

Study findings shape agricultural extension guidelines in Uganda

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Highlights

Evidence impact

- The evaluation showed that farmer-to-farmer knowledge-sharing yielded positive results. These results informed two Ugandan policies: the Extension Guidelines and Standards in 2016 and the National Agriculture Extension Policy issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in 2019.

Factors that contributed to impact

- Early engagement with the Ministry allowed the research team to obtain buy-in for evaluation findings.
- One of the principal investigators of the study had strong working relations with the Ministry, enabling her to effectively communicate study findings. She was also the chairman of the working group at Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services, the organisation that provided technical expertise in developing the guidelines for the ministry.
- The evaluation findings were available in time for the Ministry to consider researchers' recommendations for modifying Uganda's agriculture extension guidelines and standards.

Impact evaluation details

Title: [Dissemination of new agricultural technologies in Africa: making extension work](#)

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Status : Completed June 2018



Context

Public extension services have been used to tackle low agricultural productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa since the 1990s. However, traditional extension services have often been identified as expensive and ineffective. Similarly, there is limited coverage of the services, partly due to information problems and administrative challenges.

New approaches, such as farmer-to-farmer extension services, have spread rapidly in recent decades. In this approach, farmer-trainers are trained under the extension programme, and in turn they share knowledge and train other farmers on agricultural innovations. Though the approach has been widely adapted across Africa, there is limited rigorous empirical evidence on its impact, adoption of technology, farm productivity, and profitability and cost-effectiveness.

World Agroforestry Centre (earlier called the International Council for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF)) has been training volunteer farmer-trainers in Uganda on how to improve the feeding of their dairy cows, with the farmer-trainers then sharing this knowledge with their fellow farmers.

In 2013, 3ie collaborated with researchers from Makerere University, the Paris School of Economics National Institute of Agronomic Research (PSE INRA), ICRAF and National Agricultural Research Organisation, Uganda to evaluate the impact of ICRAF's farmer-to-

farmer extension on smallholders in dairy projects in Uganda through a randomised controlled trial. The evaluation provides results on an intervention that seeks to address some of the shortcomings in other approaches, such as elite capture, exclusion of disadvantaged groups and lack of farmer control of priority-setting for trainings.

Evidence

The evaluation found significant and positive effects of imparting knowledge through farmer-to-farmer training. The farmers in the treatment group reported an increased use of feeds, improved feeding practices and planting of more feeds on their farmlands. Milk production also increased by 20 per cent for the farmers who received training.

Qualitative findings suggested that the effect on profit was also positive.

Evidence impacts

Evaluation findings inform Agriculture Extension Guidelines and Standards

The government of Uganda passed an extension policy in 2016 that included the use of farmer-trainers as a strategy to improve extension service delivery. The evaluation also influenced the extension guidelines and standards in the National Agriculture Extension Policy published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in 2019. The guidelines aim to establish a high-quality, well-coordinated agricultural extension delivery system to promote application of appropriate information, knowledge and technological innovations. These innovations are designed to promote food security, economic growth, the commercialisation of agriculture, the expansion of exports and the welfare of the population.

Suggested citation

International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), 2020. *Study findings shape agricultural extension guidelines in Uganda* [online summary], Evidence Impact Summaries. New Delhi: 3ie.

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Last updated on 13th November 2020