



THE UGANDA FORUM FOR AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES (UFAAS)

UFAAS CASE STUDY # 2: UFAAS' SUPPORT TO AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN UGANDA: A CASE OF THE GAYAZA SCHOOL AGRICULTURE INNOVATION PLATFORM (G-SAIP)



Introduction

Different organizations and institutions in Uganda integrate and use various approaches to disseminate agricultural information to farmers. The appropriateness of these approaches is relative to the different social, economic, political and environmental set-up of the communities where the farmers live. It also depends on the implementing institution and composition of the players and the ultimate goal for implementing such an approach.

Under the AFAAS-IFAD grant, the Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) was involved in a process of stock taking innovative agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS) approaches and tools, as well as adaptation of a few approaches selected by the AEAS stakeholders. The process in particular involved: an inventory, assessing (including designing of the assessment tool), documentation and dissemination and selecting a few workable and unique for further promotion and scaling up through proposal development and marketing to potential donors.

The Gayaza School Agricultural Innovation Platform (G-SAIP)

The Gayaza High School (GHS) entrepreneurial model (initiated by the deputy Head and a Mathematics Teacher (Mr. Ronald Ddungu), is one of those approaches that came out as a unique one that could be adopted to agricultural extension. This model fosters a

culture of entrepreneurial mind-set among the secondary school youths and agriculture is core to it. On July 14, 2015, GHS and UFAAS signed an agreement to re-design and improve on the existing model into an effective and efficient AEAS approach, using the lessons already learnt. The re-design resulted in the Gayaza School Agricultural Innovation Platform (G-SAIP).

A G-SAIP is an arrangement where: students are imparted with basic practical agricultural skills; interact with other identified relevant actors; and passionately share their experiences with the communities around the school and beyond in their respective home areas. These skills are also integrated into other subjects (including sciences, mathematics, ICT and humanities) in a practical way, to enhance problem-based learning. As the students participate, their personal attributes and social skills (like communication, problem solving, interpersonal relation, mobilization, report making) are also enhanced. This platform culminates into a market place, where different actors along the implemented value chains participate and benefit in various ways. It is aimed at helping these youths, from an early stage appreciate agriculture as a valuable sector at both micro and macro levels. The students that participate on this platform are future leaders, who can advocate for the sector and also be better practitioners.

The G-SAIP idea begins with a school that has agriculture as a taught subject and/or an extra-curricular activity. Within or around this school a champion emerges, the administration understands the concept and buys-in, its readiness is assessed basing on the requirements, the agricultural environment scanned and resources identified. After inception the adopting school embarks on: formation of the school farmers club (with teachers and students); stakeholders' identification and engagement by the farmers club, supported by the school; teaching and skilling of the members; community Outreach commences and a market place is established. In the whole arrangement the agricultural club (students and teachers) take a centre stage and are the drivers of the whole process.

Highlights of the G-SAIP Testing

After the re-designing of the G-SAIP 2015, the model was tested through the process and the following are some of the remarkable achievements:

Participation of the girls: With a team of 10 teachers, 708 girls (260 from S1, 210-3, 125-S5 and 113-S6) were imparted with agricultural skills which they practiced during the setting up and management of demonstrations for vegetables, management of the bananas and silage making. 45 Teachers were introduced to tangible agriculture and set up their own demonstration gardens. About 100 of these were able to participate in the community outreach programme where visited 20 farmers and Sittankya Primary School (11km away), with 210 pupils, to share and train the pupils on what they learnt at school. The school an Agri-Tourism/awareness day where the girls showed them what they are doing to over 200 parents, who attended the function. After this, 5 parents were interested in supporting their girls reach out to the communities at home with what they learnt. 4 parents volunteered and supported their girls to demonstrate what they had learnt with the communities



A senior one girl being instructed on tomato growing



The girls sharing their skills with the pupils at a primary school within the community

back at home during the holidays. All throughout this processes, the girls were supported by 10 teachers who are members of the Agriculture Club.

Development of the appropriate communication and training materials: The teachers Agriculture and related subjects participated in the process of developing various materials intended for dissemination of the innovation and also for field use by the girls. The materials were the generic brochure and poster for showcasing the model and 2 sample enterprise guides (Vegetable and Piggery) for testing in the field by the girls.

Scaling-out the approach to other schools: GHS hosted the 2nd Agricultural School Camp for 2015 that brought together teachers and selected students from 30 schools to share and learn about agriculture. FAO, NAGRIC, CABI and Pepsi Cola were among the sponsors of this event. During this event, the G-SAIP was presented to all participants who included students, teachers, development partners and other stakeholders. After the camp, a special workshop was conducted for 42 interested teachers from 17 schools, where the model was further discussed and the participants' inputs and recommendations were gathered, possible enterprises and supporting skills were proposed and they agreed that there was need to sensitize their Head Teacher about the programme.

Showcasing the Model in various fora: The G-SAIP was successfully showcased at the continental AFAAS Extension Week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Two members who represented GHS were: Ms. Wanyana Rose (one of the teachers of Agriculture and Head of department, part of the team working on the project); and Miss Regius Tumusiime (a Senior 5 student by that time and head of the Agriculture Club). Regius gave a moving presentation of the G-SAIP and also gave her personal experience of the same model at the conference that was attended by over 330 delegates from all over the world and representing all sectors of agriculture. GHS has also continued to showcase its model whenever

Due to the above and more activities tested, a number of stakeholders and development partners are taking keen interest in this youth model, giving hope to its strengthening and scaling up