

FARA – AFAAS – RFO – NI Consultation 2008
Exploring Opportunities for Future Collaboration

First Draft Report

Consultation in Malawi
8 to 13 September 2008

List of content

List of Abbreviations	3
1. Background	4
2. Country Agriculture Profile – brief	6
2.1 No. of Farms, size of farms, climate, main crops.....	6
2.2 Value addition activities	6
3. Overall situation of AAS.....	7
3.1 Overview of the stakeholders, users, providers and others involved	7
3.2 Brief summary of outreach, constraints and opportunities	7
4. Organisations involved in AAS.....	9
4.1 Core functions.....	9
4.2 Public institutions	9
4.3 Commodity based organisations	9
4.4 NGOs.....	10
4.5 Farmer organisations	10
5. Opportunities for Collaboration	12
5.1 Pooling competencies and strengthen capacities.....	12
5.2 Exchange Platforms.....	12
5.3 Joint Advocacy.....	12
5.4 Adapting to a Changing AAS Environment.....	13
5.5 Other Ideas for Collaboration	13
6. Conclusion.....	14
6.1 Particular areas for collaboration, which the stakeholders give priority.....	14
6.2 Suggested ways forward – options for support strategies and key partners	14
Annex 1 Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Extension	16
Annex 2 Bunda Agricultural College	22
Annex 3 Agricultural Research and Extension Trust (ARET)	27
Annex 4 Agricultural Development Division (ADD) Blantyre	32
Annex 5 National Stakeholder Panel (NSP).....	37
Annex 6 Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM).....	42
Annex 7 Southern Africa Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU)	47
Annex 8 Consultation Programme	48
Annex 9 Consultation outline.....	49
1. Background	49
1. Common Platform	50
2. Process for consultation in Africa	51
3. Resources.....	52
Annex 1 Key questions to AAS institutions	53
Annex 2 Report Structure	55

List of Abbreviations

AAS	Agricultural Advisory Service
ADD	Agricultural Development Division
ADP	Agricultural Development Programme
AFAAS	African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
ARET	Agricultural Research and Extension Trust
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
CF	Common Framework
CFA	Core Function Analysis
DAEC	District Agricultural Extension Committee
DAESS	District Agricultural Extension Service System
EA	Extension Agent
EU	European Union
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FFS	Farmer Field School
FO	Farmer Organisation
FUM	Farmers Union of Malawi
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
ICT	Information and Communication technology
IDAF	Institutional Development Across the Agri Food Sector
NASFAM	National Smallholder farmers Association of Malawi
NEPAD	The New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NI	Neuchatel Initiative
NSP	National Stakeholders Forum
RFO	Regional Farmer Organisation
SACAU	Southern Africa Confederation of Agricultural Unions
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SMS	Subject Matter Specialists

0. Executive Summary

The partners Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services, the four African Regional Farmer Organisations (RFO)¹ and Neuchatel Initiative (NI) have undertaken a consultation with stakeholders in Africa in 2008 in order to explore opportunities for future collaboration to strengthen Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS) in Africa. The present report is from the part of the consultation that took place in Malawi.

The consultation was organised by SACAU and the logistic arrangement by Farmers' Union of Malawi (FUM). The major stakeholders in AAS in Malawi were consulted through interviews which aimed at getting an updated overview of the situation and functioning of AAS in Malawi. They also aimed at collecting the stakeholders' views on their capacity as well as their priorities and ideas for a regional and international collaboration that would add value to their efforts in strengthening AAS in Malawi.

Agriculture is the most important sector of the Malawian economy. Due to government subsidy to agricultural inputs the country is right now a net exporter of maize. Productivity is, however, extremely low, little agro processing is taking place and smallholder farmers mostly sell raw agricultural produce without any value addition. Outreach of AAS is very low - only 13% of farmers have some kind of access.

Agricultural extension is currently under reform guided by a new policy, which is promoting pluralistic and demand driven services and which is being implemented under a partly decentralised District Agricultural Extension Service System (DAESS). The service providers are public extension staff, NGOs, commodity based organisations, farmer organisations and private enterprises such as input suppliers. There is, however, a great gap between the new policy and the capacity of the institutions and the staff that is meant to implement it. The main challenges are:

- Capacity of staff to carry out the functions of demand driven AAS
- Coordination of the pluralistic service provision from multiple actors

The report describes the current roles and experiences of the different AAS stakeholders. An AFAAS Country Chapter has recently been established, where all the stakeholders are represented. It is expected that this will contribute to coordination among the stakeholders and be an important platform for sharing competencies and exchange of knowledge in the country.

All the stakeholders emphasise the needs for strengthening capacity development for AAS and for advocacy. In line with this it is also emphasised that more knowledge is required concerning consequences of different policy options and best practises. They therefore see great opportunities in a continental network that can facilitate joined forces on human resource development, research and international sharing of knowledge.

¹ There are four RFOs in Africa: Platform of Peasant Organisations of Central Africa (PROPAC), Réseau Des Organisations Paysannes et Producteurs Agricoles de L'Afrique de L'Ouest (ROPPA), Eastern African Farmers Federation (EAFF) and Southern Africa Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU)

1. Background

This consultation in Malawi is part of a larger consultation process among the partners FARA, AFAAS, the four African RFOs and NI: Exploring Opportunities for Future Collaboration. These consultations are aimed at:

- Exploring the possibilities and interest by African AAS stakeholders in elaborating a needs- and demand-based proposal for future collaboration between NI and African AAS actors
- Identifying, jointly with FARA, AFAAS and selected African networks and organisations with continental or regional mandate, how collaboration between NI and African AAS stakeholders can contribute to the revitalisation and improved performance of AAS in Africa
- Identifying potential collaboration partners and ensuring that the proposal is integrated with ongoing regional processes such as CAADP, FAAP and regional agricultural productivity programmes

Neuchatel Initiative has therefore together with FARA and AFAAS planned the consultation during a kick off meeting in Brussels in March 2008, after which the TOR for the consultation was produced.

The first part of the consultation took place in Accra, Ghana where the rest of the consultation process in Africa – in four African countries - was designed and tested with Ghana stakeholders involved in AAS. At this meeting it was decided to carry out consultations with AAS stakeholders in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Uganda and Malawi. It was also decided that the RFOs would lead these consultations (see Annex 9 - Consultation Outline)

For Malawi the consultation was thus organised by SACAU who placed the logistic planning with their member organisation in Malawi: Farmers' Union of Malawi (FUM). The consultation was carried out by the NI consultant Sanne Chipeta as semi structured interviews of a number of relevant stakeholders in AAS. SACAU and FUM joined in the consultation process through their own organisations' interviews. Annex 8 presents a programme for the consultation and an overview of the consulted stakeholders and individuals met.

The interviews particularly aimed at getting an updated overview of the situation and functioning of AAS in Malawi and also an overview of the stakeholders involved and their respective roles in AAS. They also aimed at collecting the stakeholders' views on their capacity as well as their priorities and ideas for a regional and international collaboration that would add value to their efforts in strengthening AAS in Malawi.

2. Country Agriculture Profile – brief

2.1 No. of Farms, size of farms, climate, main crops

Agriculture is the most important sector of the Malawian economy. It employs 80% of the labour force and contributes more than 80% of the foreign exchange earnings and accounts for 39% of the Gross Domestic Product. Moreover it contributes significantly to national and household food security. Approximately 90% of the food consumed in Malawi is home-produced.

The highest proportion of agricultural produce - approximately 70% - is produced on smallholder farms, while 30% comes from estate farms. It is estimated that there are 3.5 million farming households in Malawi and the average land holding is 1.2 hectares. The main production is depending on rain-fed cropping and only 15% of the land is under irrigation.

The climate is subtropical and the main crops for home consumption are maize, rice and cassava. Recent government support to the smallholder farmers through agricultural input subsidies, combined with good rains has led to significant increases in maize production. Malawi is right now a net exporter of maize. Other crops such as sweet potatoes, sorghum and potatoes add on to the stable crops.

The dominating crops for export are tobacco, tea and sugar. New cash crops are coffee, pulses, paprika and rice and also groundnuts, cashew, chillies and macadamia nuts have some importance. Organised markets are critical for the small farmers' participation in the cash crop production. The National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) has for example been rather successful recently in promoting and marketing groundnuts, which has resulted in groundnuts regaining its importance as export commodity.

Livestock production is very low and has been declining in recent years. The dairy sector is just in the process of being developed but faces strong constraints.

Productivity of most crops is extremely low – the gap between the potential yield given the available technologies and the actual yields is substantial. Only for tea have there been steady improvements of productivity. The most important factor affecting productivity is low input use due to failure of agricultural credit markets combined with increases in prices of the major inputs, unfavourable weather, poor output markets and inadequate extension services.

2.2 Value addition activities

Very little agro-processing is taking place in Malawi and most smallholder farmers sell raw agricultural produce without adding value to it. For the main cash crops such as tobacco, groundnuts and cotton, there is no value added by smallholder farmers. However, for some cash crops such as cotton, sugar, tea and coffee substantial value addition is taking place. Smallholder farmers producing these crops are linked to commercial processing facilities in different ways. Some of the processing is done by private companies and some by enterprises owned as producer cooperative. For coffee – the farmers are for example organised in cooperatives that have their own processing facilities. Smallholder farmers are thus producing some of the final products such as the Mzuzu coffee that is sold in retail markets both in Malawi and at export markets.

3. Overall situation of AAS

3.1 Overview of the stakeholders, users, providers and others involved

The institutional system for delivery of AAS in Malawi is currently undergoing reforms. A policy document was developed in 2000 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation: *“Agricultural Extension in the new Millennium: Towards Pluralistic and Demand-driven Services in Malawi”*. This policy was developed with much inspiration from Neuchatel Initiative such as the first Common Framework for Agricultural Extension. The policy is therefore quite radical in promoting pluralistic and demand driven services. This is now being implemented under the District Agricultural Extension Services System (DAESS).

In terms of management, administration and funding, extension is integrated into the Local Government decentralisation structures (to the District Assembly through Stakeholder Panels and District Agricultural Extension Coordination Committee). However, in terms of the technical capacity and backstopping, agricultural extension remains a line ministry activity with a Department of Extension at national, divisional and district levels.

The DAESS is responsible for organising farmers’ demand, facilitating service providers’ response, coordinating agricultural strategy development and arranging for funding from Ministry of Local Government or donor programmes. The service providers involved are the public extension staff – front line staff at the section level and Subject Matter Specialists at district level, NGOs, farmer based organisations and private enterprises such as input suppliers. The actors will coordinate their services in the District Stakeholder Panels as well as in the National Stakeholder Panel.

The farmers are engaged in demand formulation through Agricultural Committees from community to district levels.

As the DAESS is quite new, it is currently under development and not yet full reality in all districts.

There is a number of actors in AAS that is directly commodity based. Some of these are successful examples of market oriented advisory services, which manage to address the whole value chain and therefore contribute to commercialisation of the small scale farmers – see examples below in section 4.3.

An EU funded programme: *“Institutional Development Across the AgriFood Sector (IDAF)”* is supporting institutional capacity development and the implementation of the new extension policy. It was unfortunately not possible to meet with the responsible staff at the EU office during the mission. The present report therefore has little information in this regard.

3.2 Brief summary of outreach, constraints and opportunities

The capacity in the system for delivering AAS is still rather low. A study has shown that only approximately 13% of farmers have contact to the public extension services and also that there is a great gap between what the Departments aim to deliver and what the farmers actually receive.

A great and major constraint to the implementation of the extension policy is the lack of capacity among staff at all levels to carry out the functions related to demand driven services. For example is the process of demand formulation a great challenge. The used methodology (PRA) produces an overwhelming amount of demands out of which many are beyond the capacity and mandate of

AAS to deal with. Moreover, the demands are required to be formulated into proposals for funding, but both farmers and extension staff lack the capacity to write these proposals.

Other major challenges are to respond to the forthcoming demand for AAS and to coordinate the response. A needs assessment has been carried out by Bunda Agricultural College for curriculum development in retraining of government staff. The data is about to be analysed for finalisation, so the details are not yet known. But it is pointed out by the researchers that a major gap is the lack of understanding of purposeful use of different extension methodologies. Moreover there are serious gaps in the capacity of extension staff to provide farm management advice and agribusiness development, which are services that are much in demand but currently not part of the curriculum at the training institutions.

It should be noted that the government's programme for subsidising seed and fertiliser is administered by the district and frontline public extension staff and therefore occupies a major part of the staff capacity in the beginning of each growing season.

4. Organisations involved in AAS

4.1 Core functions

A Core Function Analysis of agricultural institutions is currently being carried out as part of the development of the basket fund programme the “*Agricultural Development Programme (ADP)*”. This also includes an analysis of the core functions of different institutions involved in AAS. As this is still in process, it is not yet clear how the future roles and responsibilities will be. Naturally, there is a divide between the non-state actors, represented in the process by the National Stakeholder Panel (NSP). The NSP visions a future, where non-state actors provide all technical services on the ground and the public institutions provide policy guidelines, standards for quality and the required regulations as well as funding. The public institutions have, however, not yet finalised the analysis and it is likely that they may have a different view, since they have a huge staff employed at divisional and district levels which currently represent a major capacity in the country regarding AAS.

4.2 Public institutions

Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Department of Extension Services: The department is providing the policy and implementation guideline for the DAESS. It moreover provides backstopping for the Agricultural Development Divisions (ADD) and technical backstopping for the DAESS.

Agricultural Development Divisions: Provide technical backstopping to the DAESS. The agricultural extension department provides technical expertise on areas of methodologies, agribusiness development, food and nutrition and training. Apart from that the divisions have expertise in crops, animal health and land resources.

District Agricultural Committees: Employ Subject Matter Specialists (SMS), who follow the same technical areas of expertise as the Divisions. These provide technical backstopping to the front line extension staff, which is placed at area and section level. Together they are supposed to facilitate the demand formulation and proposals for funding of services to the local government - the District Assembly. They also deliver the services as demanded along with the non-state service providers at the district level.

Bunda Agricultural Collage is responsible for the education of AAS providers. The College has two standard programmes on AAS: A BSc in Agriculture with extension as an option and a BSc in agricultural extension for mid career professionals whose major client is Ministry of Agriculture. They also run a two year master programme in rural development and extension.

4.3 Commodity based organisations

As mentioned above, there is a number of commodity-based organisations engaged in AAS. Some of these are:

- The Agricultural Research and Extension Trust (ARET) - organises the tobacco production and also delivers extension services to both small and large scale tobacco producers. ARET does not engage directly in marketing of tobacco but the Trust and its services are financed by a production levy on all tobacco sales in the country
- Mzuzu Coffee Planters' Union - organises farmers in coffee production, provides AAS, processes and markets the coffee. The activities are financed through the marketing

- National Small Scale Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) – is originally an organisation of small scale tobacco producers but now a more general organisation with 100,000 small scale farmers as members. Tobacco is the major commodity of focus and they provide training, extension and marketing for this as well as for a number of other crops. The AAS is provided through a system of lead farmers. The activities are funded by a donor (Cordaid)
- Shire Valley Dairy Producers' Association is an association of a number of Dairy Cooperatives in Shire Valley. The cooperatives process and market the milk and most of them employ their own staff, of which some provide AAS to the members
- Tea Association of Malawi – an association of tea estates. Many of the tea estates have out growing arrangements with small scale tea producers and they employ technical staff, who provide technical advice on tea production to the small scale producers

4.4 NGOs

There are a considerable number of NGOs involved in AAS in Malawi. Some of them use the public extension staff for implementing their AAS related activities while others supplement these with their own employed staff. An important organisation in this is World Vision, which has programmes in all districts in Malawi except for two. AAS is normally provided as part of either Integrated Development Programmes or Food Security Programmes. They have around 200 agricultural staff at grass-root level and work in crops, horticulture, irrigation and livestock. AAS is normally provided in association with input credits.

4.5 Farmer organisations

Also farmer organisations are involved or beginning to be involved in AAS. They are particularly involved in lobby and advocacy for AAS and for their member associations such as the commodity associations' engagement.

Farmers' Union of Malawi (FUM) is a rather new organisation – registered in 2004 with a few initiating organisations including the government. FUM is currently getting a broader membership and some of the important commodity organisations are joining. There are now 21 farmer commodity associations as members. NASFAM is also considering joining. There are however not yet many district farmers unions. The core mandate of FUM is quite broad: To safeguard and promote the interests of farmers. A strategic plan is being developed for starting implementation from January 2009. They are still discussing the question of how to engage in AAS as an organisation. Meanwhile, they are active in the National Stakeholder Panel, which coordinates non-state actors in agriculture and AAS.

Southern Africa Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU): FUM and NASFAM are both members of SACAU. In the strategic framework for SACAU, the 7th strategy is: Enhance access to and use of agricultural information. However, while the other parts of the strategy are being addressed, the organisation has struggled with how to address the 7th. Mostly because they do not have the competencies required to address it. The organisation is well aware that SADC is in the process of developing a common framework for agricultural development and is concerned of how it can be ensured that agricultural advisory services will be part of this.

An independent evaluation of SACAU is currently being finalised. It will have the form of a review and collection of lessons learned which will mainly look at what can be learned for the future direction. The evaluation will therefore be followed up by amending the strategy of SACAU. It is foreseen that the amended strategy will have a stronger focus on the advisory services and on providing capacity to the member organisations on AAS.

SACAU is therefore interested in developing the knowledge and competencies required to address a future focus on AAS. They see the FARA, AFAAS, NI collaboration as an opportunity for addressing this need.

5. Opportunities for Collaboration

5.1 Pooling competencies and strengthening capacities

The stakeholders in AAS have recently established a country chapter of AFAAS and developed a TOR for its operation. All stakeholders want to use this for collaboration and sharing of competencies and also for lobbying for funding of AAS activities. The public sector particularly wants to use AFAAS for coordinating the activities and for developing quality standards. Some stakeholders also see AFAAS as an opportunity for enhancing visibility of AAS and thereby eventual improved attraction for funding. Few of the stakeholders have, however, realised the potential of AFAAS as a continental network.

One suggestion was to organise conferences, for example every second year, with regional and international inputs, which would attract much attention and create visibility of the issues and of AFAAS in the country.

All stakeholders are facing great challenges related to weak capacities and gaps in competencies in relation to the reformed AAS provision. The idea that was consistently coming through was about increasing opportunities for regional/international collaboration on professional education related to AAS at all levels. There were suggestions regarding collaboration on development of curricula, but also on mid career educational programmes, where educational institutions with competencies could share these and build sandwich types of programmes that would relate much to their working situations and secure impact of the learning in the AAS provision.

5.2 Exchange Platforms

The newly established AFAAS is seen as the platform for exchange in-country, but most of the stakeholders were strongly supporting the idea of a continental platform for exchange of experiences, research and practises of AAS. Almost none of the stakeholders have regional or even international linkages in terms of AAS except for when international consultants come in for assignments, but many take advantage, whenever they get an opportunity. For example had the team for developing the new extension policy used the NI CF on Agricultural Extension and this and other of the NI CFs are still in use in teaching at the Bunda Agricultural College.

All the stakeholders identified limited knowledge of what works and what does not as a constraint to successful implementation of the new policy. They can therefore see an opportunity for joined research or sharing of research in order to learn from organisations in other countries in Africa about their experiences.

For sharing of knowledge they suggested platforms such as a journal for publication of research, a website or regular conferences. But it was noted that internet facilities are weak in Malawi and that internet based network therefore are less likely to be of use at this moment.

5.3 Joint Advocacy

All stakeholders emphasised that there is a need for increased investment in capacity development for AAS as well as for understanding of institutional reform processes. But it was also emphasised that in order to strengthen this, there is need for evidence of systems and methodologies that work. This requires research and sharing of research, so therefore the opportunities for joined advocacy goes much together with the need for a platform for exchange of experiences and research in AAS.

The farmer organisations are the organisations, which have the strongest mandates on advocacy and have the opportunity for joined advocacy in the regional organisations, which provides inputs to the regional programmes such as NEPAD/CAADP and SADC. The organisations emphasise that there are great needs for advocacy for investments in AAS and for advocacy towards the right institutional reforms as well as methodology development.

The capacity and competencies of the farmer organisations in AAS are, however, currently weak. Effective joined advocacy by these organisations will therefore require strong institutional capacity building in the areas of AAS. From SACAU it is mentioned that they would need contact to an international network for competencies in order to develop meaningful policy positions on AAS.

5.4 Adapting to a Changing AAS Environment

Most stakeholders find that Malawi puts much attention on adapting to the changing environment, particularly when it comes to the climatic changes. The reason is stated to be that Malawi is extremely dependant on the agricultural sector. A number of campaigns have been promoted such as irrigation, introduction of drought resistant crops and varieties, increased use of manure etc.

Concerning the adaptation to the rapid changes in the world market prices on commodities as well as the input, SACAU suggested to host a facility for market intelligence that could track changes and provide more reliable forecasts of the market situation. This would, however, require substantial institutional capacity and development of the required tools to make up the facilities.

5.5 Other Ideas for Collaboration

From several stakeholders it was emphasised that farmer to farmer sharing and networking would be an important element in improving and enhancing the AAS, This would particularly strengthen the capacity for demand articulation and formulation.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Particular areas for collaboration, which the stakeholders give priority

As the reform process of institutional framework and collaboration in AAS is ongoing in Malawi, the gaps in capacity both in terms of human resources and competencies are becoming evident and represent a huge challenge and perhaps also a major obstacle to the successful implementation of the reform. Unfortunately, the consultation did not succeed in getting opportunity for neither a meeting nor documents concerning the IDAF, so it is so far not known in detail how this programme will contribute to addressing the current gaps and challenges.

However, the priorities from the stakeholders are much in line with the areas identified at the meeting in Ghana:

1. Regional and international collaboration on development of educational programmes for AAS suppliers at all levels
2. Regionally joined research and sharing of results of pilot programmes, reforms and tests in AAS in order to learn what works and what does not and also to verify how investments in AAS can impact smallholder agricultural production and contribute to rural poverty reduction
3. Facilitate joined activities, which can increase visibility of AAS and the potential benefits such as conferences, articles etc.
4. Regional and international expertise to be shared with the stakeholder organisations in Malawi in order to build and upgrade their own competencies
5. Particularly SACAU is requesting for consultancy expertise to be rendered for them to develop/amend their strategy in terms of AAS as well as develop plans for implementation of such strategies with SACAU and with their member organisations. This would include consultancy assistance towards development of policy positions for their lobby and advocacy
6. A platform for regional experience sharing and networking between farmers in Africa

6.2 Suggested ways forward – options for support strategies and key partners

A major choice of strategy for the way forward will be the choice of drivers of the process. In terms of alignment towards the NEPAD/CAADP framework and also as a way of establishing the end-users of AAS – the farmers – at the centre of attention of the future collaboration, it has so far been chosen to explore the possibilities for FOs to be drivers of the collaboration.

The Malawi consultation and discussions with both SACAU and FUM, however, revealed that route to be relevant but also rather risky and with great uncertainties from the side of the organisations as to whether this is within their mandate and their competencies in particular. In the discussions there were found to be a mandate alright but there are still questions to which role the FOs should take – only on advocating for AAS and institutional reforms or even also on delivery of AAS?

Moreover, it is very clear that the capacity of most of the FOs (not all – see e.g. NASFAM, which has strong competencies in organising and providing AAS) is very weak and it is therefore difficult for many FOs to develop their advocacy and practise in this area.

It is therefore suggested to continue working on a collaboration of FARA, AFAAS, RFOs and NI, but mostly with AFAAS as a driver. But at the same time it is suggested that the proposal contains a strong component on developing capacity (institutional as well as human capacity) in the regional as well as the national organisations, which have an interest in this. This could be in line

with the Concept Note: *“Farmer Organisations engaging in promotion of demand driven and market based training and advisory services”*.

So, after the discussions with stakeholders in Malawi, the first suggestions appearing are the following – here organised according to topic:

1. Capacity development of Farmer Organisations: Both the regional and the national organisations. Key partners: SACAU and FUM (including the member organisations and NASFAM) together with the other RFOs
2. Establishment of collaboration network with other educational institutions in the region, eventually also with an international Institution dealing with education of agricultural advisers. Development of curricula for different levels and modes of educations. Key partner in Malawi: Bunda Agricultural College. The other regional institutions and eventually an international institution with connection to NI should be identified.
3. Establishment of a joined research fund for collection of lessons learned from initiatives of AAS reforms and pilot projects in African countries and sharing of these results in a new established AAS Research Journal, a Newsletter and at conferences in the participating countries. Key stakeholders in Malawi: The organisations working with AAS represented by the AFAAS Malawi chapter.

Annex 1 Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Extension

Topic 1: Pooling Competencies and Strengthen Capacities

How is the institution involved in Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS) – What are the roles?

The mission of the department is to promote nutrition, food security and incomes through improving access to technology for small scale farmers in Malawi.

The agreed policy for extension in Malawi is emphasising on demand driven, pluralistic services delivery with a district focus. The implementation plan outlines the structure for implementation from National to Division to District to area to community level.

Malawi is currently decentralising public administration to local government at district level. The different line ministries are at different levels of devolving their powers to the local government. Ministry of Agriculture is one of the ministries, which does not intend to completely devolve, but will follow the structure described in figure 1.

Figure 1

What are the capacities in terms of: Outreach to clients?

There are 8 divisions in Malawi. In each district there is a District Agricultural Coordinator, who is responsible for 7 to 8 areas. Each area holds 5 to 10 sections. Sections are the units that have the frontline extension officers. At national as well as district levels there are Agricultural Stakeholder Panels consisting of all non-government value chain players.

Expertise in AAS?

The Department of Extension has a large staff organised in the different departments:

- Extension Methodology
- Communication
- Food and Nutrition
- Agribusiness
- Crop

There are subject matter specialists at National, Divisional and District levels, These are all trained in AAS methodologies as well as their particular area of specialisation.

At the frontline level (sections) there are extension workers with very basic agricultural education, but most have some kind of training in AAS methodologies. Only 55 to 60 of the front line position are filled

Other key capacities linked to AAS?

Who are the clients?

The public extension is supposed to target all farmers in Malawi, particularly all the small scale farmers - there are 3,500,000 of these.

How do you match services with Client expectations?

According to the new policy the extension service starts with farmers' concerns, which are formulated through a priority setting, facilitated as a PRA by extension workers at community level. The priorities are then consolidated at area level. If the resources are available at area level, the priorities will be responded to immediately at that level. If not, they will be passed on to the district level where all the stakeholders will be asked if they can respond. Gaps will be referred to National level.

There are, however, big issues of capacity to respond to the demands, particularly also because the demands, as they are formulated, are extremely wide and rather overwhelming to the agricultural extension service. Moreover there is the issue of standardisation in order to ensure delivery of quality services.

How do you engage the farmers?

Both through the PRAs and the Farmers' Committees from Community level (Community Agricultural Committees), area level to district level

Which organisations do you collaborate with to develop and provide AAS?

Research institutions and university (Bunda), at the district level mainly NGOs and input suppliers and some farmer based organisation. They have some collaboration with FUM but they have no structure at district level

How do you collaborate?

The collaboration with non-state actors is through the National Stakeholder Panels and the District Stakeholder Panels

How do you pool expertise with other organisations?

See above as well as the newly established AFAAS Malawi Chapter

What is your vision of the future engagement, roles and capacity in AAS?

This structure is only in its second year of operation through the EU funded project: Institutional Development Across the Agri Food Sector (IDAF). The vision is to see the District Agricultural Extension Service System functioning in the structure according to the Implementation Guide. This means facilitating a decentralised service delivery that is driven by demand and implemented by several different actors, both public, private, NGOs and Farmer based organisations.

How would a continental network add value to your future AAS activities in terms of improving competencies and capacities?

- Standard setting and coordination in terms of responding to demand
- Pooling competencies and strengthening capacities is an important focus for both staff and farmers e.g. through joint planning and study visits as well as monitoring of achievements and results
- Strengthen ties for more capacity building and education for extension staff. At the moment there is no carrier route and the agricultural extension is very low status. There is a need to build a better image through improving education and carrier options. Suggests a sandwich programme for professional development for example at regional level using the pooled competencies of the universities in the region as well as internationally

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

See above

Topic 2: Exchange Platform

Which Platforms/networks for exchange of experiences and for harmonisation in AAS exist in your country/Region?

At international level:

Through the Corporation programmes

At regional level:

The newly established links to AFAAS

At national level:

Ad hoc seminars and workshops

The newly established AFAAS country Chapter

The National and District Stakeholder Panels

Which institutions/actors participate in these platforms/networks?

AFAAS:

Bunda Agricultural College

Farmers Union of Malawi

NASFAM

ARET

Public extension

What is your role in the platform/network?

Drivers of the NSP

The others – participants

How do you coordinate and make best use of the platforms/networks?

What are the outcomes of the networks/platforms?

Hopefully better coordination and rationalisation

What other mechanisms would improve information sharing, alignment and harmonisation in AAS?

Looking forward to get the AFAAS to function

Regional, continental and international platform for exchange and sharing of experiences and extension research

Platform and collaboration among regional universities for education of extension professionals

How could a continental platform add value to exchange of experiences and facilitation of alignment and harmonisation?

- Exchange is important but would also be needed at the lower levels – farmer level, so that it could contribute to farmer empowerment, which would strengthen the demand side

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 3: Joint Advocacy

Is your institution involved in advocacy related to AAS – what is your particular role?

Which other organisations are involved in advocacy related to AAS – what are their roles?

What do you think are the most important issues to advocate for in the future in relation to AAS?

Budget for public spending on AAS

What advocacy strategies are required in the future in order to:

Increase public investment in AAS?

Image building, getting politicians to understand that AAS is crucial for agricultural development

Promote institutional reform or better practices?

Who would be appropriate actors in these strategies?

What are the main challenges for advocacy activities in the agricultural sector?

How could a continental network/platform contribute to strengthen your advocacy?

- Evidence and documentation of extension processes through action based research, cost benefit analyses

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 4: A changing AAS | Environment

How are the AAS organisations and providers of your country positioned to adapt to the changing market environment such as increasing global influence, rising food prices, and changing structure of the farming community in terms of:

Monitoring, evaluation and forecasting the changes?

Malawi is in the process of trying to link to disaster and weather forecast as well as Farming Early Warning System for tracking food trends and food production estimates

Analysing the consequences and appropriate responses

Not yet well positioned, since this is in early stages

Policy dialogue and formulation

Malawi government has already implemented responses to many of the changes such as focus on irrigation, subsidising fertiliser and seed, campaign on manure use etc.

Commodity chain development

The commodities chains of the major cash crops have been analysed and action will be taken

Financing models for AAS

The new DAEC is an effort to change the financing model more towards a decentralised financing, with accountability at district level, which theoretically should enable a demand drive of the provided services.

ARET is an example of privately funded services – funds coming from production levies on tobacco

Many of the commodity based farmer organisations are providing services from funds obtained from marketing activities.

Who are the key actors?

District local government, ARET, farmer based organisations

What are their roles and responsibilities?

Annex 2 Bunda Agricultural College

Topic 1: Pooling Competencies and Strengthen Capacities

How is the institution involved in Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS) – What are the roles?

The College has 2 standard programmes on AAS:

- A Bsc in Agriculture with extension as an option
- A Bsc specialised in extension

The students of these courses are normally right from secondary school

They also run 2 years master programme in rural development and extension for the Ministry of Agriculture. This is mainly as a mid career education programme

Basic extension is offered to all agricultural students

What are the capacities in terms of: Expertise in AAS?

There are 8 academic staff with expertise in adult education, sociology and general extension

Other key capacities linked to AAS?

Who are the clients?

There are around 70 students taking courses in extension

Outreach to clients?

There are good employment opportunities with non government projects and organisations. Therefore there is a good demand for the education

How do you match services with Client expectations?

At the moment, there is a review going on of the curriculum. This is based on a needs assessment, which has just been carried out and showed great gaps in capacities among extension staff. For example:

- The staff knows different approaches and methodologies, but has no theoretical understanding of these. This has so far not been part of the curriculum
- Practical skills are inadequate, particularly to the requirements of the private sector
- Farming as a business has not been part of the education – the new department of agribusiness management created as a response to the need

How do you engage the farmers?

Only through the needs assessments

Which organisations do you collaborate with to develop and provide AAS?

- Department of Extension
- Other government departments
- NGOs
- Private input companies

How do you collaborate?

Mostly use these organisations for field exposure for the students

In the new established AFAAS Malawi

How do you pool expertise with other organisations?**What is your vision of the future engagement, roles and capacity in AAS?**

- Want to broaden access to university education by developing other ways of education as for example distance learning, module built course combined with mentorships etc
- Want to strengthen research on extension practices

How would a continental network add value to your future AAS activities in terms of improving competencies and capacities?

- Sharing of research through a joined journal and publications of research
- Finding ways of getting AFAAS functional and visible. One way of attraction and visibility of AFAAS could be regular organisations of conferences for sharing research results

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Funding of the above ideas

Topic 2: Exchange Platform

Which Platforms/networks for exchange of experiences and for harmonisation in AAS exist in your country/Region?

At international level:

At regional level:

At national level:

Which institutions/actors participate in these platforms/networks?

What is your role in the platform/network?

How do you coordinate and make best use of the platforms/networks?

What are the outcomes of the networks/platforms?

What other mechanisms would improve information sharing, alignment and harmonisation in AAS?

How could a continental platform add value to exchange of experiences and facilitation of alignment and harmonisation?

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 3: Joint Advocacy

Is your institution involved in advocacy related to AAS – what is your particular role?

Which other organisations are involved in advocacy related to AAS – what are their roles?

What do you think are the most important issues to advocate for in the future in relation to AAS?

What advocacy strategies are required in the future in order to:

Increase public investment in AAS?

Promote institutional reform or better practices?

Who would be appropriate actors in these strategies?

What are the main challenges for advocacy activities in the agricultural sector?

How could a continental network/platform contribute to strengthen your advocacy?

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 4: A changing AAS | Environment

How are the AAS organisations and providers of your country positioned to adapt to the changing market environment such as increasing global influence, rising food prices, and changing structure of the farming community in terms of:

Monitoring, evaluation and forecasting the changes?

Analysing the consequences and appropriate responses

Policy dialogue and formulation

Commodity chain development

Financing models for AAS

Who are the key actors?

What are their roles and responsibilities – see all of the above comments

Annex 3 Agricultural Research and Extension Trust (ARET)

ARET was originally a government institution for research on tobacco. In 1995 the government gave over the facilities to a trust run by tobacco farmers associations. The trust is sustained by production levies on tobacco.

The trust provides

1. Research and technical services
2. Extension and advisory services

The trust runs 3 research farms

Topic 1: Pooling Competencies and Strengthen Capacities

How is the institution involved in Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS) – What are the roles?

What are the capacities in terms of:

The role of the extension department is to bridge the farmers and the research. They have the contact with the end-users and therefore take the needs for technology to the research department and package the information from research to the farmers' use.

They provide extension on tobacco and other crops, land conservation, forestry, development of maps, gross margin analyses and farm business planning. They have radio programmes on tobacco, newsletters etc. There is a training institute for farmers in Kasungu (Mwimba Farm Institute), which provides certificate courses in agricultural production. They also provide soil analyses

Outreach to clients?

For historical reasons, the tobacco farmers are very well organised, since they all have to register with Tobacco Control Commission of Malawi and join in clubs.

Several clubs join up to form contact groups. The EA arranges meetings with these groups along the calendar of the crop. They also make individual visits on request by the farmers.

In order to address illiterate farmers, they also make demos. There are both farmer owned demos and ARET owned demos. These are used both for teaching the technical skills and for field days. They use an adapted FFS approach

Expertise in AAS?

At the HQ there are specialists in research and also in extension. 30 Extension Agents are located strategically in the country to provide the frontline services

Other key capacities linked to AAS?

The EAs are also equipped to address issues of other crops that the smallholders have, such as grain and legumes – here they get the material from the public extension

Who are the clients?

There are 2 categories of farmers – the large farmers and the small farmers.
There are 40,000 smallholder growers all registered in clubs.

How do you match services with Client expectations?

There are two different types of extension agents for the 2 categories. For the large farmers, they mostly hold seminars. The small farmers are reached in the clubs

How do you engage the farmers?

In the clubs and contact groups

Which organisations do you collaborate with to develop and provide AAS?

The public extension

How do you collaborate?

Mostly on other crops than tobacco

How do you pool expertise with other organisations?

On research they collaborate a lot internationally, but not on extension

What is your vision of the future engagement, roles and capacity in AAS?

How would a continental network add value to your future AAS activities in terms of improving competencies and capacities?

By learning from organisations in other countries

On developing education programmes for extension agents

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 2: Exchange Platform

Which Platforms/networks for exchange of experiences and for harmonisation in AAS exist in your country/Region?

At international level:

Research exchange

At regional level:

At national level:

NSP

AFAAS

Which institutions/actors participate in these platforms/networks?

Se others

What is your role in the platform/network?

Representing the parastatal model

How do you coordinate and make best use of the platforms/networks?

What are the outcomes of the networks/platforms?

What other mechanisms would improve information sharing, alignment and harmonisation in AAS?

How could a continental platform add value to exchange of experiences and facilitation of alignment and harmonisation?

Exchange of studies – access to information like for example a website, where you can access information from other organisations working with AAS

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

A platform such as a common and interactive website

Topic 3: Joint Advocacy

Is your institution involved in advocacy related to AAS – what is your particular role?

Not really

Which other organisations are involved in advocacy related to AAS – what are their roles?

What do you think are the most important issues to advocate for in the future in relation to AAS?

- Recognition of extension and appreciation of knowledge
- Investment in extension
- Unified delivery system

What advocacy strategies are required in the future in order to:

Increase public investment in AAS?

Promote institutional reform or better practices?

Who would be appropriate actors in these strategies?

What are the main challenges for advocacy activities in the agricultural sector?

How could a continental network/platform contribute to strengthen your advocacy?

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

A common forum for advocacy

Topic 4: A changing AAS | Environment

How are the AAS organisations and providers of your country positioned to adapt to the changing market environment such as increasing global influence, rising food prices, and changing structure of the farming community in terms of:

Monitoring, evaluation and forecasting the changes?

Analysing the consequences and appropriate responses

Policy dialogue and formulation

Commodity chain development

Financing models for AAS

Who are the key actors?

What are their roles and responsibilities – see all of the above comments

Annex 4 Agricultural Development Division (ADD) Blantyre

Topic 1: Pooling Competencies and Strengthen Capacities

How is the institution involved in Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS) – What are the roles?

The ADD is the level between the National level (Department of Extension Services) and the Districts. While the administration and funding of the district services are decentralised at district level and therefore the responsibility of the Local Government finance committee, the ADD is responsible for the technical backstopping of the extension services at district level.

What are the capacities in terms of: Expertise in AAS?

The ADD has 7 technical departments along the same structure as the national level: Agricultural Extension, Crops, Animal Health, Land Resources, Fisheries, Planning and Human Resources, Finance and there are 80 professional staff members in the division. The extension department has 4 professional areas: Methodology, Agribusiness, Food and Nutrition and Training

At district level, it is said that both the number and the qualification of staff is very low, which is bringing down the quality of the services.

Other key capacities linked to AAS?

Who are the clients?

The direct clients are the District extension services in 7 districts and the 544 frontline extensionists of which only 60% are filled.

The end users are the 700,000 farm families in Blantyre Division

Outreach to clients?

With the staff in place there is one frontline officer per 2000 farm families. Moreover, the programmes of subsidising fertiliser and seed are managed by the district extension system. So it is not likely that the system actually reaches out to many clients with real AAS.

How do you engage the farmers?

The new decentralised structure at district level with Village Agricultural Committees, area committees and reference to the elected District Assembly is supposed to ensure engagement of the farmers in the process of formulating demand and also accountability towards the local farmers, The farmers are supposed to formulate demands to the services through the committees.

How do you match services with Client expectations?

The system is, however, not well prepared for a demand driven system. The farmers have problems of articulating the demands and the Extension staff does not have the capacity to help. Moreover, the farmers are supposed to write proposals for services, which they are not able to and again the field-staff (as well as the SMS) also do not have the capability.

Furthermore the funding procedure is not yet fitting to the demand drive.

Which organisations do you collaborate with to develop and provide AAS?

The non state actors through the DSP are supposed to deliver services which the public extension cannot meet

How do you collaborate?

See the structure under Ministry of Agriculture, Extension Department.

How do you pool expertise with other organisations?

What is your vision of the future engagement, roles and capacity in AAS?

The vision is to see the new structure operation according to the aims and objectives

How would a continental network add value to your future AAS activities in terms of improving competencies and capacities?

As seen above, the whole chain of service requires capacity building. Moreover, an international network could provide a new perspective by learning from other's experiences

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 2: Exchange Platform

Which Platforms/networks for exchange of experiences and for harmonisation in AAS exist in your country/Region?

At international level:

At regional level:

At national level:

Which institutions/actors participate in these platforms/networks?

What is your role in the platform/network?

How do you coordinate and make best use of the platforms/networks?

What are the outcomes of the networks/platforms?

What other mechanisms would improve information sharing, alignment and harmonisation in AAS?

How could a continental platform add value to exchange of experiences and facilitation of alignment and harmonisation?

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 3: Joint Advocacy

Is your institution involved in advocacy related to AAS – what is your particular role?

Which other organisations are involved in advocacy related to AAS – what are their roles?

What do you think are the most important issues to advocate for in the future in relation to AAS?

What advocacy strategies are required in the future in order to:

Increase public investment in AAS?

Promote institutional reform or better practices?

Who would be appropriate actors in these strategies?

What are the main challenges for advocacy activities in the agricultural sector?

How could a continental network/platform contribute to strengthen your advocacy?

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 4: A changing AAS | Environment

How are the AAS organisations and providers of your country positioned to adapt to the changing market environment such as increasing global influence, rising food prices, and changing structure of the farming community in terms of:

Monitoring, evaluation and forecasting the changes?

Analysing the consequences and appropriate responses

Policy dialogue and formulation

Commodity chain development

Financing models for AAS

Who are the key actors?

What are their roles and responsibilities – see all of the above comments

Annex 5 National Stakeholder Panel (NSP)

The NSP is a panel for coordination of Non-State Actors in AAS. They represent private actors, NGOs and Farmer Organisations

Topic 1: Pooling Competencies and Strengthen Capacities

How is the institution involved in Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS) – What are the roles?

The role of NSP is to coordinate and promote the interests of non-state actors in the reform of AAS in Malawi. There are also Stakeholder Panels at the district levels (DSP) – their role is to coordinate service delivery by non state actors at the district level.

The establishment is rather new. Up to now the NSP has been involved in the Core Function Analysis (CFA) in connection with the development of the Agriculture Development Programme (ADP), which is going to be a basket fund programme that will act as a framework for all the stakeholders. Government has, however, not yet completed the CFA.

What are the capacities in terms of:

Outreach to clients?

That is according to the outreach of each stakeholder, some of which (like NGOs, NASFAM and some private enterprises) have quite strong grassroots level outreach.

Expertise in AAS?

This again will depend on the different actors – some have highly qualified expertise and others have not. Some rely on the expertise of the public extension services.

Other key capacities linked to AAS?

Who are the clients?

Farmers of all categories

How do you match services with Client expectations?

As a basis for the CFA was done a study of what the public extension thought they extended and what the farmers perceived to have received and what they would want to receive – this showed a strong difference in perceptions

How do you engage the farmers?

Which organisations do you collaborate with to develop and provide AAS?

See above

How do you collaborate?

In a NSP committee

How do you pool expertise with other organisations?

That is what they expect AFAAS Malawi to do in the future

What is your vision of the future engagement, roles and capacity in AAS?

The position of the NSP is to promote a system where non-state actors deliver actual services and the public sector role is setting policy standards, regulation and monitoring of the services.

There are still more actors coming into the picture of AAS and it is still unsettled what the roles of each player will be and also who actually has the capacity to deliver.

How would a continental network add value to your future AAS activities in terms of improving competencies and capacities?

- Support towards institutional reform and capacity building
- Use of experiences and knowledge to get the future system right

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Workshops with stakeholders for making up strategies and action plans – direct support to the process

Topic 2: Exchange Platform

Which Platforms/networks for exchange of experiences and for harmonisation in AAS exist in your country/Region?

At international level:

At regional level:

At national level:

Which institutions/actors participate in these platforms/networks?

What is your role in the platform/network?

See above

How do you coordinate and make best use of the platforms/networks?

What are the outcomes of the networks/platforms?

What other mechanisms would improve information sharing, alignment and harmonisation in AAS?

How could a continental platform add value to exchange of experiences and facilitation of alignment and harmonisation?

This could assist in gathering evidence of AAS institutions and methodologies to use for advocacy and for refining development

It would be important to find a way to involve farmers directly in order to build farmers capacity such as farmer to farmer network nationally and internationally

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 3: Joint Advocacy

Is your institution involved in advocacy related to AAS – what is your particular role?

Yes indeed – see above

Which other organisations are involved in advocacy related to AAS – what are their roles?

SNP is a collection of non state organisations to do this

What do you think are the most important issues to advocate for in the future in relation to AAS?

Institutional reform to involve non state actors more

What advocacy strategies are required in the future in order to:

Increase public investment in AAS?

Promote institutional reform or better practices?

Who would be appropriate actors in these strategies?

What are the main challenges for advocacy activities in the agricultural sector?

- Providing empirical evidence of how reforms are working
- Finding a way to involve farmers more directly in this

How could a continental network/platform contribute to strengthen your advocacy?

By providing the evidence from other experiences of reforms and methodologies used in AAS

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Direct support to the process

Topic 4: A changing AAS | Environment

How are the AAS organisations and providers of your country positioned to adapt to the changing market environment such as increasing global influence, rising food prices, and changing structure of the farming community in terms of:

Because Malawi is an agricultural country, it is capable of adapting many of the changes. For example, as a response to the changing climate, irrigation, rainwater harvesting and drought tolerant crops are being promoted.

As a response to economic shocks, apart from more funds for subsidising fertiliser, the AASs are promoting organic agriculture and use of manure.

Monitoring, evaluation and forecasting the changes?

Market Commodity Exchange – forecasting the market. IDEA sending out the messages of market through the SMS system.

Analysing the consequences and appropriate responses

Policy dialogue and formulation

Commodity chain development

Financing models for AAS

Who are the key actors?

What are their roles and responsibilities – see all of the above comments

Annex 6 Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM)

The organisation is relatively new in its current form. It was first registered in 2004. The mandate is to safeguard and promote the interest of the farmers through political advocacy.

In 2006 an independent assessment pointed out the following issues: The smallholder farmers cannot differentiate FUM from NASFAM, Some prominent associations are not members. There was an issue of governance both in the board and in the secretariat, visibility was low, a financial base missing and there was no strategic plan for the organisation.

Thereafter they started developing a strategic plan, a draft document is ready and it is planned to start implementing from January 2009. There are four departments in the secretariat:

- Research, Policy and Advocacy
- Institutional Development, Business and Marketing
- ICT
- Finance and Administration

The secretariat has 7 staff members

Topic 1: Pooling Competencies and Strengthen Capacities

How is the institution involved in Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS) – What are the roles?

FUM is currently not directly involved in AAS provision, but participates in the different forums where AAS is discussed. It is still being discussed and it is not particularly clear how FUM will be engaged in the future.

AAS is provided by several of the member associations.

What are the capacities in terms of: Outreach to clients?

There are 21 commodity associations as members of FUM, some of these provide AAS to their members.

FUM itself has not yet any grassroots base, but uses the associations as well as the agricultural extension structure at district and grassroots levels.

Expertise in AAS?

Mostly lacking since this is a new area

Other key capacities linked to AAS?

Have good linkages with other institutions that have the expertise, e.g. used linkages with NASFAM and ICRISAT for a campaign against aflatoxin in groundnuts

Who are the clients?

Farmers in commodity associations

How do you match services with Client expectations?

The associations do that

How do you engage the farmers?

Through the general assembly and the executive board, which are all representing farmers

Which organisations do you collaborate with to develop and provide AAS?

See above

How do you collaborate?

As members and linkages to research institutions

How do you pool expertise with other organisations?

In the Lake Malawi Basin Programme they collaborate with FUM and MUSCO to deliver the services required

What is your vision of the future engagement, roles and capacity in AAS?

Extension services are very high in demand and FUM wants to play a bigger role in service provision, but currently lack the capacity as well as the knowledge of how to do it, particularly how to make it cost effective and how to finance it.

Particularly services in the area of market intelligence are of their interest

How would a continental network add value to your future AAS activities in terms of improving competencies and capacities?

Learning about experiences where FOs have implemented AAS with good results showing impact for the farmers

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Knowledge, capacity as well as institutional funds, which are necessary to develop new areas

Topic 2: Exchange Platform

Which Platforms/networks for exchange of experiences and for harmonisation in AAS exist in your country/Region?

At international level:

IFAP

At regional level:

- SACAU
- Exchange with Zambia National Farmers' Union concerning their experiences

At national level:

- National Stakeholder Panel
- AFAAS, just about to start

Which institutions/actors participate in these platforms/networks?

See for the Ministry

What is your role in the platform/network?

Representing farmers' interest

How do you coordinate and make best use of the platforms/networks?

Both are quite new

What are the outcomes of the networks/platforms?

What other mechanisms would improve information sharing, alignment and harmonisation in AAS?

See above

How could a continental platform add value to exchange of experiences and facilitation of alignment and harmonisation?

By bringing other experiences to learn from

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 3: Joint Advocacy

Is your institution involved in advocacy related to AAS – what is your particular role?

The main mandate of FUM is to advocate for and serve the interests of the farmers. FUM is involved in the NSP, where they advocate for this. For example they have been involved in the Core Function Analysis for non-state actors, which is part of the process leading to the ADP

Which other organisations are involved in advocacy related to AAS – what are their roles?

The other partners in NSP

What do you think are the most important issues to advocate for in the future in relation to AAS?

- The public extension should keep to overseeing, economic governance, planning and monitoring but other actors such as FO and others should deliver AAS.
- More funds for AAS. At the moment only 1.6% of the state budget goes to extension

What advocacy strategies are required in the future in order to:

Increase public investment in AAS?

Promote institutional reform or better practices?

Who would be appropriate actors in these strategies?

What are the main challenges for advocacy activities in the agricultural sector?

How could a continental network/platform contribute to strengthen your advocacy?

What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 4: A changing AAS | Environment

How are the AAS organisations and providers of your country positioned to adapt to the changing market environment such as increasing global influence, rising food prices, and changing structure of the farming community in terms of:

Monitoring, evaluation and forecasting the changes?

Analysing the consequences and appropriate responses

Policy dialogue and formulation

Commodity chain development

Financing models for AAS

Who are the key actors?

What are their roles and responsibilities – see all of the above comments

Annex 7 Southern Africa Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU)

Discussion with Ishmael Sunga, Executive Director

In the strategic framework for SACAU, the 7th strategy is: Enhance access to and use of agricultural information. However, while the other parts of the strategy are being effectuated, the organisation has struggled with how to address the 7th. Mostly because they do not have the competencies required to know how to address it.

At the same time SADC is in the process of developing a common framework for agricultural development and he is concerned of how it can be ensured that agricultural advisory services will be part of this.

An independent evaluation of SACAU is currently being finalised – although the evaluation was actually being changed into a review and collection of lessons learned that would look more into future use. This is being carried out by two consultants: Jürgen Hagmann and Hans Peter Dalsgaard. When this is finalised, there will be need for amending the strategy of SACAU and he believes that there will be a bigger focus on the advisory services and for providing capacity to the member organisations will be an important part of this.

The organisation will, however, still struggle with the fact that it does not have the competencies necessary to take this into practice and also to know what policy positions to take in this work.

They are therefore in dire need of knowledge and competencies to draw on.

A platform which makes knowledge available – particularly evidence of what works that can be used in advocacy work – and facilitates exchange of ideas between organisations of how to engage in advisory work will therefore add important value to the process SACAU will be facing. This means two suggestions:

1. Access to international consultants with expertise to build the capacity of the organisation
2. Access to a regional/continental platform for exchange of ideas, experiences, knowledge and evidence of functional systems

Ishmael Sunga is a bit uncertain as to whether SACAU can be in position to lead a regional platform. He would, however, like to explore the idea, but it would require finding out what capacities and human resources they would need. All of it would moreover require direct and institutional funding.

We agree to continue exploring the possibilities together. He will comment on the proposal and try to schedule for attending the meeting in Kampala in November.

Annex 8 Consultation Programme

Date	Time	Meeting Organisation	People met
Monday 08.09.08	15.00	Arrival in Lilongwe	Check in at Hotel
	18.00	Logistic arrangements with Prince	
Tuesday 09.09.08	09.00	Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Extension Services	Dr. Grace Malindi, Director of Extension Services Jeromy Nkoma, Chief Agricultural Extension Officer Claudina Chowa, Dep. Director, Extension Methodology
	11.00	National Small-scale Farmers of Malawi (NASFAM)	Duncan Warren
	15.00	Famers Union of Malawi (FUM)	Prince Kapondamgaga, Executive Director
Wednesday 10.09.08	09.00	Agricultural Research and Extension Trust (ARET)	Ibrahim Phiri, Director Harrison Ofesi, Head of Department of Extension and Advisory Services
	11.00	National Stakeholder Panel	Esau Mwendo Phiri, Chairman and Director of Worldvision Malawi
	18.00	Tea Association of Malawi	Clement Thindwa, Chief Executive Officer
Thursday 11.09.08	07.30	Blantyre Agricultural Development Division	Erica Mahuka Maganga, Programme Manager
	14.00	Bunda Agricultural College and AFAAS members	Jeff Mutimba, Catherine Mthinda
	19.00	SACAU	Ishmael Sunga, Executive Director
Friday 12.09.08	11.00	Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Extension	Frida Kayuti
	15.00	FUM about Mzuzu Coffee Planters Union and Shire Valley Milk Producers Association	Peace Mtheke
Saturday 13.09.08		Writing report	

Annex 9 Consultation outline

FARA – AFAAS – RFO – NI Consultation 2008 Exploring Opportunities for Future Collaboration

Consultation Outline

1. Background

In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) the search for practical ways of accelerating rural development features among the region's highest priorities. In the discourse on SSA's rural development, advisory services are considered to be crucial to the realisation of the region's rural development targets. This view is supported by the prominence of advisory services in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) and in the Framework for Africa's Agricultural Productivity (FAAP) that was developed by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). The FAAP lays down the principles for implementing CAADP's pillar IV which is responsible for agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption. The interest in advisory services centres on the search for appropriate practical solutions of providing rural advisory services with a particular focus on the institutional structures and policies.

The creation of the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) is one of the major institutional initiatives aimed at advancing agricultural advisory services (AAS) in Africa. AFAAS aims to advocate for the AAS in the African development agenda, aligned to FAAP principles. It also seeks to facilitate alignment and harmonisation of AAS at continental level, and to enhance the sharing of AAS information and interaction among AAS actors.

The Neuchâtel Initiative (NI) is credited with creating a strong dynamic network and convergence in thinking about agricultural advisory services (AAS). It now wishes to build on this success by supporting efforts that will have greater impact on rural development policies and institutions, and on dissemination and practical application of new approaches, particularly in Africa. This position was endorsed by NI affiliates at their annual meeting in November 2007, held in Montpellier, France. The meeting resolved that NI should explore specific opportunities to make practical use of its experiences in order to strengthen regional and sub-regional networks and organisations engaged in supporting and promoting rural advisory services in Sub-Saharan Africa.

As a first step towards realising its new vision, NI has initiated consultations with African stakeholders involved in AAS. These consultations are aimed at:

- Exploring the possibilities and interest by African AAS stakeholders in elaborating a needs- and demand-based proposal for future collaboration between NI and African AAS actors
- Identifying, jointly with FARA, AFAAS and selected African networks and organisations with continental or regional mandate, how collaboration between NI and African AAS stakeholders can contribute to the revitalisation and improved performance of AAS in Africa
- Identifying potential collaboration partners and ensuring that the proposal is integrated with ongoing regional processes such as CAADP, FAAP and regional agricultural productivity programmes

Neuchatel Initiative has therefore together with FARA and AFAAS planned for the consultation during a kick off meeting in Brussels in March 2008, after which the TOR for the consultation was produced.

The first part of the consultation took place in Accra, Ghana. It had the form of a working meeting hosted by FARA. Here participated representatives of FARA, AFAAS, NEPAD and the four African RFOs (ROPPA, PROPAC, EAFF and SACAU). The main aim of this meeting was to design the rest of the consultation process in Africa and test it with a group of Ghana stakeholders involved in AAS. The present outline is a direct result of the design meeting.

1. Common Platform

Definition of AAS

The consultation is based on the common understanding of AAS broadly as services that make new knowledge available to farmers and their organisations and assist them to develop their farming and management skills and practises. AAS may include services such as:

- Dissemination of information
- Training and advice of individual farmers, groups of farmers and farmer organisations
- Testing new technologies on-farm
- Development and dissemination of farm management tools
- Facilitation of linkages to market actors (financial and non-financial inputs, market channels etc.)
- Facilitation of linkages with the public sector and government
- Support to institution building processes (development of informal and formal farmer organisations at different levels)
- Legal advice
- Etc.

Common vision for AAS

The common vision for the AAS in Sub-Saharan Africa for the future is that it will be: Farmer or end-user-driven with a clientele of empowered and enlightened farmers; well organised and with the capacity to meet the demands of the growing agricultural sector and networked from local to continental level where learning is effectively taken into improved practises.

It is envisaged that the following are the key AAS actors and their activities in the future will include:

- Farmers. These are expected to be organised around commodity or value chains. They are also expected to play a crucial role in determining the kinds of advisory services to be provided and the technology options to be developed by research.
- Farmer (business and commodity) organisations acting at different levels. These are expected to provide and facilitate access to services, economies of scale, increasing bargaining power of their members, avenues for mobilising and pooling finances, linkages and partnerships with other actors, capacity strengthening and representation of interest and advocacy for their constituents.
- Research institutes. These are expected to orient their research to: (a) respond to demands expressed by farmers and (b) address anticipated future demand and challenges.
- Governments: These are expected to establish and maintain conducive policy environments, and make investments in the necessary infrastructure and research (basic and applied).
- Private sector: These are expected to increase their role in the provision of AAS especially financial services, promotion of production, post-harvest and processing technologies, quality assurance, transportation, skills development and networking.
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs). As the role of the private sector in providing AAS increases, the role of NGOs in this arena is expected to diminish. AAS services provided by NGOs are expected to become confined to humanitarian purposes only.

Opportunities for collaboration

The following were identified as good opportunities for the collaboration to add value towards fulfilment of the common vision:

1. Pooling competencies, capacity strengthening and addressing gaps in strategic plans of RFOs in terms of AAS;
2. Platform for exchanging experiences as well as for facilitating alignment and harmonisation;
3. Joint evidence-based advocacy for public investment and institutional reform; increasing legitimacy and acceptance of lessons from AAS experiences and findings from monitoring and evaluation; and
4. Adapting to and drawing benefits from a changing AAS environment. This will entail monitoring, forecasting and reviewing the changes expected in: (a) the behaviour of AAS actors, (b) their clients, (c) their operating environment, (d) agricultural production, (e) demand for agricultural products and commodity prices, and (f) the anticipated shift in AAS to commodity-based and market oriented advisory services

2. Process for consultation in Africa

Countries

The consultation was tested with Ghana stakeholders and will further be carried out in 5 countries: Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Uganda and Malawi. Four consultations (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Uganda and Malawi) will be arranged by the four RFOs and the consultation in Ghana arranged and carried out by FARA.

NI consultants are to provide expert input to the consultations in Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Malawi, while AFAAS will provide this input to the process in Uganda.

Country	Responsible Consultation Team	Time
East Africa Uganda	AFAAS + NAADS (Max Olupot) and EAFF (Stephen Muchiri)	July – September
Central Africa Cameroon	PORPAC (Guy Gustave Ewole) and NI (Agnes Gerold)	July – September
West Africa Burkina Faso	ROPPA (Desiré Proquet) and NI (Agnes Gerold and possibly Guy Faure)	July to September
West Africa Ghana	FARA (?)	
Southern Africa Malawi	SACAU (Eliasi Benito) and NI (Sanne Chipeta)	August

The questions to be presented and discussed with the stakeholders are framed along the above mentioned opportunities for collaboration. They are listed in annex 1.

Methods of consultation

The form of the country consultations can be meetings with gathered groups of stakeholders or semi-structured interviews with representatives of individual institutions as the consultation teams find appropriate in the countries. But participation of private sector actors is high priority for the consultation and it is therefore advised to make individual interviews with the private sector stakeholders, because experience shows that private actors are unlikely to attend long meetings. The country consultations should be concluded with a de-briefing with the

representatives of the respective National Farmer Organisation (NFO) and AFAAS Country Chapter regarding the results of the consultation, the proposition made by the consulted stakeholders and the role and contribution of the NFO to the intended collaboration and common programme of FARA, AFAAS, the RFO and NI.

Institutions to be consulted

The institutions to be consulted in the countries are:

- Farmer Organisations (micro/meso level)
- Country Chapters of AFAAS
- Private AAS providers
- Research Institutions engaged in AAS (e.g. ASARECA and others)
- Public Extension Services
- NGOs engaged in AAS

Results

The findings of the consultations will be reported to the core group and used to develop an initial draft proposal for next six years of collaboration, which will be presented and discussed with key stakeholders in Frankfurt, Germany at a meeting from 30 September to 1 October, 2008. Sanne Chipeta will be responsible for coordinating the collection of the reports. After the review of the reports by the NI-field team consisting of Sanne Chipeta, Agnes Gerold and eventually Guy Faure, the team will discuss the results of the reports and develop together the basic concept of the initial programme proposal. Based on that discussion Sanne Chipeta will elaborate the first drafting of the initial proposal, which will then be discussed and commented by Agnes Gerold and Guy Faure, if he has participated in the consultation in West-Africa (Burkina Faso). Annex 1 contains a format structure for the reports.

3. Resources

The consultations are to be financed by the regional partners, that is, ROPPA, PROPAC, EAFF, SACAU and AFAAS. The NI will support the input of NI experts on three missions as scheduled above.

Annex 1. Key questions to AAS institutions

The questions which are presented in the following aim at collecting information on the present situation at the level of the consulted organisations, the ideas and visions of these organisations for the future on the different topics and the type of support which is considered as helpful by these AAS related organisations.

Topic 1: Pooling Competencies and Strengthen Capacities

Make a mapping of organisations that are actively involved in providing AAS in the country

Question to the consulted actors:

- How are you as an institution involved in AAS – What are your roles?
- What are your capacities in terms of:
 - Outreach to clients?
 - Expertise in AAS?
 - Other key capacities linked to AAS?
- Who are your clients (farmers (men, women), agribusiness, government etc.)?
- How do you match your services with clients' expectations?
- How do you engage farmers / your clients?
- Which other organisations do you collaborate with to develop and provide AAS?
- How do you collaborate?
- How do you pool expertise with other organisations?
- What is your vision for your future engagement, roles and capacity in AAS?
- How could a continental network add value to your future AAS activities in terms of improving competencies and capacity?
- What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 2: Exchange Platform

- Which platforms/networks for exchange of experiences and for harmonisation in AAS exist in your country/region?
- Which institutions/actors participate in these platforms/networks?
- What is your role in the platform/network?
- How do you coordinate and make best use of the platforms/networks?
- What are the outcomes of these platforms/networks?
- What other mechanisms would improve information sharing, alignment and harmonisation in AAS?
- How could a continental platform add value to exchange of experiences and facilitation of alignment and harmonisation?
- What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 3: Joint Advocacy

- Is your organisation involved in advocacy related to AAS – what is your particular role?
- Which other organisations are involved in advocacy related to AAS – what are their roles?
- What do you think are the most important issues to advocate for in the future in relation to AAS?
- What advocacy strategies are required in the future in order to:
 - Increase public investment in AAS?
 - Promote institutional reform or better practises?
- Who would be appropriate actors in these strategies?
- What are the main challenges for advocacy activities in the agricultural sector?
- How could a continental network/platform contribute to strengthen your advocacy?

- What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Topic 4: A changing AAS environment

- How are the AAS organisations and providers of your country positioned to adapt to the changing market environment such as the increasing global influence, rising food prices, and changing structure of the farming community, in terms of:
 - Monitoring, evaluation and forecasting the changes
 - Analysing the consequences and appropriate responses
 - Policy dialogue and formulation
 - Commodity chain development
 - Financing models for AAS
- Who are the key actors?
- What are their roles and responsibility?
- How could a continental network add value to the ability and capacity of AAS actors to adapt to the changing external environment and exploit opportunities that may feature along the way?
- What kind of institutional support would be helpful?

Are there other important areas for collaboration?

Annex 2. Report Structure

1. Country Agriculture Profile – brief

- 1.1. No. of Farms, size of farms, climate, main crops (cash crops - home consumption)
- 1.2. Value addition activities related to the different crops for the local market
- 1.3. Exports of unprocessed agricultural products and processed agricultural products

2. Overall situation of AAS

- 2.1. Overview of the stakeholders, users, providers and others involved
- 2.2. Brief summary of outreach, constraints and opportunities

3. Organisations involved in AAS

- 3.1. Brief profiles: Roles, responsibilities and capacities in terms of AAS

4. Opportunities for Collaboration

Cross analysis of responses with focus on future opportunities for collaboration

- 4.1. Pooling competencies and strengthen capacities
- 4.2. Exchange Platforms
- 4.3. Joint Advocacy
- 4.4. Adapting to a Changing AAS Environment
- 4.5. Other Ideas for Collaboration

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Particular areas for collaboration, which the stakeholders give priority
- 5.2. Suggested ways forward – options for support strategies and key partners

Annexes: Responses from the organisations