of the work is done by sub-county officials. In all the sub-counties we visited, no where we found community procurement successful. Elements of poor quality in-puts were witnessed, and elements of connivance of suppliers, sub-county NAADS cordiantors, and the subject matter specialist were suspected in our investigations. For example in Budaka district Ms Mukulu Ruth was given 50 local chicken at a cost of 10,000= each. Of 50, only 30 were in a good condition, 20 were too malnourished. Dr Owori a subject matter specialist also admitted that he only approved 30 chicken; he does not know why the 20 he never approved were given to the farmer. He admitted there could have been some connivance between the supplier and his colleagues-the sub-county NAADS officials.

“I verified only 30 birds, but I never verified the twenty, how they took them to the farmer I don’t know...” Says Dr Owori

Similar case was for Mr. Awele Godfrey of Ojwii B, Abela paris, Aleka S/County Oyam district. He received 24kgs of beans in April 2011 and 2 hoes, but all the seeds that were given to him nothing came of the soil (no germination at all). We found he has planted his own indigenous variety and in a good state.



Mr Awele with a stick showing us the beans he planted after he uprooted the ones NAADs gave him.

6.5 The co-funding approach

NAADs guidelines stipulate that each group is supposed to pay 30,000= to the sub-county as co-funding. But later on a circular was issued to all Chief Administrative officers that co-funding be lifted to only food security farmers, but the rest should pay. We found this aspect very confusing in the districts we visited. Each district has its own understanding of this aspect. With exception of KOLO sub-county which was charging 113,800= per beneficiary in the market oriented category, none of the other sub-counties we reached was charging any co-funding. We are still making sense of this whether each sub-county understands NAADs guidelines differently or it is sheer inefficiency. There seems to be a cocomphony of information. Instead of information, there is confusion! NAADs should come up with a clear and elaborate communication strategy.

6.6 The extension services (Accessibility of crop and animal service providers)

Every sub-county has one crop service provider and animal service provider, apart from delivering in-puts no where we found they had made training or monitoring the beneficiaries. Actually, in most of our discussion with them, the community based facilitators (CBFs) seem to be conversant with NAADs progress than coordinators. Our deep investigations found out that in some districts, these providers are fresh graduates who have no skills in crop or animal husbandry, farmers actually challenged them on the most practices in these sectors. The rural nature of most farm enterprises is a challenge to graduate and fresh extension workers; they are more keen on urban life and not spending time with farmers. According to a number of respondents, these extension workers are usually hanging around trading centers watching premiership football and enjoying other trappings of peri-urban life.

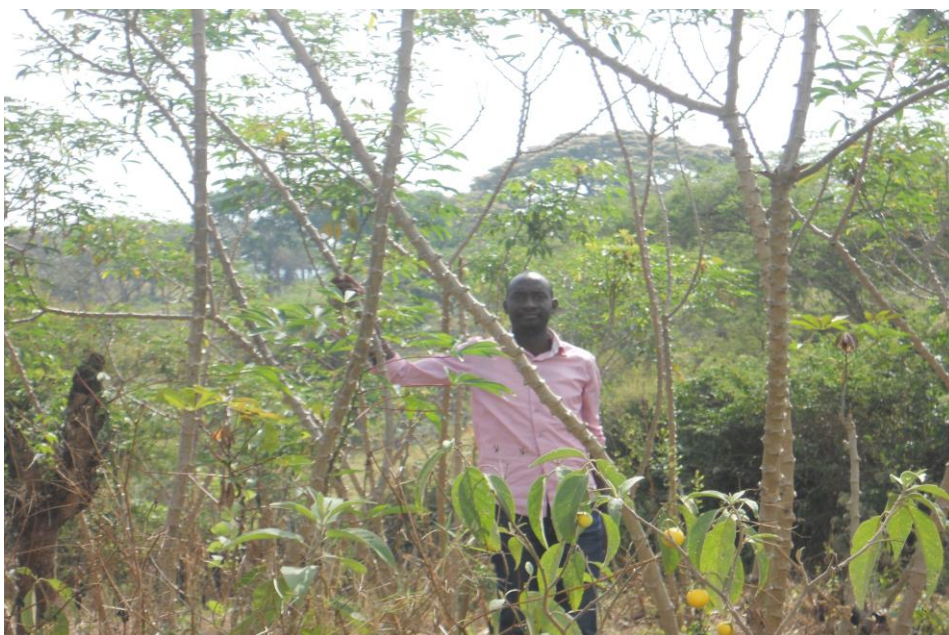
6.7 *Photographic Capture of farmers thoughts and stories*



A town hall meeting? NO. A FARMERS FIREPLACE CONVERSATION IN NYAMUBOGORE. Deploying our sharp ears and silver tongue ,we are determined to listen and speak for the farmers. No. We need to give farmers information to enable them speak for themselves. True and enduring change must come from people. People them selves. Nisisi!



The team discussing with Mrs. Apuri, a mixed farmer in Kamwenge.



Researcher Morrison Rwakakamba in a forest of a cassava garden at Kataryeba in Bishozi, Nkoma subcounty. Cassava is a key food security crop promoted by NAADS. Farmers in NAADS groups receive cassava cuttings and three hoes each.



Farm Walk with Mrs Apuli: Her farm is big for her available labour resources. she uses a hand hoe and propagates her own indigenous pineapple seed varieties



Visiting coffee farmers in Nyeibingo. Coffee yields are plummeting due to unprecedented droughts: NAADS has no strategy to assist farmers with diverse irrigation technologies. Will farmers stand the recent climate terror adjuncts?



Counting the Cost: A farmer in Rukungiri points at his drying coffee. Indeed his drying up 2011 season income! Drought that started November 2010 has continued through March 2011. This situation of “coffee plants” drying up is exceedingly unprecedented. Farmers were not prepared. Will they be prepared in future?



Coffee Conversations in Katenga: Notwithstanding the drought, coffee farmers; Khamutima Eric and Herbert Rwabihurwa seem to be optimistic about the future. My colleague Sande Emmanuel told them about water harvesting and drip irrigation. Will they wait for NAADS or they will do it for and by themselves?

7.0 General observations;

- There are still farmers in this country who don't know what NAADS is all about.
- There is a general apathy about the programme, with the majority of the farmers saying it only helps the rich so it's not for them, after asked about NAADS, one farmer said **"I don't know what its about and it never helped anyone I know"**
- The program has not done a lot to help livestock farmers.
- There are very few NAADS extension officers; some farmers said they had never seen a NAADS extension worker!!
- Only a few farmers have benefited from NAADS in its over 10 years of existence.
- The NAADS sub-county officers are under facilitated and as a result, the don't do as much field work as they would wish to do.
- Very few people actually learned from the model farmers who were supported in the first NAADS phase.
- Even the few people who are keen enough to learn from others, most often than not, don't have the resources to implement what they have learnt.

8.0 *NAADS and the issues surrounding it that need reflections*

- Advisory services should remain key in NAADS design, because farmers are not yet fully acquainted with best farming practices
- Designate credible input suppliers countywide, so that even the group procurement committees can have information about such providers
- Monitoring of NAADS must be urgently strengthened in order to correct some of the issues that are infringing on the operations of NAADS
- Sensitization of farmers on NAADS should be regular, otherwise people forget their roles and responsibilities which restrain the success of the program
- Involve the civil society in the service delivery, group formation and sustainability, sensitization and entire outreach

- MAAIF has researched and come up with a report that pins the corrupt culprits of phase 1. They range from suppliers, coordinators, government officials, to farmers. The whistle blowers policy as well will help to curb the prevalent corruption.
- On the issue of food security and safety, NAADS has not been addressing these directly. It has been the work of other agencies, although it will take them seriously.
- UBOS statistics indicate that 4-5 million households engage in agriculture. NAADS phase 2 is targeting this entire figure, though mainly through farmer groups and adults (18 years of age).
- NAADS in discussions with NGOs such as world vision and other agencies to reach out to farmers in areas such as Kalangala, Bundibugyo, and northern Uganda. NAADS still needs more stakeholders to come on board and help in effective service delivery.
- NAADS has over 50 Public Private Partnership (PPPs) for example with Mukwano and Sendegeya. However in the agriculture sector, there is lack of a clear framework policy on PPPs.
- By constitution, extension service is a citizen right to be provided by the local government. That's why NAADS struggles to spread widely in an effort to avail the services to all. Although this requires more funding sources and partnerships.
- Phase 2 has a research and extension component and it will be implemented as Agriculture Technology and Agribusiness Advisory Services (ATAAS) project.

9.0 Towards a NAADS that Farmers Want

- One of the biggest and most common issues raised by the farmers was that they would want a NAADS which provide labour saving technologies, because hiring of labour was increasingly becoming too expensive and prohibitive for the local farmer.
- Farmers also emphasized that they want a NAADS which can help them market their products.
- NAADS which provides timely in-puts and also teaches farmers how to effectively use those inputs.

- They also requested for more wide spread awareness on the new NAADS, especially on the difference between the old and new NAADS.
- NAADS should promote specific enterprises according the ecological zoning of the country to ensure optimum production.
- Need more livestock extension officers and it should also put certified animal drugs distributors at sub-county level so that farmers can access animal drugs from trusted drug shops.
- Extension workers should get to the farms more frequently than they used to, they should be more visible as farmers noted that they never see them at their farms.
- The new NAADS should also promote technologies like irrigation especially because of climate change, as the areas are experiencing more dry periods
- The in-puts given in the new NAADS are very few and will make very little tangible impact on the recipients.
- A NAADS which integrates demand based research because of the diseases like wilt and mosaic which are on the rise.