

Advancing Agricultural Knowledge: Improving the Professionalism of Rural Advisory Services



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May 2017

The Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) is about enhancing the performance of advisory services so that they can better serve farm families and rural producers, thus contributing to improved livelihoods in rural areas and the sustainable reduction of hunger and poverty. Rural advisory services help to empower farmers and better integrate them in systems of agricultural innovation.

The GFRAS structure reaches smallholder farmers via the regional rural advisory services networks, which are made up of national-level platforms. The national platforms include actors from all sectors working in rural advisory services, and work directly with smallholders. National platforms help prioritise national-level issues and formulate demands to be taken to the regional and global levels.

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Correct citation: Terblanche, S.E. (2017). Advancing Agricultural Knowledge: Improving the Professionalism of Rural Advisory Services. GFRAS: Lausanne, Switzerland.

Cover page photo: ILRI

Photos: page 3: Charity Chonde; pages 5 & 26: Swiss Academy for Development; page 9: Abbas Farzami, Rumi Consultancy, Wold Bank; page 18: Denise Miller

Design: Ana María Hintermann-Villamil, webhint.ch, Gümligen, Switzerland

Layout: Isabel Jost, PolyCrea, Laupen, Switzerland

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Acronyms

AESA	Agricultural Extension in South Asia
AFAAS	African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
AIS	Agricultural innovation systems
APEN	Australasia–Pacific Extension Network
APIRAS	Asia Pacific Island Rural Advisory Services
CAEPNet	Caribbean Agricultural Extension Providers Network
CECRA	Certificate for European Consultants in Rural Areas
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (South Africa)
EAS	Extension and advisory services
EUFRAS	European Forum for Rural Advisory Services
GFRAS	Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services
NAEPSDP	National Association of Extension Program and Staff Development Professionals
NIFA	National Institute for Food and Agriculture (USA)
PIRAS	Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network
RAS	Rural advisory services
RELASER	Red Latinoamericana de Servicios de Extensión Rural
RESCAR-AOC	Réseau des services de conseil agricole et rural d’Afrique de l’Ouest et du Centre
SACNASP	The South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions
SASAE	South African Society for Agricultural Extension
SIA	Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists
UF-IFAS	University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Executive summary

Introduction

Businesses and other institutions around the world are increasingly using the term 'professionalism' to describe their level of service provision. While some professions, for example medicine and engineering, have been well known and recognised through standard qualifications for many years, others – such as rural advisory services (RAS) – have only recently begun to aspire to a high level of professionalism.

In 2016, the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) commissioned a scoping study to examine the current levels of professionalism in its 11 regional networks. The aim was to provide evidence that would guide the activities and tools offered by GFRAS as well as to promote inter-regional learning and information exchange with a specific focus on training, talent and career development, performance incentives, certification and registration, mentoring and standards.

Methodology

The methodology included a literature study to identify examples of professional RAS from around the world and assess how they are structured, how they operate (including bylaws and membership classes) and the competencies they require in order to recognise their staff as professional extension agents.

The consultant also developed a questionnaire and distributed it to the regional networks to identify the key stakeholders in RAS and gain their input. The questionnaire assessed respondents' perceptions on current levels of professionalism in their own RAS, the advantages and disadvantages of professionalism, and what they regarded as essential professional skills. They were also asked to rate the competencies included in the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#).

Findings

The study identified four examples of professional RAS: Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists (Canada), European Forum for Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (EUFRAS), South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions, and National Association of Extension Program and Staff Development Professionals (USA).

A total of 54 people (37 male and 17 female) from 29 countries responded to the survey. Participants were drawn from academic institutions (30%), non-governmental organisations (30%), government extension and advisory services (22%), research institutions (11%) and GFRAS regional network staff (7%). Their roles included lecturer, advisor, researcher and manager.

The results revealed that respondents from 37 countries consider their RAS to be professional. Thirty of these countries are within EUFRAS. Fifteen countries are considered to be in the process of becoming professional, and 20 are interested in becoming more professional. The countries that are considered to have professional RAS generally have a specific legal body or structure responsible for establishing and upholding professional standards, e.g. the National Institute of Agricultural Technology is the legal body in Argentina. Respondents interested in becoming more professional indicated the availability of a body or structure that could oversee the professionalism process, e.g. the non-governmental organisation Sustainable Alternatives for Development in Cameroon.

Respondents from countries having professional RAS as well as those from countries in the process of becoming more professional indicated the bylaws applicable to their own situations. Both groups considered 'field of practice' and 'continuous professional development' to be the most applicable bylaws.

In most countries with professional RAS, the minimum qualification to be registered as a professional agricultural advisor is a degree in agriculture. Some countries also ask for a Master's degree. Respondents from non-professional RAS recommended that a diploma, degree and/or post-graduate degree should be required for professional registration.

According to the study respondents, the five most important characteristics of a professional person are:

- personal characteristics, e.g. trustworthy, respectful, committed, accountable
- extension science competencies, e.g. education and research, social/cultural behaviour and adaptation to change, leadership skills and conflict management
- technical competencies, e.g. qualifications in agriculture
- adhere to a code of ethics/moral standards
- undertake continuous professional development.

Respondents listed the main advantages of professionalism as: a) set high standards to improve performance and deliver a relevant service (54%); and b) job satisfaction, including pride, recognition, practising without fear/interference, remuneration/reward, support from colleagues, etc. (46%). They described the main disadvantages of professionalism as: a) disconnected from reality, i.e. work environment becomes discouraging, administrative burden, inability to practise with confidence (34%); b) effect on the work environment, i.e. eliminate small enterprises, more oriented towards large producers, mistrust (46%); and c) high cost for beneficiaries (20%).

When asked about the essential competencies needed in order to be recognised as a professional in RAS, respondents listed the top three as communication, technical skills, and social/cultural aspects and human behaviour.

Respondents rated the significance of the competencies covered in the 13 modules of the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#) as follows:

- Absolutely essential: communication for innovation; extension approaches and tools; adult learning and behaviour change; and facilitation for development.
- Essential: agricultural entrepreneurship; extension programme management; professional ethics; gender issues in agricultural extension and rural development; adaptation to change; value chain extension; and introduction to the New Extensionist.
- Somewhat essential: community development; and farmer institutional development.

They suggested it would be useful to include the following competencies in the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#):

- conflict management
- group dynamics and leadership
- policy-making, advocacy and principles
- monitoring and evaluation
- marketing aspects
- partnership building.

Conclusions and recommendations

The study indicated that agricultural extension and rural advisory services need to attain a professional status on a level with that of other agricultural disciplines. Participants expressed some confusion regarding the characteristics of a professional person, but generally agreed that personal characteristics and extension/technical competencies were the most important. When asked about the essential competencies needed in order to be recognised as a professional in RAS, respondents listed the top three as communication, technical skills, and social/cultural aspects and human behaviour.

Importantly, almost two-thirds of respondents (61%) indicated that they would like to obtain support and guidance with the process of enhancing professionalism in their countries. GFRAS focuses on several 'strategic fields' in pursuit of its mission and vision. Strategic field 2 relates to professionalism in RAS and the scoping study was conducted under this strategy. The majority of the respondents indicated that there is a body or structure available in their country that can take the lead, while GFRAS has its own regional networks that could manage the process.

The recommendations for GFRAS are as follows:

1. GFRAS should investigate the possibility of developing a model or process to support countries and regional networks work towards establishing professionalism in their extension and rural advisory services.
2. This process could include a two- to three-day workshop for extension advisers and other stakeholders involved in extension and advisory services.
3. GFRAS will need to secure funding for the development and implementation of the model and process at country or regional level.
4. The first aim of the model/process is to determine the current extension landscape in a country.



1. Introduction

Businesses and other institutions around the world are increasingly using the term ‘professionalism’ to describe their level of service provision. While some professions, for example medicine and engineering, have been well known and recognised through standard qualifications for many years, others – such as rural advisory services (RAS) – have only recently begun to aspire to a high level of professionalism. This trend is reflected in the fact that extension and RAS have been mentioned as a profession in publications specifically from 2005 onwards (see box 1).

The Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) commissioned this scoping study to examine the current levels of professionalism in its 11 regional networks. The aim was to provide evidence that would guide the future activities and tools offered by GFRAS as well as to promote inter-regional learning and information exchange with a specific focus on training, talent and career development, performance incentives, certification and registration, mentoring and standards. The results of this study also informed the development of a module on Professional Ethics, which is part of the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#).

The methodology included a literature study to identify examples of professional extension and advisory services from around the world and to assess how they are structured, how they operate (including bylaws and membership classes) and the competencies they require in order to recognise their staff as professional extension agents. The consultant also developed a questionnaire and distributed it to the regional networks to identify the key stakeholders in RAS and gain their input.

A total of 54 people (37 male and 17 female) responded to the survey. Participants were drawn from academic institutions (30%), non-governmental organisations (30%), government extension and advisory services (22%), research institutions (11%) and GFRAS regional network staff (7%). Their roles included lecturers, advisors, researchers and managers.

The countries participating in the study (number of respondents in brackets) were: Argentina (3), Australia (1), Benin (2), Cameroon (1), Cook Islands (1), Ecuador (1), Egypt (1), Ethiopia (7), Fiji (1), Ghana (1), India (1), Ireland (1), Kenya (1), Madagascar (1), Malawi (2), Mali (6), Namibia (2), Nigeria (7), Pakistan (1), Philippines (1), Samoa (1), South Africa (2), Sudan (1), Switzerland (2), Tanzania (1), Togo (1), Trinidad and Tobago (1), Uganda (2) and United States (1).

Respondents were members of the following GFRAS regional networks: African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), Agricultural Extension in South Asia (AESAs), Asia Pacific Island Rural Advisory Services (APIRAS), Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN), US National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (PIRAS), Red Latinoamericana de Servicios de Extensión Rural (RELASER), Réseau des services de conseil agricole et rural d’Afrique de l’Ouest et du Centre (RESCAR-AOC) and European Forum for Rural Advisory Services (EUFRAS).

Respondents were members of GFRAS country fora in Australia, Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Togo and Switzerland.

Towards more professional RAS

In its publication *Norms and standards for extension and advisory services*, the South African Department of Agriculture (2005) indicated:

- Extension officers are encouraged to become professionals and experts in their fields and rewarded accordingly for excellence performance (p.v).
- Agricultural extension and advisory services are dynamic professions (p.8).
- It is therefore expected of every individual who performs duties of agricultural extension and advisory services to demonstrate professionalism (p.7).
- Those who wish to be in the extension stream must have a higher degree in extension and must register with the recognised relevant professional body (p.8).
- Source: SA D of A (2005)
- In *Modernizing national agricultural extension systems: a practical guide for policy-makers of developing countries*, the author states the following:
 - There is a need to broaden the technical mandate of extension to aim at broader development of rural human resources.
 - There is a need to formulate national policy on extension.
 - The extension profession should be given a status similar to that of other agricultural science disciplines.
 - The profession of extension has never received the proper status it deserves.
 - Extension is a tough and demanding profession, both physically and intellectually.
 - There should be frequent public recognition of extension professionals for their achievements.

Source: Qamar (2005).

This report is organised as follows: Section 2 provides definitions of ethics and professionalism. In Section 3, the reader will find examples of professional RAS from around the world and suggested minimum professional competencies. Section 4 presents the study findings. The report ends (Section 5) with conclusions and specific recommendations for GFRAS on how to move forward and improve the professionalism of RAS.



2. Ethics, professions and professionalism

This section defines the terms ethics, profession, professional and professionalism to set the context for the later discussions. The focus is on the general literature.

2.1 Ethics defined

Ethics (also known as moral philosophy) is a branch of philosophy that involves systematising, defending and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, undated).

Ethics describe a moral code or set of principles guiding human behaviour. However, in order to better understand the concepts of ethics in relation to professionalism in RAS, it is important to look briefly at the different predominant theories that shape the ethical discourse. There are three generally known and accepted components of enquiry or theories of ethics: meta-ethics, normative ethics and applied ethics (see box).

Normative ethics and applied ethics are closely linked to professionalism and often enforceable through legal means. In understanding the nature of ethics and their relationship to the law, a useful analogy is that of a wall. The solid bricks represent clearly defined and substantial laws and status. Ethics represent the mortar that fills the voids between the bricks. This helps to hold the wall together and give it additional strength. The

weaker the mortar, the more likely it becomes that the wall will collapse.

Ethics encourage people to: a) consider all relevant sides of an ethical problem; b) consider basic ethical values; and c) act in accordance with the code of their profession. According to Plant (2016), the basic concepts of ethics include: a) who we are (personal identity), being a person of integrity, character and virtues (such as compassion, empathy and sympathy); and b) what we do (actions, conduct), doing what is good, right and fair, responsible conduct and conforming with ethical standards or values. Managing ethics is about preventing decent people from doing stupid things (Alan Knott-Craig, former CEO of Vodacom, cited in Plant, 2016).

According to Verschoor (1998, cited in Plant, 2016), companies with stated commitments to ethics or that emphasise compliance to their codes in their annual reports, have significantly better financial performance than those that do not.

The purpose of a code of ethics (Plant, 2016) is to:

- protect stakeholders and enhance trust
- promote reputation
- prevent unethical behaviour
- promote ethical behaviour
- encourage ethical decision-making and provide guidance
- facilitate social integration
- legitimise 'ethics'.

The [Texas Explorer's Guide to Law Enforcement Training](#) suggests the best way to understand the concept of ethics and professionalism is to think of occupations as differing regarding the degree to which they are professional. The characteristics of professionalism are described as:

- service to others
- assessment of client needs
- theoretical body of knowledge obtained through extended pre-service education
- standards for entry, practice and ethical conduct
- professional associations to maintain standards
- continuing education and life-long learning.

The same source describes the ethical role as being performed by being objective and ethical in all personal behaviour and functions, i.e.:

- to act in a manner that reflects belief in the fundamental value of ethical behaviour and in application of this value to your job
- to conduct daily activities in an objective manner, striving to be uninfluenced by emotion, personal prejudice or insufficient evidence
- to provide objective and constructive assistance or information to all persons, regardless of personal feelings
- to assist the public in understanding how they can help to achieve objective and ethical behaviour.

2.2 Profession explained

In the [Oxford English Dictionary](#), a profession is defined as "the occupation, which one professes to be skilled in and to follow. A vocation in which professed knowledge of some branch of learning is used in its application to the affairs of others, or in the practice of an art based upon it".

Perks (1993) identified the following as the major milestones that may mark an occupation being identified as a profession: an occupation becomes a full-time occupation; the establishment of a training school, university school, local and national association; the introduction of codes of professional ethics; and establishment of state licensing laws.

The common denominator in the understanding of a profession is that it has minimum standards, enjoys social status and there is some level of regulation. The definition by Professions Australia (see box) provides a suitable definition to use as guidance in this study.

2.3 Professional clarified

A professional is a member of a profession or any person who earns their living from a specified professional activity. The term also describes the standards of education and training that prepare members of the profession with the particular knowledge and skills necessary to perform their specific role within that profession (Wikipedia, undated)

Three predominant ethical theories

Meta-ethics is about the meaning of ethics. It investigates where our ethical principles come from, and what they mean. It explores the status, foundation and scope of moral values, properties and words. It answers questions such as: What exactly are people doing when they use moral words such as 'good' and 'right'? What precisely is a moral value in the first place, and are such values similar to other familiar sorts of entities, such as objects and properties? Where do moral values come from – what is their source and foundation? Are some things morally right or wrong for all people at all times, or does morality instead vary from person to person, context to context, or culture to culture?

Normative ethics is about arriving at moral standards that regulate right and wrong conduct. It examines standards for the rightness and wrongness of actions and which actions can be judged. It asks questions such as: Which actions are right and wrong, or which character traits are good and bad? How should one act? What good habits should we acquire? What duties should we follow? What are the consequences of our behaviour on others?

Applied ethics: unlike meta-ethics and normative ethics, which are abstract, applied ethics is more 'practical' and deals with ethical questions to a professional, disciplinary or practical field. There are often business ethics concerned with ethical behaviour in the corporate world, and professional ethics referring to a professional in a specific field. Applied ethics is prominent in the medical, business, environmental, human rights, legal and media spheres. It involves examining specific controversial issues, such as environmental concerns, animal rights, capital punishment, nuclear war etc.

Source: modified from: Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy and New World Encyclopedia (undated).

Professions Australia definition of a profession

A profession is a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards and who hold themselves out as, and are accepted by the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others. It is inherent in the definition of a profession that a code of ethics governs the activities of each profession. Such codes require behaviour and practice beyond the personal moral obligations of an individual. They define and demand high standards of behaviour in respect to the services provided to the public and in dealing with professional colleagues. Further, these codes are enforced by the profession and are acknowledged and accepted by the community.

Source: Professions Australia (undated)

Ten characteristics of professionalism

Appearance: A professional is neat in appearance. Be sure to meet or even exceed the requirements of your company's dress code, and pay special attention to your appearance when meeting with prospects or clients.

Demeanour: Your demeanour should exude confidence but not cockiness. Be polite and well-spoken whether you're interacting with customers, superiors or co-workers. You need to keep your calm, even during tense situations.

Reliability: As a professional, you will be counted on to find a way to get the job done. Responding to people promptly and following through on promises in a timely manner is also important, as this demonstrates reliability.

Competence: Professionals strive to become experts in their field, which sets them apart from the rest of the pack. This can mean continuing your education by taking courses, attending seminars and attaining any related professional designations.

Ethics: Professionals such as doctors, lawyers and public accountants must adhere to a strict code of ethics. Even if your company or industry doesn't have a written code, you should display ethical behaviour at all times.

Maintaining your poise: A professional must maintain their poise even when facing a difficult situation. For example, if a colleague or client treats you in a belligerent manner, you should not resort to the same type of behaviour.

Phone etiquette: Your phone etiquette is also an important component of professional behaviour. This means identifying yourself by your full name, company and title when you place a call. Be sure not to dominate the conversation and listen intently to the other party.

Written correspondence: During written correspondence, keep your letters brief and to the point. Your tone should be polite and formal without being 'stuffy'. This also applies to email correspondence.

Organisational skills: A professional can quickly and easily find what is needed. Your work area should be neat and organised, and your briefcase should contain only what is needed for your appointment or presentation.

Accountability: Professionals are accountable for their actions at all times. If you make a mistake, own up to it and try to fix it if possible. Don't try to place the blame on a colleague. If your company made the mistake, take responsibility and work to resolve the issue.

Source: Smallbusiness.chron.com (2017).

A business definition suggests that a professional is a person formally certified by a professional body or belonging to a specific profession by virtue of having completed a required course of studies and/or practice and whose competence can usually be measured against an established set of standards. This person has achieved an acclaimed level of proficiency in a calling or trade (Businessdictionary.com, undated).

A professional often possesses a special set of skills in a chosen field, acquired through training, experiences, knowing and practice and that can be demonstrated by qualifications or accreditation of some kind. Much has been written about the qualities of a good professional, for example the Elmbrook mentoring programme cites examples of the qualities of a good professional (see box).

2.4 Professionalism simplified

In simple terms, **professionalism** can be defined as "the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person" (Merriam-Webster dictionary).

Much has been written about professionalism in the workplace. The general view is that professionalism is associated with honesty, accountability and responsibility as well as a high level of excellence going above and beyond the basic requirements (see box, which highlights some of the characteristics of professionalism).

Some qualities of a good professional

Technical expertise

A good professional:

- is master of the knowledge, expertise and skills that are used in a given profession
- is technically competent, can do the job and can do it well
- seeks to continue learning while practising the profession by doing the necessary research to handle new situations and problems as they arise; also tries to follow advances in the field
- seeks advice as needed from other professionals both in the same and in other fields
- is interested in learning from anyone who can help them to expand their knowledge.

Integrity

A good professional:

- is fair in dealing with others and honours their commitments even when it might seem contrary to their own advantage.

Ethics

A good professional tries to:

- act ethically in all their work and dealings with others; they feel responsible for knowing and observing the ethical norms that are particular to their profession (e.g. codes of ethics)
- obey the civil law, including regulations that apply to the particular profession
- not cooperate with others who seek to act in an unethical way or seek to break the law; if necessary, takes measures to prevent or stop unethical behaviour.

Advancing the profession

A good professional:

- tries to innovate within the profession so that the profession improves its service or provides that service more efficiently
- will collaborate with others in the profession when necessary (showing professional courtesy) and generally avoids publicly criticising others in the profession
- wants ethical norms to be lived in the profession and will work to ensure that they are
- takes an interest in the professional community (all those who exercise the profession); tries to promote solidarity among those practising the profession and will seek to be involved in professional societies; wants to help younger members of the profession to develop.

Integration of professional and personal life

A good professional:

- understands that professional work is a part of their life and not the whole of their life; does not neglect other aspects of life (e.g. family, culture, religion) due to excessive dedication to professional activity
- avoids commitments that will not allow them to fulfil other basic commitments.

Source: modified from Elmbrook, 2015.

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF-IFAS) describes professionalism and professional development as follows (Harder, 2015):

- demonstrate attributes of a positive role model
- maintain high ethical standards
- be accountable for my actions
- apply best practices to all aspects of work
- contribute to the knowledge base of UF-IFAS extension
- provide research-based information to the public
- collaborate with other professionals
- promote the profession to others
- serve as a catalyst for response to community needs
- identify opportunities for professional development
- attend relevant in-service trainings
- self-evaluate strengths and weaknesses as an extension professional
- share information with colleagues
- accept responsibility for all actions
- use professional, technical publications to keep current in my area of expertise.



3. Professional agricultural advisory services around the world

This section outlines the results of the literature study. It identifies examples of professional RAS from around the world, describes the way they are structured and operate, and highlights the competencies that are considered essential for a professional extension adviser.

3.1 Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists

The Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists (SIA) in Canada is an organisation of university-trained professionals. It protects the public by ensuring its members are qualified and competent to provide advice on agriculture and related areas. The principal body is the Agricultural Institute of Canada and this supports and promotes Canada's professional and scientific capacity for agriculture.

In Saskatchewan, the profession of agrology is regulated by provincial legislation (Agrologist Act, 1994). This gives SIA authority to make regular and administrative bylaws. The Act varies from province to province and each institute has its own membership criteria, fees and standards. Table 1 lists the bylaws of SIA.

3.2 European Forum for Rural Advisory Services

The European Forum for Rural Advisory Services (EUFRAS) has established the Certificate for European Consultants in Rural Areas (CECRA). The CECRA cooperation and usage agreement with Internationale Akademie Land-und hauswirtschaftlicher Beraterinnen und Berater was signed on 15 June 2015. The EUFRAS-CECRA office was established in October 2015.

CECRA is a qualification that encourages professional development among consultants in the rural areas of Europe. The aim is to improve their professional skills in the areas of scientific methodology, communication and dealing with people. The certificate has two compulsory modules and applicants must complete at least three of 13 elective modules. Those applying for the certificate must have:

- completed a degree course or vocational training
- two years of professional experience in rural advice
- confirmation that they have completed the required modules
- attended an event in another country and completed a visit to an advisory organisation in another country
- completed a final thesis (case study including self-reflection).

Interested institutions may apply to EUFRAS to become a regional certification body authorised to issue CECRA. The Teagasc Advisory Service is an example of a regional body

that has achieved CECRA. Located in Ireland, Teagasc was established under the Agricultural (Research, Training and Advice) Act 1988 and its principle function is to provide (or procure the provision of) agricultural education, training and advisory services, including those that may be specified by Ireland's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Marine Resources for the purpose of implementing any directive, regulation or other act adopted by an institution of the European Union. The

Teagasc governing body is an 11-member authority appointed by the Minister. It operates according to the following documents:

- Teagasc Customer Charter
- Code of Business Ethics, including Ethics in Public Office (The Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001) and the Teagasc Code of Standards and Behaviour (The Ethics in Public Office Act 2001)
- Teagasc Code of Conduct 2011
- CECRA.

Table 1: Bylaws of the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists

<p>Bylaw I: Membership</p>	<p>Classes of membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional agrologist (completed a four-year agricultural degree from an accredited university programme) • Articling agrologist (undergoing a four-year agricultural degree from an accredited university programme) • Agricultural technologist (a diploma in agriculture recognised by the Canadian Association of Diploma Agriculture Programs) • Articling agricultural technologist (a two-year diploma from the University of Saskatchewan or two-year diploma recognised by the Canadian Association of Diploma Agriculture Programs) • Student affiliate • Retired member • Graduate student
<p>Bylaw II: Code of ethics</p>	<p>Code of ethics for agrologists Agrologists will assent and conform to the code of ethics, which is as follows: The profession of agrology demands integrity, competence and objectivity in the conduct of its members while fulfilling their professional responsibilities to the public, the employer, the client, the profession and other agrologists.</p> <p>Code of ethics for agricultural technologists Agricultural technologists will assent and conform to the code of ethics, which is as follows: The agricultural industry demands integrity, competence and objectivity in the conduct of its members while fulfilling their professional responsibilities to the public, the employer, the client and other agricultural technologists.</p>
<p>Bylaw III: Meetings of the Institute</p>	<p>Special meetings of the institute may be called by the president when requested by 20 members of the institute.</p>
<p>Bylaw IV: Continuous professional development</p>	<p>All practising members of the Institute shall be required to demonstrate that they are continuing their professional education and development by obtaining a minimum of 150 hours of continuing professional development over a three-year period in order to maintain their membership of the Institute.</p>
<p>Bylaw V: Standards of practice</p>	<p>All members must apply with the following standards of practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure safe and ethical practices • act with integrity • only undertake work for which the member is competent and qualified • act fairly and with objectivity • avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest • clearly communicate the scope of work undertaken • maintain adequate records as required by these laws and any related policies, guidelines and procedures.
<p>Bylaw VI: Discipline</p>	<p>Professional Conduct Committee is responsible for investigating professional misconduct. Discipline Committee determines action against any member was found guilty.</p>

Source: Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists

Teagasc has three levels of membership: a) Teagasc members (all staff with a degree); b) private consultants' association (all with degrees); and c) other advisors (some with degrees).

3.3 Council for Natural Scientific Professions and the Society for Agricultural Extension

In 2011, South Africa's Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) requested the South African Society for Agricultural Extension (SASAE) to undertake a study on the feasibility of establishing a professional national extension and advisory body. SASAE undertook desktop research on relevant documents, developed a questionnaire and conducted interviews with key stakeholders, including extension managers in the private and semi-private advisory services sector and provincial departments of agriculture.

The study addressed the following:

- the pros and cons of establishing a new professional council under the auspices of DAFF or pursuing registration under the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP)
- best practices with regards to establishing and managing a professional council
- levels of professional registration
- specific qualifications needed for registration at each level
- means of providing recognition of prior learning and experience
- the essential elements of continuous professional development and mentorship.

Regarding private and semi-private sector extension and advisory services, the study team found that respondents were generally experienced and well qualified, regarding SASAE as an important institution with acceptable membership fees. However, some respondents noted that while SACNASP enjoys a high level of esteem and credibility, they considered the annual fees to be too high. While 43.5% of practising field workers belong to a learned society, only 12.5% belong to SASAE. Respondents also noted that communication is considered to be the most important extension training module and a closer and more cordial relationship among SASAE and SACNASP was widely supported.

Regarding government extension and advisory services, respondents were generally experienced and academically qualified, with non-government extension agents appearing to be better qualified in the natural sciences than in other disciplines. Just over 9% of government extension staff had a BSc qualification in agriculture, compared with 53% of non-government extension agents, although 29% of government extension staff have registered to further their qualifications in

agricultural sciences. Government extension advisers regarded SASAE in high esteem and only a handful belonged to scientific organisations other than SASAE. Communication, leadership and management appeared to be the disciplines needed most by practitioners.

The study concluded that, rather than pursuing a parallel registration structure through SASAE, it would be better to build closer links with SACNASP. The study team suggested the following improvements.

- SACNASP and the Department of Science and Technology should approve a field of practice for extension.
- A level-B category should be considered for the registration of certificated natural scientists who would not normally be accepted for registration by SACNASP.
- The Board of SASAE should re-examine SASAE membership categories and include additional classes, for example, professional agricultural extension scientist, certificated extension technologist and associated extension technologist.
- Continuous professional development and mentorship should become essential elements of the professional registration of extension advisers in the future.

After discussion, DAFF, SASAE and SACNASP unanimously decided that extension advisers in South Africa would be registered with SACNASP according to the Natural Scientific Professions Act 2003.

The Natural Scientific Professions Act 2003

The purpose of the Natural Scientific Professions Act (Act 27 of 2003) is to provide for the establishment of the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions and for the registration of professional, candidate and certified natural scientists.

As per Schedule 1 of the Act, nobody may practise in any of the 23 listed fields of practice unless they are registered in a category of the schedule. The latest fields of practice were published under Notice 36 (2014) by the Minister of Science and Technology. The notice officially substitutes Schedule 1 to the Act, and includes extension as a field of practice (as approved on 3 December 2013 and gazetted on 24 January 2014).

SASAE has been registered with SACNASP as a voluntary association and will be responsible for the registration of professional extension advisers and the development of a continuing professional development programme.

SACNASP has drawn up a code of conduct to which registered persons must comply. Failure to comply constitutes improper

conduct. In practising their profession, a registered natural and extension scientist must:

- have due regard to public safety, public health and public interest in general
- have due regard to harmful practices against the environment
- discharge their duties to their respective employers or clients efficiently and with integrity
- conduct themselves in such a way as to uphold the dignity, standing and reputation of the natural scientific professions
- not undertake natural scientific work for which their education, experience or background have not rendered them competent to perform
- disclose to their respective employers or clients in writing: a) any interest they may have in any company, firm or organisation, or with any person, that is related to the work for which they may be or may have been employed; and b) particulars of any royalty or other financial benefit which accrues or may accrue to them as a result of such work
- not deliberately injure (directly or indirectly) the professional reputation, prospects or business of another registered person
- not knowingly attempt to supplant another registered person after a formal offer of employment has been made
- not advertise their professional services in a self-laudatory manner or in a manner that is derogatory to the dignity of the profession
- not knowingly misrepresent or permit misrepresentation of their own or their associates' academic or professional

- qualifications, nor exaggerate their own degree of responsibility for any work of a natural scientific nature
- not, without a satisfactory reason, destroy calculations, documentary or any other evidence required for the verification of their work
- not personally, or through any other agency, attempt to obtain consulting work by way of touting or bribery
- order their conduct when practising their professions in another country in accordance with these rules in so far as they are not inconsistent with the law of the country concerned, provided that they shall also adhere to the standards of professional conduct in that country.

The following lists the requirements for registration as a professional natural scientist.

- The professional natural scientist (Pr. Sci. Nat.) requires a four-year BSc degree and four years of appropriate experience as a prerequisite.
- A candidate natural scientist (Cand. Sci. Nat.) requires qualifications as for professionals but lacks the appropriate years of experience.
- A certificated natural scientist (Cert. Sci. Nat.) requires a three-year qualification in the natural sciences.

Registration as a natural scientist is a pre-requisite to registration as extension scientist. Extension science category requirements are listed in Table 2. It is now compulsory for all government extension advisors to register with SACNASP and SASAE, while some private advisory service providers (commodity organisations) have also decided to register their advisors with SACNASP.

Table 2: Requirements for registration as a professional extension scientist in South Africa

Category	Requirement
Professional Extension Scientist (Pr. Ext. Sci.)	Four-year degree/honours degree level 8 120 credits in extension science modules in fourth year/honours degree level Three years' work experience
Candidate Extension Scientist (Cand. Ext. Sci.)	Four-year degree/honours degree level 8 120 credits in extension science modules in fourth year/honours degree Less than three years' work experience
Extension Technologist Level A (Ext. Tech. A)	Recognised extension qualification: 60–120 credits Three years' work experience
Candidate Extension Technologist Level A (Cand. Ext. Tech. A)	Recognised extension qualification: 60–120 credits Less than three years' work experience
Extension Technologist Level B (Ext. Tech. B)	Recognised extension qualification: 10–59 credits Three years' work experience
Candidate Extension Technologist Level B (Cand. Ext. Tech. B)	Recognised extension qualification: 10–59 credits Less than three years' work experience
Associate Extension Technologist (Assoc. Ext. Tech)	At least ten years' work experience, no academic qualification required Two credible independent witnesses

3.4 National Association of Extension Program and Staff Development Professionals

There are a number of professional associations in the United States concerned with agricultural extension services. The National Association of Extension Program and Staff Development Professionals (NAEPSDP) is the most appropriate organisation to study in order to gain a better understanding of professional development (Harder, 2015). This is an appropriate source of knowledge and experience from which GFRAS and other RAS can learn.

NAEPSDP is an organised forum that brings together (physically and virtually) professionals who are actively engaged in, or have a strong commitment to, programme and staff development within the Cooperative Extension System. The objectives of NAEPSDP are to:

- improve communication and collaboration by discussing issues, needs and opportunities of mutual interest and building and sharing resources
- advocate for the profession by promoting its importance within the land grant system
- enhance multi-state efforts
- discuss, develop, sponsor and promote educational training programmes and activities towards programme and staff development
- advance the professional status of extension programme and staff development professionals by encouraging continuous self-improvement.

Members of NAEPSDP are extension professionals in each of the country states. There are three categories of membership.

- Active members are currently employed as extension professionals with responsibilities or a strong interest in programme and staff development.
- Life members must have retired from the Cooperative Extension Service with responsibilities or a strong interest in programme and staff development.
- Student members include graduate and undergraduate students engaged in training for careers in programme and staff development within the Cooperative Extension Service.

NAEPSDP has nine bylaws. Article I covers membership and fees, Article II concerns officers and board members and Article III relates to committees. Article IV includes the following guiding documents:

- constitution: NAEPSDP's fundamental rules governing the conduct of the organisation
- bylaws: the regulations enacted that provide a framework for the operation and management of NAEPSDP
- operating procedures: operational guidelines for the management of the board of directors and committees.

The remaining four Articles concern governance, amendments to the constitution and bylaws, elections, strategic partnerships and the dissolution of NAEPSDP.

3.5 Minimum professional competencies

According to Athey and Orth (1999), a competency is "a set of **observable** performance dimensions, including **individual** knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours, as well as **collective** team, process and organisational capabilities, that are linked to **high performance**, and provide the organisation with **sustainable competitive advantages**".

Different institutions/organisations define different priority competencies that are required for extension professionals. This section highlights the core competencies required by the following institutions/organisations:

- Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services
- Agricultural Extension in South Asia
- University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences
- The Core Competency Handbook
- Core competencies for extension professionals in Nepal
- Extension Educator Competencies for the 21st Century
- The Texas Extension Competency Model
- South Africa's Agricultural Extension Landscape
- EUFRAS CECRA modules

Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services

Working through its Consortium for Education and Training, GFRAS has developed a position paper ([The New Extensionist](#)), which defines the core competencies required to manage change within the context of agricultural innovation systems (AIS). Below is the list of the learning modules proposed by GFRAS and more information is provided in Annex 1.

- Module 1: Introduction to the New Extensionist
- Module 2: Extension approaches and tools
- Module 3: Agricultural extension programme management
- Module 4: Professional ethics
- Module 5: Adult learning for behavioural change
- Module 6: Basic knowledge management and extension
- Module 7: Introduction to facilitation for development
- Module 8: Community mobilisation
- Module 9: Farmer organisational development
- Module 10: The role of extension in value chains
- Module 11: Agricultural entrepreneurship
- Module 12: Gender in advisory services
- Module 13: Risk mitigation and adaptation in extension and advisory services.

Agricultural Extension in South Asia

Agricultural Extension in South Asia (AESAs) organised four workshops on capacity needs assessment in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Table 3 lists the capacities required by

extension and advisory service (EAS) functionaries, as defined by AESA.

Table 3: Capacities required by EAS functionaries

	Capacities required at field level	Countries
1	Communication skills and use of information technology	Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka
2	Sound technical knowledge	Bangladesh, India and Nepal
3	Community mobilisation and farmer organisation development and facilitation skills	Bangladesh, India and Nepal
4	Needs assessment of farmers and planning based on these needs	Bangladesh and Sri Lanka
5	Capacities to link farmers to markets	Sri Lanka
	Capacities required at middle level	
1	Capacities to network, partner, establish links and coordinate actions among different stakeholders	Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka
2	Leadership, team building, coaching and mentoring of subordinate staff	Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka
3	Planning and designing needs-based programmes	India
4	Technical knowledge	Nepal
5	Information technology skills	Bangladesh

Source: AESA (2016)

Table 4: Priority competencies for extension as defined by UF-IFAS

	Area	Working definition
1	Programme planning and development	Strategies, methodologies and tools used to develop an extension programme
2	Extension teaching tools and methods	Means used to deliver educational content to clients
3	Programme evaluation	Measures used to document outcomes and impacts as a means of accountability and programme success
4	Subject matter expertise	Technical knowledge and skills possessed to perform tasks related to a specific field or fields
5	Extension organisation and administration	Knowledge of the organisation and overall management of the duties of the position
6	Professionalism and professional development	Maintaining a high code of excellence and ethics along with seeking opportunities to stay up to date in relevant fields
7	Information and communication technologies	Using current technologies to reach mass audiences and enhance programming
8	External links	Collaborations with other government agencies, non-governmental organisations and industry
9	Volunteer development	Proactive use of the ISOTURE model to work with volunteers
10	Interpersonal leadership	Process of creating change in others through positive relationship-oriented behaviours

Source: Harder (2015)

Note: The ISOTURE model is a set of seven steps that a manager can use to help volunteers become more involved and effective. The steps are Identification, Selection, Orientation, Training, Utilisation, Recognition and Evaluation.

University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Science (UF-IFAS) Extension County Faculty has developed ten extension competency priorities, listed in Table 4.

The Core Competency Handbook

What every extension worker should know: The Core Competency Handbook (Suvedi and Kaplowitz, 2016) describes the characteristics and core competencies of extension workers as follows:

- plan well
- coordinate and collaborate to implement
- be humble
- communicate confidently
- build public relations
- value the diversity
- acquire educational and informational technology
- evaluate to show results
- update knowledge.

Core competencies for extension professionals in Nepal

Suvedi and Ghimire (2015) describe the core competencies for extension professionals in Nepal as follows:

- programme planning and implementation
- communication skills
- education and informational technology
- leadership
- diversity, pluralism and multiculturalism
- programme evaluation and research
- extension and organisational management
- professionalism
- technical subject matter expertise.

Extension Educator Competencies for the 21st Century

The University of Nebraska Lincoln published its Competency for 21st Century Extension Professionals in 2005. The list of core competencies are summarised as follows:

- successful teacher: plans, implements and evaluates extension education programmes
- subject matter competency: mastery of discipline, understands research base, considered technically proficient and current
- skilled communicator: excellent written and verbal skills and knowledge of supporting technology
- inclusiveness: aware of and committed to serving all members of a community
- entrepreneurial: generates grants, fees and contracts to enhance programmes
- collaborator and team player: creates partnerships and contributes to teams in response to significant issues
- leadership: ability to engage a wide range of individuals and facilitate progress on projects or programmes

- balance: optimise work efficiency to balance professional and personal time
- change manager: accepts change and is willing to deal with ambiguity
- professionalism: personal presentations and behaviour appropriate to our role and responsibility
- citizenship: contributes to the well-being of the organisation.

The Texas Extension Competency Model

Stone and Coppernoll (2004) developed the Texas Extension Competency Model. The core competencies are as follows:

- subject matter expertise: expert knowledge and skills in the area of extension
- organisational effectiveness: programme development and evaluation
- develop and involve others: maintain healthy relationships, mentoring, delegation, teamwork and facilitation groups
- communication: oral, written, interpersonal and groups
- action orientation: creating a vision for the future and working diligently toward goals
- personal effectiveness: committed to their work.

Additional required competencies are:

- communication and Information
- professional development planning
- learning opportunities on resources
- tracking, integration and accountability.

South Africa's Agricultural Extension Landscape

In South Africa, the Standard Generating Body for Agricultural Extension conducted a process of consultation and stakeholder workshops through which it developed the Agricultural Extension Landscape (Terblanche, 2008). This publication highlights specific extension concepts, study fields and the essential skills and knowledge areas (competencies) required by every extension worker to successfully fulfil their tasks in a professional manner (see Table 5).

Table 5: The Agricultural Extension Landscape in South Africa

Extension concept	Study fields	Essential skills and knowledge areas
Communication and interaction (the vehicle through which extension takes place)	Communication	Fundamentals of communication Communication strategies Individual/group/mass communication Communication aids Managing the communication process Mentoring – the protégé and mentor Individual facilitation process Consultation dialogue Group dynamics and theories Group forming and utilisation
	Group facilitation	Facilitation methods and techniques Leadership development Adult education
Extension methodology (implementing and managing the extension process)	Approaches to extension	Different implementation approaches and structures Philosophy of change and development Extension systems History and development of agricultural extension Action research and action learning
	Management in extension	Strategic planning and management Corporate policy and capacity building Organisational and systems theory Functions of management Motivational theory Networking, linkages and coordination Programme development and planning Programme implementation and management Evaluation of extension inputs and outputs efficiency Extension practice quality management systems – accountability Extension profession quality management systems Ethics (motivation and commitment, code of conduct, credibility, continuous professional development, work management)
Extension philosophy and practice (the science of extension)	Behavioural change	Agricultural production as forms of behaviour – influencing factors Behaviour fundamentals and theories Behavioural change processes and intervention Adoption and diffusion processes
	Decision-making	Basis to behavioural change The decision-making process Influence and function of mediating variables Individual decision-making Group decision-making Risk, uncertainty and risk perception Information and knowledge management in judgment and decision-making
Contextual extension (the context or environment of extension practising)	Community development	Rural sociology, structures and leadership Dynamics of social change Organisational and institutional structures Participation and empowerment Facilitation, negotiation and conflict resolution Community development roles Social networking and coordination
	Extension policy-making	Natural resource utilisation and protection The policy-making process Policy analysis and evaluation Technology transfer and skills development The agricultural legal environment Commercial agriculture production environment Small-scale agriculture production environment

EUFRAS CECRA Modules

Table 6 lists the EUFRAS CECRA compulsory and elective training modules.

Table 6: CECRA modules

Compulsory modules	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Course didactic methods2. Personal development – my profile as a consultant and communication and relationships building in advisory work
Elective modules (minimum of three modules according to individual choice)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Rhetoric presentation and moderation and discussion management2. Handling changes and change management3. Self and time management4. Project management and advising5. Arrangement of consulting processes6. Dealing with difficult consulting situations and change management7. Moderation and meeting management8. Graduate as service provider to client and professional handling of client9. Education and event management10. Counselling and accompanying groups11. Essentials of mediation12. Consulting and assisting enterprises in strategic questions13. Coaching introduction



4. Survey results

GFRAS developed a checklist and questionnaire and distributed it to the regional networks to identify the key stakeholders in RAS (see Annex 2). The aim was to assess the levels of professionalism in RAS around the world. This information will feed into further GFRAS activities designed to promote cross-regional learning and exchange.

4.1 Levels of development

The results reveal that 37 countries (30 within EUFRAS) can be considered to have established professionalism in RAS, with another 15 in the process of establishing professionalism. A total of 20 countries indicated that they are interested in becoming more professional in their RAS (see Table 7).

4.2 Responsible institutions

Respondents from the countries that have established professional RAS listed the institutions that are responsible for managing professionalism in RAS in their countries (see Table 8). Those from countries interested in or in the process of establishing professionalism listed the relevant institutions overseeing the transition (see Table 9; NB not all countries answered the question).

Table 7: Professionalism in RAS: countries' levels of development

Professionalism established	In the process of becoming professional	Interested in becoming more professional
Argentina Australia Ireland Philippines South Africa Switzerland USA In Europe there are already approximately 30 countries who have achieved professionalism under EUFRAS.	Benin Cook Islands Egypt Ethiopia Ghana Madagascar Mali Namibia Nigeria Pakistan Samoa Sudan Tanzania Togo Trinidad and Tobago	Benin Cameroon Cook Islands Ecuador Ethiopia Fiji Ghana India Kenya Madagascar Malawi Mali Namibia Nigeria Pakistan Samoa Sudan Tanzania Togo Trinidad and Tobago Uganda

Table 8: Professionalism in RAS: responsible institutions

Country	Professional association	Legal body	GFRAS regional network and country forum	Additional institutions
Argentina	AADER	INTA	RELASER	
Australia	APEN	Association Incorporation Act, Victoria 1981	APIRAS (APEN)	Regional CECRA certification bodies
Ireland	Teagasc	Agricultural (Research, Training and Advice) Act 1988	EUFRAS	Agricultural Training Institute/Civil Service Commission
Philippines	PhilEASNET	Professional Regulatory Commission, Republic Act: 8435	APIRAS (PhilEASNET)	Agricultural Training Institute/Civil Service Commission
South Africa	SASAE	SACNASP, Natural Scientific Act, Act 27 of 2003	AFAAS (SARFAAS)	
Switzerland	AGREDIA	Federal and Canton Admin Offices for Agriculture	EUFRAS (SFRAS)	
USA	NAEPSDP	USA extension service established 1914: Smith-Lever Act	NIFA	Every state is responsible for training and development of extension professionals

Note: AADER = Argentina Association of Rural Extension; AGREDIA = Swiss Association for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas; INTA = National Institute of Agricultural Technology; PhilEASNET = Philippine Extension and Advisory Services Network; SARFAAS = Southern Africa Regional Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services; SFRAS = Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services

Table 9: Establishing professionalism in RAS: relevant institutions

Country	Principle institution	Secondary institution
Benin	Ministry of Agriculture with country forum	
Cameroon	Sustainable Alternatives for Development (non-governmental organisation)	
Cook Islands	Country forum	
Ecuador	Organisations taking part in country forum, including universities and development agencies	
Egypt	Ministry of Agriculture	
Ethiopia	Ethiopia Society for Rural Development and Agricultural Extension	Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources Agricultural Development Producers Linkages Advisory Council
Fiji	Regional network (PIRAS)	
Ghana	Country forum	
India	Directorate of Extension, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare	National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management Indian Council of Agricultural Research
Kenya	Country forum	
Madagascar	Country forum	
Malawi	Country forum	
Mali	Country forum	
Nigeria	Country forum	
Samoa	Regional network (PIRAS)	
Tanzania	Tanzania Society for Agricultural Extension	
Togo	Country forum	
Trinidad and Tobago	Regional network (Caribbean Agricultural Extension Providers Network, CAEPNet)	
Uganda	Country forum	

4.3 Levels of membership and required qualifications

The levels of membership reported by the respondents in professional RAS are presented in Table 10 (note that Argentina and Switzerland did not provide information).

In countries where RAS is in the process of establishing professionalism, respondents highlighted the following professional mechanisms, qualifications and extension competencies.

Professional mechanisms:

- country forum (the most important mechanism) to develop, implement and manage the process (11)
- create a framework for coordination (3)
- undertake a study to develop a plan (1)
- develop and implement a continuous professional development programme (1).

A total of 10 respondents indicated at least a diploma and post-graduate degree, while 11 indicated at least a degree. The professional qualifications (technical and extension) mentioned were:

- certificate (3)
- diploma (10)
- degree (11)
- post graduate degree – Masters (10)
- post-graduate degree – PhD (3).

Specific extension competencies mentioned were:

- social science, rural and community development (9)

- communication (8)
- facilitation (6)
- concepts of extension according to GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#) (5)
- multi-stakeholder management (3)
- conflict management (2)
- adult education and training (2)
- entrepreneurship (1)
- innovation platform development and management (1)
- advocacy (1)
- group dynamics (1)
- monitoring and evaluation (1).

4.4 Applicable bylaws

Respondents from countries having professional RAS as well as those from countries in the process of becoming more professional indicated the bylaws applicable to their own situations. According to Table 11, respondents from professional RAS indicated 'field of practice' (90%) and 'continuous professional development' (80%) as the most applicable bylaws. 'Discipline' was perceived as the least applicable (40%). Respondents from non-professional RAS indicated 'continuous professional development' (94%) as the most applicable, followed by 'field of practice' (91%), with the least applicable bylaw considered to be 'standards of practice' (77%).

It is interesting to note that respondents from non-professional RAS rated the applicability of the five bylaws higher than respondents from professional RAS (86% versus 62%). The reason could be that they are not yet affected by the

Table 10: Professional RAS: levels of membership

Country	Membership levels				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Australia	Ordinary members	Student members	Retired professionals	Life member	Corporate member
Ireland	Teagasc (all staff with a degree)	Private consultant associations (all with degrees)	Other advisors (some with degrees)		
Philippines	Individual members	Institutional members			
South Africa Registration of two qualifications	1. Natural Science: Pr. Nat. Sci.	Cand. Nat. Sci	Cert. Nat. Sci		
	2. Extension Science: Pr. Ext. Sci.	Cand. Ext. Sci.	Cert. Ext. Tech. Level A/B	Cand. Ext. Tech. Level A/B	Assoc. Ext. Tech.
USA	Active members	Life members	Student members		

bylaws, while respondents from professional RAS might have experienced problems with some of the bylaws. See box for more information on the SACNASP continuous professional development bylaw.

SACNASP continuous professional development bylaw

Continuous professional development is an internationally recognised tool used by professionals to maintain and enhance their knowledge and skills. It is an essential part of supporting professionals in their current roles and in their career progression. SACNASP has developed a model with three categories:

- Category 1: Developmental activities (compulsory)
- Category 2: Work-based activities
- Category 3: Individual activities.

Over a period of five years, 25 credits need to be accrued for a scientist to be eligible for renewal of their registration. The SACNASP model will be implemented in April 2017.

4.5 Characteristics and advantages of being professional

Respondents were asked to list the five most important characteristics of a professional person. A total of 245 answers were received from the 54 respondents. The survey team categorised the answers into a group of broad descriptions in line with the findings of the literature review. A large number of respondents noted 'competencies' as important characteristics.

- Personal attributes: trustworthy, trusting, respectful, committed, integrity, accountable, etc. – 31% (76 responses).
- Extension science competencies: communication/facilitation, extension education and research, social and cultural behaviour/adaption to change, leadership skills/conflict management – 29% (70 responses).
- Technical competencies: qualifications in agriculture – 24% (59 responses).
- Adhere to a code of ethics/moral standards: 12% (29 responses).
- Undertake continuous professional development: 4% (11 responses).

Table 11: Bylaws applicable for professionalism

Bylaws		Professional RAS		Non-professional RAS	
		N	%	N	%
Code of ethics	Yes:	5	50	27	87
	No:	3	30	2	6.5
	Don't know	2	20	2	6.5
	Total	10	100	31	100
Field of practice	Yes:	9	90	29	91
	No:	1	10	1	3
	Don't know	0	0	2	6
	Total	10	100	32	100
Continuous professional development	Yes:	8	80	30	94
	No:	1	10	2	6
	Don't know	1	10	0	0
	Total	10	100	32	100
Standards of practice	Yes:	5	50	23	77
	No:	2	20	2	6
	Don't know	3	30	5	17
	Total	10	100	30	100
Discipline	Yes:	4	40	23	79
	No:	2	20	4	14
	Don't know	4	40	2	7
	Total	10	100	29	100

Regarding the advantages of being professional, a total of 153 answers were provided by the 54 respondents and the team grouped these into two specific advantage categories.

- Set high standards to improve performance and deliver a relevant service: 54% (82 responses).
- Job satisfaction: proudness, recognition, practising without fear/interference, remuneration/rewarding, support from colleagues, etc.) – 46% (71 responses).

The survey also asked for responses on the disadvantages of being professional and there were 64 responses, which were grouped into three categories.

- Effect on the work environment: eliminate small enterprises, more oriented towards large producers, mistrust – 46% (29 responses).
- Disconnected from reality: work environment becomes discouraging, administrative burden, inability to practise with confidence – 34% (22 responses).
- Cost for beneficiaries: 20% (13 responses).

The responses were then divided into those from countries with professional RAS and those from non-professional RAS (Table 12). Respondents from the professional category indicated communication skills as the most essential competency. They listed the second most important as technical skills, socio-cultural aspects and human behaviour, leadership and group functioning, and extension research, education and training. The respondents from the non-professional RAS also indicated communication skills as the most essential competency, followed by technical skills, and socio-cultural aspects and human behaviour.

4.6 The New Extensionist Learning Kit

The 54 respondents were asked to rate the significance of the competencies described in the modules of the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#) as follows:

1. Introduction to the New Extensionist
2. Extension approaches and tools
3. Extension programme management
4. Professional ethics
5. Adult learning and behaviour change
6. Communication for innovation
7. Facilitation for development
8. Community development
9. Farmer institutional development
10. Value chain extension
11. Agricultural entrepreneurship
12. Gender issues in agricultural extension and rural development
13. Adaptation to change

They were asked to rate these competencies on a scale of 1–5, where 1 = absolutely essential; 2 = essential; 3 = somewhat essential; 4 = not essential at all; and 5 = I don't know (Table 13).

The following competencies/modules received a mean value of below 1.40 and can therefore be recognised as absolutely essential:

- communication for innovation
- extension approaches and tools
- adult learning and behaviour change
- facilitation for development.

Table 12: Essential competencies to ensure recognition as a professional

Competency	N=54			
	Professional RAS		Non-professional RAS	
	n	%	n	%
Communication skills	10	22	31	20
Technical skills	5	11	23	15
Facilitation skills	4	9	15	9
Personal characteristics	4	9	13	8
Socio-cultural aspects and human behaviour	5	11	23	15
Leadership and group functioning	5	11	11	7
Extension research, education and training	5	11	16	10
Entrepreneurship	0	0	12	8
Ethical and moral standards	3	7	8	5
Programme and project processes	4	9	6	3
Total	45	100	158	100

Note: N = number of respondents; n = number of responses

- The following competencies/modules received a mean value of between 1.40 and 1.60 and can therefore be recognised as essential:
- agricultural entrepreneurship
- extension programme management
- professional ethics
- gender issues in agricultural extension and rural development
- adaption to change
- value chain extension
- introduction to the New Extensionist.

The following competencies/modules received a mean value of above 1.60 and can therefore be recognised as somewhat essential:

- community development
 - farmer institutional development.
- Respondents were requested to indicate any additional competencies or skills they thought should become part of the [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#) and they listed the following:
- conflict management
 - group dynamics and leadership
 - policy-making, advocacy and principles
 - monitoring and evaluation
 - marketing aspects
 - partnership building.
- Finally, the respondents were requested to indicate whether or not they were interested in obtaining support and guidance in the process of becoming professional. A total of 33 respondents (61%) said 'yes', seven (13%) said 'no', and 14 (26%) said 'I don't know'.

Table 13: Significance of competencies listed in the New Extensionist Learning Kit

Module/competency	Significance of competency/ module	Mean value	Priority
1. Introduction to the New Extensionist	n 1=Absolutely essential: 29 2=Essential: 14 3=Somewhat essential: 3 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 2 Total: 48	1.58	10
2. Extension approaches and tools	n 1=Absolutely essential: 38 2=Essential: 9 3=Somewhat essential: 1 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 48	1.23	1
3. Extension programme management	n 1=Absolutely essential: 32 2=Essential: 14 3=Somewhat essential: 3 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 49	1.41	5
4. Professional ethics	n 1=Absolutely essential: 30 2=Essential: 16 3=Somewhat essential: 2 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 1 Total: 49	1.49 7	7
5. Adult learning and behaviour change	n 1=Absolutely essential: 33 2=Essential: 14 3=Somewhat essential: 2 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 49	1.37	3

Module/competency	Significance of competency/ module	Mean value	Priority
6. Communication for innovation	n 1=Absolutely essential: 37 2=Essential: 6 3=Somewhat essential: 3 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 46	1.26	2
7. Facilitation for development	n 1=Absolutely essential: 33 2=Essential: 11 3=Somewhat essential: 4 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 48	1.39	4
8. Community development	n 1=Absolutely essential: 23 2=Essential: 21 3=Somewhat essential: 5 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 49	1.63	12
9. Farmer institutional development	n 1=Absolutely essential: 19 2=Essential: 23 3=Somewhat essential: 5 4=Not essential all: 1 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 48	1.75	13
10. Value chain extension	n 1=Absolutely essential: 27 2=Essential: 15 3=Somewhat essential: 5 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 1 Total: 48	1.60	11
11. Agricultural entrepreneurship	n 1=Absolutely essential: 32 2=Essential: 11 3=Somewhat essential: 6 4=Not essential at all: 0 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 49	1.46	6
12. Gender issues in agricultural extension and rural development	n 1=Absolutely essential: 29 2=Essential: 14 3=Somewhat essential: 4 4=Not essential at all: 2 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 49	1.57	9
13. Adaptation to change	n 1=Absolutely essential: 26 2=Essential: 15 3=Somewhat essential: 4 4=Not essential at all: 1 5=I don't know: 0 Total: 46	1.56	8

Note: the titles of the modules/competencies listed in the survey form (Annex 1) do not exactly match those given in the [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#) (Annex 2) since the survey was conducted before the kit was finalised.



5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

This scoping study indicated that agricultural extension and rural advisory services need to attain a professional status on a level with that of other agricultural disciplines. The required qualifications for professional registration are at least a diploma or degree in agriculture and, in some countries, a Master's degree. In South Africa, there are different levels of professional registration due to regulations established in the past.

Participants expressed some confusion regarding the characteristics of a professional person, but generally agreed that personal characteristics and extension/technical competencies were the most important. When asked about the essential competencies needed in order to be recognised as a professional in RAS, respondents listed the top three as communication, technical skills, and social/cultural aspects and human behaviour.

Respondents rated the significance of the 13 competencies covered in the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#) as follows:

- Absolutely essential: communication for innovation; extension approaches and tools; adult learning and behaviour change; and facilitation for development.

- Essential: agricultural entrepreneurship; extension programme management; professional ethics; gender issues in agricultural extension and rural development; adaption to change; value chain extension; and introduction to the New Extensionist.
- Somewhat essential: community development; and farmer institutional development.

They suggested it would be useful to include the following competencies in the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#):

- conflict management
- group dynamics and leadership
- policy-making, advocacy and principles
- monitoring and evaluation
- marketing aspects
- partnership building.

Finally, almost two-thirds of respondents (61%) indicated that they would like to obtain support and guidance with the process of enhancing professionalism in RAS in their countries. GFRAS focuses on several 'strategic fields' in pursuit of its mission and vision. Strategic field 2 relates to professionalism in RAS and the scoping study was conducted under this strategy. The majority of the respondents indicated that there is a body or structure available in their country that can take the lead, while GFRAS has its own regional networks that could manage the process.

5.2 Recommendations for GFRAS

1. GFRAS should investigate the possibility of developing a model or process to support countries and regional networks work towards establishing professionalism in their extension and rural advisory services.
2. This process could include a two- to three-day workshop for extension advisers and other stakeholders involved in extension and advisory services.
3. GFRAS will need to secure funding for the development and implementation of the model and process at country or regional level.
4. The first aim of the model/process is to determine the current extension landscape in a country. The landscape will clearly indicate essential elements of professionalism available in the country or region. The assessment should include the following aspects:
 - Which institution will manage the process of establishing professionalism in the extension advisory services?
 - Has a legal body been established as a result of a government Act?
 - Who are the service providers (government, private sector, other)?
 - What qualifications are available via agricultural training institutions? Is agricultural extension available as a science discipline?
 - What qualifications are needed for a person to be registered as a professional extension adviser? Can the [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#) be used in the curriculum towards gaining a qualification in extension?
 - What are the possible levels of registration?
 - Is there a code of ethics and are there any bylaws, specifically covering the need for continuing professional development?
 - Who are the beneficiaries (especially farmers)?
 - What specific tasks need to be accomplished (according to government Acts)?

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Annex 1. New Extensionist Learning Kit: modules and required competencies

Module	Module outcomes: after completing this module, you will be able to:	Module contents
1. Introduction to the New Extensionist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain the reasons behind the need for EAS to develop better capacities, as elaborated in GFRAS' call for the New Extensionist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be able to explain why and how your role as an extension agent has changed ● Describe the capacities needed at different levels of EAS and particularly elaborate on the practical implication for field-level extension agents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe the additional knowledge and skills (or competencies) that will help improve your advisory services in the changed landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rationale for the New Extensionist in the context of agricultural innovation systems ● New Extensionist capacities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guiding principles of GFRAS that drive the New Extensionist movement ● Different levels of strategic fields and capacity development and how they relate to one another ● The core competencies to be covered in this module and others of the learning kit
2. Extension approaches and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe the role of extension in innovation and development and how it has changed over the years ● List and explain the major extension approaches ● List and explain the features of different tools and select appropriate ones based on programme goals and local context ● Make informed decisions and identify the appropriate approaches and tools to fit local conditions in response to changing contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovation and development in extension (Including the role of extension in stimulating change, the contribution of different disciplines to extension science, etc.) ● Major extension approaches and tools (evolution and features of extension approaches, including reforms in extension and advisory services)

Module	Module outcomes: after completing this module, you will be able to:	Module contents
3. Agricultural extension programme management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● List the theories and explain the practice of agricultural extension management ● Differentiate between approaches to management strategies or extension organisations ● Explain the concept and relevance of leadership, motivation and group dynamics in management ● Describe the importance of agricultural extension programmes and the process of programme planning ● Explain the importance of farmer involvement and apply the tools of programme planning ● Create an action plan for your time management process and identify ways to evaluate and improve your efforts ● Explain the relevance of human resource management ● Explain the importance of coordination and control within a pluralistic system of extension ● Explain the management information system and its role in organisational management ● Explain how large-scale computer application systems can assist with business management and operations ● Explain the concept of monitoring, evaluation and learning and its application for effective organisational management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meaning, process, basis/theories and practice of extension management ● Approaches to management strategies of extension organisations ● Leadership, motivation and group dynamics ● Extension programmes and programme planning ● Managing organisational change and conflict resolution ● Involvement of farmers and programme planning tools ● Time management ● Human resource management ● Coordination and control in agricultural extension management ● Management information systems ● Monitoring, evaluation and learning
4. Professional ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe what professionalism means in the work place ● Apply the code of ethics and a code of conduct ● Explain what a profession is and what is expected of me as a professional extensionist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professionalism in the work place of the extensionist ● Ethics ● A profession and a professional ● Competencies needed for a professional extensionist
5. Adult learning for behavioural change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain the basics of behavioural change within the AIS context and your role in that process ● Identify the various components that affect the facilitation of learning ● Describe and apply the steps in proper training development ● Explain the importance of learning assessments and describe the various methods of assessing training programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding behavioural change (through the diffusion of innovations theory) ● Facilitating learning for behavioural change ● Training design for behavioural change ● Evaluating your educational programme
6. Basic knowledge management and extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Distinguish between and describe different types of knowledge relevant to agricultural extension and innovation ● Describe the basics of knowledge management and the different intermediary roles needed to foster knowledge flow ● Distinguish between different communication media and tools that can support knowledge management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Different types of knowledge (including innovation as a process of collective learning and knowledge exchange) ● Different communication models and the intermediary role of the extensionist ● Communication media and tools in support of knowledge management

Module	Module outcomes: after completing this module, you will be able to:	Module contents
7. Introduction to facilitation for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognise the importance of facilitation for change and the core competencies require in the practice of professional extension ● Employ appropriate methods of facilitating change in individuals, groups and organisations ● Have increased confidence in designing processes to facilitate innovation platforms and other multi-stakeholder engagements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The relevance of facilitation for development in the context of agricultural innovation systems ● Facilitating change in individuals, groups and organisations ● Facilitating operational-level multi-stakeholder engagements ● Brokering strategic partnerships and networking
8. Community mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain why community mobilisation is important (roles of culture and diversity in a community and roles of gender and youth) ● Employ appropriate approaches for community mobilisation (e.g. plan and carry out a livelihood assets assessment and recognise different problem-solving approaches) ● Design processes and methods of community mobilisation strategies that involve women and youth ● Apply resource mobilisation strategies in community mobilisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Culture and diversity, including gender and youth ● Livelihood assets assessment ● Problem-solving approaches ● Leadership development ● Resource mobilisation
9. Farmer organisational (FO) development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain different formations and functions of FOs as well as the appropriate services each of the categories is expected to provide to farmers ● Advise FOs on how they can ensure sustainability of their organisations ● Explain or define theory, models and types of groups and organisations ● Explain how the policy environment and 'rules of the game' influence organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Definition and differentiated mandates of FOs ● Prerequisites for successful FOs ● Sustainability of FOs ● Functions of FOs ● Effects of policy environment and 'rules of the game' on FOs
10. The role of extension in value chains	<p>Part 1 (theory)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain why agricultural marketing is important to farmers ● Explain the agricultural market, the value chain and the key actors in the value chain ● Assess market linkage methods ● Analyse markets and value chains <p>Part 2 (practical)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate how market analysis tools are used ● Discuss value chain upgrading strategies ● Evaluate the use of information technology in value chain services in the agriculture sector 	<p>Part 1 (theory)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The agricultural market, value chain and key actors ● Market linkage methods ● Analysing markets and value chains <p>Part 2 (practical)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using market analysis tools ● Value chain upgrading strategies ● Using information technology in value chain services

Module	Module outcomes: after completing this module, you will be able to:	Module contents
11. Agricultural entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain the concept of agri-entrepreneurship ● Evaluate the key skills involved in running a business ● Identify markets, map resources and conduct business planning ● Explain the basic principles of financial management, sales and risk management ● Perform operations and keep financial records ● Explain how you would go about building a business and managing relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction to ideas on agri-entrepreneurship ● Evaluating key skills needed to run a business ● Identifying markets, mapping resources and business planning ● Financial management, sales and risk assessment ● Record-keeping ● Building your business and managing relationships
12. Gender in extension and advisory services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss the basics of gender for extension (including the meaning of gender and gender differences in rural livelihoods) ● Identify engagement opportunities and entry points for addressing gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key concepts in gender, gender roles and gender mainstreaming; gender-sensitive approaches, gender audits ● Engagement, opportunities and entry points for working with women (including power relations and positionality, finding entry points, working in groups and self-awareness or self-reflection)
13. Risk management and adaptation in extension and advisory services (EAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define the concepts of risk, uncertainty, resilience and adaptation ● Map, analyse and evaluation risk and adaptation ● Discuss the obstacles and opportunities arising from risk and adaptation planning ● Analyse the impact of climate change and climate-induced extreme events ● Describe the basics of climate change and variability ● Evaluate the role of EAS in risk assessment and adaptation planning ● Use risk management and adaptation tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction to risk and risk management (including uncertainty, risk perception and human behaviour, risk identification, measuring, analysis and evaluation) ● Understanding adaptation in the context of climate change (including climate science, climate change and agriculture, climate change and socio-economics, and climate change and health) ● The role of EAS in adaptation and risk management (including mitigating risks and uncertainty, climate and market forecasting) ● Tools for assessing risk and identifying adaptation strategies (including adaptation and risk management tools, resilience tools, climate and socio-economic forecasting tools, and data collection and visualisation tools.

Annex 2. Checklist/questionnaire to determine the level of professionalism in rural advisory services

Dear respondent,

GFRAS hereby requests your participation regarding the above scoping study and we need your inputs to ensure that the study will provide us with valuable information that will improve the professionalism of rural extension and advisory services. We thank you for your cooperation and participation. Please e-mail the completed checklist/questionnaire to the following address not later than 11 November 2016: fanie.terblanche@up.ac.za.

Name of respondent: _____

Male=1/ Female=2

E-mail address of respondent: _____

Current position and responsibility: _____

Country: _____

Sub-country/state/etc.: _____

Organisation: _____

GFRAS regional network: _____

Country extension/RAS forum: _____

Other (please mention): _____

CHECKLIST/ QUESTIONNAIRE

According to the literature, a profession is a vocation, occupation or 'calling' and a professional is a person who is extremely competent. To what extent is the extension and RAS in the country/sub-country/region/organisation etc.:

Professionalised 1 = yes; 2 = no

In the process of professionalisation yes=1/ no=2

We are interested to professionalise RAS yes=1/ no=2

If RAS is professionalised, which body is responsible to manage it?

A professional association: (Name)

A legal body (Council) according to an Act: (name of body and Act)

GFRAS Regional Network: (name)

Country Forum: (name)

Any other body: (name)

If RAS is professionalised, please list how (example levels of membership and /or other):

If RAS is not professionalised, is there a body or structure available to start the process and manage it, for instance any national body from the list in Question 2? (Name of body):

If RAS is not professionalised, list, according to your perception, possible professional mechanisms and possible qualifications/skills/knowledge and experience to be an extension professional:

If RAS is professionalised in your country/region/etc. indicate which by-laws are applicable (use the scale below):

Yes= 1; No= 2; I don't know=3

Code of Ethics / Code of Conduct:

Fields of practices such as Agriculture/Forestry/ Extension etc.:

Continuous Professional Development:

Standards of practice:

Discipline:

Any other by-laws please mention:

If RAS is not yet professionalised indicate below the by-laws that, according to you will be essential for professionalism (use the scale below):

Yes=1 ; No=2; I don't know=3

Code of Ethics / Code of Conduct:

Fields of practices such as Agriculture/ Forestry /Extension etc.:

Continuous Professional Development:

Standards of practice:

Discipline:

Any other by-laws please mention:

What according to you are the five (5) most important characteristics of a professional person?

What according to you are the most important advantages of professionalisation?

What according to you are the disadvantages of professionalisation?

If RAS is professionalised, list the essential competencies (skills) necessary to be recognised as a professional extensionist:

If RAS is not professionalised please list according to your perception the essential competencies (skills) necessary to be recognised as a professional extensionist:

Attached is the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#) of 13 competencies essential for the 'New Extensionist':

Use the following scale to evaluate the significance of each one of the 13 competencies in relation to the 'New Extensionist':

1 = absolutely essential; 2 = essential; 3 = somewhat essential; 4= not essential at all; I don't know= 5

Introduction to the New Extensionist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extension approaches and tools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extension programme management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult learning and behaviour change	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication for innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilitation for development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farmer institutional development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value chain extension	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender issues in agricultural extension and rural development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adaptation to change	<input type="checkbox"/>

Indicate other competencies (skills) that you believe should be part of the GFRAS [New Extensionist Learning Kit](#):

If RAS is not yet professionalised are you and your organisation interested in obtaining support and guidance in the process? Use the scale below.

Yes=1; No=2; Uncertain=3

Do you have any examples of any countries that have a professionalised extension service? If so, please list and name a person we can contact to get more information from (including contact information).

Is there any other aspect related to professionalisation of RAS that according to you needs attention?

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