

## **Consolidated Responses for the PAFPNet Discussion for the month of August 2015**

**Date: 11/08/2015 – 04/09/2015**

### **"Relevance of Policy Framework to Support Strengthen Agricultural Extension and Rural Advisory Services"**

The PAFPNet topic for the month of August, "**Relevance of Policy Framework to Support Strengthen Agricultural Extension and Rural Advisory Services**" pinpointed similar views on establishing a solidified framework for extension services support by tackling central issues. This discussion focused on five (5) questions rendering the key priorities that should be deemed paramount in various countries regarding extension services, its limitations and the roles of various support systems.

Extension services have proved to be significant in the progression of agriculture as well as the development of rural areas. Members showcased their opinions highlighting reasons for of extension services in their countries. According to members, there is a need to implement or update policy guidelines to place specific emphasis on certain agriculture types. This corresponds with resource intensive smallholder mixed economies or large-scale capital intensive production implicating changes in land use and tenure as a means to help forge collaborations with the private sectors and Government ministries. Capacity building and proper training among extension officers and new recruits was also featured to help in the understanding of the various roles and functions in extension services as a channel to strengthen extension and research linkages.

An important element for an efficient farmer support system in the Pacific is the role of the extension services readily available. Funding and resources are essential to carry out an effective extension service system. According to a respondent, network strategies must be formulated to help increase funding in this area. Assistance from the government and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) could be the solution to improving the overall extension services to farmers.

The discussion also presented an opposing view stating that in most cases, funding has not the issue. The problem lay with misdirection due to lack of planning and groundwork policies. The efficiency and the effectiveness of the extension officers comes in to play for a practical and operable support system to farmers. Given the fact that the system structuring of extension services being provided is an area that is lacking, it is vital that implementing guidelines be adhered to and enforced.

Involving farming organisations and the private sector are boosters to extension services support. Fully utilising the parties services would help clarify underlying issues and address the needs of farmers in the area of extension. Consultations need to be made through these farming organisations and the private sectors; therefore linkages must be enhanced and further enforced to receive the desired outcome with the engagement of the listed parties.

More emphasis must be placed on research and development in order to achieve an improvement in extension, members mentioned. Research and development can be adopted by farmers based on their willingness to progress in the agriculture sector. This implementation depends on the farmers' creativity, intuitiveness and intellectual capacity. Moreover, according to a contributor, farmers can only adopt research and development if farmers see it addressing their needs.

In order to create the necessary awareness on the importance of exercising extension service support, it needs to be implemented in the education systems of our schools. Rather than have these lessons revolved around the theory aspect, a more practical approach must be considered. Infrastructural support is also vital for the advocacy of these extension services.

Priority training by extension officers must be highlighted to achieve an effective extension service system. More emphasis on understanding ecological, cultural and economic impacts is what is needed by farmers. Focus must be placed on possible long-term effects on a wider scale of the services provided by the extension sector.

**The assessments of the consolidated responses were gauged from the questions below:**

### **Questions**

1. What are or should be the top 2-3 key priorities for extension services support in your country?
2. Extension services support for farmers are important but can be constrained by limited public funding and resources.
  - a) *How can your governments ensure that its limited budgets is still able to effectively provide extension services?*
  - b) *Do you think certain agricultural sectors/commodities in your country should be prioritized for extension support? If so, please name these for your country and briefly why*
  - c) *How can national extension officers themselves be incentivised/supported to ensure they are effective and adopt latest tools and innovations?*
3. How can farming organisations and the private sector be engaged to assist with providing extension support more widely?
4. In addition to extension support, R&D is also important. Please explain:
  - a) *How can R&D be adopted by farmers readily?*
  - b) *Are you aware of the R&D activities undertaken by Ministries of Agriculture and Agricultural Research institutes in your country?*
  - c) *If no, would you like to know more? If yes, do you have suggestions as to how this information could be strengthened?*
5. It is increasingly recognised that extension should play a wider role than the traditional transfer of technology and training. Please explain:
  - a) *What strategies are required for a paradigm shift for extension services in your country?*
  - b) *What are the current and emerging issues/priorities do you see driving the paradigm shift?*
  - c) *How can ICT support dissemination of technology and best extension approaches?*
  - d) *What priority training do extension agents need to play this wider role?*

**Please visit the following link PAFNet discussion:**

**<http://www.spc.int/pafpnet/pafpnet/discussion-summaries>**

Responses from:

1. Mr. Brian Tairea, Extension, Ministry of Agriculture – Cook Islands
2. Mr. Alan Quartermain, School of Natural Resources, University of Vudal – PNG
3. Mr. Poasa, Agronomy, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – Fiji
4. Mr. Michael Ho’ota, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock – Solomon Islands
5. Mr. Jone Sovalawa, Ministry of Agriculture – Fiji
6. Mr. Tommy Tuuamalii, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries – Samoa

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**1. Mr. Brian Tairea, Extension, Ministry of Agriculture – Cook Islands**

PAFPNet Relevance of Policy Framework to support Strengthen Agriculture Extension & Rural Advisory Services.

6. What are or should be the top 2-3 key priorities for extension services support in your country?

*The 2-3 key priorities are;*

- **Mobility, especially in rural areas**
- **Access to readily available information. This includes, effective pamphlets,**
- **Farmers are now carrying mobile phones, Need access to latest tools for surveying, distribution of information**

7. Extension services support for farmers are important but can be constrained by limited public funding and resources.

d) *How can your governments ensure that its limited budgets is still able to effectively provide extension services?*

- **Governments come & go. Their time frame is limited. For a government agency to be effective, it relies on information from the community. This includes field days, whereby ministers can see and provide support where it can. It is up to the officers to be efficient & effective. Because of this, governments are willing to give the support where it can. This is either financial or other means eg transport etc.**

e) *Do you think certain agricultural sectors/commodities in your country should be prioritized for extension support? If so, please name these for your country and briefly why*

- **No we are providing a service. This includes the environment, tourist industry, education, health. The above named entities play a major role in what is needed in the country. Or main markets are within the country itself.**

f) *How can national extension officers themselves be incentivised/supported to ensure they are effective and adopt latest tools and innovations?*

- **More training/refresher programs need to be provided to ensure officers are well equipped .Communicating, sharing of ideas with other extension officers within the region.**

8. How can farming organisations and the private sector be engaged to assist with providing extension support more widely?
    - **Fortunate for the Cook Islands, the private sector (hoteliers, restaurants), rely on the extension services to communicate to the farming organisation of what is needed on the market. The farming organisations appreciate this as they know that they are important. The support given from the private sector is data via email and the ministry of agriculture to provide a website on what is happening in the community. But it still needs quite a bit of foot work, So organising meetings/workshops are arranged with either of the groups.**
  
  9. In addition to extension support, R&D is also important. Please explain:
    - d) *How can R&D be adopted by farmers readily?*
      - **Field days, especially in times of climate change & food security**
    - e) *Are you aware of the R&D activities undertaken by Ministries of Agriculture and Agricultural Research institutes in your country?*
      - **Yes especially in introducing of modern planting techniques, seed/plant varieties, Our extension officers work with the Research institutes. We do have research plots scattered around the country for the convenience of the community**
    - f) *If no, would you like to know more? If yes, do you have suggestions as to how this information could be strengthened?*
  
  10. It is increasingly recognised that extension should play a wider role than the traditional transfer of technology and training. Please explain:
 

**Exactly. Having demonstrations, ensuring the field officers are confident in disseminating information. Extension officers need to be computer literate. Also now there are drones that assist in field mappings**

    - e) *What strategies are required for a paradigm shift for extension services in your country?*
      - **When extension services was removed from the ministry of agriculture, this broke the link between the community and government. Now more officers are needed.**
    - f) *How can ICT support dissemination of technology and best extension approaches?*
      - **On the field dissemination of information. Using the tablet. The mobile/smart phone seems to be the most effective means of communicating with ICT and the field.**
    - g) *What priority training do extension agents need to play this wider role?*
      - **Creating effective websites not only for the commercial industry but for other ministries themselves. Have hardier ICT tool training eg use of tablet, canva, GIS. New time farmers do ask what can be planted on their particular land. Farming know how is changing. There are now both conventional & organic farming. Extension officers have to well equip to handle both areas.**
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## **2. Mr. Alan Quartermain, School of Natural Resources, University of Vudal – PNG**

### **Questions**

1. What are or should be the top 2-3 key priorities for extension services support in your country?

Coherent policy guidelines as to what kinds of agriculture to emphasise – e.g. resource intensive smallholder mixed economies or large-scale capital intensive production implicating changes in land use and tenure.

Planning with clear messages as to who should do what, when and where, not just simplistic production targets.

Human resource capacity building to enable assistance to farmers and communities to cope with changing pressures on land use and lifestyles.

2. Extension services support for farmers are important but can be constrained by limited public

*a) How can your governments ensure that its limited budgets is still able to effectively provide extension services?*

Money is not the problem but misdirection due to lack of planning and policies based on realities on the ground. For example there are no national policy guidelines to direct or support livestock Research and Development.

*b) Do you think certain agricultural sectors/commodities in your country should be prioritized for extension support? If so, please name these for your country and briefly why*

The smallholder/ mixed enterprise sector, including subsistence food gardening, must be prioritised, otherwise food security is totally jeopardised.

*c) How can national extension officers themselves be incentivised/supported to ensure they are effective and adopt latest tools and innovations?*

Needs better management at the local level – e.g. clear objectives, consultative planning, HRM issues such as housing. In many cases junior officers have no say in implementation planning or are neither supported nor rewarded for innovative implementation. Officers often do not know what to do or cannot see how to use what resources they have to do something useful.

3, How can farming organisations and the private sector be engaged to assist with providing extension support more widely?

They are already most importantly engaged. But they need policy guidance to ensure coherent messages and lack of conflicting aims. The problem is that concentration on commercial commodities conflicts with ensuring use of resources for balanced lifestyles/ livelihoods. Ensuring the smallholder mix of food security, income and cultural obligations.

4. In addition to extension support, R&D is also important. Please explain:

*a) How can R&D be adopted by farmers readily?*

Effective pre-consultation is necessary. Social science research is lacking – what there is seems concentrated on marketing, market chains. Research institutions must learn to understand farmers and their communities, understanding what may be feasible without disruption.

*b) Are you aware of the R&D activities undertaken by Ministries of Agriculture and Agricultural Research institutes in your country?*

Yes. But not everyone may be as aware as I am although publicity about the research being done is good.

*c) If no, would you like to know more? If yes, do you have suggestions as to how this information could be strengthened?*

We must work together, not in competition. Hence policy guidelines would be useful but institutions must retain autonomy to pursue innovation.

5. It is increasingly recognised that extension should play a wider role than the traditional transfer of technology and training. Please explain:

a) *What strategies are required for a paradigm shift for extension services in your country?*

Since the shift must be towards working with communities and farmer cooperatives, rather than one-on-one technology transfer, social science input is essential to understand what is going on at the local level. Unfortunately longer term ethnography is not supported.

b) *What are the current and emerging issues/priorities do you see driving the paradigm shift?*

Capacity building to enable this shift in thinking and operation.

c) *How can ICT support dissemination of technology and best extension approaches?*

Involvement in the use of the cell-phone revolution is essential. Otherwise there is a continuing role for ICT in support for research and information dissemination.

d) *What priority training do extension agents need to play this wider role?*

There must be clear messages to training institutions as to what training is needed – more emphasis on understanding ecological and cultural as well as economic impacts of what we, farmers and their communities do or are willing and able to do. We must put more emphasis on possible long-term effects and wider, even international, contexts.

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### **3. Mr. Poasa, Agronomy, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – Fiji**

#### **Questions**

11. What are or should be the top 2-3 key priorities for extension services support in your country?
  - i. Logistics support – this includes proper planning, procurement and distribution of essential equipment needed (training and communication equipment), facilities, spares parts, technical information, and trained personnel, essential to the proper operation of any project.
  - ii. Funding support – from Partners, Donors or Government should be made available and on time all the time
  - iii. Institutional support – should have the backing of all Partners/Stakeholders involved even the Bosses and Government of the day.

2. Extension services support for farmers are important but can be constrained by limited public funding and resources.

g)

h) *How can your governments ensure that their limited budget is still able to effectively provide extension services?*

i. Prioritizing of activities.....put important plans or much needed services (*short term to medium term priority needs*) first and provide for this.

i) *Do you think certain agricultural sectors/commodities in your country should be prioritized for extension support? If so, please name these for your country and briefly why.*

i. Every country should have their own sector/commodity priority.....as for reasons in (a) above this should be in place and to be always done (prioritization) as other sectors will compete for the same piece of cake (limited governments budget).

Some of these commodities or sector needs are driven by stakeholders/private sector/farmers and should have the full support of the government to materialize in terms of bilateral agreements, marketing, food safety etc.....etc.....so they need not only extension support

j) *How can national extension officers themselves be incentivised/supported to ensure they are effective and adopt latest tools and innovations?*

i. Agriculture is a business and should be treated as such and likewise for people who are involved in it.

We should look at successful business entities in how they provide their services and how they treat their workers. In Agriculture Sector/Departments the Extension person is a salesperson (Selling to farmers the findings from Research).....incentives to successful ones should include/be bonuses, allocation of company vehicles, communication technology, housing, continuous up skilling/capacity building/regular mentoring etc.....etc.....to name a few.

*(The bottom line is that the person himself (Extension Officer) should be passionate about his work.....so the right person should be put in the right place/job from the start)*

3. How can farming organisations and the private sector be engaged to assist with providing extension support more widely?

- There should be more consultations – a lot of face to face interactions. Regular farm visits/calls on one to one or in group meetings etc.....etc.....to understand underlying needs and know roles to play in regards to providing that support needed.

4. In addition to extension support, R&D is also important. Please explain:

1. *How can R&D be adopted by farmers readily?*

i. All R&D should be participatory R&D.....all are involved from the beginning, from the planning right up to implementing, discussion of results and future directions to follow so the cycle continues again until an amicable solution to the problem is decided by all to be the most fitting one (*in all the facets of decision making all stakeholders are to be involved*).

All stakeholders are to be involved from the beginning so to be committed. Once people/stakeholders/farmers are committed to a particular activity only then they then can take ownership.....and be committed right to the end.

2. *Are you aware of the R&D activities undertaken by Ministries of Agriculture and Agricultural Research institutes in your country?*

3. *If no, would you like to know more? If yes, do you have suggestions as to how this information could be strengthened?*

- Regular consultations between all stakeholders.....monthly meetings/updates etc....etc.....

5. It is increasingly recognised that extension should play a wider role than the traditional transfer of technology and training. Please explain:

*h) What strategies are required for a paradigm shift for extension services in your country?*

- Get the right person for the job.....get away from the whom you know chronic culture we have in the work place
- Train Extension Agents to be able to do participatory field research as well
- More interactions face to face on one on one or in groups by all Stakeholders

*i) What are the current and emerging issues/priorities do you see driving the paradigm shift?*

- None

*j) How can ICT support dissemination of technology and best extension approaches?*

- ICT to support should be readily available and easily accessible otherwise.....it will be of no use.

*k) What priority training do extension agents need to play this wider role?*

- The trainings are abundant and available.....and most have gone through them.....it is just commitment and setting of priorities right.

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#### **4. Mr. Michael Ho'ota, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock – Solomon Islands**

##### **Questions**

**1. What are or should be the top 2-3 key priorities for extension services support in your country?**

- a. Agriculture Extension infrastructure and communication improvement. Renovation or construction of Extension offices in growth centers. Establishment of ICT technology for the Extension Staff in the rural areas.
- b. Strengthening Extension and Research linkages (Roles and functions)
- c. Streamline man power for effective and proficient advisory services.

**2. Extension services support for farmers are important but can be constrained by limited public funding and resources.**

***a) How can your governments ensure that its limited budgets is still able to effectively provide extension services?***

- a. Proficient advisory services (Technical and Management wise)
- b. Output and outcome reflects conformity of a good service.



**b) Do you think certain agricultural sectors/commodities in your country should be prioritized for extension support? If so, please name these for your country and briefly why**

- a. **Cocoa**- Is one of the major export earners for the economy. The extension services are promoting new technology; IPDM to increase yield per tree, through crop management and improved genetic materials. Some farmers are sun drying their products for niche market.
- b. **Coconut** –Coconut is the crop that involves most number of farmers in the rural areas. Who depend on it for their livelihoods. Currently the majority are still involved in the production of copra, however a timeline needs to be set for raw copra export and to only export or process coconut into virgin oil or crude coconut oil (Policy). Also a majority of the existing stand are approaching senility and the need to do major replanting program is needed now.
- c. **Kava**- A crop that became a valuable commodity which is farmer led and was brought in by farmers themselves. Overseas markets have been established for this crop. There is the need now for extension services to promote the two varieties that have been certified for export and to strengthen marketing by establishing (2-3 agencies) for external trading.
- d. **Coffee**- A new crop that is currently gaining popularity with highland farmers. Development of this crop will ensure that high land communities will become involved in meaningful developments that will contribute towards national economic development. Extension services are facilitating trainings and expansion of this crop.

**c) How can national extension officers themselves be incentivised/supported to ensure they are effective and adopt latest tools and innovations?**

- a. Capacity building of Extension Staff
- b. Equipped with necessary tools and equipment's.
- c. Development of a better conditions of services especially for staff in remote areas as incentives.

**3. How can farming organizations and the private sector be engaged to assist with providing extension support more widely?**

- a. All NGO's or private sectors is a partner to MAL with an MOU. Hence there will be no duplication or all advisory services are standardized.
- b. Provincial authorities register all NGO'S Established in each Province with preconditions.

**4. In addition to extension support, R&D is also important. Please explain:**

**a) How can R&D be adopted by farmers readily?**

- Farmers can only adopt R&D if farmers see it as addressing their real needs.

- *Conducting R&D requires awareness and a funding grant with continued M&E*

**b) *Are you aware of the R&D activities undertaken by Ministries of Agriculture and Agricultural Research institutes in your country?***

Yes

**c) *If no, would you like to know more? If yes, do you have suggestions as to how this information could be strengthened?***

- d. *Since most of the R&D are funded by aid donors or regional institutions information's tend to be transmitted through the project stakeholders rather than through the formal system which is the Extension service as a result good initiatives or technologies end when the projects end.*

**5. It is increasingly recognised that extension should play a wider role than the traditional transfer of technology and training. Please explain:**

**a) *What strategies are required for a paradigm shift for extension services in your country?***

- *Reestablish the agriculture training centres (ATC's) and invest more in these centres by Extension and Research*
- *Encourage Establishment of farmers associations, encourage farmer to farmer trainings/contact.*

**b) *What are the current and emerging issues/priorities do you see driving the paradigm shift?***

- *Farmers are now more learned, some now on their own initiatives progressing crop development, i.e Kava development which is farmer led in Isabel Province and is now being introduced to other provinces.*
- *Market oriented and the need for higher profit in these activities.*

**c) *How can ICT support dissemination of technology and best extension approaches?***

- a. *The geographical makeup of the country makes traditional extension practices very expensive, with the introduction of modern information technologies the use of ICT will definitely reduce the cost of extension service delivery in the form updated farmer information's, market prices and general administrative advise or consultations with farmers as well as to the MAL HQ.*
- b. *Development of Apps for data collection or for seeking advise*
- c. *Connection of all extension staff through ICT.*

d. *Training of staff in extension methodology, issue*

**d) *What priority training do extension agents need to play this wider role?***

a. *Approaches and methodology in Extension*

b. *Sociology*

c. *Participatory modules*

d. *Presentation methods and confidence*

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## **5. Mr. Jone Sovalawa, Ministry of Agriculture – Fiji**

### **Extension Questions**

**1. What are or should be the top 2-3 key priorities for extension services support in your country?**

- Institutional support by the Ministry in terms of the provision of tools (computers for recording/reporting purposes) and equipment (Housing in remote parts of islands) and appointments to strategic areas (outer stations) that ensures that we our presence is real.
- Capacity building in terms of recruiting people with the right attitude to serve our farmers and stakeholders, to be on call more or less 24/7. People who view Extension work as a calling and not a 8-4:30 kind of job.
- Educational Institutions must train our people well in Extension work because it deals in building relationships with peoples group and communities of much diversified nature.

**2. Extension services support for farmers are important but can be constrained by limited public funding and resources.**

**a) *How can your governments ensure that its limited budgets are still able to effectively provide extension services?***

To effectively provide extension services in a limited budget, means we will concentrate **only** on key strategic **players/areas** (commercial farmers that are near to markets) and will miss out on the rest. And that **“rest”** usually constitute the majority of our growers/farmers in the subsistence sector who are in our Maritime islands and highlands. And this has always being the case over the years. A limited budget cannot be spread thinly on our programs because it will have ZERO effect, it has to focus on potential growing/established areas. Infrastructure will obviously be out, which affects the pathway to the markets by many of these small farmers (70%).

**b) *Do you think certain agricultural sectors/commodities in your country should be prioritized for extension support? If so, please name these for your country and briefly why***

Yes-at present our priority lies on those commodities that have the major impact in terms of Import Substitution which contributes to our foreign earnings and at the same time contributes to our GDP growth. Taro, Ginger, Coconuts, Yaqona, Cocoa & BQA crops are few that are part of our priorities.

**c) How can national extension officers themselves be incentivised/supported to ensure they are effective and adopt latest tools and innovations?**

Apart from the tools, equipment & capacity building-our peoples remuneration should be seriously looked at-we can yell and bark on the directions and strategic goals to achieve however if one is paid \$12k in a year with the kind of working environment they are exposed to-it may be unfair to expect a lot from them because at the end of the day they have bills to be paid and their take home pay is really low. Usually, money is not the only motivating factor however it is a key motivating factor depending on what level of your career one is in.

**3. How can farming organisations and the private sector be engaged to assist with providing extension support more widely?**

The Ministry of Agriculture in Fiji have organised numerous workshops and meetings to bring these two bodies together. It worked in some occasions and not in others. It's really a complex situation in our case because we are living in a multicultural/multilingual society and when it mixes with the local politics and agendas it makes it a very challenging issue. It needs to be fully understood because some are more centred on their bottom line and focus on beating the other competitor. Even farming Organizations have their own politics and the dominant factor between the bigger and small players will always be an issue. Having said that, it's really a wide topic and needs to be discussed further.

**4. In addition to extension support, R&D is also important. Please explain:**

**a) How can R&D be adopted by farmers readily?**

This is really dependent on farmer's creativity, intuitiveness, intellectual capacity & commitment. Some are doing things on trial and error basis others can just share their experience on real situations on the ground and **if well documented** can be regarded as R&D matters. Our established farmers are doing this day in and day out, it's the small ones that needs to be coerced to carry out R&D on a more or less systematic manner.

**b) Are you aware of the R&D activities undertaken by Ministries of Agriculture and Agricultural Research institutes in your country?**

I am aware of the ones by the Ministry of Agriculture but maybe not fully aware of the minor details on some however; upon request Director Research (Crops) can always provide details. On those that are carried out by Agriculture Institutes, am not really familiar with-esp. SPC Agriculture research work.

**c) If no, would you like to know more? If yes, do you have suggestions as to how this information could be strengthened?**

Yes I would like to know more-which is really more collaboration with our Research people and also with other Institutes that carry out Agriculture Research in Fiji.

**5. It is increasingly recognised that extension should play a wider role than the traditional transfer of technology and training. Please explain:**

**a) What strategies are required for a paradigm shift for extension services in your country?**

- I believe our education system needs to inculcate simple methods of crop and husbandry practices in the primary school curriculum and gradually widens its scope as a student progresses however; rather than too much theory it must be more practical based.

- More awareness/advocacy to our rural population and the peri-urban communities of the importance of the Agriculture sector and the role it plays and how we can collaborate more often.
- Infrastructural support is vital so that our reach is far and wide.

b) *What are the current and emerging issues/priorities do you see driving the paradigm shift?*

The various interest for the Agricultural sectors especially the cross cutting issues that includes Environment, Energy, Sustainable issues, Women & Youth empowerment, Disaster management/Climate change as well as the increase demand for quality agricultural products that drives our economy has accelerate the paradigm shift which in some ways has really put a lot of pressure on our overall service delivery.

c) *How can ICT support dissemination of technology and best extension approaches?*

Capacity building on the various levels of our Organisational structure and support on new equipment.

d) *What priority training do extension agents need to play this wider role?*

Priority training areas is how to read and conceptualise the situation on the ground and not await instructions-the intuitiveness to control things. Building relationships is not easy especially in a diverse cultural environment. The technical bits are often learnt at the University levels however; it's how to fit into the community is an area that needs a lot of training. And of course reporting to Superiors in an accurate and timely manner of the happenings on the ground. Leadership, time management, knowledge management are other key areas.

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## **6. Mr. Tommy Tuuamalii, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries – Samoa**

### **Relevance of Policy Framework to Support Strengthen Agricultural Extension and Rural Advisory Services for Samoa.**

1. What are or should be the top 2 -3 key priorities for extension services support in your country?
  - I. To serve the public or farmers and communities through services available in rural area whereas agricultural stations are located in Upolu and Savaii to improve crop production for subsistence and commercial producers, producers and marketers.*
  - II. To conduct and facilitate farmer appraisals(PRA) and consultations through farmer communities such as village, church, youth, women and men groups to identify their issues and problems so that it can develop a logical framework of activities and work-plans, objectives and goals to be achieved. This is follow by trainings provided by the extension and advisory services where Farmer Field School FFS is strongly suggested to be conducted to address issues and problems.*
  - III. To strengthen the collaboration to support the private sectors and Government Ministries through trainings, meetings and consultations as well as regular visits to provide technical advice.*
2. Extension services support for farmers are important but can be constrained by limited public funding and resources.
  - a. How can your governments ensure that their limited budget is still able to effectively provide extension services?

- *The governments' budgets are monitor by the Corporate Services Division through the approval of its Line Manager (ACEOs) where he or she oversee and monitor its division budget according to extension and advisory activities and programs that already approved under its implementation or annual plan for its financial year. The budget allocated based on the approved activities for its financial year and more focus on resources that might be very useful and affordable provided by the extension to cater the needs of farmers, while some few are requesting the assistance from projects.*
- b. Do you think certain agricultural sectors/commodities in your country should be prioritized for extension support? If so, please name these for your country and briefly why?
- *Taro export commodities is one of the most important program as a high prioritize to the extension and advisory services to make sure that the farmers can be able to receive the planting materials with a recommended varieties to support the supply chain for export of taro. Conducting many consultations and meeting with farmers are very significant to our services where we can identify the needs regarding the program and been able organize and set up a good demonstration for them either establish a multiplication site of taro as a sourcing avenue for planting materials of farmers or distributing directly the planting materials for individual for their own multiplication.*
  - *Vegetable production in Samoa is another program that push the farmers to reduce the import of identified vegetable crops for such as tomato, bulb onion, lettuce, sweet pepper and Irish potato.*
- c. How can national extension officers themselves be incentivized/supported to ensure they are effective and adopt latest tools and innovations?
- *The extension and advisory officers are able to receive their Training of Trainers – ToT to its specific areas of technologies from the research results to make sure that they can be able to build up their capacity. The main aim of these for extension and advisory staffs training is to have the opportunity and chance to learn more skills and have more experiences so that they can handle any training conducted for the farmers. In addition, they also have the chance to send them to overseas training to acquire more knowledge and skills and make sure they can utilize when they are on the field.*
3. How can farming organizations and the private sector be engaged to assist with providing extension support more widely?
- *The extension and advisory services in Samoa are using the private sectors or farmer organization to be working together through programs. Regarding the engagement with private sectors, the extension and advisory can invite the any of them like for instance Soil Health Pacific to present what they in their company so that the farmers can also access of the information as well as to know what they offer for their benefit. In addition, the extension and advisory also participate on their request to present what services we offer if they can have any workshops and this is where we can work together. We can also work together when the extension promote their service through our meetings, consultations and trainings and let them know about the role of private sectors and farmer organizations individually.*
4. In addition to extension support, R & D is also important. Please explain.
- *The role of Research and Development is very important whereas the research section can study, investigate, explore and examine any specific issues for solutions and been able to train the extension and advisory people so that they can be able to train the farmers. They can also invite to participate the trainings in order for them to understand more about the*

*problems or have the opportunity to present any results that they have to the farmers. In addition, the development section also supports the extension through providing quality planting materials as well as to assist the training of farmers as coordinated and facilitated by extension. The development can also provide the market opportunities to the farmers whereas they can develop the pathway to guide the farmers.*

5. It is increasingly recognized that extension should play a wider role than the traditional transfer of technology and training. Please explain.
  - *Not really increasingly play a wider role but it is an integrated transfer of new model and approaches with traditional transfer of technology and training. It is depend on the situation where the program is planning to take place as well as the level of farmers. Although the new recognized extension tools are introduced to the communities to make sure that it is effective and make them more changes regarding the farming technologies.*