

## Presenting key insights from IFAD's latest publication on "Lessons learned from supporting Pluralistic Extension Services in Asia and Africa"



The image shows a webinar welcome slide. On the left, a dark blue box contains the text: "WELCOME", "Webinar: 12 December 2022 (Monday)", "1300-1430 hrs (Rome Time/GMT+1)", "Presenting key insights from IFAD's latest publication on 'LESSONS LEARNED FROM SUPPORTING PLURALISTIC EXTENSION SERVICES IN ASIA AND AFRICA'", and "PLEASE REMEMBER TO MUTE YOURSELVES WHEN NOT SPEAKING". On the right, there is a graphic featuring the IFAD logo and a photograph of a group of people in a meeting. The graphic also displays the title of the publication: "LESSONS LEARNED FROM SUPPORTING PLURALISTIC EXTENSION SERVICES in Asia and Africa".

The launch event of IFAD's publication on "Lessons learned from supporting pluralistic extension services in Asia and Africa" took place on 12 December 2022 and featured, *inter alia*, a presentation by the IFAD Agronomy team (Putso Nyathi, Senior Regional Agronomist for East and Southern Africa and Marie-Aude Even, former Senior Regional Agronomist for APR, now Senior Biodiversity Specialist) and panel discussions with public and private stakeholders engaged in pluralistic extension services, as well as a question & answer session.

The event focused on how Private Extension Service Providers (PESPs) can complement public extension services in a pluralistic approach to meet the multiple needs of farmers (production, access to markets, adaptation to climate change) and to ultimately improve their livelihoods. The main lessons learned from implementation of pluralistic extension services from 23 IFAD investment projects covered:

- selection of PESPs
- models of pluralistic extension services,
- empowering PESPs to reach the last-mile,
- efficiency and cost-effectiveness of PESPs,
- public-private partnerships to strengthen and sustain PESPs.

Approximately 160 participants attended the event. Three Panellists provided insights on their concrete experience along various pluralistic extension systems: Government of Malawi sharing experiences on the lead farmer approach through the IFAD funded [SAPP](#), farmer organization representatives from Uganda's Gulu District Farmer Association supporting the [PRELNOR](#) project in Uganda; IFAD Country Director sharing his experience on pluralistic extension systems in Bolivia and Bangladesh. In addition, two experts provided further insights from global studies on pluralistic extension: IDH expert shared experience from the innovative [farmfit](#) initiatives that reviewed over [100 private service delivery models](#), Deputy Director of FAO Investment Centre positioned the study against a recent global [review of investments in human capital](#) led by FAO and IFPRI.

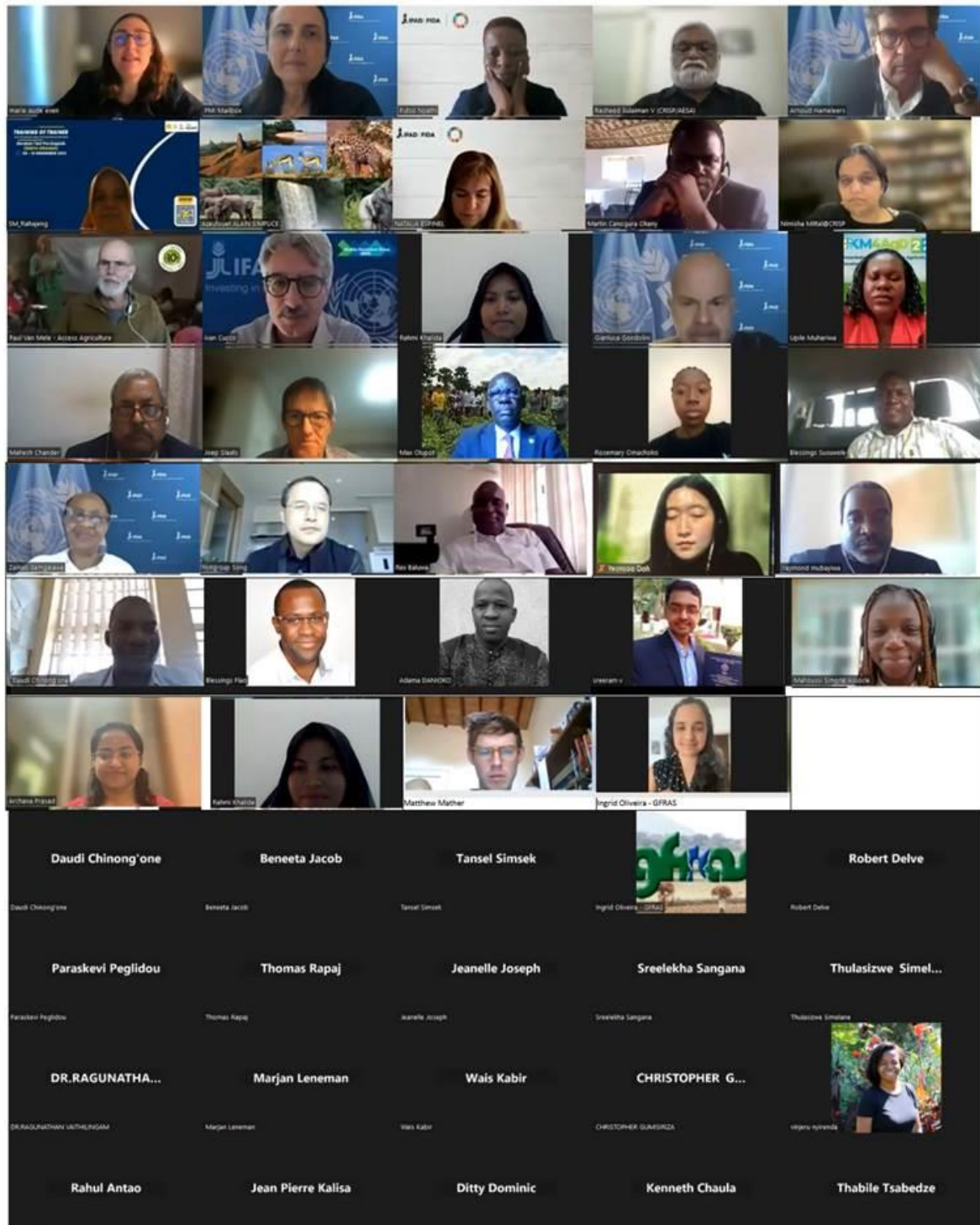
In case you missed the webinar, please follow the recording on the link:

<https://youtu.be/D7DhH363O3c>

Presenting key insights from IFAD's latest publication on "Lessons learned from supporting Pluralistic Extension Services in Asia and Africa"

The publication can be found in IFAD's website at the following link:

<https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/46847063/lessons-extension-services.pdf/e7b2bbe5-c1d7-1438-21c7-1fb903efeafb?t=1669635950998>



## Summary of the event

**Rasheed Sulaiman opened the session** by reminding participants that IFAD has been one of the founding members of GFRAS (Global Forum of Rural Advisory Services) and has supported many other regional networks in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Promoting pluralistic extension services and strengthening last-mile delivery are important aspects for both IFAD and AESA (Agricultural Extension in South Asia), which has contributed to the preparation of the publication.

He explained that the goal of the session was to discuss the findings from 23 IFAD-financed projects implemented in Asia and Africa, how the pluralistic extension system is organized and how we can learn from their experience.



In her **opening remark, Thouraya Triki**, Director of IFAD's PMI division, thanked both the IFAD Agronomy team for putting together the publication and the management units of those IFAD projects that provided evidence for the lessons learned.



She underlined that agricultural advisory services are instrumental to contribute to the delivery of IFAD's corporate mandate to invest in rural people, since they support smallholder farmers through improved technologies, better access to markets, therefore fostering better nutrition and increased resilience to climate change.

However, public extension services in Asia and Africa are highly underfunded, understaffed and often have skill shortages on emerging issues. Pluralistic extension services offer opportunities to counter these challenges through collaboration with private extension service providers (PESPs) (input suppliers, agri-preneurs, NGOs, value chain actors and farmer organizations) in view of achieving the following objectives:

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- clear win-win outcomes for the government, service providers and farmers,
- a conducive environment for private sector players to operate,
- harmonization of messages, and
- sustainability of services.

These lessons are relevant for PMUs, IFAD staff, as well as consultants and partners involved in the design and implementation of IFAD investment projects and it will be important to disseminate them as much as possible.

She encouraged all the other stakeholders participating in the event to share both their successful and unsuccessful practices (in particular), and be thought provocative in order to make the event richer and foster continuous conversation.



### **Presentation by Putso and Marie Aude (full presentation attached to this document)**

Putso Nyathi and Marie Aude Even co-presented the document by summarizing the 10 lessons learned, providing practical examples from project implementation and sharing suggestions on how to use the lessons in the various stages of the project life cycle.

While designing and implementing projects, the aim should always be to ensure provision of targeted, relevant, efficient and inclusive services. The fundamental aspects to always take into account are: last-mile delivery (ie to reach the remotest and the poorest in accordance with our mission) offer of diverse services (not limited to production but also climate and access to market related), need for continuous capacity building, role of the Government and public funding, cost management, post-project sustainability.

Field experience shows that rural households need various services to increase production, access markets and improve their livelihoods, however public extension services are frequently lacking capacity and outreach to provide these services.

Therefore most IFAD projects invest in pluralistic extension advisory services (comprising both public and PESP) to obtain a wider range of services (going from production to value addition to marketing, but also natural resource management, adaptation to climate change and nutrition).

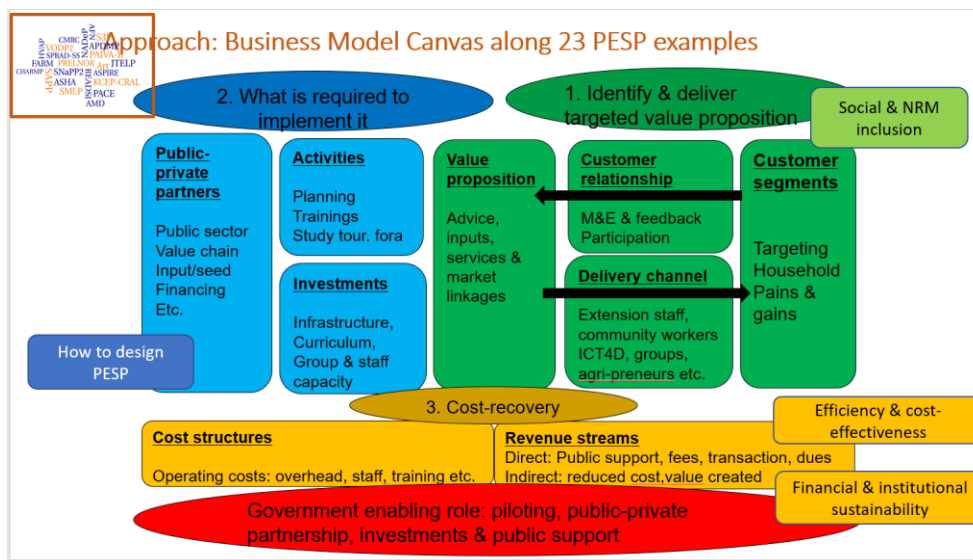
The key lessons detailed in the report show how to better select and engage PESP, enhance efficiency and reach the last-mile, favour post-project sustainability, promote inclusiveness of pluralistic services.

Starting from 23 examples of PESP (list of projects attached to this document), the approach used to draw the lessons was the business model canvas, a well-known tool in the private sector.

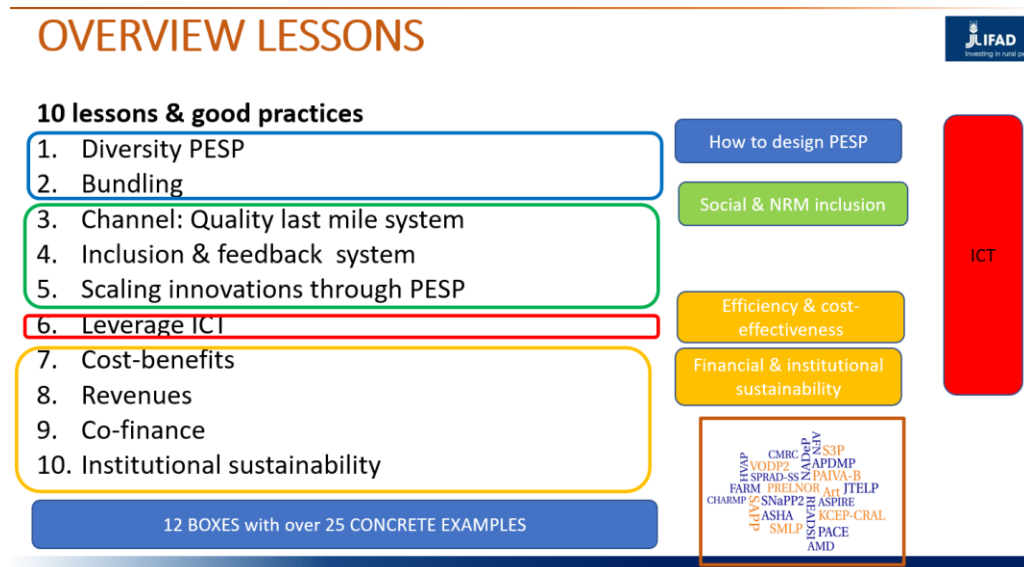
Activities, resources, costs, delivery, partnerships and sustainability were reviewed and 3 pillars were identified:

- 1) identifying and delivering targeted value propositions (taking into account customer needs, possible delivery channels and customer relationship mechanisms,
- 2) requirements to implement models (in terms of activities, possible partners and investments),
- 3) related operating costs and possible revenue streams (both direct and indirect).

plus, the government’s and project’s respective roles were spelled out as per graph below:



The lessons were grouped under three aspects: models of services and how to select and engage PESP, actions to reach the last-mile and to take into account climate concerns, efficiency and cost effectiveness + sustainability. The role of ICT was also illustrated. Reference to projects was made throughout the lessons.



## Summary of lessons

**Lesson 1: Projects use different types of PESPs** (private entities, producer organizations, NGOs, upstream and downstream value chain institutions, rural finance institutions) **depending on local context and needs.**

The strengths, weaknesses and shared interest of the various models were shown.

**Lesson 2: Project use PESPs to bundle different services** (inputs and transportation, access, advocacy, product development, finance, information, technical, technology, training) **to enhance impacts.** They either use service providers offering various services, or support multiprovider platforms, or integrate extension in value chain contracts.

The capacity of PMUs to hand multiple providers or the availability of providers offering multiple service change depending on the context. The mapping/designing/implementing efforts made by HVAP/Nepal were explained extensively.

**Lesson 3: Projects employ diverse "last-mile delivery channels" that require dedicated investments:** in order to reach the last-mile, the best extension systems are those that rely on local resources that farmers trust and see as peers (grassroots groups, lead farmers, community workers, and field staff), however these need capacity development in order to diversify their offer of services and be more effective.

**Lesson 4: Projects employ different mechanisms** (quality mapping and registration of farmers, selection and training of extension workers based on farmers' needs, participatory planning and regular feedback, quality monitoring) **to improve targeting and make services demand-driven.** This is especially important if service providers are of a private nature and only interested in some segments of the rural population.

**Lesson 5: Projects link PESPs to research and value chain actors to help integrate and scale relevant climate-smart technologies.** PESPs are particularly useful during the scaling-up phase of climate-smart agronomic innovations. They can strengthen production of adapted seeds and technologies, they facilitate embedding of new practices within the value chains, they can develop green mechanisms to finance these innovations.

**Lesson 6: ICT improves the efficiency, inclusion and sustainability of PESPs' last-mile delivery.** Various ICT solutions are available to improve targeting, feedback and monitoring, to link demand with offer and bundle services, to facilitate remuneration of services providers. They were especially important during COVID times when people were in lockdown situation. However in some contexts ICT tools are not sufficiently affordable and/or easy to use and farmers still rely on peer learning. In those cases, projects can devise ways to facilitate access and use, for example service centres open to all, or availability of local leads.

Farmers not being able to afford ICT therefore still relying on peer learning, therefore make sure local leads or local centres can offer these services and the poorest can go there to learn (Malawi and Kenya examples were illustrated).

**Lesson 7: Tracking extension costs and benefits helps increase cost-effectiveness.** Costs must be tracked by clearly separating investment costs (for example developing and teaching new curricula) from operating costs (staff costs, transportation and logistics costs) and then optimized by finding the good balance (taking into account that overhead costs are mostly fixed, try to increase scope and/or scale of services, introduce cost sharing, improve dissemination).

Sometimes higher costs are necessary to ensure sustainability. Burundi case was illustrated separately.

**Lesson 8: PESPs use a diversity of revenue streams** (non-monetary incentives, i.e. support among peers, membership fees, fee-based services, transaction fees) **or diversify their services/increase their outreach, for financial post-project sustainability.** Projects can help by co-planning early exit strategies.

**Lesson 9: PESPs mobilize co-financing to achieve inclusion and financial sustainability.** In this context, public investments are important (especially at the beginning phase) in order to increase financial viability, in addition Governments can facilitate partnerships and cofinancing with other private entities, and so that some services can be offered for free.

**Lesson 10: Long-term support and partnerships are required to deliver sustainable services to the last-mile.** Usually exit strategies rely uniquely on producer organization and last-mile service providers to ensure sustainability, however the whole institutional framework can contribute, comprising public extension systems, federations, networks. Sustainability can also be ensured by investing in sustainable training material and curriculum and tracking maturity of POs (i.e. making sure they can carry out the sustainability task).

The Government is key to providing an enabling environment through dedicated investments (offer incentives and revenue streams), coordination mechanisms (aggregating demand and facilitating partnerships), quality assurance (fostering quality value proposition), and conflict management.

Finally, a list of recommendations was drawn concerning which activities are most appropriate in each stage of the project cycle in order to strengthen pluralistic extension services, the main recommendation being to prepare early for the implementation phase, during which the focus will be more on strengthening, monitoring and ensuring post-project sustainability.

At the design stage: Mapping demand, existing PESP & capacity gaps; Identification of bundling systems; Exit strategy & business model in mind.

Implementation readiness: Identify mechanisms for capacity development; Formalisation of partnerships.

At the Implementation Stage: Monitoring and Evaluation; Exit/Sustainability Plan; Strengthen Business Models; Leveraging PPPs.

## **Panel discussion**

A panel discussion followed comprising of five speakers with rich experience and bringing different perspectives: John Preissing from FAO Investment Centre Division, compared the findings of the FAO study on human capital investments in agriculture with those in IFAD publication, Arnoud Hameleers, Blessings Susuwele, and Martin Canogura focused on project implementation in country contexts (Bangladesh, Malawi, Uganda) from different points of view (respectively international financier, Government officer, Farmer's association representative), finally Clara Colina exposed the early findings of the IDH publication on inclusive business models targeting the private sector.

John Preissing was asked to draw some light on the importance of investing in human capital (also based on the FAO study) and on the added value of IFAD publication to guide future human capital investments.

According to the FAO study, it is important to: (1) incentivize providers of extension services and producers so that they can use new technologies; (2) strengthen producer organizations in order to ensure last-mile delivery (similar to IFAD findings); (3) target well; (4) foster linkages and coordination, especially when there are multiple public and private providers (similar to IFAD findings); (5) keep the system stable but dynamic (role of the Government); (6) control quality with reliable measurement systems.

John thanked IFAD for the publication contributing to the ongoing work on agricultural human capital investment, and in particular for underlining the importance of bundling services for better impact and financial viability of extension services.

Arnoud Hameleers shared insights on the value added and lessons learned from working with rural finance institutions on pluralistic extension systems (work done by PACE Bangladesh while partnering with microfinance organization PKSF).

He underlined the importance of working with research and financial institutions to provide improved extension and foster innovation. He warned that ensuring sustainability requires time and efforts. In most countries, extension is fully managed by Government, which represents a limit. Opportunities with the private sector should be explored, but always being careful that they align with our values. He also insisted on the importance of targeting and of raising more awareness on climate-related issues and other insecurities.

Blessings Susuwele explained how the lead farmer approach in Malawi complemented services offered by the Government (see full presentation annexed to this document).

The most important aspects in this case are that lead farmers are selected and supervised by the community as well as guided by the Government extension staff, and that they work with limited numbers of farmers, focusing on one enterprise. They are trained in various technologies and grouped in networks. They are motivated and recognized. This approach promotes sustainability beyond project life.

Martin Canogura talked about the experience with PRELNOR and the benefits and challenges in providing extension services to a project as a Farmer Organization.

The benefits were: (1) increased expertise in a wide range of technology and climate resilient practices, (2) relationships established with various institutions, facilitating solutions, (3) joint planning and collaboration/accountability/transparency/trust context, fostering sustainability; (4) increased membership, especially of youth and women, revenues increased. Among the challenges: 1) emergency of counterfeited seeds from agro-input dealers, (2) land wrangles, (3) limited availability of bulking centres, (4) difficulty of farmers to adapt to climate change related shortages; (5) lack of equipment.

Clara Colina presented the ongoing work on the Farmfit initiative database carried out by IDH and their upcoming publication on inclusive business models targeting the private sector, that will review data from over 100 business models and present lessons learned from technical assistance in 17 projects in the East and Southern Africa region. She spoke of the importance to use data to help building more inclusive, sustainable and commercially viable service delivery models.

In trying to answer the following fundamental questions:

What defines and what drives successful service delivery to smallholder farmers?

How can performance be optimized for both the businesses (in order for them to offer inclusive and commercially viable services) and the farmers ( i.e. increasing their revenues)?



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a few insights are offered by the publication, for example: 1) bundled services can be up to 1.3 or 2 times more effective on income than standalone services, 2) models with less than 100 farmers per agent (the so called “higher touch models”) can be up to 5 times more effective on revenues than lower touch models, 3) last-mile delivery: cost to serve farmers are up to 17% less when using local lead farmers than own staff, and surprisingly 4) companies that are investing more in the farmers also tend to recover more their costs. However this is not foolproof, there is large variability due to contexts and design.

In closing the panel session, Rasheed wished for more collaboration among GFRAS member in order to collect more experiences from different regions and to be able to draw more lessons (for example from the very rich experiences made in Latin America).



### Question and answer sessions

Participants asked many questions in the chat and the following are some of the replies provided.

**How many years does IFAD see as a minimum period to make private rural advisory services financially sustainable? is there a timeframe or does it depend on many different factors?**

According to Arnoud it depends on the maturity of institutions: stable institutions are able to offer sustainable services in a very fast way, however when starting from zero, this can take years. Particular attention must be devoted to adapting packages to the needs of the poorest, women and youth.

**What is your experience with using the CSR (corporate social responsibility) funds for strengthening last-mile services delivery)**

Marie Aude replied that CSR plays a big role in order for institutions to gain a better image, be recognized and get more access to markets. A few models exist, for example partnership with Mars in Indonesia is very much focusing on this aspect; they are really investing in the farmers because they want high quality products and also have to comply with different certification systems.

According to Clara CSR plays a key role in redistributing value along the value chain. The private sector should and can play a leading role beyond traditional CSR so to break the long-anchored perception of the cost and risk associated to serve the farmers and prove business models that are commercially attractive to compete with other investments opportunities.

Finally, in answering a question about **the role of ICT for farmers organizations and youth**, Martin replied that there is a big issue to be tackled, i.e. that it is still a challenge for many farmers to use ICT, and especially to access the market information system.

**Closing remarks**

Rasheed thanked participants for a very rich discussion and stated that this publication contributes to address the knowledge gap that exists in that there is very little evidence of experience of pluralistic services on the ground. In addition, more needs to be known about inclusive services, especially gender inclusive models. Finally, it is still very important to articulate public sector investments and the need of long term handholding support for all these pluralistic service providers.

Marie Aude delivered closing remarks on behalf of Tom Anyonge. She underlined the role of youth, the importance of environmental issues, and how increasing participation creates more opportunity for strong last-mile systems. She talked about the fundamental role of networks and platforms, like for example GFRAS, the interest of exchanging experiences and lessons learned (even if context specific) to improve project design and implementation. She reminded about the need to take sustainability at heart, to invest in the right capacities and to obtain support from effective institutional mechanisms. Finally she thanked all panellists and project staff, country teams, governments etc...for this collective learning experience and she encouraged all to read the report to learn more. She stated the intention to organize a similar session to discuss about experiences and lessons learned in Asia.

Putso thanked all for participating and for showing interest by asking questions. Replies will be provided to questions that were not answered during the session and material (recording, presentations and others) will be uploaded in the link that was sent to all, which is the following:

<https://ifadbox.ifad.org/owncloud/s/JnMyWwaXXtskTlh>

## **Appendixes**

- i) Bios of speakers
- ii) Notes for delivery of final remarks
- iii) List of projects
- iv) Full presentation by Marie Aude and Putso
- v) Presentation by Blessings

### **Bios of speakers**

#### **Thouraya Triki**

Thouraya Triki is the Director of the Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division of IFAD. Before joining IFAD, Triki worked at the African Development Bank (AfDB) as Manager in the Microeconomics, Institutions and Development Impact Division, Chief Economist Complex, at its headquarters in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. She managed the division's knowledge products as well as a team providing support to AfDB's non-sovereign lending operations. From 2013 to 2017, she was Chief Country Economist at AfDB North Africa Regional Department based in Tunis, Tunisia, with a particular focus on entrepreneurship, public-private partnerships and financial sector development. She also played a leading role in setting up the AfDB PPP Hub for North Africa. Triki holds a PhD in finance from HEC Montréal.

#### **Rasheed Sulaiman V**

Rasheed Sulaiman V is Director, Centre for Research on Innovation and Science Policy (CRISP), Hyderabad ([www.crispindia.org](http://www.crispindia.org)). CRISP hosts the AESA (Agricultural Extension in South Asia) Network ([www.aesanetwork.org](http://www.aesanetwork.org)) which is a sub-regional network under the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) and Dr Rasheed is its focal point. Before joining CRISP, he worked with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) as Senior Scientist at the National Institute of Agricultural Economics and Policy Research (NIAP), New Delhi (1993-2006). Rasheed holds a PhD in Agricultural Extension.

#### **Marie-Aude Even**

Marie-Aude is the Senior Biodiversity Specialist in ECG (IFAD) since October this year; before that, she was the Regional Senior Technical Specialist on Agronomy for Asia Pacific, providing technical support to over 15 projects in the regions and getting engaged in various partnership on extension and sustainable agricultural development. It is in this position that she co-led with Putso this review of extension system. Marie-Aude is an agronomist with two masters around agrarian systems, agricultural development economics and policies.

#### **Putso Nyathi**

Putso is a Senior Regional Technical Specialist – Agronomy, based in the Nairobi- Kenya Regional Office of IFAD. She supports the design and supervision of IFAD funded projects in the East and Southern Africa Region. She also supports policy engagement, partnership efforts and knowledge management in areas of agronomy and agriculture extension. She coordinates partnerships with CGIAR centres, AGRA and other similar organizations to bring innovation to IFAD programs in the region. Putso holds a PhD in Rural Development from the University of Pretoria, South Africa

#### **John Preissing**

John is Deputy Director, FAO Investment Centre which focuses on bringing development to scale through investment support together with countries and the international financial institutions. At the Investment Centre he provides direct technical support in innovation, agriculture human capital, and research and extension investment strategies. John also co-lead the global [IFPRI-FAO publication](#) on investments in human capital. Previously he served as FAO Representative at Ecuador and Peru.

#### **Arnoud Hameleers**

Arnoud Hameleers is the country director, IFAD Bangladesh. He has been working for IFAD since 2016, starting as Country Director for Bolivia and Honduras. Before that, he worked as a senior technical advisor for DANIDA agricultural program in Bolivia and occupied several position within Ministry of agriculture and University in UK. Arnoud holds a Ph.D in agricultural systems and has

been extensively working on extension systems. Arnoud can bring perspectives from his international experience as well as Bangladesh case studies reviewed in this report which includes both lead farmers, local service provider-entrepreneurs and micro-credit organization for PACE, providing view from country director who has been engaged in extension in different contexts

#### **Blessings Susuwele**

Blessings Susuwele is Assistant Chief Agriculture Officer in the Department of Agriculture Extension Services, Malawi. Blessings holds a Masters in Social Change and Development, and has worked as an Extension Worker since 2005. His work through the years of services span from community engagement, farmer empowerment, staff training, development of communication materials, to Policy implementation.

#### **Martin Canogura Okeny**

Martin Canogura is a Project Management & Administration Officer at the Gulu District Farmer Association (GDFA) in Uganda. He has more than 13 years of experience working in rural development particularly with farmer organizations. Martin holds degrees in Project Planning and Management, Business Administration and Public management. GDFA currently have registered membership of 25,000 farmers and 834 Registered Farmer groups. The Association operates in the whole of Gulu and Omoro districts respectively, which is located in the Northern Part of Uganda.

#### **Clara Colina**

Clara Colina is the program director for the intelligence centre of the farmfit initiative of IDH; IDH has been developing the IDH Farmfit initiative to foster "game changing private-public initiative to break the cycle of rural poverty". Among others, Farmfit has been reviewing business models of over 100 examples of private sector service delivery and publishing various insightful reports extensively used in this publication. Such insights are used together with business services and de-risking farmfit fund to support more private sector investments in agriculture ; <https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/farmfit/>

#### **Tom Anyonge**

Tom Anyonge is the Director a.i. (ad interim) of the Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion *Division* of IFAD. Prior to that, he was the Lead Technical Specialist in Youth and previously on rural institutions. Anyonge has 30 years of professional experience strengthening institutions for rural development. Prior to joining IFAD, Anyonge worked with NORAD, FINIDA, DFID and SIDA in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. He also has experience as a programme manager, National Technical Adviser, Senior Programme Officer and Senior Programme Support Officer. Anyonge holds two MSc degrees: one from the University of Arizona, United States, and one from Voronezh University, USSR.

### Notes for delivery of final remarks

- Importance of investing in **quality and sustainable extension services** through all our projects with challenge to increase outreach, quality and diversify services (including nutrition, gender, climate, market, finance etc.) to facilitate innovations
- **NOT ONE SIZE FIT ALL:** diversity of potential models and actors depending on local contexts and value chains: importance of context specific & building on what already exists
- The crucial role of **the last-mile extension providers:** with increasing roles of **entrepreneurial and committed youth** (such as community workers, agripreneurs etc.) in providing such services on the ground and being at the forefront of local innovations
- **Increasing transversal role of ICT again,** not to replace extension system and peer learning but to support such last-mile actors and peer learning flow
- Importance of **sustainability and attention to institutions,** both local farmer organizations and enabling institutions: Timely as IFAD is about to launch its sustainability action plan which re-emphasizes the importance to reflect early on exit strategy and pay stronger attention to institutional capacities & partnership
- The increasing **role and investments from private sector** in extension and service provision, as demonstrated here and along the examples offered by IDH representations
- **Review extension system through a "business canva" / business model lens:**
  - Identify and enhance **VALUE PROPOSITION of extension** for different actors;
  - ensure close **stakeholder engagement and feedback mechanisms** + quality data
  - Work on the **cost recovery / revenue** streams etc.
  - Leverage stronger partnership and **CO FINANCING / stronger revenues by identifying and demonstrating value created**

IFAD has always been committed to extension, network and institutions. We need to further our investments and partnership to ensure quality, diversified and sustainable extension to take on board increasing environmental, social and nutrition challenge

- IFAD hosts farmers forum, IP forum and engage with multiple networks who can be at forefront of such movement
- IFAD among the founding member of GFRAS; current and forthcoming grant to further support such network improve pluralistic extension + invest in agro-ecological transitions
- Need to further partnership and engagement to increase our capacities to design and support sustainable and inclusive advisory services that respond to new challenges

## LIST OF PROJECTS

### Eastern and Southern Africa

- Burundi: Agricultural Intensification and Value-enhancing Support Project (PAIVA-B)
- Eswatini: Smallholder Market-led Programme (SMLP)
- Kenya: Kenya Cereal Enhancement Programme - Climate-Resilient Livelihoods Window (KCEP-CRAL)
- Malawi: Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme (SAPP)
- Uganda: Programme for the Restoration of Livelihoods in the Northern Region (PRELNOR)
- Uganda: Vegetable Oil Development Programme (VODP2)
- Zambia: Smallholder Productivity Promotion Programme (S3P)

### Asia

- Afghanistan: Support to National Agricultural Priority Programme 2 (SNaPP2)
- Bangladesh: Promoting Agricultural Commercialization and Enterprise (PACE)
- Cambodia: Agricultural Services Programme for Innovation, Resilience and Extension (ASPIRE)
- China: Sustaining Poverty Reduction through Agribusiness Development in South Shaanxi (SPRAD-SS)
- India: Andra Pradesh Drought Mitigation Project (APDMP)
- India: Jharkhand Tribal Empowerment and Livelihoods Project (JTELP)
- India: Community-Managed Resource Centre (CMRC) reviewed in CAIM project and Tejaswini
- Indonesia: Rural Empowerment and Agricultural Development Scaling-up Initiative (READSI)
- Lao People's Democratic Republic: Strategic Support to Agriculture and Food Security (AFN)
- Myanmar: Fostering Agricultural Revitalization in Myanmar (FARM)
- Nepal: High-Value Agriculture Project in Hill and Mountain Areas (HVAP)
- Nepal: Adaptation for Smallholders in Hilly Areas (ASHA)
- Pakistan: Economic Transformation Initiative – Gilgit Baltistan
- Philippines: Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resource Management Project (CHARMP)
- Sri Lanka: National Agricultural Development Programme (NADeP)
- Viet Nam: Climate Change Adaptation in the Mekong Delta (AMD)

**Presentation by Marie Aude and Putso (full)**

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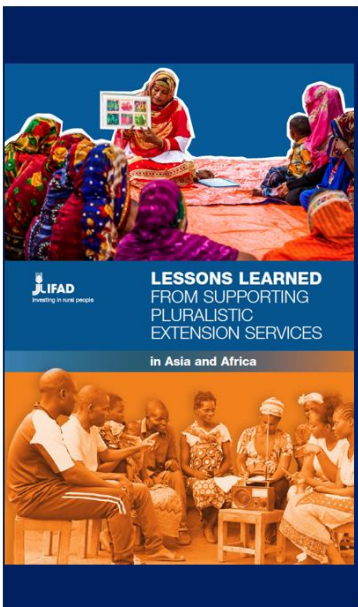
**Webinar: 12 December 2022 (Monday)**  
1300-1430 hrs (Rome Time/GMT+1)

*Presenting key insights from IFAD's latest publication on "LESSONS LEARNED FROM SUPPORTING PLURALISTIC EXTENSION SERVICES IN ASIA AND AFRICA"*

*Kindly remember to mute your microphones when not speaking.*

*You are welcome to type questions in the chat and they will be dealt with during the Q&A part of the event."*

[Link to the publication](#)



**Chair and moderator:** Dr Rasheed Sulaiman, Director of the Centre for Research on Innovation and Science Policy in India; Coordinator of the Asian network for extension

**Agenda**

13:00–13:05	Opening remarks	Thouraya Triki: Director, Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division
13:05–13:25	Overview of the publication with selected examples from ESA and APR	Putso Nyathi: Senior Regional Agronomist, East and Southern Africa Division Marie-Aude Even: Senior Biodiversity Specialist, Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division
13:25–13:50 (5 minutes each)	Panel discussion to share insights on:  i) added value and use of the publication for pluralistic extension systems ii) complementary lessons – work	i) John Preissing: Deputy Director & OIC, Asia Pacific Service (CFIB) FAO Investment Centre Division ii) Arnoud Hamelers: Country Director of Bangladesh iii) Blessings Susuwele: Malawi SAPP Assistant Chief Agriculture Officer iv) Canogura Martin Okeny: Gulu Farmers Association, Uganda v) Clara Colina, Program Director, Intelligence Centre of the Farmfit initiative (IDH)
13:50–14:25	Q&A session	Moderator
14:25–14:30	Closing remarks	Marie-Aude Even and Putso Nyathi



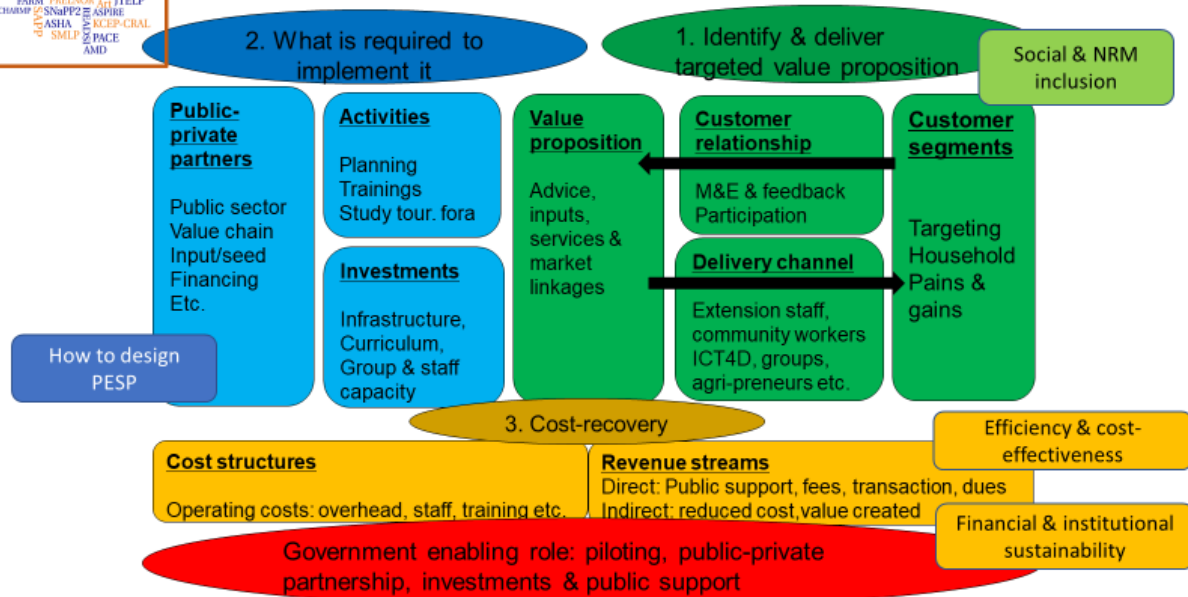
## Outline event



- Rationale
- Approach
- Lessons
- Implications
- Panel discussion
- Q&A

- **Rural households need a range of services to enhance livelihoods, adapt CC and access market**
- Public extension services are generally weak in outreach and capacity
- **Most IFAD loan projects invest in “pluralistic extension advisory systems”** engaging public and private extension service providers (PESPs) to broaden services  
*includes production, natural resource management, value addition, marketing, nutrition, adaptation to climate change etc*
- **To make better investments in this area of PESPs, we identified key lessons on:**  
*the selection and engagement of PESPs,  
Ways of enhancing efficiency, better reach to last-mile farmers  
How to sustain beyond projects ?  
How public sector can foster inclusive pluralistic EAS?*

## Approach: Business Model Canvas along 23 PESP examples



## OVERVIEW LESSONS



### 10 lessons & good practices

1. Diversity PESP
2. Bundling
3. Channel: Quality last mile system
4. Inclusion & feedback system
5. Scaling innovations through PESP
6. Leverage ICT
7. Cost-benefits
8. Revenues
9. Co-finance
10. Institutional sustainability

How to design PESP

Social & NRM inclusion

Efficiency & cost-effectiveness

Financial & institutional sustainability

ICT

12 BOXES with over 25 CONCRETE EXAMPLES



## Lesson 1: Examples of PESPs



Projects use different types of PESPs depending on local context and needs

Private Entity

Producer organization

NGO-specialized

Upstream VC

Downstream:

Rural finance

### Uganda, PRELNOR) & PO

- PO deliver better services to members + revenues
- Last mile services ; trust; proximity

### Zambia, (S3P) Burundi PAIVA B & specialized providers

Using specialized NGOs for specific extension services  
PEA, CA/CSA, Gender ,Co-operative development

### Partnership with Mars in Indonesia

- Mars cocoa academy, cocoa village & cocoa doctors to improve quality cocoa & CSR
- Mars train project last mile workers & public extension

### KCEP- CRAL- Kenya

- Conservation agriculture services providers, provide extension services on CA in addition to CA services
- Agrodealers

### India: partnership with bank and PO

Bank co-finance PO led service centre (CCMC)  
That manage credit & provide business advisory: so increase bank outreach & de-risk credit

## Lesson 1: DIVERSITY PESP



Entity	Strengths	weakness	Shared interest
<b>Producer organization</b>	Cost trust social remote	Capacity; income	Value for members
<b>NGO-specialized</b>	Technical capacity; grant	Cost ; sustainability	Revenue; shared goals
<b>Upstream VC</b>	Embed market; expertise co-finance	Exclusions ; mono crops ;	Improved sourcing; CSR
<b>Downstream: input seeds</b>	Embed access input; cofinance; expertise	Conflict interest	More customers ; CSR
<b>Rural finance</b>	Embed finance; business	Agri capacities ; outreach	Outreach; bankability

=> Selection of the right PESP depends on the locally identified demand for and offer of services, and considers capacity gaps and long-term interest in providing extension services.

## Lesson 2: BUNDLING

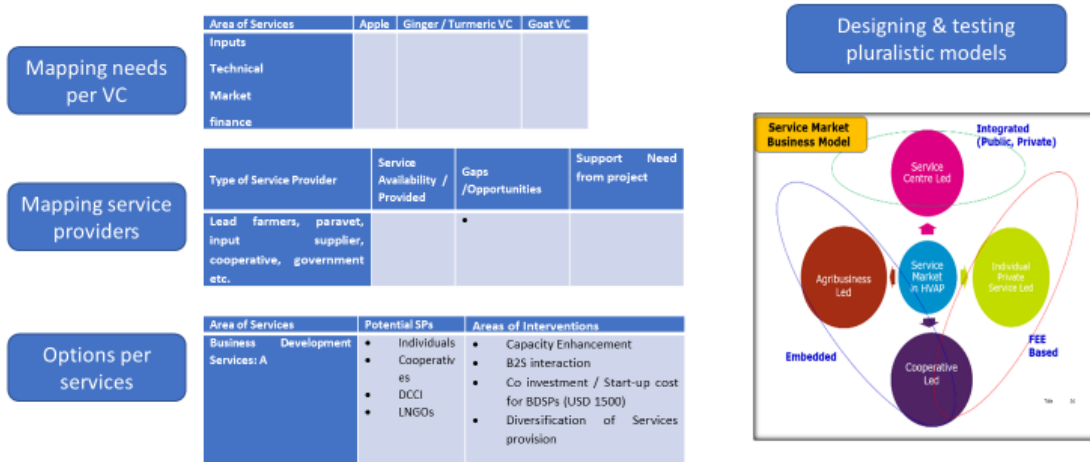


Projects use PESP to bundle different services to enhance impacts

- Farmers benefit most from projects that can effectively bundle different services across the value chain.
- Depending on context and the existing strengths of PESP, projects bundle services by:
  - (i) PESP aggregating/bundling different services
  - (ii) Supporting platforms and the engagement of various specialized PESP
  - (iii) Bundling within value chain partnership



## Context based bundling: Example Nepal HVAP



Source: Sanjeev Shrestha note; consultant for Nepal portfolio supporting such projects

### Lesson 3

- **Locally trusted community-based extension systems are crucial for effective peer learning, trust and outreach.**



Projects employ diverse “last-mile delivery channels” that require dedicated investments



**Malawi Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme (SAPP)** uses one lead farmer /15-20 follower farmers.

**Uganda’s PRELNOR** : 200 community-based facilitators / 54,000 farmers in 1,800 groups.

**Kenya (KCEP) mechanization** service providers to provide advisory services on conservation agriculture.

- **Need capacity development, backstopping & vertical delivery system**

**Bangladesh PACE/PKSF system:** PO, value chain assistant and facilitators support cluster with groups, lead farmers, local services providers, input deal and value chain

## Lesson 4: TARGETING & INCLUSION



Projects employ different mechanisms to improve targeting and make services demand-driven

Dedicated mechanisms are required to **improve targeting and demand-driven services:**

- Quality mapping and registration of different target farmers :baseline and targeting.
- Last-mile workers are selected and trained depending on different target farmers (i.e. gender, etc.).

*SMLP-CSARL in Eswatini applies a differentiated PESP system: public extension for CSA in food deficit HH; private PESP for market oriented HH*

- Mechanisms are integrated to ensure regular participatory planning and feedback mechanisms, and ideally support farmer groups/communities to recruit PESPs directly.

*PRELNOR Uganda & group self appraisal & actions plans; Bangladesh NATP2 micro extension plans*

- Quality monitoring and accountability are key for tracking and ensuring impacts for different farmers.

*i.e. partnership with WOCAT on participatory SLM monitoring*

*IDH & MARS work on farm data for extension*

## Lesson 5: SCALING GREEN THROUGH PESP



Projects link PESPs to research and value chain actors to help integrate and scale relevant climate-smart technologies

- **Dedicated partnerships with research are needed** to develop locally relevant climate-smart agronomic innovations.

- Partnerships with PESPs are key to facilitating the scaling :

- Strengthening production of adapted seeds, technologies and inputs by local groups and agripreneurs

*Training lead farmers on adapted seed production/sale in ESA;*

*Example: Bio-resource entrepreneur in India; C etc.*

- Embedding innovations and practices within value chain partnerships and standards

*Partnership with Mars on cocoa sustainable practices & ag-forestry*

- Developing dedicated "green financing" mechanisms to finance proven innovations.

*Partnership with Women dvpt fund and banks to co-finance adoption of climate smart package ;*

## Lesson 6 ICT



ICT improves the efficiency, inclusion and sustainability of PESP's last-mile delivery

- **Diverse ICT solutions help deliver better services by:**
  - (i) Improving monitoring, feedback and targeting
  - (ii) Bundling of services and linking demand and offer
  - (iii) Improving the quality of services (embedding climate advisory, tailored agronomic advisory, etc.)
  - (iv) Facilitating remuneration of PESPs.
- However, the **digital divide** is still acute & farmers still mostly learn through trusted peer learning
- Therefore, **ICT options should be embedded in pluralistic extension systems** and used to further empower last-mile extension workers to support fellow farmers.

## Lesson 6: ICT examples



ICT improves the efficiency, inclusion and sustainability of PESP's last-mile delivery

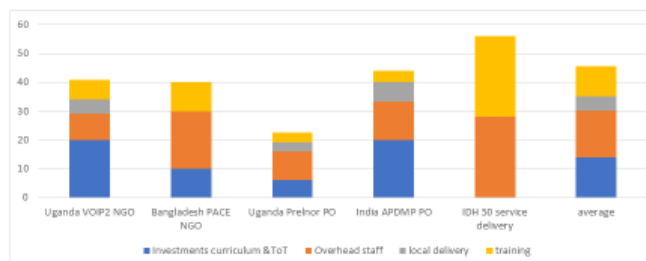
- *In Malawi, where mobile network penetration is still low,:*
  - *Rural resource centres equipped with ICT equipment and radios are reducing the digital divide, as farmers can access video advisory services*
  - *General advisory services from radio programmes.*
  - *SAPP developed a mobile application called DAESv1,*
  - *SAPP reports that 71 per cent of households (against a target of 50 per cent) reported an increase in production, and 57 per cent of beneficiaries were satisfied with extension services provided by the project.*
- *In Kenya, KCEP Regional Programme Coordination Unit (RPCU) formed WhatsApp group to bring together all public & private actors & farmers ;*
  - *Helped timely access to inputs and early planting by farmers despite covid.*
  - *In 2020, 68 per cent of farmers reported increased production due partly to improved coordination and timely implementation of farm activities.*

## Lesson 7: COST EFFICIENCY



Tracking extension costs and benefits helps increase cost-effectiveness

- Important to track extension costs, separating investment costs from operating costs, with different cost recovery.



Source: Project annual workplan, budgets and expenditures

To reduce costs, projects can:

- Balance operating & investment:** cheap use of last-mile extension workers vs investment and supervision costs required; *Uganda Prelnor CEW*
- Overhead costs : up to 50% costs & are mostly fixed=>** increase scope or scale of services / outreach; cost-share ; *India APDMP Producer organization*
- Improve outreach** through efficient cascading systems and dissemination modalities. *Bangladesh PACE*

## Lesson 7: COST EFFICIENCY



Tracking extension costs and benefits helps increase cost-effectiveness

- Higher costs are sometimes needed to ensure sustainable quality impacts, so costs should be reviewed against benefits and sustainability.
- *Ex. EKATA CARE Burundi realized that bringing gender-transformative approach was only 16 per cent more expensive (US\$303 per participant instead of US\$263 for a gender-neutral approach) but created twice the value of Gender Light and almost 8.5 times more than the control.*  
-> *EKATA GT approach had the highest return on investment, at 410 per cent,*

## Lesson 8: Sustainable revenue streams



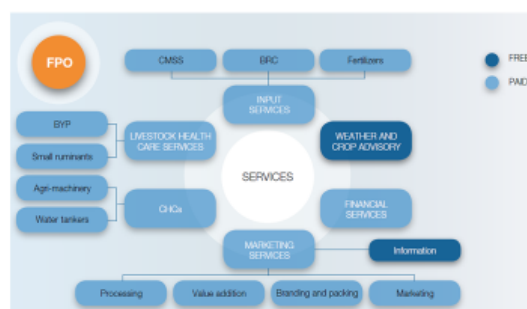
PESPs use a diversity of revenue streams for financial sustainability

- Most services need to be maintained beyond the project
- => Early **exit strategies and business plans for revenue streams**:
  - (i) non-monetary incentives;
  - (ii) membership fees;
  - (iii) fee-based services; and
  - (iv) transaction fees.

- => **Increasing revenues**:
  - Diversifying
  - Increase outreach

*Example APDMP India Farmer producer organization combining different services & revenue streams: 43% recover costs*

*CCMC: 50% < Bank interest*



## Lesson 9



PESPs mobilize co-financing to achieve inclusion and financial sustainability

- Achieving financial sustainability takes time and may not be achievable with only private financing.
- Extension services create value beyond revenue generated, and such benefits should be quantified.



IDH, 2020

- **Public investments are important** to increase financial viability
- Governments can also facilitate **partnerships and private co-financing**

*Sri Lanka, NADeP: 17 VC partnership with FO & Bank  
Beneficiary household investment cost (US\$1,500 on average) split between:  
(i) program matching grants (ii) incentivized credit as  
Part beneficiary contribution; (iii) private sector (agribusiness) with extension services*

*India APDMP: project initial support in equipment, investments, running costs;*



## Lesson 10: INSTITUTIONS



Long-term support and partnerships are required to deliver sustainable services to the last mile

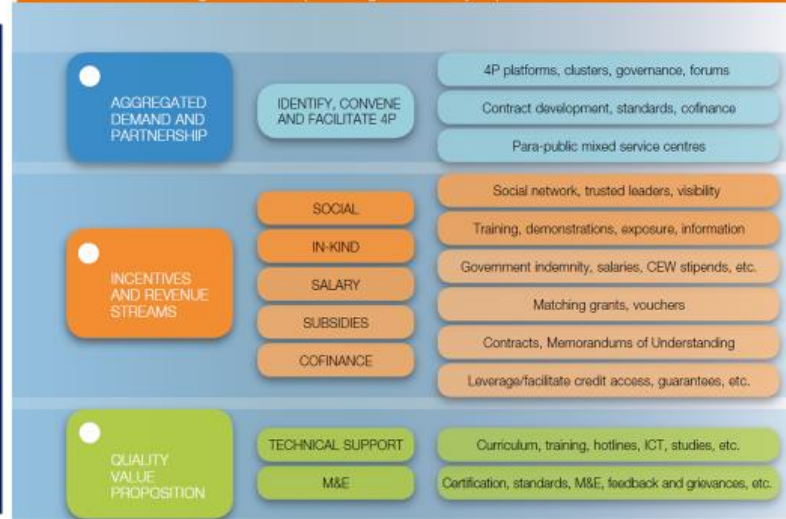
- Project Exit strategy often **relies on PO and last-mile service providers**
- But **sustainability takes time**, efforts needed on institutional framework:
  - (i) build on existing institutions;
  - (ii) develop exit strategies and business plans from the start; and
  - (iii) Track maturity progress (score card)  
*Sri Lanka SAP strategy for differentiated support to PO based on initial maturity score card;*
- Invest in **sustainable training material and curriculum**  
*Wocat-IFAD Cambodia: integrate SLM in extension curriculum*
- **Integrate last mile service providers:**
  - Public extension systems. *Malawi, SAPP: lead farmers integrated in extension,*
  - Federations, : *In Vietnam AMD, lead farmers integrated in PO network*
  - Networks *GFRAS & national platform*
- *The Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) developed extension guidelines and standards to measure PESP performance and code of conduct with registration and accreditation process;*

## Lesson 10



Government is key to providing an enabling environment through dedicated investments, coordination mechanisms and quality assurance.

**FIGURE 6** The role of government in promoting sustainability of pluralistic extension services



## Strategic Recommendations (appropriate to each stage)



### 10 lessons & good practices

- Quality selection
- bundling mechanisms
- Quality last mile system delivery & feedback
- Leverage ICT
- Economic business model for cost-revenues
- Quality institutional framework
- Enabling environment to convene, ensure quality and facilitate co-finance



### At the design stage

Mapping demand, existing PESP & capacity gaps  
Identification of bundling systems  
Exit strategy & business model in mind

### Implementation readiness

Identify mechanisms for capacity development  
Formalisation of partnerships

### At the Implementation Stage

Monitoring and Evaluation  
Exit/Sustainability Plan  
Strengthen Business Models  
Leveraging PPPs

Thank You!



[Link to the publication](#)



## Acknowledgements Collective work!

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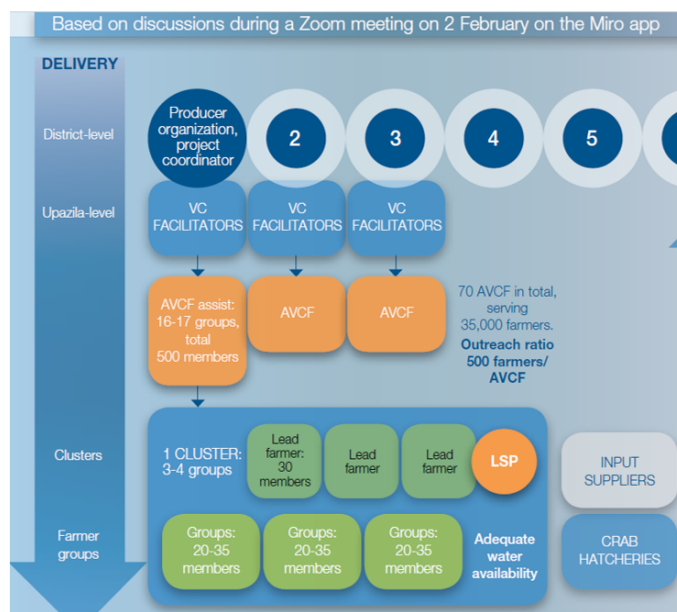
### ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES

& reference external publications & networks mentioned

- Malawi SAPP & lead farmer model
- India APDMP farmer organization model
- Bangladesh PACE micro-credit NGO & value chain cluster model
- Cambodia Aspire pluralistic extension system policy & investment tools
- IDH farm fit  
<https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/farmfit/>
- <https://www.g-fras.org/en/>
- <https://www.ifpri.org/publication/investing-farmers-agriculture-human-capital-investment-strategies>
- <https://www.aesanetwork.org/tag/agricultural-extension-in-south-asia-aesa/>  
[Link to the publication](#)

## Lesson 2 -3: Example: Bangladesh PACE

For quality and sustainable services:  
Need to **integrate such systems within extension service provision**  
Include **capacity development**



## Lesson 7 -8-9: ex.

APDMP example: optimizing costs and diversifying revenues;

Importance public investments

### COSTS

**Investments::** equipment training etc.

**Fixed Cost:** Rental office 2 office staff

**Operations:** Transport field staff; purchase costs

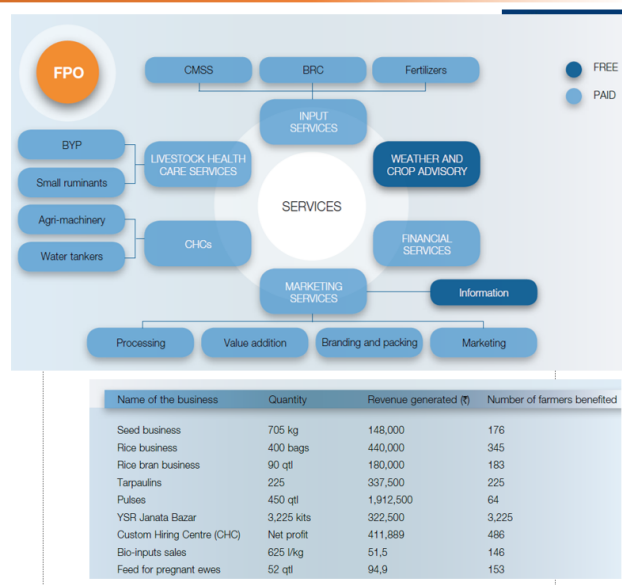
=> reduced staff / increase outreach

### REVENUE

**Project +benefit activities**

=> Need Financial capacities

Access credit CCMRC more stable



## Example for lesson 9 & 10: Cambodia Aspire



Example Cambodia Aspire: integrated government led approach & national policy engagement successes

- Strong policy component articulated to extension policy reform promoting pluralistic extension
- Performance based allocation of 5 public investment tools
  - Public system including FFS
  - CEW as last mile delivery and facilitators of F2F extension
  - Contracting NGO/ SP for specific demand
  - Incentives for PPP contracts
  - Support for cooperative to deliver services to their members
- Coordinating & institutions: Business cluster, cooperative, extension platform; ICT
- Emergence of strong role of local service providers + ICT
- + 30 to 500% productivity increase

## Presentation by Blessings Susuwele

### Acronyms

DAESS: Decentralized Agricultural Extension Service System

GAP: good agricultural practices

HH: household approach

IHF: integrated homestead farming

EPA: extension planning area

# LEAD FARMERS IN DECENTRALIZED, PLURALISTIC & DEMAND DRIVEN EXTENSION SERVICES

Lessons from Sustainable Agriculture Production Programme (SAPP)

Presented by  
BLESSINGS SUSUWELE  
Department of Agriculture Extension Services  
MALAWI



## Lead Farmer Approach in Malawi

- The LFA was formalized at the time the Ministry of Agric (MoA) embraced pluralistic, demand driven extension services.
- SAPP adopted the Lead Farmer Approach to support extension coverage in the six implementation districts
- The MoA through the Department of Agric Extension services has provided guidelines on how lead farmers should work in Malawi.
  - LF's jurisdiction is a village
  - Works as volunteers and cannot be recruited as a formal extension worker
  - The village/Community has an upper hand in the work of the LF
  - The LFA is guided by the Extension system of the country i.e LF works under the supervision of the frontline extension staff
- LF works through; Individual & farmer groups, DAESS, Lead farmer network, Action plans
- Currently working with 14,901 (7,896 males, 7,005 females and 3,261 youths)



Farmers appreciating one of the field days manned by a LF in Nkhotakota District on groundnut seed multiplication

## ENGAGEMENT AND WORK OF LEAD FARMERS

### Engagement with Lead framers under SAPP

- Lead farmer focuses on one enterprise (Land Resources, Crop Production, Livestock, Nutrition)
- No duplication of lead farmers in the same village
- LF are selected by the community though a participatory process
- Selected LF are those that can read and write
- LF with good personal attributes are selected; Hard working, honest, tolerant, development conscious, cooperative, sacrifice for others, early adopter, approachable

### How LF complements government

- The LF promote GAPs based on their areas of specialty in areas where the extension workers are stretched with work
- The LF helps in data collection, mobilization of communities in undertaking agriculture based development work
- Under SAPP, Lead Farmers perform the following under guidance from the extension worker:
  - Mounting and management of demonstrations for both crops and livestock
  - Organizing field days
  - Implementing Farmer Field Schools
  - Small-stock housing and management
  - Food and Nutrition through IHF
- Gender mainstreaming through HHA.

## Sustaining the LFA beyond SAPP

- Training of the Lead farmers in various technologies including facilitation and communication skills
- Involvement of local and community leaders in the selection and supporting of lead farmer has helped their institutionalization into village development structures and processes at village and area levels
- The lead farmer network where they regularly meet to discuss agriculture development issues at EPA level has enhanced their recognition by several stakeholders as important stakeholders in development work
- The project has motivated them through considering them for tours, training, demonstration materials, literature and recognition through certificates which reinforce their interest in the work
- Development structures and NGOs have been sensitized on the approach hence will continue to use and support them beyond SAPP

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