

UGANDA DEBT NETWORK



ISSUES PAPER ON DUPLICATION OF ROLES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN AGRICULTURE

November 2012

LIST OF ACRONYMS

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AAO	Assistant Agricultural Officer
AVO	Assistant Veterinary Officer
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
DAO	District Agricultural Officer
DCO	District Commercial Officers
DFO	District Fisheries Officer
DNC	District NAADS Coordinator
DNRO	District Natural Resources Officer
DPO	District Production Officer
DSC	District Service Commission
DTPC	District technical planning committee
DVO	District Veterinary Officer
DWO	District Water Officer
DPO	District Production Officer
FY	Financial Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LG	Local Government
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries
MLHUP	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Planning

MoWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NDP	National Development Plan
SNC	Sub County NAADS Coordinator
PMA	Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Background and introduction	7
2.0	Roles of the different district officials contributing to agriculture at LG level	9
2.1	The District NAADS Coordinator (DNC);	10
2.2	The District Production Coordinator (DPC);	10
2.3	The District Agricultural Officer (DAO);	10
2.4	The District Veterinary Officer (DVO);	11
2.5	The District Fisheries Officer (DFO);	11
2.6	The District Commercial Officers (DCO);	12
2.7	The District Natural Resources officer (DNRO);	12
2.8	The District Water Officer (DWO);	12
3.0	Analysis of the roles of the above officers	15
4.0	Recommendations	18

1.0 BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Agriculture remains one of the key sectors in Uganda contributing to national growth and development through food security, income enhancement and employment. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics' report the sector contributes about 40% to total Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 90% of total exports and it is responsible for 70% of employment in the country¹. Uganda has 87% of its population one of the highest in the world living in the rural areas².

Despite Agriculture sector being the major driver of economic growth and development in Uganda, the sector has suffered from limited funding compared to other sectors as seen in the FY 2012/13, where the sector was allocated 3.2% of the national budget contrary to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Declaration target of at least 10% of the national budget. Agricultural budget allocations have however been declining contrary to what has been agreed in the CAADP FY 2010/11 and FY 2011/2012.

In spite of the limitation on budget allocation to the sector, there has been advancement in the sector through a number of programmes that are aimed at transforming the majority of small scale farmers from subsistence farming to commercial farming.

Uganda has put in place a comprehensive development framework which is operationalized through the National Development Plan (NDP). One of the pillars of the NDP focuses on transforming Uganda from a low income country to a middle income country by raising incomes of smallholder communities to commercial farmers. The Government seeks to achieve this through implementation of the Plan for the Modernization of Agriculture (PMA)

1 Pilot census of agriculture 2003: pg 21

2 Needs Assessment on Agriculture in Amuria District November 2011 by Uganda Debt Network, p. 3

unit in the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). Secondly government's justification for investing in road infrastructure is to facilitate access to the market and value addition. However, going by the budgetary allocation to agriculture and high administrative expenditure on personnel and operations, Uganda will not achieve this vision in the medium term. Uganda therefore needs to strike a balance between the drive towards increased agricultural productivity with infrastructure expansion. The justification for this argument is that the country shall be able to build more roads with increased foreign exchange earnings from agriculture than the other way round. The case for development in Uganda is that it's more sustainable to finance agriculture along side energy and road infrastructure.

The Government introduced PMA with the aim of eradicating poverty through modernizing agriculture. This was envisaged through supporting farmers to produce for the market, support them with better and cheaper variety of seeds, animals, fish and tools to improve their produce, provide the technical advice needed and encourage farmers participation in planning for better and more responsive services that affect their agricultural activities. These was to be achieved under the seven pillars of PMA which include; Research and Technology Development; National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS); Agricultural Education; Rural Finance; Agro-processing and Marketing; Natural Resource Utilization and Management; and Supportive Physical Infrastructure.

The National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) was put in place to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural extension service. It is a semi-autonomous body formed under NAADS Act of June 2001 with a mandate to develop a demand driven, farmer-led agricultural service delivery system targeting the poor subsistence farmers, with emphasis to women, youth and people with disabilities. Its development goal is to enhance rural livelihoods by increasing agricultural productivity and profitability in a sustainable manner.

2.0 ROLES OF THE DIFFERENT DISTRICT OFFICIALS CONTRIBUTING TO AGRICULTURE AT LG LEVEL

The provision of agricultural extension services and farmer institutions is embedded in the Local Government Act Cap 243. Under the Act a huge mass of services which the Central Government hitherto provided were decentralized to Local Governments. However like all other decentralized services, agriculture remains 99% dependent on funding from the central government as conditional grants.

The district level technical teams play a vital role in agricultural service delivery, and these normally comprise of the District NAADS Coordinator, District Agricultural Officers, District Veterinary Officer, District Fisheries Officer and District Commercial Officer. On the other hand, the agricultural sector has been disadvantaged by the fact that key offices like; District Environmental Office and District Water Office are now de-linked from the production department yet they should be complementing the production department. These sectors have no

obligation to report to the DPO. They report directly to CAO, council standing committees and line ministries. These district officials are charged with various roles and responsibilities which include but not limited;

1.1 *The District NAADS Coordinator (DNC);* The DNC reports to the CAO and the NAADS secretariat at national level and to the district production officer at district level contributing to one output of increasing agricultural productivity under production. The DNC responsibilities are to ensure and guarantee application of set standards and criteria for selection of service providers, procurement of goods, technical assistance to Sub-Counties Farmer Fora, monitoring and evaluation, facilitate District NAADS meetings, supervise NAADS implementation and ensure accountability and value for money is realized³. This is aimed at harmonizing NAADS and agriculture activities since the primary focus for both is on agricultural service delivery.

1.2 *The District Production Officer (DPO);* The DPO is recruited by the district service commission and reports to the CAO and District Council. The district production officers are agricultural officers by training appointed to provide leadership under the production department whose roles are duplicated with the district agricultural officer. He /she is duty bound to report to the district council and Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries. The DPO responsibilities include; facilitating the delivery of farm production, extension services, identifying market potentials, advising the producers appropriately, ensuring the detection and control of pests, vermin and animal epidemics in the district and providing farmers with technical advice on the use of chemicals and pesticides.

1.3 *The District Agricultural Officer (DAO);* The DAO reports to the District Production Officer who is the head of department responsible for amalgamating reports for

³ National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) Programme Implementation Manual, September 2001, p.39, cap 4, No.

the district council. At national level, the DAO reports to Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries. The DAO undertakes the following activities; training farmers in modern productive methods, use of appropriate technologies, providing technical assistance to the sub county agriculture sub sector, undertake monitoring and assessing the progress of agricultural activities, undertake agricultural trainings, organize agricultural shows, collecting, analyzing and documenting agricultural data and managing demonstration sites.

- 1.4 *The District Veterinary Officer (DVO)***; Like others in the production department, DVO reports to the DPO. The DVO relates directly with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries in matters of disease control and policy guidelines. The responsibilities of the DVO include monitoring and controlling the occurrence and spread of animal diseases, treating sick animals, training and guiding animal owners for better animal production, inspecting livestock markets and holding grounds, inspecting and advising processors and handlers of animal food and by-products, assisting administrators and local leaders on matters involving animals, guiding farmers in pasture management, farm structures, record keeping and farm management.
- 1.5 *The District Fisheries Officer (DFO)***; DFO reports to the production department at LG and to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries at national level. DFO is responsible for monitoring of fishing activities, law enforcement, collection of statistics, and rehabilitation of fisheries resources. The officers are also responsible for aquaculture inspection, monitoring, evaluation and regulation of private service providers and fish farmers.

- 1.6 ***The District Commercial Officers (DCO)***; report to the district production officer though under Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives despite the fact that agriculture itself has a trade component. Under the NAADS, Commercial officer is responsible for farmer organizations through mobilization and trainings, trade, industry, marketing and cooperatives, planning, guiding and advising on the development of the commercial services, industrial cooperatives and related investments in agriculture and enhancing the quality of goods and services.
- 1.7 ***The District Natural Resources officer (DNRO)***; As head of the Natural Resources Department, reports to CAO and supervises the district forest and environment officers directly under Ministry of Lands, Water and Environment. As secretary to the district environment committee, provides advice to the committee on all matters relating to the environment, promote environmental awareness through public educational campaigns, gather and manage information on the environment and the utilization of natural resources in the district . He/she is supposed to render all the necessary assistance to the other district agricultural officials especially with regard to matters of the environment.⁴
- 1.8 ***The District Water Officer (DWO)***; reports to Works Department and the Ministry of Lands, Water and Environment and his /her role is supervising the installation of safe, clean water and sanitation facilities, providing technical advice to stake holders in the provision of water networks and under taking inspection of water and sanitation facilities among others

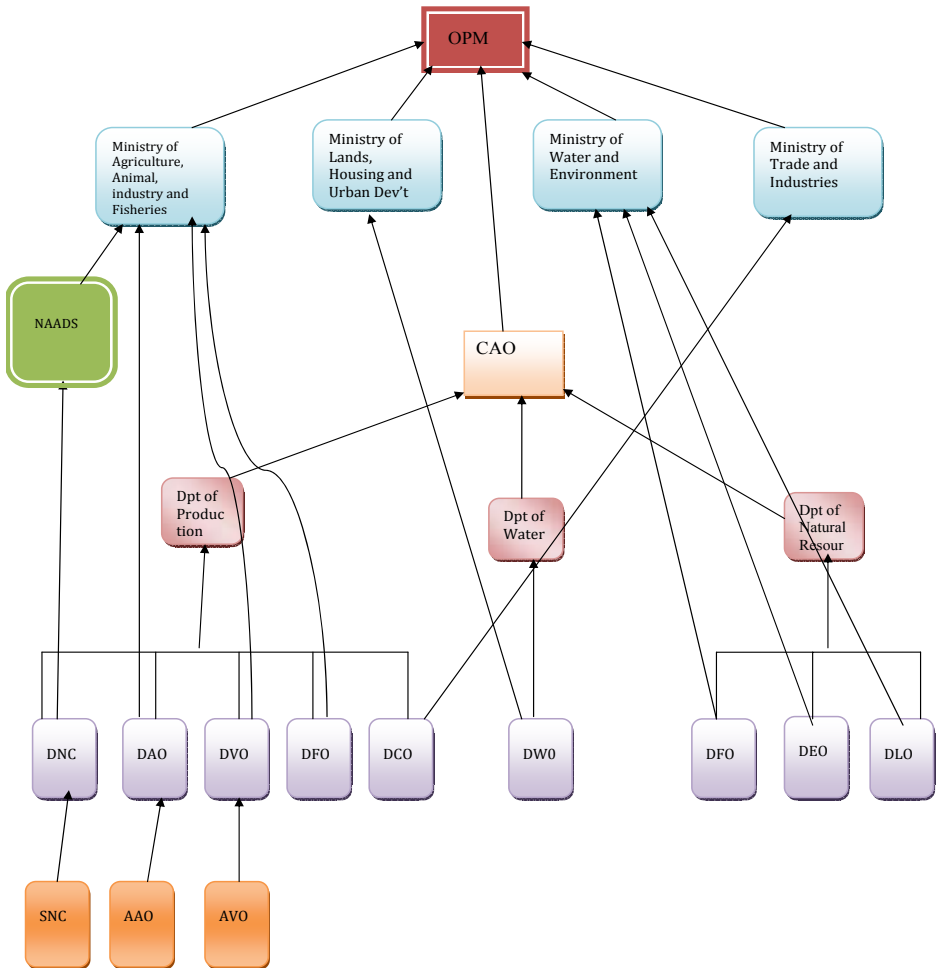
All in all, the above officers have a direct link with the office of the Chief Accounting Officer (CAO), since he is charged with the responsibility of accounting for all the funds received in the district.

4

S.16 of the National Environment Statute No.4 of 1995

Structure of Local Government Officials in Agriculture

Structure of Local Government Officials in Agriculture



3.0 ANALYSIS OF THE ROLES OF THE ABOVE OFFICERS

- 1) While the roles of key LG extension officers are critical to farmers, there is no proper coordination of activities of DNC, DAO, DVO, DPO, DFO and DCO under the production department at LGs. The current structure creates redundancy of the production officers who has the same qualification with the district agricultural officer, thus duplication. This has left farmers with little or no access to extension services leading to low agricultural productivity. For instance, the DNC unlike other technical staff has a direct vote and power which enables him/her to report directly to the CAO and NAADS Secretariat other than the District production officer. This undermines the role of the District production officer and therefore calls for harmonization of all agriculture related activities in LGs through the production department.

- 2) While the current personnel structure provides for the DPO, the roles of the DPO are duplicated by the other officers including the district agricultural officer. DAO is in a better position to coordinate activities in the production since agriculture is the core unit of the production office. The structure should therefore be reorganized to allow the DAO to be the head of the Production Department with budgetary control to perform the functions of the production officer at LG.

- 3) Discrepancy in salary, transport and other allowances among the technical staff under production. For example, District NAADS Coordinator and those under him/her earn much higher than their counter parts in the traditional agriculture structure like the DAO, DVO, DPO and DPO yet they all offer extension services to the farmers. The same transcends down to the sub county where the SNCs and service providers are better salaried and facilitated compared to the Assistant Fisheries, Agriculture Assistants, e.t.c who are not in the mainstream of NAADS programme. This structure not only demoralizes those who earn less but is a recipe for poor performance of agriculture sector in Uganda.

- 4) With due regard to the importance of the office of the NAADS Coordinator, there are instances where the DNC has the same roles like DVO, DFO, DAO and DFO. There is need to have the resources used by DNC to coordinate NAADS activities to be redirected to better facilitate the production office under the DAO. This duplication of duties has rendered some LG officials redundant and others overwhelmed with work. This encourages wastage of taxpayers' monies in terms of salaries and other allowances as well as double budgeting and reporting for similar activities and hence no value for money.

- 5) There exists no clear coordination mechanism for building synergies across the staff members under the production department. For example, there is no direct relationship between production, natural resources and works departments yet in functional terms; there is a close link between them. The parallel structures at the district are further replicated at sub county level where the SNC has a budget with service providers fully facilitated. While agricultural assistants, fisheries, Vet, entomology and Vermin Assistants are redundant due to the fact that they rely on funds from the district under decentralization for community sensitization and training which is hardly disbursed. yet environment and market information are very crucial in increasing agricultural productivity in Uganda.

- 6) DNC, DAO, DVO, DPC, the DFO, report to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries; District Commercial Officer though under production department, at national level reports to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives; and the District Environment Officer, District Forest Officer and District Lands officer who are under the District Natural Resources Department report to Ministry of Lands, Water and Environment. The District Water Officer who is under the Works department also reports to the Ministry of Lands and Environment. This makes the coordination and implementation of activities at local level very difficult since different officials are accountable to different departments and ministries.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to realise better and effective service delivery in the agriculture sector, Uganda Debt Network recommends the following;

1. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries should work with the Ministry of Public Service and District Service Commission to streamline the personnel structure of the production department to allow;
 - a) The District Agricultural Officer to head the department of production at Local Government level.
 - b) The position of the District Production Officer and District NAADS Coordinators should be removed and NAADS funds be channeled through the production department under the district agricultural officer with the same intentions and purpose of NAADS programme.
 - c) The Assistant Agriculture Officer heads the sub county production department and coordinates activities of line extension workers who should be absorbed into the mainstream NAADS as service providers.
2. We strongly recommend that the Production Department and Natural Resources Department be merged at LG Level. The District Water Officer should be removed from Works Department and incorporated into the Production and Natural Resources Department. This will be in line with the responsibilities of Production and Natural Resources Committee at LG.
3. Government should expedite the establishment of an independent remuneration review commission to harmonize salaries and other allowances for all public servants. This will lead to improved motivation and effective delivery of extension services in Agriculture and other sectors.

4. There is need to streamline the role of Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture and main stream Ministry of Agriculture, Animal, Industries and Fisheries to effectively transform agriculture from subsistence to commercialization in line with National Development Plan.
5. We further recommend that the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development should increase allocation in the national budget from the current 3.2% in 2012/13 to 10% in line with the MAPUTO declaration for increased productivity in the Agriculture sector.
6. There is need for government to subsidize the cost of agricultural inputs and ensure their availability to farmers to enable NAADS put emphasis on advisory/extension services which was the core mandate of NAADS than supply of inputs. This should be done using the farmer field school approach which has been tried and proved to be more effective in transforming rural agricultural practices towards commercialized agriculture

Sh2 trillion blown on NAADS

BY JO-IN MASABA
AND JOHN SEMAKULA

THROUGH hard work, James Musoke had made himself the envy of many in Muliemo district. An enterprising farmer, Musoke made his mark as a successful goat farmer. His farm became a tourist attraction of sorts, with many farmers coming to learn from him.

In 2001, a man driving a government vehicle came to the farm. And when his guest introduced himself as an official from the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), Musoke was excited, thinking the official had come to register him so that he could start benefiting from the programme.

"Instead, he asked me to allow NAADS to put a signpost at my farm so that I could become a model farmer in my parish and earn some money," Musoke says. After reviewing the proposal, he turned down the offer.

Musoke is not the only farmer who has been approached by NAADS officials to allow them to put their signposts at their farms to claim fake accountability.

During the 2011 presidential campaign, President Yoweri Museveni received several complaints from farmers about how NAADS was benefiting only the rich.

Museveni, on several occasions, called the NAADS officials to the position to defend themselves and threatened to sack them.

In Kaswvo sub-county in Mukono district, farmers told the President that most of the NAADS signposts he had seen had been erected the previous night.

Missing a delegation of leaders from Butoga to his country home in Bwankira recently, Museveni said he was considering dissolving NAADS since it had not lived up to expectations. The President wants the money to be injected in SACCOs.

Origin of NAADS

In 2001, NAADS started as a farmer-led agricultural service delivery system targeting poor subsistence farmers, with focus on women, youth and people with disabilities.

It was intended to increase the effectiveness of agricultural extension services under the Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture.

The programme aimed at promoting food security, nutrition



Farmers attending a NAADS' field day. Experts say the programme did not stick to its objectives

Why Museveni is querying the programme

A SPOT checkdone by the State House NAADS monitoring unit in Bukuru, Kiboga, Mubende, and Kyankwanda districts in 2012, unearthed a number of anomalies.

The team, led by Sister Grace Akazi, the special presidential advisor NAADS Monitoring Unit, discovered poor record-keeping, especially in the accounts

department, even though the new board under Dr. Samuel Mugasi, the programme's executive director, had promised with changes to clean up the scheme.

The team discovered that many NAADS centres were facing procurement irregularities and had inadequate supervision.

The team also unravelled

audit queries as a result of weak internal financial controls. The team also learnt that councilors interfered with the selection of beneficiaries and distribution of farm inputs, putting some bonafide beneficiaries at a disadvantage.

Observers said these findings could be behind the President's call to disband NAADS.

and household incomes, through increased productivity and market oriented farming, among others.

Starting as a pilot project in Arua, Kibale, Kibale, Mukono, Soroti and Tororo districts, NAADS was rolled out to the rest of the country in 2002 with a vision for 25 years, after showing signs of success.

But 12 years later, the founding objectives seem to have fallen by the wayside. Today, NAADS has become a tale of big dreams, but few concrete achievements. It has been suspended twice and there is now talk of winding it up.

Chequered past

In 2008, seven years after sinking to \$108m (sh25b), the President suspended the programme over reports of corruption exhibited in sourcing of inputs, lack of accountability and poor procurement processes.

However, after receiving assu-

ances from NAADS technocrats, Museveni lifted the suspension.

The second phase, which was to run for five years, was upgraded from \$108m to \$460m (sh120b) per year. Available information shows the programme has so far cost a whopping one trillion shillings (some circles say two trillion), but with little to show for such investment.

Old problems dihard

A study by the Uganda Data Network, released last year found that farmers were not given a chance to choose the enterprises they wanted to get involved in.

"Enterprise selection was not demand driven, hence affecting successful implementation and sustainability," read the report, following a survey of 14 districts.

It also revealed that some farmers were complaining with village procurement committees to supply agribusiness enterprises.

In Muliemo sub-county in

Nakapiripiti district, the study discovered that two other initiatives introduced in 2009 remained redundant. This is because the farmers had not been trained on proper farming practices and as such could not utilize the machines.

Other findings

The study blamed NAADS for undermining other institutions. One such body was the Agricultural Extension Advisory Services. Extension workers continued drawing salaries, but were rendered redundant when NAADS started, yet its personnel lacked expertise.

In Atete sub-county, Kumi district, a poultry farmer, who had benefited from NAADS, said, "when my birds fell sick, the NAADS coordinator could not assist because he did not have the expertise."

The programme also left out urban areas.