
CONTRIBUTIONS OF NAADS TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF FARMERS' LIVELIHOODS

ADJUMANI DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY

OF ADROPI SUB COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that NAADS is contributing a lot towards transforming the agricultural sector in Uganda through provision of services and agricultural inputs to improve agricultural productivity and hence modernization; It is failing to change hitherto subsistence agriculture. Farmers have continued to become poor, agricultural output has not found market; diseases and pests have continued to hit farmers living them impoverished. Little is known as to why farmers keep on becoming poor yet NAADS is providing services to the same farmers in the rural areas. Agriculture has failed to take off to be an enterprise of choice, it has remained static as it has previously been and poverty appears to persist at household level in Adjumani District and in Adropi Sub County in particular. Therefore, the researcher was compelled to find out why farmers have continued to remain poor despite the existence of NAADS. The study found that the role of farmers in NAADS program in Adropi Sub county are to directly enjoy the benefits that NAADS brings, participate in the NAADS trainings and joining a farmers' group; that the performance NAADS in Adropi sub county was found to be good due to the fact that it has transformed the agricultural sector of Adropi sub county on through providing quality Advisory Services provided to farmers, promoting adoption of new crop and livestock enterprises that is evidenced by the improved yields and increase in the numbers of goats and pigs per household in Adropi sub county. The study also found that introduction of modern farming methods, improvements in crop production, improved extension delivery systems topped as the major achievements of NAADS in Adropi Sub County. The study recommends that the government should increase funding the NAADS program since it is impacting positively in improving the standard of living of people in Adropi sub-County.

Key words: NAADS, Agriculture and farmers' livelihoods

Background of the Study

Agriculture is the backbone of Uganda's economy but it is carried out in a rudimentary fashion by use of basic technology like hand hoes, pangas, axes and so forth yet it employs 77% of the population, according to the 2002 Population Census results (Allan et al., 2023). Agricultural extension is being critically examined and assessed for its usefulness more than ever before to speed up service and impact delivery (Christopher et al., 2022). This has led to world-wide demand for reforming national agricultural extension systems (Collins et al., 2023). Uganda in particular is rapidly reforming its extension in line with global trends. This has led to the development of many new and reformed government articulatory Education 1997-1998, Decentralized Education 1997- 2001 and now Agricultural services under contract extension systems (Anthony et al., 2023). Each of those up to 1997- 2001 had strengths to build on and weaknesses to change or improve, but had challenges of the socio-economic and political environment (Francis et al., 2023). In addition, there have been marked

changes in the concept of agriculture which is increasingly seen; in terms of commercial or market farming with emphasis on modernization of agriculture and use of participatory approaches in the process. This explains why National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) was introduced in 2001. The National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) is a program of the government of Uganda put in place to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural extension service (Niyonzima, 2023). 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. The Program is currently in its Phase II of implementation under the Agricultural Technology and Agribusiness Advisory Services (ATAAS) Project set up to support and strengthen the implementation and collaboration between the full national programs of NARO and NAADS.

Problem statement

The National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) is a statutory semi- autonomous body under the ministry of Agriculture, animal and Fisheries (MAAIF) mandated to manage and distribution of agricultural inputs to farmers for sustainable household for security and income It is now 21 years since the inception of the NAADS although there seems to be very little difference between farmers' incomes (Oromo et al., 2023), output and productivity today and 20 years ago before they were NAADS farmers (Isaac et al., 2023). Despite the fact that NAADS is contributing a lot towards transforming the agricultural sector in Uganda, farmers have continued to become poor, agricultural output has not found market; diseases and pests have continued to hit farmers living them impoverished (Christopher, 2022). The study therefore sought to find out ways in which the NAADS program has helped farmers in Adropi Sub County and Adjumani district in general.

Specific Objective

- Find out the roles of the local farmers in Adropi Sub County in the implementation of NAADS
- Assess the performance of NAADS in improving the livelihood of the people in Adropi Sub County.
- Find out the achievements of NAADS in the transformation of Agriculture in Adropi Sub County

Methodology

A cross-sectional research design was used to carry out this study. This was combined with qualitative, quantitative and descriptive research designs. The qualitative technique helped in gathering and evaluating data on respondents' preferences, contextualization, interpretation, attitudes, opinions and behavior while the quantitative research gathered information using a constructed questionnaire and scales, which helped to understand a number of phenomena such as generalizability, prediction and causal explanations. On the other hand, descriptive research technique involved graphical, tabular and parametric descriptions if necessary. The overall total of the study population was 75. The study targeted people who participate in the NAADS policy implementation in the rural areas such as Agricultural extension workers, Sub County NAADS Coordinator and the farmers who are the major beneficiaries of the NAADS program. This included 48 peasant farmers who are beneficiaries of the NAADS program, 4 Agricultural Extension workers and 1 NAADS Coordinator. Purposive and stratified sampling procedures were employed by the researcher. Sekaran (2003:277) suggests that purposive or judgment sampling involves choice of subjects who are most advantageously placed or in the best position to provide the information required. Similarly, Kakooza (1994) argued that purposive sampling ensures that the significant sub groups of the population are represented in the sample

Table 1: Study population and sample

Category	Population	Sample	Selection methods
NAADS Coordinator	1	1	Purposive
NAADS Extension workers	4	4	Purposive
Peasant farmers	108		
Food security	100	4	Random
Market Oriented	8	8	Random
Total	103	53	

The sample of this study was 53 respondents drawn from the above population. According to Roscoe cited by Sekaran (2003), a sample size larger than 30 and less than 500 is appropriate for most studies. Bailey (1992) argues that for the descriptive research, 10 percent of the population is adequate and for research involving smaller population 40 percent may be considered. The questionnaires were hand-delivered and collected at a later date. For respondents who could not read and write; assistance was provided by the researcher through direct discussion to answer the questionnaire. Open ended and closed ended questions were used so as to eliminate bias when answering questions. The data entry was done using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) to generate frequencies and percentages (Nelson et al., 2022). This made the data collected from the field more organized, meaningful and easier to analyze. The statistics were presented using charts and tables. The data collected was presented in form of a written report (essay), tables and charts which were generated using SPSS.

RESULTS

Table 2: Size of farmer's land under usage

Land under production	Frequency	Percentage
Less than an acre	6	12.5
One and half acres	25	52.08
Two to three acres	15	31.25
More than three acres	2	4.17
Total	48	100

Source: primary data, 2022

Respondents were asked to state the acreage of land under production per peasant farmer. The above table 2 reveals that most of the peasants (95.83%) have up to three acres of land with only a few (4.17%) having more than 3 acres with 12.5% having less than 1 acre. This reflects an increase in land under production as a result of NAADS program that is benefiting farmers in the form of improved extension service, improved breeds among others. This has boosted farmers and hence improved production.

Table 3: Farm tools used by farmers

Tools	Frequency	Percentage
Hand hoe	11	22.92
Ox plough	35	72.92
Tractor	2	4.16
Total	48	100

Source: primary data, 2022

Farmers were asked to state the type of farm tools used in preparation of land and Table 3 reveals that most farmers use ox plough (72.92%) and hand tool (22.92%). Ox plough is the most common tool as a result of NAADS program to supplying peasants with Ox ploughs in the area. However, there were only a handful of farmers using tractors; this can be attributed to the fact that it is expensive to hire tractors to prepare agricultural land.

Table 4 showing source of capital of peasant farmers

Capital source	Frequency	Percentage
Own savings	38	79.17
Credit from friends	8	16.67
Credit from banks/MFI	2	4.16
Total	48	100

Source: primary data, 2022

Peasants were asked to state the source of their capital. Table 4 shows that majority of the farmers (79.17%) use capital from their own savings, others use credit from friends (16.67%) and credit from banks and /or Microfinance Institutions (4.16%). With only a few farmers accessing credit from banks, this can be attributed to high interest rates or inaccessibility to bank loans. Hence farmers resort to using their own savings to invest in agriculture.

Table 5: showing how farmers rate the performance of NAADS in Adropi Sub county

Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	18	37.5
good	23	47.92
Fair	3	6.25
Poor	4	8.33
Total	48	100

Source: primary data, 2022

Farmers were asked to rate the performance of NAADS in Adropi Sub County and Table 4.5 shows the results from findings. Majority (47.92%) rated NAADS performance as good, followed by 37.5% that rated it as very good. However, a few farmers rated NAADS performance as poor (8.33%) and fair (6.25%). With the majority rating the

performance of NAADS in Adropi Sub County as good, this reveals that NAADS performance is well above average and its intended impact is being realized in Adropi Sub County.

The role of the local farmers in the implementation of NAADS

Table 6: The role of the local farmers in the implementation of NAADS

Farmers' role	Frequency	Percentage
Direct beneficiary	26	50
Joining a famers' group	13	27.08
Participating in training	9	18.75
Total	48	100

Source: primary data, 2022

Farmers were asked to state their role in the NAADS program and Table 4.6 gives the results from findings. Majority (50%) of the farmers stated that their role was to directly enjoy the benefits that NAADS brings. This can be attributed to the mindset of the farmers who take NAADS program as intended to improve the livelihood of the local citizens who are 80% dependent on dependent on agriculture. Meanwhile, others stated that their role is to join a farmers' group (27.08%) and participating in trainings (18.75).

Achievements of NAADS in Adropi Sub County

Chart 2 shows reveals that farmers stated benefits of NAADS program in Adropi sub county as follows; modern farming methods (22.92%), improvements in crop production (25%), improved extension delivery systems (18.75%), improved seeds (14.58%), boosted food security (12.5%), improved fish farming (8.33%) and introduced modern storage (2%). This implies that out of the many achievements of NAADS in Adropi Sub County, modern farming methods, and improvements in crop production, improved extension delivery systems topped as the major achievements of NAADS in Adropi Sub County (Emily et al., 2023).

Conclusions

The study concluded that the role of farmers in NAADS program in Adropi Sub County are to directly enjoy the benefits that NAADS brings, participate in the NAADS trainings and joining a farmers' group. Farmers are directly provided with farm implements and they have to use and enjoy the services directly. In a few cases farmers who perform well are given the chance to supply NAADS with seeds and other farm products like piglets and chic's. The performance NAADS in Adropi Sub County was found to be good due to the fact that it has transformed the agricultural sector of Adropi Sub County through providing quality Advisory Services provided to farmers, promoting adoption of new crop and livestock enterprises that is evidenced by the improved yields and increase in the numbers of goats and pigs per household in Adropi Sub County (Christopher, 2022). Though it is still wanting, the advisory services provided by NAADS is helping farmers a lot by teaching them better farming methods. This

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has helped to improve the quality of farm products, reduce costs and it has also helped farmers to get the most out of their small farm land.

Recommendations

The government should increase funding for the NAADS program in Adropi Sub county it was found to be improving the livelihood of the peasant farmers. This will result to fundamental improvements in the standard of living of the local population through improved breeds, high yields and better pay from the quality produce and products.

Corrupt leaders especially NAADS Coordinators and field extension officers should be penalized and replaced. This will help avoid frustrations of the NAADS program as a result of embezzlement of funds and abuse of office.

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