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NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION STRATEGY



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PREFACE

The vision 2020 provides for the framework of long-term development policy to make of Rwanda an intermediate income country with GDP of 1000 US per capita per capita by 2020. Under this vision and EDPRS, especially in agricultural sector which remains the major national economic growth pillar (Agricultural sector contributes approximately 39% of GDP in current prices (as of 2005), provides 80 % of export earnings and employs about 88 % of economically active population), different policies, strategies and programs have been defined, notably:

- National agricultural policy;
- SPAT I and II;
- Crop intensification program;
- Girinka program;
- Agasozi Ndatwa program.

The Ministry of agriculture is being restructured to improve services delivery to farmers and increase the production.

The main challenges of the agricultural sector are notably the poor skills and organization of farmers, small-scale farming with less than one ha of arable land, soil degradation, dependence of agriculture on climate..., weak coordination of agricultural actors and insufficient collaboration between farmers-researchers and extension workers.

To overcome these challenges, the Government of Rwanda has adopted the National Agricultural Extension Strategy whose Vision is to ensure ideal conditions for the dissemination and exchange of information between producers, farmer organizations and other different partners in order to transform and to modernise the agricultural sector so that this sector can effectively contribute to achieve the millennium development goals, Vision 2020, and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy objectives.

We hope that this strategy is another step forward to enabling the national agricultural development context and completes considerable progress towards the implementation of National Agricultural Policy adopted by the cabinet meeting on October 20, 2004. Different rural development actors (public sector especially decentralized entities, civil society organisations and private sector) should take this opportunity to improve and make sustainable their results in agricultural sector.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1. BACKGROUND	5
2. THE NATIONAL CONTEXT	5
2.1. Vision 2020.....	5
2.2. Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS).....	5
2.3. National Agricultural Policy.....	6
2.4. Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA)	6
2.5. Other local related initiatives	8
2.5.1. Ubudehe program.....	8
2.5.2. Imihigo.....	8
2.5.3. Integrated Development Program	8
2.5.4. Agasozi Ndatwa	9
2.5.5. Girinka program (one cow per poor family).....	10
2.6. International Development Goals	10
2.6.1. Millennium Development Goals	10
2.6.2. NEPAD Perspectives.....	10
3. AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION IN RWANDA.....	11
3.1. History of Agricultural Extension in Rwanda.	11
3.2. Evolution of agricultural extension schools in Rwanda.	12
3.3. Analysis of current Agricultural extension in Rwanda:	13
3.3.1 Some examples of extension approaches currently practised in Rwanda.	13
3.3.2. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.....	14
4. NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION STRATEGY.	16
4.1. Definition of agricultural extension	16
4.2. Vision of National Agricultural Extension Strategy	16
4.3. Objectives of National Agricultural Extension Strategy.....	16
4.4. Guiding Principles.....	17
4.5. Strategic axes	20
4.6. Agricultural extension methods	22
4.7. Characteristics of new orientations as regards to decentralised extension.....	23
4.8. Roles of different actors in agricultural extension system.....	24
4.9. Functional relationship between MINAGRI Agencies and District	26
5. COORDINATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION	27
6. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK ON NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION STRATEGY	29
Annex 1: Non exhaustive list of functional relationship between MINAGRI Agencies and the Districts	33
ANNEX 2: Proposed National Agricultural Extension structure	35

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION STRATEGY:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The development, modernisation and transformation of the agriculture sector in Rwanda requires the existence and implementation of a National Agricultural Extension Strategy whose main objective is to contribute to the professionalisation of producers and to the effective adoption of agricultural innovations, in order to increase, diversify, specialize and intensify agricultural production, under economic profitability conditions for producers and for the Nation at large.

The National Agricultural Extension Strategy therefore, aims to contribute in achieving the National and international development goals, such as: (i) **Vision 2020** which considers agricultural sector as the main source of economic growth of the country, (ii) **Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper** which currently entered its second phase called “**Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2008-2012**”, (iii) **National agricultural policy**, and (iv) the **Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA)**, Millennium development goals and NEPAD perspectives .

To achieve the desired impacts therefore, this Strategy is based on a number of guiding principles, which are: (i) **Participatory extension**: all stakeholders define their vision, analyse their constraints and needs and, therefore, plan together for implementations, monitoring and evaluation; (b) **Multi approach and multi method**: various methods and approaches are recognized, provided that they are effective and complement each other; (iii) **Demand driven and market oriented extension**: In addition to market needs and/or requirements, the interventions should be planned as per demand by different target groups, considering the specific conditions of the area or location, to enhance ownership, responsibility and accountability; (iv) **Process and result oriented extension**: The process has to be as good as the results. That is, the expected or targeted results and/or impacts should be planned well; (v) **Multi actor extension**: The strategy recognizes the complementarities and potential synergy of different actors in agricultural development (farmers’ organizations, research, extension, agricultural education institutions, input supply, micro credit and other public and private partners intervening in the sector; (vi) **Building on already existing initiatives**: Imihigo, Ubudehe, Integrated Development Program, Girinka, Agasozi Ndatwa, and other related initiatives that emerge and prove to be effective or contributing to IDP, for sustainable development.

The main activities for operationalization will be based on the specific objectives of this strategy, which are: To promote farmer organisations and to encourage their participation in agricultural sector stakeholders “concertation” platforms, strengthen technical capacities of producers, improve proximity services delivery to producers in the perspective of gradual disengagement of the Public sector from direct extension service delivery and to promote a system of participatory extension and research adapted to the needs of producers, but also market requirements.

1. BACKGROUND

In spite of many efforts made by the Government after genocide of 1994 related to agricultural development, indicators of poverty among population remain still high. The part of the population depending on agriculture is around 90%. A 57% of the population still lives below the poverty line. The demographic growth of 2,7% per year will carry the population of the country currently estimated at 9,3 millions to 15 millions in the year 2020.

Agricultural sector contributes for approximately 39% of GDP in current prices (as of 2005), provides 80 % of export earnings and employs about 88 % of economically active population.

The insufficiency of mining resources or other directly exploitable resources, the landlocked country, the low level of industrialization and the weak purchasing power of the population are main factors explaining why the agricultural sector will constitute during the period covered by Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy and Vision 2020, the pillar of economic growth and the foundation of sustainable development.

Agricultural sector in Rwanda is confronted with many challenges: agricultural production system is dominated by small-scale farming with less than one ha of cultivable land, soil degradation, dependence of agriculture on climate...

To overcome this great challenge, the agricultural sector should be deeply transformed and modernized. However, the lack of a national agricultural extension strategy is believed to be an important issue, to implement the agricultural agenda, specifically the PSTA II (Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation).

This requires an extension strategy able to facilitate all producers to access technological packages and information they need. This will be done through development of partnerships with private sector, local and international NGOs, farmers' organisations, civil society, agricultural institutions of education and research.

2. THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

This National Extension Strategy should align with following national and international development goals, and also build on already existing local initiatives:

2.1. Vision 2020

Vision 2020 considers the agricultural sector as the principal source of economic growth of the country. To reach an economic growth of 7-8% projected in Vision 2020; the agricultural sector should grow by 5 - 6 % each year. In particular, it considers that by 2020, only 50 % of the population of the country will be employed in a modernized agricultural sector.

2.2. Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS)

Based on Vision 2020 orientations and a process of broad consultations with local communities and other stakeholders, the Government formulated, in 2001, a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper which currently entered its second phase called "Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2008-2012".

The main objective of this strategy is to significantly improve living standard of population by reducing from 60% to 25 % the population living under poverty line while raising to 1000 US dollars per year the average income per capita. In this strategy, a special focus will be put on modernization of agriculture, agricultural processing industry and development of the informal sector. As a consequence, the part of the population depending on agriculture will pass from 90% at present to 50 % in 2020.

Over the period 2007-2012, EDPRS for the agricultural sector has fixed as objective an annual growth of 7%. Performance indicators retained in this sector for the period of EDPRS attest that many efforts will be necessary to achieve the expected results: Land protected against soil erosion will pass from 40% at present to 80%, the percentage of households with livestock will increase from 71% to 85%, the percentage using mineral fertiliser will pass from 12% to 25%, with importation of mineral fertilisers passing from 14 000 tons at present to 56 000 tons, the percentage of households using organic manures will pass from 7% to 25%, the percentage using improved seeds will pass from 39% to 50%, the percentage using insecticides from 26 % to 37%; acreage of reclaimed and exploited marshlands with irrigation will pass from 1% to 1,6% (from 15 000 ha to 24 000 ha) of total arable lands area.

Regarding proximity services, it is expected that ratio extension worker / farmer household will pass from 1:3 000 to 1: 2 550, while the number of agricultural cooperatives will pass from 1 105 to 2 242. Financing of the agricultural sector by micro finance institutions, development and commercial banks is expected to rise from 3% to 7% of the total amount of credits granted by these institutions.

The total volume of exported products will pass from 73 000 to 123 000 tons for green tea, from 26 000 to 40 000 tons for coffee, from 3 183 to 6 366 tons for pyrethrum and from 1 041 to 1 600 tons for leathers and skins.

2.3. National Agricultural Policy.

Given the importance of the agricultural sector in economic development of the Country, and the need to ensure sustainable food security for the whole population, the Government of Rwanda has formulated an agricultural policy, adopted in October 2004. This policy puts the producer at the centre of its concerns and aims at enabling him to contribute to modernization and professionalisation of Rwandan agriculture and to make the agricultural sector the pillar for economic growth of the country, for poverty reduction and for food security.

The principal goal of this policy is to ensure sustainable economic growth through:

- a modernized, innovative, professional and specialized family based agriculture, generating employment and income and oriented to domestic, regional and international markets;
- an agriculture preserving the environment and protecting the country's natural resources.

2.4. Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA)

To implement the National Agricultural Policy, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources has formulated a Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA I) which was adopted by the Cabinet in January 2005 and which is a planning tool for

development of the agricultural sector. The PSTA II (now in the pipeline) will cover the period from 2008 to 2012.

The global objective of the PSTA is "to contribute in a sustainable way to poverty reduction and to sustain economic growth of the country through increased productivity, maximization of profits for agricultural productions, diversification of incomes and protection of environment and natural resources".

PSTA I includes ten strategic axes translating the will, to change in favour of ownership by actors at grassroots level such as farmer organisations, private sector and decentralized institutions: These strategic axes are: (i) diversification and intensification of crop, animal and halieutic productions, (ii) diversification of income sources and employment for the rural population, (iii) connection of the production with markets and integration of agriculture in the national and regional economy, (iv) sustainable management of natural resources, in particular water and land, (v) organization, mobilization and strengthening capacities of producers and professional organizations (vi) Strengthening capacities of service providers, privatisation and promotion of private sector (vii) creation of institutional framework conducive to professionalisation of producers and transformation of Rwandan agriculture, (viii) creation of a conducive environment for productive investment and development of entrepreneurship and employment in agribusiness, (ix) review of the role of MINAGRI and restructuring of its actions through a sector program approach within the framework of decentralization, (x) promotion of gender approach and reduction of vulnerability of disadvantaged groups.

The PSTA II includes four following programmes:

- «Physical resources and food production: intensification and development of sustainable production systems» including sustainable management of natural resources, water and soil conservation, integrated development of crops and livestock, supply and use of fertilisers and certified seeds.
- «Producer organization and extension: support to the professionalisation of producers» by strengthening their technical capacities and by enhancing their relationship with the private sector.
- «Entrepreneurship and market linkages: promotion of commodity chains and the development of agribusiness».
- Institutional development: strengthening public and private sectors and the regulatory framework for agriculture.

The National Agricultural Policy and the Strategic Plan for Transformation of Agriculture represent a change compared to former policies and strategic plans which were based on approaches oriented on subsistence agriculture, while new policies are now based on approaches which emphasize opportunities and requirements of agricultural markets.

In the same way, new policies break with the past by recognizing the dominant role of private actors (producers, private extension service providers, private sector engaged in production, inputs supply, marketing of products, processing, consumers....), instead of being mainly based on public extension services. Transformation of the agricultural sector should be based on grassroots' communities, local authorities and private sector; while the role of Government should be the formulation of policies, creation of a conducive environment to development of agriculture, mobilization of resources, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

Promotion of private sector, professionalisation of producers, strengthening of inter professional organizations will allow for gradual disengagement of public services from direct extension service delivery.

2.5. Other local related initiatives

2.5.1. Ubudehe program

Ubudehe is part of the decentralized programme for rural poverty reduction, building on the Rwandan tradition of mutual solidarity at local level. This programme allows communities to collectively define their priorities and to actively participate in different development activities through joint planning. These activities for example are agricultural activities, water harvesting, construction, etc. The funds for the collective activities are transferred directly to the grassroots level, and are administered by members of the community. Therefore, in addition to improving their welfare the program makes the society responsible and accountable.

2.5.2. Imihigo

Imihigo is a tradition that Rwanda has institutionalized as a way to enhance local government reform and stimulate development. It draws on a long-standing cultural practice in Rwanda whereby two parties publicly commit themselves to achieve a particular task. Failing to meet these public commitments leads to dishonor, not only for the individual party but for the community. It is therefore, a planning tool as well as a social contract

The Ministry for Local Administration (MINALOC) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning consulted with district leaders on an action plan for better service to community members. This action plan included contracts holding the President of Rwanda and the district leaders accountable for the goals that had been set and/agreed. These contracts were called *Imihigo* in the tradition of this established cultural practice. Since 2006, *Imihigo* have been signed at the local government level with district, sector, cell, and *umudugudu* (village) officials (2007), as well as at the household level (2008), and will be signed at the individual level (planned for 2009). With the element of competition included, *Imihigo* catalyses the ownership, the actions and processes concerning different development plans, enabling improvement of the living standards of the population.

2.5.3. Integrated Development Program

The Government during its Akagera retreat in February 2007 agreed to adopt a comprehensive programme which was named the Integrated Development Programme (IDP), to fast track broad based income generation and economic expansion towards achieving the EDPRS targets on economic growth and poverty reduction by 2012.

The IDP converges most of the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme with key elements of the Growth and Governance programmes, targeted primarily at the meso levels i.e. umurenge (sector) to akagari (Cell) levels for short to medium term transformational impact on the lives of as many Rwandans as possible. It adopts a phased approach beginning with a focus on enhancing productivity in areas with high economic potential.

The IDP comprises ten pillars as follows:

1. *Land Productivity* – to increase agricultural and livestock productivity
2. *Post Harvest Processing and Marketing* - to assure food security and promote commercialisation of agriculture through support for value addition and an increase in internal and export sales
3. *Cooperative Development* - to increase economic value and reinforce unity through joined capital and promotion of savings
4. *Off-Farm Employment* - to diversify and modernise the Rwandan economy through the creation and enhancement of sustainable off-farm employment
5. *Promotion of Micro-finance and Insurance* - to increase inputs for economic expansion and protect entrepreneurs against business risks
6. *Resettlement* - to voluntarily settle citizens for efficient service delivery and land consolidation
7. *Rehabilitating the ecosystem* – to ensure optimal utilisation and sustainable management of the natural resource base
8. *Social Protection* - to provide effective and sustainable social protection and release the productive capacities of the most poor and vulnerable
9. *Promotion of ICT* - to improve access to market information and technology innovations for production
10. *Leadership Development* - to build a large cohort of community leaders who will catalyse social cohesion and an economic revolution

Each of the pillars has or will go through a process of detailed design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, feedback and transition. In line with VUP implementation which is currently under development, the pillars are all at different stages in this management cycle.

Planning and implementation of interventions in each pillar is led by the sector ministry under whose mandate it primarily falls and implementation is overseen by a pillar committee comprising key stakeholders at national and regional level and the focal point (Director of Planning) in the concerned sector ministry. The entire IDP is steered and overseen by an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (IMSC) comprising Ministers of the key ministries engaged in the programme i.e. MINECOFIN, MINAGRI, MINICOM, MINALOC, MIFOTRA, MININFRA and MINIRENA. The IMSC is chaired by MINALOC.

2.5.4. Agasozi Ndatwa

Agasozi Ndatwa is an effective way or a competitive approach of mobilizing a community to jointly implement the development plans, for example the Integrated Development Program (IDP). This was initiated by Government of Rwanda in 2008, with the following objectives:

1. Jump-start self-betterment for a continuous process of improvement at each Umudugudu in all matters related to land management. This has been an entry point in 2008, as a basis for other agricultural activities.
2. Create a spill-over effect for self betterment in other critical areas including, health, education, organization of cooperatives, credit and savings, resettlement...
3. Influence a positive mindset, at the different levels towards values and/standards and discipline for high performance.

Agasozi Ndatwa therefore is a process of implementing development programs, whereby a certain village after piloting, becomes a model for others to learn. The vision is to scale up the success from Agasozi Ndatwa to Umudugudu-, Cell-, Sector-, and District Ndatwa and, at the end, to have all the Country (Igihugu) Ndatwa.

2.5.5. Girinka program (one cow per poor family)

Girinka program (One cow per poor Family) was inspired by the Rwandan culture and initiated by His Excellency the President of the Republic in 2006. The cabinet meeting of 12/04/2006 approved the program as one of the 2020 vision, EDPRS and IDP implementation measures. This program aims at enabling every poor household to own and manage an improved dairy cow which would help the family to better their livelihood through increased milk and meat production and to improve soil fertility of their land for their crops using the available manure. This will not only improve the nutrition, but also increase the earnings of beneficiaries from milk, milk products, meat and sale of manure.

This program is implemented in two ways :(i) *Girinka y'ingabirano* (donation): a poor family receives a cow free of charge. When the cow calves, the calf is given to the neighbour who keeps it and gives the next calf to the next neighbour and so on. This procedure is called "*kuziturirana*" (credit revolving scheme). The second way is (ii) loan (*Girinka y'inguzanyo*): an average family gets a bank loan to buy a cow. It is the responsibility of the average family, to be able to comply with the criteria necessary to receive the cow. For example: being able to construct a cow shed (Kraal), the field planted with different pasture species for nutrition purpose, etc... *Girinka* program was a success and other related initiatives have followed. For instance, in Southern Province, Kamonyi District initiated "*inka y'akaguru*: process of producing many cows in the community whereby the first owner remains with the calf and the next beneficiary takes the mother and so on. This is much faster than *kuziturirana* mentioned earlier because there is a possibility of getting a new calf every year to the benefit of different households. Another initiative is "*Kuragiza*": a cattle owner gives a cow to his neighbour who keeps it for him and when it calves twice the owner gives one calf to the neighbour as recognition for his work to care for his cow. Elsewhere, well-off cattle keepers give cows to poor neighbours to enable them to own cows for milk, but also to benefit from manure. This is called "koroza".

2.6. International Development Goals

2.6.1. Millennium Development Goals

The extension strategy to be developed has to contribute to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular related to reduction of hunger and poverty (MGD 1)

2.6.2. NEPAD Perspectives

To put an end to the decline of the agricultural sector on the continent, Leaders of African Countries committed themselves to put in place, within the framework of the New Partnership for Development of Africa (NEPAD), a detailed program for the development of African Agriculture (PDDAA), which objective is the sustainable increase of economic growth rate (7% per year). To realize this vision, Heads of State and Government of African countries have adopted a Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) as a tool to boost agricultural growth, food security and rural development in

Africa. This program sets the target of 6 % growth rate of the agricultural production per year.

3. AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION IN RWANDA

3.1. History of Agricultural Extension in Rwanda.

Before colonization, there were no agricultural extension services in Rwanda and technical services, were related to social interactions by exchange of information and goods.

During the colonial period, the agricultural extension services aimed mainly at introduction of export crops such as coffee, tea, pyrethrum, quinquina. It was a directive system of extension (Top down Extension) where farmers were obliged to blindly fill standards defined by the colonial services. The system was characterized by an absence of dialogue between farmers and extension workers who were very insufficient at that period. Due to frequent famines, the colonial authorities introduced sweet potato and cassava as crops to ensure food security.

From 1962 to 1980, after the independence, the new authorities maintained this directive extension system and farmers who did not respect the unilaterally decided instructions were punished.

During this period, a large number of public extension workers were recruited and stationed throughout the country at national, prefecture and sector level. Several extension approaches were tested for instance (i) extension through contact farmers, (ii) pilot zones, (iii) demonstrations in public fields, (iv) extension through farmers settled in non occupied lands (paysannats) etc.

It is also during this period that the first projects called «Integrated Rural Development Projects» appeared, formulated without any participation of beneficiaries, meaning that these projects were not based on the real needs of the beneficiaries.

In 1982, the first national extension system was officially launched. It included two important orientations which are development of partnership with farmers and collaboration in extension service delivery between extension workers and local authorities. Extension commissions including extension workers and local authorities were created at all levels (sector, commune, Prefecture).

This system was replaced by the «Training and Visits » system, defined by the Workshop held in 1986 on the theme « Projects Reorientation ». This extension system was initially tested by the « Projet Agricole de Gitarama ». In 1990, this extension system was extended to 8 Prefectures out of 10 with the support of the « Projet Services Agricoles ». It was introduced in the beginning of the liberation war, and did not get enough time to prove its reliability.

From 1994 to 1998, it was the emergency period when Government efforts were oriented to rehabilitation of infrastructures and reconstruction of the country. During this period, many farmers associations were created mainly to benefit from assistance of NGOs and not to share their efforts and capacities to solve common problems. This contributed to instability of farmers groups and/or farmers associations, still experienced to day, whereby these

associations are not real partners of extension workers, in respect of delivering agricultural extension services.

None of the approaches introduced up to now took sufficiently into account the real needs of the farmers, because these approaches were designed and introduced by people who did not understand well the social-economic conditions of beneficiaries.

Thus appeared the need for reformulating principles, objectives and modes of intervention for a new extension system which was adopted by the « Séminaire National de Vulgarisation » in 1998. Recommendations issued from this workshop have not been applied.

It is also in 1998 that extension workers (monagris) at sector level were removed from public staff and this led to a distortion of the extension service delivery, because there was no longer a link between MINAGRI and the farmers. Indeed, without monagris at Sector level, the extension workers at District level were insufficient compared to the number of farmer households that needed to be supported.

3.2. Evolution of agricultural extension schools in Rwanda.

Rwanda like other countries experienced different agricultural extension approaches, both **Top down** (Transfer of Technology and Training & visit) and **Bottom up** (Farming System Research, Participatory extension, Farmer to Farmer Extension, Partnership extension, Agricultural Knowledge Information System, Privatization of agricultural extension and Contracting for extension service delivery). Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses in a given context.

The approach which long dominated in agricultural extension service delivery in Rwanda is the School of "Transfer of Technologies" based on chains of command (Top -down) which reached, at the bottom , the monagri whose responsibilities were to ensure that instructions received from the top were applied by farmers. This approach is still used by many organisations, public and private.

Due to the limited impact of this approach, new extension schools were introduced internationally and in Rwanda.

- Participation in development: In this school, the farmer is at the centre of all concerns. This school criticizes the inadequacy of the uniform scientific recommendations given to farmers and recommends flexible recommendations, adapted to different agro-ecological zones and socio-economic conditions of the target groups. This approach advises researchers to carry out tests in farmers fields, to involve in dialogue with them and to consider all aspects of the farming system, instead of considering only one aspect of the problem to be solved. In the same way, this approach advises extension workers to use participatory problem analysis and to suggest to farmers a range of options from which farmers can choose the ones adapted to their own situation. The participatory approach is actually popular in the context of the process of democratisation and decentralization (development led by grassroots communities)

- Empowerment and Social Inclusion. This school postulates that apart from adapted technical recommendations to farmers, extension workers should emphasize on organisational, institutional and political reinforcement of farmers capacities. This approach recommends also to pay special attention to disadvantaged groups of population.

- Commodity Chain Development. In the context of liberalization and promotion of market oriented agriculture, this approach recommends to develop extension strategies based on economic opportunities and to concentrate efforts on profitable commodities.

However, these different approaches, each applied in isolation, have not contributed to an effective agricultural extension service delivery and have therefore achieved limited impact on sustainable development. So far, in Rwanda, no “school of extension” is really prevalent; though their coexistence and need for mutual complementarity is recognised.

3.3. Analysis of current Agricultural extension in Rwanda:

3.3.1 Some examples of extension approaches currently practised in Rwanda.

Farmer based extension: experience of Rural Sector Support Project (RSSP).

The project supports NGOs service providers which in return, train and supervise farmer’s organisations in different technical and organisational activities. Theoretical and practical trainings are provided to groups of 20 to 25 farmers, and at the end of the training cycle, trained farmers become lead farmers who each of them organise new groups to be trained.

Approach used by the NGO called Caritas .

In a participatory approach, Caritas through poor households in areas with frequent food insecurity crises, links groups of farmers or individuals to Micro Finance Institution called «Réseau Interdiocésain de Microfinance» to promote income generating activities and to encourage them to constitute strategic stocks for food security.

Voluntary based extension: experiences of Syndicat Ingabo

In the ex Province of Gitarama, Syndicat Ingabo has initiated a system of voluntary farmers providing agricultural extension services to their colleagues. This system is based on the following principles (i) Voluntary service provider farmers are innovative people, with good communication skills, living in good relations with their neighbours and who agree to work voluntary, (ii) Motivation for those farmers are trainings, study tours, and awards received in agricultural competitions. iii) Each voluntary extension service provider accepts to assist at least 5 exploitations in their own neighbourhood.

Commodity Chain Development Approach.

This approach is being used by different development partners. It deals with promoting one speculation from inputs supply to the marketing of the final processed product. This approach is used by Syndicat Imbaraga, some farmer Organisations and other partners. The advantage of this approach is that it tends to organize the producers in Unions and Federations, which, in long term, can be able to replace public extension services for certain tasks within their specific commodity chain.

Experiences indicate that all these approaches in different contexts have their own strength and weaknesses and/or points for improvements.

3.3.2. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

In the process of developing a National Extension Strategy, four provincial workshops have been organized to do a SWOT analysis of the current situation regarding agricultural extension in Rwanda, the practices by different organizations, institutions and other partners.

Farmers and other partners deplored the absence of a functional relationship between MINAGRI and the decentralized agricultural extension services, especially at Districts, Sectors, Cell and Umudugudu (village) level as the main cause of inefficiency of extension service delivery. In particular, they pointed out the lack of extension training material both for extension workers and farmers, limited access of producers to good quality agricultural inputs, especially good quality seeds, lack of means of transport for public extension workers at District and Sector level and the fact that local authorities and extension workers do not demonstrate in their own farms what they are supposed to teach or advice to farmers.

The table below illustrates what the participants in the workshop, identified as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the current agricultural extension services in Rwanda.

Strength	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Existence of many Farmers organizations, NGOs and Projects as service providers; -Qualified extension workers (A0 and A1) at District and Sector level -Existence of infrastructures to support extension services (training centres, storage infrastructures); - Many trained and progressive farmers in the country. - Trained Technical staff in some of the institutions and organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of synergy and harmonization of different agricultural approaches and development initiatives, programs and/or plans at different levels; Lack of information sharing among different actors in agricultural sector; -Some local authorities that do not understand agricultural policy or do not consider agricultural sector as a priority; -Lack of extension training, educational or information material for extension workers, farmers, local authorities and other actors -Lack of specialized training for extension workers at District and sector level -Lack of means of work for extension workers (means of transport, GPS, Veterinary Kits, Computers.....); - Weak organisational and low technical capacity of existing farmers organizations; -Media which are not effectively and sufficiently used in agricultural extension information sharing/dissemination; -Absence of a functional relationship between MINAGRI and extension workers at District and Sector level (no mechanism of feedback from Umudugudu up to the District level); -Local authorities and extension workers don't do in their own farms what they are supposed to demonstrate to farmers and other partners in the area;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient quality seeds. When available, late delivery of quality seeds; -Farmers don't know the value of using quality seeds and continue to use seeds of bad quality, even when quality seeds are available from various sources; -Farmers are not sufficiently sensitised on the utility of agricultural credit and fear to take credit; -Farmers don't know where they can find agricultural service providers; -People trained by RSSP and UBPR (Union des Banques Populaires), and other organizations and/or institutions to help farmers to prepare eligible projects in banks are insufficient; -Lack of agricultural competitions (concours agricoles) to stimulate farmer competition; -Lack of reading culture by different partners, even when some materials are available -Some farmers do not know how to read and write
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good governance and political will to develop agricultural sector; -Existence of a National Agricultural Policy and related policies, approaches and programs Ex: Ubudehe, Imihigo, IDP, Agasozi Ndatwa, Girinka etc.; -Good experiences of Ubudehe, Imihigo, Girinka etc. which can be built on in the effective participatory planning, implementation for quick positive impact in agricultural sector; -The resettlement policy (Umudugudu) policy; - A network of micro finance institutions present in all Districts; - Agricultural Education Institutions (UNR, ISAE, KIST, UNATEC...) . -Increasing small agro processing units; -Communication facilities (Several radios, newspapers, ICT); -Facilities given to local communities to take part in decision-making in the context of decentralization and good governance; -Existence of a good policy for Cooperatives promotion; - Organisation of agri shows; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Some local authorities do not consider agriculture as a priority; -Lack of motivation for Extension workers; -Lack of functional relationship between MINAGRI and decentralized extension services; - Public extension workers at District and Sector level are diverted from their main task which is agricultural service delivery; -Resistance to change by the farmers ; -Insufficiency of extension workers, in particular veterinary specialists; - Research confined in experimental stations and not sufficiently done in farmers fields; - Research results not effectively translated into extension messages, to be disseminated to different beneficiaries and partners; -None certified seeds sold at the same price as certified seeds; -Insufficient public financing allocated to agricultural sector; -Agri inputs expensive compared to the purchasing power of the farmers; -Climatic risks (especially in the East and the South); - High interest rate on bank credits;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political stability in the country - Good climatic conditions favourable to agriculture, especially in the north and the west - The use of one mother tongue understood by everyone - Opportunities for expansion on regional and international markets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of insurance scheme in agricultural sector: - Eligibility criteria for farmers to access bank credit difficult to meet; - Lack of concertation platforms between all stakeholders in agricultural sector; - Good quality seeds not enough on agri input markets or other sources; - High population density; - Land locked country; - Globalisation; - Political instability in the sub region; - Macro-economic instability; - Gacaca courts take part of time that farmers could devote to agricultural works; - AIDS pandemic negatively impacting on the labour force in rural areas.
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4. NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION STRATEGY.

4.1. Definition of agricultural extension

There are several definitions of agricultural extension and no widely accepted definition. One among these is that « agricultural extension is the "Dissemination and exchange of information between farmers and farmer's organisations with the objective to build capacities of producers to maximize the use of resources they have and to improve, through the adoption of innovations, their economic and social standing». Extension is an ongoing process of getting useful information to people (professional communication dimension) and then assisting those people to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to utilize effectively this information and technology (the education). Leeuwis (2004) indicated that extension is a series of embedded communicative interventions that are meant, among others, to develop and/or induce innovations which supposedly help to resolve (usually multi-actor) problematic situation.

4.2. Vision of National Agricultural Extension Strategy

On the basis of the definition of agricultural extension, the Vision of the National Agricultural Extension Strategy is to ensure ideal conditions for the dissemination and exchange of information between producers, farmer organizations and other different partners in order to transform and to modernise the agricultural sector so that this sector can contribute effectively to achieve the millennium development goals, Vision 2020, and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy objectives.

4.3. Objectives of National Agricultural Extension Strategy.

The National Agricultural Extension Strategy should fit with the objectives of Vision 2020, the National Agricultural Policy, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture.

In the Strategic Plan for the Transformation Agriculture, Extension strategy comes under the second program “Support to the Professionalisation of Producers”. For this reason, the objectives of extension strategy are aligned on the objectives of this program.

Therefore, the Global objective of the National Agricultural Extension Strategy is to contribute to the professionalisation of Producers and to the effective adoption of innovations, in order to increase, diversify, specialize and intensify agricultural production, under conditions of economic profitability for the State and for farmers households while preserving the environment.

The specific objectives of National Agricultural Extension Strategy are:

- To promote farmer organisations and to encourage their participation in agricultural sector stakeholders “concertation” platforms;
- To strengthen technical capacities of Producers;
- To improve services delivery to Producers in the perspective of gradual disengagement of the Public sector from extension service delivery;
- To promote a system of participatory research adapted to the needs of producers;

4.4. Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the New Agricultural Extension Strategy are summarized as follows:

(i) Participatory extension

One of conditions for the success of agricultural development programs is the participation of all partners and particularly Producers in the process of decision-making. This participation goes from identification of problems and solutions to planning and implementation of interventions. This requires relevant efforts to improve organisational capacities of Producers.

Ubudehe, as already practiced in the country, and other initiatives mentioned earlier can be the effective tools for improving participatory agricultural extension services.

Participatory agricultural extension integrates elements of participatory technology development and training through experimentation in farmer fields. It requires new attitudes on how researchers and extension workers interact with farmers, and other partners.

Participatory agricultural extension includes following four steps or cornerstones:

- Social mobilisation by different people involved in the process;
- Participatory planning of activities, based on selected options;
- Training through experimentation of new ideas or options in farmer fields;
- Participatory monitoring and evaluation of activities by different partners at different levels in the process.

Social mobilization and capacity building is crucial to fulfil the above conditions.

Social Mobilization consists of identification of problems and possible solutions by local communities themselves, with the methodological support of extension workers, researchers

as facilitators and other development partners operating in the area. Building capacity of the communities is very important, especially in terms of organization. This enables them to effectively implement the planned activities, seek support whenever there is a need and to deal with different challenges encountered in the process. Innovation, therefore, in this approach, is seen as a product of social negotiation and the spreading of innovation as a product of effective social organization and communication at community level.

Participatory planning of activities:

- Needs classification according to identified problems and possible solutions;
- Choice of solutions which can be immediately implemented on the field;
- Finally, a consensual planning showing activities and responsibilities for each actor (who is doing what, when, with whom, for how much etc.).

It is during this participatory planning that the local community, individually or in group sign performance contracts (*Imihigo*) for which they will be responsible and accountable before the community and before local authorities.

Training through experimentation of new ideas or options in farmer fields (demonstration), or in another specified site or venue.

This is valid only for ideas or options identified during the first step of identification of problems and solutions, which can be immediately applied in the fields, but need to go through an experimentation process. If recognized that there is no need for the experimentation step, and if it has been successful elsewhere, a study tour can be planned before implementation, and the activity can be adjusted later, if there is a need to do so. In this step, farmers choose themselves options to be tested considering different socio-economic conditions, on the basis of technical advice, and considering the expected impacts. It is advised to do experimentation of new techniques in comparison with usual practices of farmers, motivate farmers to be innovative and to try out several practices. This will provide them a chance of choosing option/s from a broad range of solutions or options, hence increasing the chance of success. In this process farmers and/or other partners involved, select themselves criteria to be used to choose new technologies to be adopted, and other accompanying measures and/or information they may require.

Farmers and/or other partners concerned who agree to do an experiment should understand that this is also a learning process, whereby there could be a need to further integrate or incorporate some previous experiences for greater positive impact.

Evaluation of activities by participants in the process.

There are two types of evaluation:

- Evaluation during the agricultural season through farmer fields visits, discussions, exchanges of ideas and experiences;
- Evaluation of the process at the end of agricultural season which can lead to (i) activities planning for the next season (ii) decision to adopt new technologies having passed successfully the experimentation process (iii) continue experimentation for if the results are not convincing pleasing results (iii) implementation of new technologies, or scaling up of the results.

Therefore, in the participatory extension approach, innovation is perceived as a result of negotiations based on the intended positive impacts, while diffusion of innovation being the result of a good organisation and effective communication at community level.

Using participatory extension approach, extension interventions should be oriented to strengthening farmer's capacities to experiment in their own fields, to exchange information and experiences among farmers themselves and between farmers and their external environment. At this level, it is difficult to set a clear demarcation between the «Transfer of technologies extension school» and the «Empowerment and social inclusion extension school». In addition to this, some people equate technology transfer with agricultural or rural extension which some also argue not to be correct. However, the main issue to consider here is their relationship or complementarities. Technology transfer includes the additional functions of input supply and agri-services, while agricultural extension includes training farmers in agricultural and home management, facilitation skills, conflict management, decision-making skills; it also helps rural people to develop leadership and organizational skills, to enable them to better help themselves in the socio-economic efforts they are making. Therefore, with this approach the intended impacts is sustainable development, but non-agricultural impacts like improved self-governance, are equally important and complement the expected achievements.

(ii) Multi-approach and multi method extension

Extension activities should be adapted to different areas and target groups to which they are addressed. They should be adapted to solve identified problems, to meet expected results and outcomes.

In this principle, there is no preference or ranking of one extension approach or method higher than the other, but only a focus on their effectiveness and complementarities. Therefore different extension approaches or methods will be used alone, or in combination according to specific challenges, and the relevant interventions needed. This will be agreed upon in different preparatory meetings by relevant partners (including farmers groups or individual farmers). Given the role of women and youth in agricultural development, a particular attention for them to participate in the process will be given.

(iii) Demand driven and market oriented extension

Extension interventions should be planned as per demand by different targeted groups, considering the specific conditions of the area or location. It is in this respect that extension related needs and interventions should be planned and/or designed with a high level of participation by different partners, at different levels. This will enhance the ownership, responsibility and accountability by different partners including farmers themselves. In addition, extension interventions should be market oriented, to enable different producers, and processors and other related partners to involve in the market economy. This implies that building farmers capacities to formulate sound extension and innovation projects to be financed by different actors is crucial.

(iv) Process and results oriented extension

The expected or targeted results should be profitable, being agriculture or livestock commodities. Therefore, the process to achieve a particular result needs to be as good as the

results itself, to effectively and efficiently achieve and sustain the desired impacts, not only at farm household's level, but also for the national economy at large.

(v) Multi actor extension

Agricultural Extension strategy recognizes the complementarity of different actors in agricultural development (farmers' organizations, research, extension, agricultural education institutions, input supply, micro credit etc.). This will facilitate the process of disengagement by the public services from production, input supply and marketing functions and other service provision in favour of private sector to take on these roles.

(vi). Building on already existing initiatives

Imihigo, Ubudehe, Integrated Development Program, Girinka, Agasozi Ndatwa, and other related initiatives are examples which may emerge and prove to be effective for sustainable development.

4.5. Strategic axes

The following are the strategic axes to achieve the objectives of national agricultural extension strategy:

(i) Promotion of partnership between public sector, private sector, local and international NGOs, Farmer organisations, research and education agricultural institutions;

To promote this partnership, agricultural concertation platforms will be institutionalised at all levels (Sectors, Districts, and National level). It is within these concertation platforms that participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation will be possible. Concertation platforms are also a good way to ensure better communication, exchange and sharing of information, orientation and coordination of agricultural activities. Through these platforms, participatory planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation will be improved, while avoiding duplications and/or contradictions and promoting synergy.

(ii) Promotion of farmer organisations by priority commodities.

Within the framework of the new national agricultural extension strategy, preference will be given to farmers organisations organized by priority commodities at community level, to Unions at District Level and to Federations at National level. The platforms will play an important role in this. It is therefore important to strengthen their capacity in order for them to play their role effectively.

Unions and Federations will be in charge of input supply, agricultural products collection and marketing. This will avoid intermediary dealers who always take a part of farmer profit margin. Federations regrouped by priority commodities will be organized in Confederation whose role will be to represent interests of member organisations at national and international level.

(iii) Experimentation in farmer's fields and establishment of a network of farmer researchers.

Participatory agricultural extension approach includes elements of participatory development of technologies and training through experimentation in farmer fields. It requires new attitudes on how researchers, extension workers and other service providers interact with farmers. Participatory development of technologies includes farmer's participation in problem diagnosis, solutions identification, and experimentation of technologies to choose those which are adapted to their specific challenges, and validate adopted technologies.

Agricultural research and agricultural extension partners will be responsible to promote this approach which allows interested or sensitized farmers through training to see, understand and compare the new technologies with their traditional practices; the advantages, constraints and risks of given innovation/s.

(iv) Promotion of Voluntary farmer's extension services providers

As shown by the experiences of RSSP and Syndicat Ingabo, voluntary farmer service providers can contribute largely to diffusion of innovations to their neighbours. However, a minimum facilitation or motivation will be needed to promote service delivery and information sharing. Given the insufficiency of public and private extension workers, extension partners will be asked to promote extension service providers through farmer to farmer extension, farmer field's schools and other approaches deemed to be effective.

(v) Promotion of Rural Innovation Community Centres

In long term, it is expected that each Sector will have a Rural Innovation Community Centre where farmers can channel their needs or demand, but also access following services:

- Agricultural information and documentation;
- Internet Connection to allow farmers to seek the required information, including market prices, service providers, input supply etc;
- Theoretical and practical training;

The management of Rural Innovation Community Centres will be under the responsibility of Farmers Organisations, and the local government will monitor and evaluate the its services delivery.

(vi) Promotion of agricultural competitions.

Agricultural competitions not only encourage competition between farmers and service providers, but also contribute to diffusion of technologies, agricultural inputs and/or cattle and other livestock and information in rural areas, through prizes distributed to competition winners. Therefore, development partners will have also the role of financing the agricultural competitions.

(vii) Progressive disengagement of public sector from extension service delivery in favour of private extension service delivery.

It is expected that public services will gradually withdraw from direct service delivery, with the objective to set up a private extension service delivery in long term. Thus, the role of the State will be confined with the functions of coordination, facilitation, follow-up, evaluation and resource mobilization.

4.6. Agricultural extension methods

There are several agricultural extension methods which are being used by different actors, for different purposes. For example;

-Individual contacts: Farm & home visits, telephone calls, personal letters and/or memos etc. may be used etc.

-Group contacts: methods & results demonstration (in field or in certain venue), participatory training, seminar, workshop, discussion meetings, field trip, study tour etc.

-Mass outreach: Circular letters, radios and/or television, bulletins, fairs, posters, leaflets, motion-pictures or movies, slides, film strips, models, exhibits etc.

The important element in selecting which Agricultural extension methods to use, is to understand well the message, information, technology you need to communicate the targets, the use of different methods, the nature of contacts needed and the forms such as (written, spoken or visual).

The following are some of the examples which may be achieved, through the effective use of the above extension methods:

- Potentials and challenges of farmers and different actors can well understand;
- Participation in implementations of options, Monitoring and evaluation;
- Easy and timely adjustment of on going agricultural research and extension interventions;
- Impacts of agricultural extension programs can be increased considerably;
- At low cost the information and/ or technologies can be shared quickly;
- Easy and quick awareness & sharing of learning experiences;
- Common understanding by different producers and other actors in the sector on further researchable issues;
- New skills and knowledge which will contribute to the change of producers and different partners in the sector, to do business in unusual way targeting social, economical and political development;
- An opportunity for farmers to see a range of technologies and inputs, displayed by other farmers, dealers, non-government organizations (private sector) and government agencies, and other related actors to discuss in a lively and informal atmosphere;
- Quick feed back on further agricultural intervention regarding research, extension and other accompanying measures etc.

4.7. Characteristics of new orientations as regards to decentralised extension

The following table summarizes characteristics of new orientations as regards to agricultural decentralised extension service.

	Old profile of agricultural extension service: transfer of technologies	New profile of agricultural extension service: professionalisation of producers
Global objective	Increase of production	Increase of incomes
Extension Schools	Transfer of technologies	Combination of Commodity chain development, participation in development and empowerment and social inclusion.
Needs assessment and priorities identification	By external people (researchers, extension workers)	By producers and other related stakeholders in commodity chain
Main localization of experiments	Research station	Farmers fields
Proposed technologies	Uniform recommendations	Baskets of options (flexible recommendations)
Process of dissemination	Linear transfer of the technological packages	Dynamic process and participative analysis of most promising options
Farmers attitude	Reception of messages: adoption or not-adoption.	Application of principles, use of methods, choice from baskets of options to maximise the use of available resources Feel he/she is part of the process
Expected results by external organizations	General adoption of technical recommendations	Possibility for farmers to choose, advise and participation of farmers in adaptive research in collaboration with extension services providers
Mode of diffusion	From extension workers to farmers	Among others by farmer to farmer extension
Role of extension workers	Information provider, trainer, technical supervisor	Facilitation or catalyst, adviser

4.8. Roles of different actors in agricultural extension system

a) Ministry of Agricultural and Animal Resources

Formerly, the Ministry for Agriculture and Animal Resources was directly responsible to deliver extension services through agricultural extension workers at Sector (Monagris), District and Provincial level, who were accountable to the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources.

After the decentralization and administrative reform of 2004-2005, the delivery of extension services was put under direct responsibility of the decentralized entities. The reporting system is from Sector to District, from District to Province and to the Ministry of Local Government.

In the new context of decentralized extension, the main functions of the Ministry for Agriculture and Animal Resources are as follows: (i) coordination and planning of agricultural development programs, (ii) agricultural sector information function, (iii) monitoring and evaluation function, (iv) regulation and control function, (v) resources mobilisation function.

Piloting agricultural sector by the Ministry for Agriculture and Animal Resources can not be possible without information going up from local administration informing about the general situation, its evolution and problems of producers.

This observation shows that functional dependence between the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources and the Districts is necessary. The Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources needs information from Districts to be able to properly plan the development of the agricultural sector, while Districts need support of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources. Otherwise the coherence and effectiveness regarding agricultural related issues will be limited.

This shows also the need for the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources with Ministry Of Local administration (MINALOC) (i) to set up and fund concertation platforms (refer annex 2) to enable the Ministry to pilot agricultural sector, (ii) to strengthen the capacities of decentralized entities through its specialized Agencies and (iii) to develop strong functional relationship with Districts.

b) MINAGRI Specialized Agencies

The role of MINAGRI specialized agencies(RAB and RAEDB) is to do research, extension, and to coordinate the implementation of agricultural development programs. In particular, they are expected to provide technical and capacity building support to the decentralised extension services, produce extension materials for extension workers, farmers and other related partners. They are also charged with the role of promoting participatory research aiming at solving the real problems of farmers and other clients. The fact that the MINAGRI agencies are undergoing the process of restructuring will facilitate the effective agricultural service delivery.

This implies that agricultural researchers and/or extensionists will participate in agricultural programs monitoring & evaluation and adjustments meetings, at decentralized level. Moreover, the stakeholder platforms at decentralized level will have to actively participate in

Agricultural extension and research program and/or interventions development. Participatory monitoring and evaluation, therefore, will be conducted at different levels (refer annex 2), to ensure effective communication among different actors.

c) MINALOC and Local Administration

The agricultural extension system has to be decentralized; and then the MINALOC as the ministry in charge of decentralization process should own the all system.

The MINALOC is involved in monitoring and evaluation of the system at national level and will ensure the formalization of agricultural plat forms at decentralized level as sub-committees of JAF.

The role of Local Administration is very important in social mobilisation and organisation of farmers in decentralized extension system.

In particular, Local Administration is responsible for:

- Mobilisation of local communities;
- Coordination of extension activities at District, Sector, Cell and Umudugudu level;
- Training needs assessment and supervision of farmers training by extension service providers;
- Facilitation for local communities in the process of identification of strengths, weaknesses, threats or opportunities of different actors in their area;
- Facilitating organization of producers in farmers associations and co-operatives;
- Collection and diffusion of information to relevant authorities and partners;
- Facilitation and collaboration with other partners in agricultural development (NGOs, private Sector etc)

d) Farmer organisations

Farmer organisations, even still timidly, contribute to strengthen production and marketing structures. They have to provide proximity services needed by farmers, contribute to problem and solutions identification, supervise experimentations in farmer fields, and supervise rational utilisation of fund and maintenance of agricultural infrastructures and/or facilities in rural areas. It is expected that farmers organisations will be organised by commodity chains and their role in decentralised extension system will be reinforced.

The promotion of partnership between farmers' organisations, extension and research and other actors involved in one way or another in agricultural service delivery will enable them to be the real partners. This will therefore, effectively work hard to effectively satisfy different clients as per their demands.

e) NGOs and Civil Society

Local and international NGOs are not only funds providers but also service providers for local communities (agricultural inputs supply, marketing and processing of agricultural production, counselling, facilitation in problem and solutions identification, facilitation in farmers organisations in commodity chain, capacity building of farmers organisations, lobbying and plea for local communities etc). NGOs and Civil society will have to provide the feedback through stakeholders' platforms, at different levels. Being service providers, they will have to sign contracts with public and private institutions funding in agricultural sector.

f) Private sector

The private sector is active in all steps of commodity chain starting from inputs supply, production, marketing, processing and commercialisation of processed or unprocessed product. Its role in decentralised agricultural extension will need to be reinforced for better ensuring the linkage between production and markets.

g) Financial institutions

In spite of its importance, the agricultural sector is not much financed by grants from commercial and development banks, comparatively with others economic sectors. That is why, public sector funding is predominant in this sector through development projects, agricultural guarantee funds, Fertilisers Funds and other programs.

This tendency will still be maintained for a certain time, but important efforts will be deployed to encourage local micro finance institutions for more participation in financing agricultural sector.

h) Higher Agricultural Education Institutions

Higher Agricultural Education Institutions will be approached and consulted on the regular review of their curricula, so that they can train qualified staff responding to the profile of the new extension strategy i.e. equipped with skills to work in rural areas, take initiatives in autonomous way, analyse complex situations of agricultural development, having competences in management and entrepreneurship, play advocacy & lobbying role whenever necessary. Higher Agricultural Education Institutions will be part of stakeholders' platforms, at different levels.

i) Primary, Secondary schools and Health Centers will take part in setting up some demonstration fields for them to learn, but also for the farmers around to benefit from agricultural information and or innovations.

4.9. Functional relationship between MINAGRI Agencies and District

With decentralisation, staff and budget management at District and Sector levels is under the responsibility of Districts authorities. In that regard, agricultural extension workers, as well as all staff affected to Districts has hierarchical relationship only with Districts authorities. These hierarchical relations which result in acts of administrative management include giving them directives, to approve their work plan, to follow-up the implementation of agreed work plan and to evaluate the results.

In addition to these hierarchical relations, extension workers at District and Sector level need to have functional relationship with all public and private institutions from which they can find technical information and advises they need to achieve successfully their functions.

Agricultural extension workers need more particularly to work closely with MINAGRI Agencies, to achieve a common objective of providing the most effective possible supports needed by farmers and by other actors of agricultural development in the Districts.

Here after a no restrictive list of activities in which functional relationship between MINAGRI Agencies and Extension workers at District level is needed:

- Basic technical and socio-economic information ;
- Agricultural planning;
- Facilitation and technical support;
- Technical control and regulation;
- Capacity building ;
- Monitoring and evaluation of activities and give timely feedback to different partners.

The table in appendix illustrates the types of functional relationships which are expected between extension workers at District level and MINAGRI Agencies.

5. COORDINATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The coordination of extension activities is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources through its Agencies.

To accomplish this function, concertation platforms will be set up at different levels, with the participation of all stakeholders including MINAGRI Agencies.

At District level, at least four concertation meetings (one per Quarter) will be organised each year. All agricultural sector stakeholders at District level will be expected to attend those meetings including MINAGRI Agencies. The main agenda for those meetings are :(i) to revise the plan for agricultural activities forwarded from grassroots level , (ii) to prepare agricultural campaigns, (iii) to discuss each one responsibilities in implementation of agreed District action plan, and (iv) activities progress evaluation.....

At National level, two concertation meetings with all partners' representatives will be organised each year.

To ensure the successful implementation of the extension strategy, annual agricultural action plans of the Districts should contains activities for all stakeholders' institutions and partners present in the District. All stakeholder institutions are expected to collaborate through this agriculture forum as a condition to accept their interventions in the District.

A reporting system will be established. In addition to reporting to financing institutions, all stakeholders' institutions will be asked to report to Districts so that one agricultural District report is produced under the coordination and responsibility of the Professional in charge of Agriculture and Animal Resources in the District. This report will be transmitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources to be analysed by MINAGRI Agencies and Districts realisations will be integrated in MINAGRI annual report. M & E and AMIS systems are under development to facilitate this task.

6. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK ON NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION STRATEGY

General objective: the National Agricultural Extension Strategy is to contribute to the professionalisation of Producers and to the effective adoption of innovations, in order to increase, diversify, specialize and intensify agricultural production, under conditions of economic profitability for the State and for farmers households while preserving the environment.

Specific Objectives	Objectively verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions and risks
<p><u>Specific Objective 1</u> To promote farmer organizations and to encourage their participation in agricultural sector stakeholder « concertation » platforms (Amahuriro)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of cooperatives organized by Commodity Chain -Number of apex organizations put in place -Number of Farmer Organizations having obtained legal status - Number of operational concertation platforms (amahuriro) -Number of meetings of concertation platforms (Amahuriro) at national and decentralized level organized with participation of Farmer Organizations. 	<p>Reports from Districts and Agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition of the importance of agricultural extension by different actors - Readiness and commitment of private sector, civil society, farmers and farmers associations to play their role in agricultural service delivery
<p><u>Specific Objective 2</u> Strengthen technical capacities of male/female producers by means of subcontracting with service providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of demands from farmer organizations and other actors for capacity building (trainings, study tours, etc.) - Number of trainings organized for service providers; - Number of trainings organized for male/female producers - Number of contracts with service providers for technical capacity building with male/female producers - Number of extension materials produced and disseminated - Awards given to winners of agricultural competitions 	<p>Reports MINAGRI, Agencies and Districts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Micro finance system reorganized to meet the specific needs of the agricultural sector
<p><u>Specific Objective 3</u> To improve service delivery to producers in the perspective of gradual disengagement of the public sector from direct service delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of operational rural Community Innovation Centers established - Number of male/female users of Community Innovation Centers - Number of farmer trainer centers - Number of male/female trainees trained at farmer training centers 	<p>Reports MINAGRI, Agencies and Districts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mindset to change from receiving free services to payment for services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of demands from male/female producers and farmer organizations for services - Number of extension projects financed - Number of Farmer Organizations delivering proximity services to male/female producers - Number of private operators delivering proximity services to male/female producers - Number of “abajyanama b’ubuhinzi n’ubworozi” (agricultural advisors) delivering proximity services to male/female producers - Types of services paid for by beneficiaries 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - risks (climatic, other) are made acceptable for producers to move from subsistence to commercial farming - Sufficient interest for service providers, farmer organizations and other to engage in agricultural extension service delivery
<p>Specific Objective 4 To promote a participatory system of research adapted to the demand of producers and actors of commodity chains</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of experiments in farmers’ fields - Number of innovations adopted - Number of open door days organized at extension/ research stations and number of participants - Level of use of agricultural inputs (seed, fertilizers, etc.) 	<p>Reports MINAGRI, Agencies and Districts</p>	

Activities /Results and cost estimate for the Period of EDPRS (2008-2012).

Expected results /Specific Objective	Activities	Total Cost
Specific objective 1: To promote farmer organizations and to encourage their participation in agricultural sector stakeholder « concertation » platforms (Amahuriro)		
1.1. The producers are organized by commodity chain	1.1.1. Organize provincial seminars to sensitize stakeholders on the advantages of organizing producers in commodity chains.	30 000 000
	1.1.2. Support producers who express interest to organize themselves by commodity chain (organization of meetings, development of charters, establishment of committees, etc.)	90 000 000
	1.1.3 . Support producer organizations to put in place Apex organizations (Unions, Fédérations)	12 500 000
1.2. The concertation platforms are put in place with the participation of the Farmer Organizations at national and decentralized levels	1.2.1. Organize every year at each decentralized level concertation/planning/evaluation meetings of the platforms (Amahuriro) with the participation of farmer organizations.	320 000 000
	1.2. 2. Organize every year, at national level two concertation/planning/evaluation meetings	12 000 000
Specific Objective 2: Strengthen technical capacities of male and female producers by means of subcontracting with service providers		
2.1. Technical capacities of services providers are strengthened	2.1.1. Make a base line of existing service providers in all Districts (technical, financial capacities, experiences, etc.)	30 000 000
	2.1.2. Assess/evaluate the needs of service providers (public and private) and develop capacity building plans	30 000 000
	2.1.3. Produce and disseminate extension material targeting service providers and male/female producers.	600 000 000
	2.1.4. Equip Districts and Sectors with means of work (Motorbikes, GPS, etc.)	150 000 000
	2.1.5. Train District and Sector staff (technical training, training, on participatory extension, training in communication and facilitation of groups) by service providers.	180 000 000
2.2. Capacities of producer organizations are strengthened	2.2.1. Make a base line of existing Producer Organizations and assess /evaluate their capacities in respect of proximity service delivery	60 000 000
	2.2.2. Support Unions and Federations to strengthen capacities of grassroot's Producer Organizations (organization, communication, financial management, advocacy and negotiating capacity).	160 000 000

Expected results /Specific Objective	Activities	Total Cost
	2.2.3. Train private service providers to assist male/female producers to formulate bankable projects.	20 000 000
	2.2.4. Put in place a fund to finance male/female producer demand driven and extension related Micro Projects.	1 000 000 000
	2.2.5. Organize male/female producer demand driven trainings by service providers.	60 000 000
	2.2.6. Organize agricultural competitions among male/female producers, among local authorities, agricultural technicians and among Districts.	720 000 000
Specific Objective 3: To improve service delivery to producers in the perspective of gradual disengagement of the public sector from service delivery		
3.1. Proximity services delivered by private sector and farmer organizations are available at Sector and District levels and gradually replace the public services.	3.1.1. Create and equip rural Community Innovation Centers (one per District during the current phase), managed by farmer organizations.	1 500 000 000
	3.1.2. Support Farmer Organizations in the organization of farmer field schools, farmer to farmer extension and study tours.	120 000 000
	3.1.3. Support Farmer Organizations to create seed multiplication centers for seeds of priority crops (minimum one center per sector) and to create agricultural inputs shops (one per cell).	900 000 000
	3.1.4. Support farmer organizations to establish support services to private extension (Artificial insemination, animal health units, etc.)	600 000 000
4.1. The agricultural research system is divers, decentralized and oriented towards the demands of the male/female producers.	4.1.1. Establish at all research stations « research committees» which include all actors in agricultural development to provide orientations on research to be conducted.	8 000 000
	4.1.2. Support Districts and sectors through service providers and/or “abajyanama b’ubuhinzi n’ubworozi” for the organization of participatory problem and solution/interventions identification meetings.	8 000 000 000
	4.1.3. Support Farmer Organizations, service providers and researchers to increase experiments in farmer fields	600 000 000
	4.1.4. Support the extension/research institutions to organize open door days at the extension/research stations.	8 000 000
Total		15 323 000 000

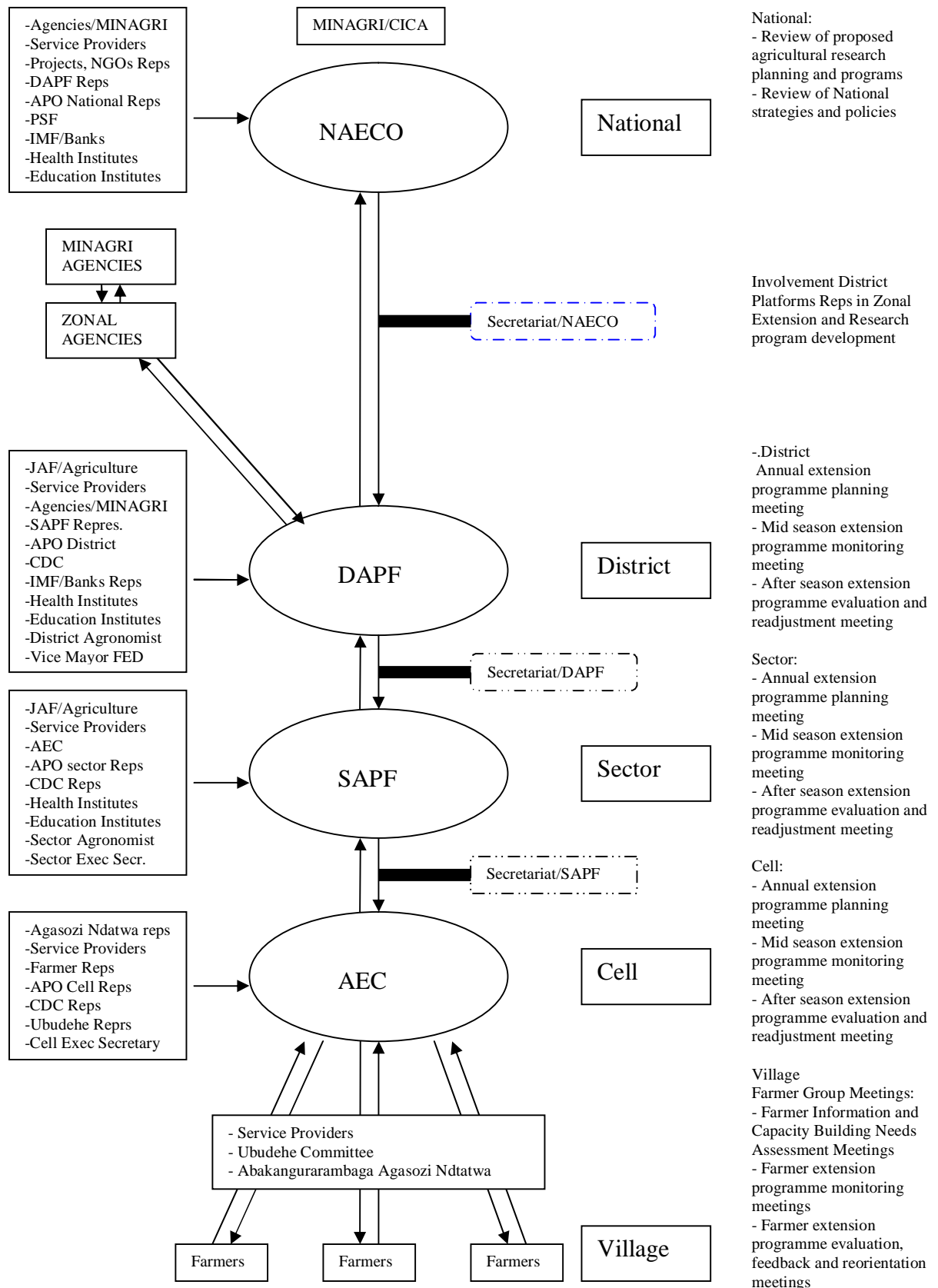
Annex 1: Non exhaustive list of functional relationship between MINAGRI Agencies and the Districts

Fields of functional relationship	Functional relationship (From Districts extension workers to MINAGRI Agencies)	Functional Relationship (from MINAGRI Agencies to Districts extension workers)
Basic technical information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To collect and transmit Districts basic data on commodity chains productions (statistics related to number and types of producers households , surface of cultivated crops and crop production, livestock, agricultural inputs, agricultural financing by credit institutions , post-harvest activities, etc); -In collaboration with District platform, transmit to related Agencies collected information from Farmers and Farmers organizations concerning their problems, needs, priorities, progress and wishes out of each commodity chain; -Information and fast alarm with regard to crops and animal diseases and other natural disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To propose tools for data collection on Districts level ; -To analyse, synthesize, publish and diffuse collected information at District level ; -To propose strategic orientations for agricultural development on basis of received information from Districts, -To provide technical information and technical support needed by Districts in the implementation of their development programs, -To provide information regarding availability of opportunities for different partners (including farmers) to formulate their demands to the districts.
Agricultural Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To collect available data for Districts agricultural planning ; -To coordinate all activities related to agricultural planning on District level -To invite MINAGRI Agencies and other partners at District level to take part in District agricultural development planning and annual action plans. -To support Sectors in agricultural activities planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To give strategic orientations to Districts in view of preparation of their development plans; -To take part in the formulation of District annual work plans and evaluation; -To participate to all meetings of stakeholders concertation platforms held at District level; -To collect District annual work plans and to integrate them in the annual work plan of the Agencies and the Ministry.
Counselling and Technical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To express needs related to technical support expected from Agencies: technical problems, methods, needs for technical information....; -To organize and supervise activities related to agricultural demonstrations, farm field's schools, organization of farm to farm visits, participative identification of problems and solutions, experimentation in farmers fields... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To seek and provide technical socio, and economical information requested by Districts staff; -To propose protocols to be used in agricultural demonstrations; -To prepare and diffuse to Districts technical standards for new agricultural technologies; -To propose the most suitable approaches to be used in different conditions or situations in District regarding extension services

Fields of functional relationship	Functional relationship (From Districts extension workers to MINAGRI Agencies)	Functional Relationship (from MINAGRI Agencies to Districts extension workers)
		delivery; -To evaluate methods used by extension workers and propose them how they can improve them. -On basis of needs formulated by Districts, to help Districts to organize study tours for farmers outside the Districts.
Technical control and regulation	-To ensure that instructions related to animal and crops diseases are respected; -To alert quickly Agencies and other relevant authorities in case of natural disasters.	-To organise quick interventions to support District to fight against natural disasters announced by Districts; -To organise preventive interventions against natural disasters and support Districts to execute them;
Capacity building	-To hold an inventory and up dates of extension service providers at District level; -To organise technical and organisational training needs assessment for both public and private extension workers and to communicate this information to relevant Agencies, and other partners; -To evaluate needs related to training material and other means of work for extension workers and farmers and to communicate them to relevant Agencies an/or organisations.	-On basis of needs expressed by Districts, to support them to organize trainings preferably using other training service providers Institutions ; -To design, produce and diffuse to Districts extension material adapted to each context.
Monitoring and evaluation	-To coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of Agricultural development programs at District level; -To prepare and organize quarterly concertation meetings (Agricultural forum) at District level -To prepare and transmit to MINAGRI Agencies Districts quarterly and annual reports including all stakeholders activities	-To support financially Districts to organize concertation meetings at Districts level - To collect and analyse Districts reports in view to integrate Districts achievements in MINAGRI and MINAGRI Agencies reports.

ANNEX 2: Proposed National Agricultural Extension structure and its implementation

2.1. Structure



2.2. MEMBERS, ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXTENSION STRUCTURE.

2.2.1. Members, roles and responsibilities.

National level.

Structure: National Agricultural Extension Committee (NAECO)

Members:

- MINAGRI Agencies: 7 (RAB: 4 and RAEDB: 3)
- Projects and Programs: according to the number of MINAGRI Projects
- Services providers: 3 (1 Local NGO, 1 International NGO, 1 Agribusiness)
- Professional Agricultural organisations: 3 (1 ROPARWA, 2 farmers unions non- ROPARWA)
- Higher educational institutions: 2 (1 public, 1 private)
- MIF and Banks: 2 (1 MIF, 1 Bank)
- District Agricultural Platform (DAPF): 4 (1/Main Agro-Ecological Zone)
- Private Sector Federation/Agriculture Chamber: 2 (1 transformation, 1 production).

MINAGRI through PASNVA will be **secretariat** of NAECO. At the end of the project, the function of secretariat will be taken up by CICA, which will be equipped for this.

Roles and responsibilities

- Ensure the implementation of national extension strategy and agricultural policies and programs (orientation, coordination, harmonization, monitoring and evaluation)
- Propose to MINAGRI readjustment of extension programs, strategies and policies considering the evaluation of program implementation and reorientation emerging from DAPF
- Ensure linkage of extension programs at National, Regional and International levels
- Approve and orient demands from agricultural extension partners
- Mobilise resources
- Consolidate reports from district level

District level.

Structure: District Agricultural Platform (DAPF)

Members:

- MINAGRI Agencies (Substructures at district level)
- JAF/Agriculture and livestock members
- Private service providers
- CDC/ youth and women's representatives (involved in agricultural activities)
- Agricultural Professional Organisations
- IMF and Banks
- Sector Agricultural Platform (SAPF) representatives

The members of the district platform are representatives of the different categories of stakeholders. They are elected per category by the stakeholders themselves. It is the responsibility of the platform members to keep their colleagues informed.

Roles and responsibilities.

- Consolidate extension themes and priorities of different sectors and submit to national level
- Identify/consolidate capacity building needs of farmer organizations and service providers
- Plan, monitor and evaluate extension activities in relation to the agricultural seasons
- Propose to NAECO readjustment of extension programs, strategies and policies considering the evaluations of program implementation and reorientations emerging from SAPF
- Coordinate extension activities of the agricultural actors
- Ensure dissemination and feed-back of agricultural and livestock information among various actors
- Develop an enabling context to improve the performance of extension service providers
- Mobilise resources
- Participate in district agricultural development planning

A permanent staff, accountable to the DAPF, with a clearly defined job description will be hired to manage the secretariat of the DAPF.

Sector level.

Structure: Sector Agricultural Platform (SAPF)

Members:

- JAF/Agriculture and livestock members
- Private service providers
- CDC/ youth and women's representatives (involved in agricultural activities)
- Agricultural Professional Organisations
- IMF and Banks
- Agricultural Extension Committee (AEC) representatives from *Akagari* level

The members of the sector platform are representatives of the different categories of stakeholders. They are elected per category by the stakeholders themselves. It is the responsibility of the platform members to keep their colleagues informed.

Roles and responsibilities.

- Consolidate extension themes and priorities of different cells and submit to district level
- Identify/consolidate capacity building needs of farmer organizations and service providers
- Plan, monitor and evaluate extension activities in relation to agricultural seasons
- Propose to DAPF readjustment of extension programs, strategies and policies considering the evaluations of program implementation and reorientations emerging from AEC
- Coordinate extension activities of agricultural actors

- Ensure dissemination and feed-back of agricultural and livestock information among various actors
- Develop an enabling context to improve the performance of extension SPs
- Participate in sector agricultural development planning

The members of SAPF will elect one member to manage the secretariat

Cell level (Akagari level).

Structure: Agricultural Extension Committee (AEC)

Members:

- Agricultural Professional Organisations
- Private service providers
- CDC/ youth and women's representatives (involved in agricultural activities)
- Farmers representatives (agriculture and livestock farmer leaders)
- *Ubudehe* committee representatives

The members of the Agricultural Extension Committee are representatives of the different categories of stakeholders. They are elected per category by the stakeholders themselves. It is the responsibility of the committee members to keep their colleagues informed.

Roles and responsibilities.

- Ensure timely organization of farmer groups meetings for needs assessment, monitoring and evaluation of extension activities and programs
- Consolidate extension themes and priorities from farmer meetings and submit to SAPF
- Propose to SAPF readjustment of extension programs, strategies and policies considering the evaluations of program implementation and reorientations emerging from farmer meetings (village level)
- Identify/consolidate capacity building needs of farmer organizations and service providers
- Promote contracting between farmers and services providers and monitor performance and achievements
- Promote farmers' participation in research experimentation and extension activities
- Ensure feed-back to correct existing field data with actual situation
- Follow up on mentoring of farmers at village level

The members of AEC will elect one member to form the secretariat.

Village level (*Umudugudu* level)

Structure: Planned Farmers Group Meetings organized by AEC with facilitation of <Umujyanama w'ubuhinzi n'ubworozi> for Needs Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation of Extension activities and Programs.

Roles and responsibilities.

Supported by *Ubudehe* committee and services providers/extensionists

- Assess Farmer's Information and Capacity Building Needs
- Prioritise extension themes
- Orient AEC on themes, priorities, urgencies,...
- Participate in Extension and Adapted Research activities
- Participate in M&E of extension activities
- Feed back

2.3. RELATIONSHIP.

The aim is to ensure the synergy of agricultural extension actors and to improve the productivity of the agricultural sector. Therefore, the relationship between the extension structures is based on:

- Coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the extension programs/activities;
- Orientation of the higher platforms/committee levels based on participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation starting from umudugudu/farmers groups level; and
- Information flow management.

At the end of the project support, the government budget for agriculture and livestock will cover the operational cost of the platforms at all levels.

2.4. IMPLEMENTATION.

The functions at different levels are basically the same but are done sequentially in order to plan, monitor and evaluate effectively. In case of emergencies, the approach will be adjusted accordingly to enable rapid action, but with emphasis on the ownership. The system has to be flexible. In case of available funding at sector and district levels, implementation of agricultural extension activities and programs as identified by farmers' needs, should start, while information will be passed on to the NAECOC. The most important issue in this connection is to respect the demand-driven principle and to share efficiently the information between different levels.

Village level (umudugudu level).

Pre-season actions.

To organize Annual Farmers' Information and Capacity Building Needs Assessment, seasonal monitoring and evaluation meetings will be carried out. With technical support of the *Ubudehe* committee and identified service providers/extensionists, the farmer groups analyze their problems and make an inventory of the important themes (prioritize) of the seasons.

The themes which come out of the meetings, including the needs for capacity building, in a priority order as assessed by the farmer groups, are reported to the Agricultural Extension Committee (AEC) at cell level.

Timing: In June (first ten days), annual plan for seasons A and B and season B evaluation are elaborated. In January (first ten days), a readjustment of season B plan and season A evaluation are done. **See annex 3**

During the season:

- Seasonal Farmer groups extension program monitoring meeting;

- Seasonal Farmer groups extension program evaluation, feed back and reorientation meetings.

Cell level (Akagari level).

Pre-season actions.

Consolidation and prioritisation of themes and pre season extension program planning meetings.

Timing: In June (second ten days), annual plan for seasons A and B and season B evaluation are elaborated. In January (second ten days), a readjustment of season B plan and season A evaluation are done. **See annex 3.**

Based on the farmers' information and capacity building needs assessment from the villages, the AEC elaborates the priorities (extension themes and capacity building needs) of the season to be submitted to the Sector Agricultural Platform (SAPF).

During the season:

- Extension program monitoring meeting, based on input from Farmer Group Meetings
- Extension program evaluation and readjustment meetings.

Sector level.

Pre-season actions.

Consolidation of cell agricultural priorities needs and extension program planning meetings.

TIMING: In June (third ten days), annual plan for seasons A and B and season B evaluation are elaborated. In January (third ten days), a readjustment of season B plan and season A evaluation are done. **See annex 3.**

The Sector Agricultural Platform (SAPF) consolidates the needs from the AEC (extension themes and capacity building needs) and elaborates the Sector agricultural plan to be submitted to the District Agricultural Platform (DAPF).

During the season.

- ♣ Extension program monitoring meeting;
- ♣ Extension program evaluation and readjustment meetings.

District level.

Pre-season actions.

Consolidation of sector agricultural plans and extension program planning meetings.

TIMING: In July (first ten days), annual plan for seasons A and B and season B evaluation are elaborated. In February (first ten days), a readjustment of season B plan and season A evaluation are done. **See annex 3.**

The district elaborates its district agricultural plan to be submitted to National Agricultural Extension committee (NAECO).

During the season

- ♣ Extension program monitoring meeting;
- ♣ Extension program evaluation and readjustment meetings.

National level.

Pre-season actions: Consolidation of district agricultural plans, readjustment of national programs/policies and extension program planning meetings. The NAECO elaborates the national season agricultural plan.

TIMING: In July (second ten days), annual plan for seasons A and B and season B evaluation are elaborated. In February (second ten days), a readjustment of season B plan and season A evaluation are done **.See annex 3.**

During the season.

- ♣ Extension program monitoring meeting;
- ♣ Extension program evaluation and readjustment meetings.

2.5. SETTING UP OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION STRUCTURE AT DECENTRALIZED LEVEL.

The Cell Agricultural Extension Committee.

The meeting on setting up of the Cell Agricultural Extension Committee is convened and chaired by the Executive Secretary of the Cell with the technical support of the district agricultural platform.

The participants are as follows:

- Agricultural Professional Organizations;
- Private service providers;
- CDC / representatives of youth and women (involved in agricultural activities);
- Farmers representatives (agriculture and livestock farmer leaders); and
- *Ubudehe* representative committee.

Objective of the meeting.

Setting up the roles and responsibilities of the Cell Agricultural Extension Committee by the members at cell level. At the end of this meeting, the Cell Agricultural Extension Committee is put in place and the calendar of the meetings at village level for participatory analysis of the agricultural season and priority is defined.

The sector agricultural platform.

The meeting for setting up the sector agricultural platform is convened and chaired by the Executive Secretary of sector with the technical support of the committee of the district agricultural platform.

The participants are are follows:

- JAF/Agriculture and livestock members ;
- Private service providers;
- CDC / representatives of youth and women (involved in agricultural activities);
- Agricultural Professional Organizations;
- MFIs, banks; and
- Agricultural Extension Committee (AEC) representative from *Akagari* level.

Objective of the meeting.

Setting up the roles and responsibilities of the sector agricultural platform by the members at sector level.

At the end of this meeting, the sector agricultural platform is put in place and the calendar of the meetings with the Cell Agricultural Extension Committees is defined. The representatives of the sector agricultural platform so elected are automatically members of the district agricultural platform.

District agricultural platform.

Meeting of setting up of the district agricultural platform level

This meeting takes place at the district level and is convened and chaired by the Mayor of the respective district with the technical support of PASNVA/ MINAGRI.

The participants include:

- MINAGRI Agencies (sub-structures at district level);
- JAF/Agriculture and livestock members;
- Private service providers;
- CDC / representatives of youth and women (involved in agricultural activities);
- Agricultural Professional Organizations (APOs);
- MFIs, banks, and
- Executive Secretary of sector
- Sector agricultural platform representatives

At the end of this meeting, the district agricultural platform is put in place.

NOTICE:

To ensure the effectiveness of this process in the districts which have not yet started the arrangement, MINAGRI should organize at national level an awareness meeting, regrouping districts authorities and technicians for ownership and organisation of meetings at decentralized level. The MINALOC will be involved.

2.6.ORGANS OF AGRICULTURAL PLATFORMS AND THEIR MANDATES.

The following organs are put in place at Cell, Sector and District levels:

Agricultural platform General Assembly.

It is the supreme organ of the agricultural platform. It is composed by all members representing various actors involved in agricultural sector. It is in charge of ensuring the respect of roles and responsibilities of the agricultural platform and tasks achievements of the other organs.

Agricultural platform committee.

The committee of the agricultural platform is elected by the General Assembly and the members should not exceed 15 people to be able to function comfortably. This number is composed by representatives of various categories of agricultural actors. The committee is in charge of implementation of roles and responsibilities of the agricultural platform.

The Board.

A bureau composed by 4 persons i) the president, (ii) two vice-presidents, and (iii) a secretary, is elected among the committee by the General Assembly. The president of this bureau is automatically the president of the agricultural platform.

The bureau is responsible on the day-to-day running of the agricultural platform and has to improve relationships within members and between the agricultural platform and other institutions, in order to achieve the goal of a well coordinated and harmonized agricultural sector development. They have also the role of being innovators themselves. That is always seeking as trying new ideas to improve the way they do things/business.

The Secretariat.

The district and sector agricultural platforms should have a technical secretariat to provide support to the elected bureau. The district agricultural platform secretary is recruited on the basis of the technical qualifications and skills and not elected. At the beginning, the sector agricultural platform secretary assumes the position of secretary to the board, and is elected by the General Assembly.

2.7. FARMER NEEDS ASSESSMENT.

Appropriate identification of farmer needs is critical for the proper functioning of the agricultural extension service delivery. In order to be successful in coming up with priority agricultural development needs of the farmers within the local community setting, it is important to involve a fair representation of the members of the target community, and/or selected agricultural development advisors/facilitators.

Effective 2009, two animators/lead farmers, one responsible for agriculture and the other incharge of livestock development activities at community level wereselected to pioneer the establishment of the agricultural demonstration site (*Agasozi ndatwa*) at the *umudugudu* level. These will eventually become community-based agricultural development advisors (similar to MINISANTE's community health services advisors).

Since agricultural extension services have to address the issues and actual community agricultural and livestock development needs, it is a precondition that there is a community-based needs assessment at the beginning of the agricultural season, and this is better carried out at least three months ahead of the season.

The community's agricultural and livestock development needs assessment is undertaken by the agricultural/livestock development advisors in collaboration with other knowledgeable community members such as person(s) responsible for *Ubudehe*, and other key informants on rural development issues within the "*umugudu*".

Effective needs assessment is carried out in smaller community interest groups such as dairy cattle keepers, flower producers, apple banana farmers, rice farmers etc.. Besides the common problem targeting increased productivity of a given crop or livestock, issues to do with the management of cooperatives, associations or other farmer/producer groupings, farmer knowledge and skills development and others.

Community needs assessment culminates at priority setting of the identified development needs at each of the stages, the causes, the effects, problems that can be resolved within and by the community, opportunities at the community's disposal, and those that require external resources and measures of minimizing dependence on externally sourced solutions to *umudugudu* agricultural and livestock problems.

FARMER NEEDS ASSESSMENT AIMS

- ♣ assisting farmers and livestock producers identify main problems that constrain their production, their causes and the short and long-term effects;
- ♣ assisting farmers and livestock producers in prioritizing the most immediate needs;
- ♣ assisting farmers and livestock producers in preparing realistic action plan basing on available resources;
- ♣ assisting farmers and livestock producers in identifying the most appropriate service providers;
- ♣ targeting research and agricultural extension services towards addressing actual farmers' and livestock keepers' problems;
- ♣ preparing action plan, monitoring and evaluation emphasizing on the active role of farmers and livestock keepers; and
- ♣ ensuring ownership and accountability of extension services delivery so as come up with sustainable agriculture and livestock development within the *umudugudu*, cell, sector, district and nation at large.

Caution.

In the event that no existing groups within the *umudugudu*, the agricultural development advisor through dialogue with other people residing in the *umudugudu* and engaged in agricultural and livestock development activities, encourages the farmers and livestock keepers to voluntarily form common interest groups.

PROFILE OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR (UMUJYANAMA W'UBUHINZI N'UBWOROZI).

- ♣ Should be literate (know how to read and write);
- ♣ Should be an opinion leader (person of integrity);
- ♣ Should be a resident of the *umudugudu* ;
- ♣ Should be owning exemplary agricultural or livestock development activities;
- ♣ Should be knowledgeable on national and district (own) agricultural and livestock development issues;

- ♣ Should be having basic knowledge on agriculture, livestock, and cooperative management issues;
- ♣ Should be having time to share knowledge with other farmers and livestock producers within *umudugudu*;
- ♣ Should be knowing kinyarwanda well;
- ♣ Should be active to learn and allocate this activity enough time;
- ♣ Should be having good relationship with the cell and *umudugudu* leadership; and
- ♣ Should be capable of chairing meetings and providing orientation to all the views emanating from meetings.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR.

- ♣ To organise farmer needs assessments meeting according to the agricultural seasons;
- ♣ To collect agricultural data;
- ♣ To facilitate farmers and livestock producers in preparing action plans within the respective groups;
- ♣ To design a simple landuse map showing agricultural and livestock landuse patterns within *umudugudu*;
- ♣ To advise farmers on how best to form cooperatives based on specific crop or livestock species or specified services;
- ♣ To link farmers and livestock keepers with SPs and assist them in preparing agreements in advocacy;
- ♣ To undertake M&E in collaboration with farmer and livestock development groups, and submit reports to Agricultural Extension Services committee at *umudugudu* , cell and sector levels;
- ♣ To provide crop and livestock production forecasts;
- ♣ To sensitize farmers and livestock keepers on soil conservation and landuse management with the objective of increasing productivity and identify best markets; and
- ♣ To sensitize farmers and livestock keepers to seek support through technology development institutions.

MOTIVATION FOR THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR.

To be efficient and sustainable, the agricultural extension system has to respond efficiently to farmers' needs defined by themselves through facilitation by good agricultural advices that conform to the national policies and programs. To address this challenge, the extension system has to ensure the continuity and sustainability of agricultural development advisor, who is the key person for the farmers' organisations and their effective participation in agricultural development process.

The agricultural and livestock development advisor works as a volunteer, his activities are not routine, therefore, the timing of activities, duration and venue depend on agreements made between himself and the different groups. The local authorities and other actors can require agricultural data collection and use the agricultural development advisor. Particularly, the season planning will be based on the data from the grassroot through the agricultural development advisor.

The time spent on activities requested by local authorities including data collection and participation at training workshops and other meetings, he is reimbursed all the expenses incurred on meals, transportation and communication.

In order for the agricultural development advisor to be motivated and be able to achieve the set goals and ensure that the tangible results in terms of increased production are reached, he/she will sign an agreement with the cell administration, with information to the *umudugudu* where he operates from, with the objective of providing output indicators during every agricultural season. After this stage, the Cell Extension Services Committee carries out an evaluation of the activities, and following the results, he/she is assigned an award.

The farmers should learn by doing. For this reason, the agricultural development adviser will be a model farmer. So, the agricultural actors and the decentralized authorities will strengthen his/her capacities in terms of skills and materials. So far, some MINAGRI projects and farmer organisations have experienced failure with the use of voluntary extension system/approach without providing any support (financial and material) to the volunteer farmers. Now the challenge is how to motivate them and who will pay.

Various scenarios can be used, notably:

- Each agricultural actor who intervenes in the sector, can start the activities by using the agricultural development adviser (soil management, trainings, demonstrations, cattle distribution,.....);
- After agricultural season's evaluation according to the pre-defined indicators, the agricultural development adviser can receive the award;
- In agricultural development budget at district and/or MINAGRI central, to include the agricultural development advisory support;
- In agricultural commodity chain, which is organised and profitable (like Irish potatoes, rice, apple (kamara) bananas, livestock, pineapples, onions,...), to sensitise the farmers to contribute after each season to payments made to the agricultural development adviser (withdrawals on the harvests, seasonal financial contributions,...)

As confirmed by stakeholders in districts covered by PASNVA/MINAGRI, the agricultural development advisers are highly appreciated. But their efficiency requires specific measures notably the performance contracts based on the indicators defined in a participatory manner, their motivation and the increasing of agricultural budget at the decentralised level.

2.8. PROXIMITY SERVICE PROVIDERS (SPs).

In the context of this agricultural extension system, the proximity service providers mean a number of stakeholders who provide agricultural extension services. They include government agencies regrouped in RAB and RAEDB and other MINAGRI services, the professionals of the decentralized entities, the farmers themselves or their organizations (OPs), local NGOs. When the response provided by all these stakeholders are not satisfactory, some private experts can be selected for specific competences that cannot be got otherwise

The GoR's decision to use proximity service providers (SPs) in the agricultural extension services delivery emerged as one of the approaches aimed at operationalizing the strategic plan for agricultural transformation adapted in 2006.

The SP approach is embedded in Program number 2 of SPAT/PSTA, which supports farmer organizations and knowledge systems, through providing support to professionalization of producers and other economic agents. The objectives of Sub-program 2.2 of SPAT clearly describes the position, roles and responsibilities of the SPs in the overall GoR development agenda of agricultural transformation.

The objectives of sub-program 2.2, on “Restructuring proximity services for producers” are four-fold, and are to : 1) develop an extension system that is accountable to the farmers as clients, with appropriate structures of incentives for that purpose; 2) promote participatory systems in which farmers participate and research and extension converge at the field level; 3) develop permanent systems for training extension agents in specialised areas and keeping them up to date; 4) strengthen systems by which farmers can propose projects and activities and solicit the necessary technical assistance to implement them, consistent with the framework of decentralisation.

The pillars of action onto which sub-program 2 is hinged include:

- Make agricultural extension accountable to farmers;
- Institute permanent, specialised training for extension agents;
- Certify lead farmers as trainers;
- Strengthen extension for market linkages and develop the role of extension agents as facilitators in the quest for information and knowledge;
- Utilize mass extension messages, especially on rural radio;
- Develop special participatory programs such as fertiliser trials (see SP1.5 above) and IPM experiments; and
- Strengthen CICA as support institution, a source of technical information in written and electronic forms.

Effective 2009 season A, the use of proximity service providers (SPs) was put into practice in various districts of the country on a pilot basis, targeting maize and wheat under the crop intensification program (CIP) operating as a special program under MINAGRI.

Three groups of SPs, namely (i) Extension Services (Technology dissemination) delivery, (ii) Agricultural input delivery, and (iii) Agricultural credit services through MFIs, were selected by MINAGRI using the official procurement process, to provide support required for the envisaged maize and wheat intensification process within selected districts, working mainly with existing maize and wheat farmers' cooperatives.

The SPs operate in close partnership and collaboration between the former Rwanda Agriculture Development Authority (RADA) and the selected districts involved in national maize and wheat intensification program vide a “Tripartite Contract Agreement” between RADA, District and SP.

A typical example of the obligations the SP was charged with in agricultural extension services delivery for season 2009A include:

- (i) Validate identified and concerned CIP 09A areas by the competent departments of RADA ;

- (ii) Identify and validate agricultural cooperatives and producers (males/females) with the aim of realizing the activities of agricultural intensification for the agricultural season under review;
- (iii) Promote the organization of producers (m/f) in cooperatives while strengthening their organizational and managerial capacities;
- (iv) Undertake activities to create awareness, in favour of producers (m/f), related to possibilities of « Land Use Consolidation »;
- (v) Organize trainings in favour of cooperatives and producers (m/f) concerning;
- (vi) The new system of agricultural inputs distribution in the CIP 2009A;
- (vii) Sound application of cultural practices (seeds and inputs) to increase the production in quantity and quality;
- (viii) Sound post-harvest and marketing practices;
- (ix) Put cooperatives and producers (m/f) in touch with Micro Finance Institutions ;
- (x) Ensure, monitor properly the distribution of the seed to the identified cooperatives and/or the producers (m/f) and to propose a reimbursement plan on the basis of the elaborated contract between the parties concerned ;
- (xi) Monitor rigorously the distribution of inputs by the « dealers » according to the clauses of their contract signed with RADA up till the use of these inputs by the farmers;
- (xii) Ensure an efficient distribution and sound management of the « vouchers » in favour of the cooperatives and/or the producers (m/f) and of the value chain of Maize and Wheat ;
- (xiii) Identify and nominate the « voucher manager » who will operate close to the area of intervention involved in the CIP 2009A.

Generally, the use of proximity service providers has shown clearly that significant achievements in terms of increased agricultural production could be realized in a more efficient, cost-effective and sustainable manner.

Lessons learnt from the pilot program are yet to be documented, but clear indications of some resistance to change from the “as usually done” situation both on the side of the farmers and the district and local administration structures can not be completely ruled out. This presented highly negative influences in the utilization of the agricultural inputs provided, selected seeds and fertilizers etc., resulting to non use and even diverting of some of the inputs offered.

It is important to note that, if proximity service providers are used efficiently and effectively, and if there are no climatic hazards including prolonged drought and floods in some areas, the overall performance of the national agricultural extension system is going to improve significantly, and the GoR short, medium and long-term visions will be realized.

2.9. AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CENTRE (CICA)

The country has a wealth of agricultural and agribusiness information that has been documented for many years through research and development work on agriculture and agribusinesses in the country, that is scattered and often times not accessible. There was no organization system in place that would enable direct and easy access to such documented materials.

The Agricultural Resource Centre was established under the national agricultural extension project (PASNVA) with the purpose of centralizing all the available agricultural documentation that was dispersed all over the country, to enrich it by regular national and international contributions, and to make it accessible.

It was realized that an information resource center exists at MINAGRI containing a collection of useful agricultural information, but its access was not ideal, especially for a person originating from outside Rwanda. The need to rehabilitate the infrastructure as well as furnishing it so as to improve the condition within the center in terms of sitting space, and easy access to the available documents. Another important requirement was to recruit a trained person with adequate skills to manage all the activities of the center.

The need to inventorize the available documents as well as computerizing the available information is key to addressing the issue of inadequate access to the available bibliographical references without the necessity of searching through all the available documents.

The center targets the entire public, and will be used by any person in need of agricultural documentation. In order to ensure easy access, it was necessary to prepare a non exhaustive list that would be distributed to MINAGRI senior authorities and all technical staff and MINAGRI agencies, selected local government authorities, researchers, students, NGO personnel, bilateral and multilateral co-operation partners, agricultural private sector individuals, and all other people seeking agricultural documentation.

2.10.THE COST OF THE NATIONAL EXTENSION STRUCTURE.

The analysis of the cost of agricultural extension system is an annual event that is supposed to be undertaken by each of the districts, it varies across districts considering the different agro-ecological setting. Both the geo-climatic and agro-ecological location dictates the type of agricultural and livestock development activities that are undertaken within any particular district. Similarly, the investment costs are variable across the different districts considering the heterogeneity that exists between the districts.

Nevertheless, the cost elements associated with agricultural extension system are categorized according to the different levels as follows:

A. Decentralized level

- Office materials
- General assembly meetings of agricultural platform:
 - district
 - Sector
 - Cell
- Committee meeting of agricultural platform:
 - district
 - Sector
 - Cell
- Board meetings of agricultural platform:
 - district
 - Sector

- Cell
- District agricultural platform secretary salary
- Capacity building
- Agricultural Development Advisor's motivation (Abajyanama b'ubuhinzi n'ubworozi)
- Monitoring campaigns:
 - district agricultural committee
 - sector agricultural platform
 - Cell agricultural extension committee

B. National level

- NAECO functioning fees
 - Committee meetings
 - Secretary's salary

ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST OF EXTENSION STRUCTURE

ORGAN	QUANTITY	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST	OBSERVATIONS
A. DECENTRALIZED LEVEL				
✓ Office materials	30 districts	550 000	16 500 000	Including sector and cell needs
S/total			16 500 000	
General assembly meetings of agricultural platform				
✓ District	80 pers x 2meetins x 30 distr = 4 800 pers	5 000	24 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
✓ Sector	120x 2 meetings x 416 sect=99 840	3 000	299 520 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
✓ Cell	200 x 2 meetings x 1 500 cells =600 000 pers	2 000	1 200 000 000	Farmers contribution
S/total			1 525 520 000	
Committee meeting of agricultural platform:				
✓ District	15persx4 x 30 = 1 800	5 000	9 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
✓ Sector	15persx4 x 416 =24 960	3 000	74 880 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
✓ Cell	15persx4 x 1 500 = 90 000	2 000	180 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
S/total			263 880 000	
Board meetings of agricultural platform				
✓ District	4 persx 8 meetings x 30 =960	10 000	9 600 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
✓ Sector	4 persx 8 meetings x 416 =13 312	6 000	79 872 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
✓ Cell	4 persx 8 meetings x 1 500 =	4 000	192 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS

	48 000			
S/total			281 472 000	
District plat form secretariat				
o District agricultural platform secretary salary:	1 x 12 mounths	120 ,000	1 440 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
S/total			1 440 000	
Seaons monitoring campains:				
o District agricultural committee	2 x 30 districts= 60	400 000	24 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
o Sector agricultural platform	2 x 416 sectors=832	150 000	124 800 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
o Cell agricultural extension committee	4 x 1500 cells= 6000	75 000	450 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
S/total			598 800 000	
B. NATIONAL LEVEL				
NAECO Operating Fund				
o Committee	2	1 500 000	3 000 000	MINAGRI

meetings				
o Secretary salary	12 mois	800 000	9 600 000	MINAGRI
S/total			12 600 000	
Capacity building				
o Committee members	30 districts	5 000 000	150 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS (the first year)
o Abajyanama b'ubuhinzi n'ubworozi	30 districts	10 000 000	300 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS (the first year)
S/total			450 000 000	
Motivation of Agricultural Development Advisors				
o Agricultural Development Advisors	2/village x 15 000 villages = 30 000 persons	50 000	1 500 000 000	MINAGRI/DISTRICTS
				Awards after evaluation
S/total			1 500 000 000	
TOTAL			4 264 692 000	

Comments.

During the first year, the total cost is estimated at 4 264 692 000 RwF of which 1 200 000 000 RwF will be raised from farmers' contribution (28%).

During subsequent years, the cost is estimated at 3 814 692 000 RwF of which 1 200 000 000 RwF would be raised from farmers' contribution (31%). After the first year, capacity building for committee members and agricultural development advisors (abajyanama b'ubuhinzi) will be done at the Rural Innovation Centers.

The monitoring and evaluation of financial implementation, accountability, ownership and sustainability will be done.

