SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Extension and Advisory Services (EAS)\(^i\) play an important role in agricultural development. However, they need new capacities to address the current challenges in agriculture and to contribute better to agricultural innovation – a process that requires interactions and knowledge flows among a wide range of actors in the Agricultural Innovation System (AIS)\(^i\). Over the past two decades, EAS have become more pluralistic with increasing participation of the private sector, non-governmental agencies, producer organisations, consultants and media services. To better contribute to agricultural innovation, EAS should collectively perform a wide range of roles. These include development of networks, organising producers, mediating conflicts, facilitating access to credit, inputs and output services, convening innovation platforms, advocacy for policy change and disseminating new knowledge through training and demonstrations. To do these, EAS needs new capacities at the individual, organisational and enabling environment (system) levels.

At the individual level, EAS need staff with good understanding of new technical knowledge and skills to manage social processes. At the organisational level, EAS should have systems and procedures to manage human and financial resources, institutions to facilitate partnerships and learning, and frameworks to deal with institutional, legal and regulatory issues. An enabling environment that provides policy support and ensures political commitment and willingness to share knowledge and resources among AIS actors is also crucial for EAS. The focus of capacity development therefore must shift from strengthening technical expertise to strengthening capacities for interaction, learning and adaptation. Similarly, reform strategies should explicitly address institutional and policy changes that enhance the ability of the different actors in the AIS to work as a system. To develop new capacities in EAS, actions must be initiated at the national, regional and global levels by several actors. These actions and actors are suggested below\(^ii\).

National level (N)

N1. Diagnosis of the Agricultural Innovation System (Action by: National innovation/science/research councils/specialist agencies equipped for diagnosis)
N2. Undertake survey of EAS providers in the country (Action by: Ministry of Agriculture)
N4. Create mechanisms for regular monitoring, reflection, learning and evaluation; review of systems and processes create arrangements for co-ordination and collaborative action among EAS (Action by: EAS facilitated by management experts)
N5. Create innovation platforms and initiate pilot projects to experiment with new approaches and learning from these (Action by: EAS and other actors in the AIS)
N6. Establish and strengthen training centres; Outsource specific requirements for supporting capacity development; Encourage management training centres and business schools to organise tailor made capacity development programmes for EAS on coaching, facilitation, leadership, vision building. (Action by: Ministries of Agriculture and EAS in collaboration with management institutions)
N7. Develop curriculum for vocational and continuing education and skill up-gradation of individuals (Action by: Universities, research centres, management training centres in collaboration with EAS)
N8. Establish collaborative projects with different actors in the AIS in action research mode (Action by: Research and extension councils, training centres in collaboration with EAS)
N9. Support establishment of national network of EAS providers (Action: Professional societies in extension with national governments and regional networks)
N10. Initiate policy research on EAS and AIS to support evidence based reforms and policy advocacy (Action by: Research councils, EAS, universities and other policy research centres)
N11. Enhance public funding for EAS (Action by: National, provincial and local governments)

Regional level (R)

R1. Support establishment of Regional Networks and engage regional networks in design, implementation and evaluation of EAS interventions (Action by: Regional lending organisations such as ADB, AfDB, IADB, EBRD etc.; Regional economic groupings such as regional economic communities in Africa, ASEAN in Asia & Pacific)
R2. Collect and synthesise evidence on different aspects of EAS in the region (Action by: Regional EAS networks; CGIAR research centres; regional university, education and research networks e.g. ANAFE, RUFORUM in Africa, AGRINATURA in Europe, APAARI, FARA)
R3. Develop policy briefs and position papers to influence policy process to support EAS (Action by: Regional networks of EAS in collaboration with policy researchers in the region in universities and research centres)
R4. Develop and promote new frameworks and methodologies related to EAS (Action by: Regional EAS networks in collaboration with researchers and practitioners)
R5. Organise regional consultations and training programmes to share experiences and influence conditions in the enabling environment (Action: Regional networks of EAS supported by other actors in the AIS).

Global level (G)

G1. Support GFRAS to lead networking and capacity development and policy advocacy for EAS at the global level (Action by: Donors and intergovernmental bodies engaged in Agriculture and Rural Development such as World Bank, FAO, CTA, IFAD, World Farmers Organization, GCHERA, GFAR and others)
G2. Strengthen, support and co-ordinate regional networks of EAS to achieve their respective goals (Action by: GFRAS)
G3. Develop frameworks, tools, training modules, investment source books, discussion papers to shape the evolution of EAS and share these outputs widely (Action by: GFRAS in collaboration with donors, researchers and practitioners linked to EAS; FAO, World Bank, CTA, MEAS)
G4. Liaise with donors at the global and regional levels engaged in EAS (Action by: GFRAS)
G5. Policy advocacy on strengthening the role of EAS in agricultural development and poverty reduction and advocating for enhanced funding support and institutional and policy reforms in AIS (Action by: GFRAS in collaboration with regional networks)
G6. Promote inter-regional sharing of experiences with reforms and new approaches in EAS (Action by: GFRAS in collaboration with Regional Networks, FAO, World Bank and other donors)
G7. Provide long term financial and technical support to EAS to manage change and develop new capacities; Use new investments to experiment with new approaches and promote institutional reforms (Action by: Donors and intergovernmental bodies engaged in agriculture and rural development such as World Bank, FAO, IFAD and others Donors)

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1 EAS consist of all the different activities that provide the information and services needed and demanded by farmers and other actors in rural settings to assist them in developing their own technical, organisational, and management skills and practices so as to improve their livelihoods and well-being.
2 AIS is a network of organisations, enterprises and individuals focussed on bringing new products, processes and new forms of organisations into economic use, together with the institutions and policies that affect their behaviour and performance.
3 Acronyms. AfDB = African Development Bank; ADB = Asian Development Bank; ANAFE = African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education; ASEAN = Association of Southeast Asian Nations; APAARI = Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions; EBRD = European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; FARA = Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa; IFAD = International Fund for Agricultural Development; IADB = Inter-American Development Bank; RUFORUM = Regional Universities’ Forum