Title: The role of extension in strengthening the associativity to export high quality products within Guyana: CAEPNet’s role in enhancing Guyana’s competitiveness and reducing CARICOM’s food import bill

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Presentation Outline

• Introduction
• Background
• CAEPNet’s Role
• Results and Discussions
• Conclusion and Recommendations
Background

• In the context of meeting the holistic needs of increasing agricultural production in a sustainable manner, agricultural extension has a crucial role to play.

• Reforms in the system envisage an extension service more broad-based and holistic in content and scope, thus beyond agricultural technology transfer.

• Its normal task of transferring and disseminating appropriate technologies and agronomic practices would not be sufficient.
Background

• Extension agencies, services providers and workers will need to exercise a more proactive and participatory role, serve as knowledge/information agents, initiating and facilitating mutually meaningful and equitable knowledge based transactions among agricultural researchers, trainers and primary producers.

• All this needs to be done in an effective and cost efficient manner and thus the need for a more organized agricultural extension services.
**Background**

- **Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services impacts (GFRAS)** is about enhancing the performance of advisory services so that they can better serve farm families and rural producers, thus contributing to improved livelihoods in rural areas and the sustainable reduction of hunger and poverty.

- Rural advisory services help to empower farmers and better integrate them in systems of agricultural innovation.

- The GFRAS structure reaches smallholder farmers via the regional rural advisory services networks, which are made up of national-level platforms.

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Background

• Abbreviations: African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS); Agricultural Extension in South Asia (AESA); Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (APIRAS); Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN); Caribbean Agricultural Extension Providers Network (CAEPNet); Central Asia and the Caucasus Forum for Rural Advisory Services (CAC-FRAS); European Forum for Farm and Rural Advisory Services (EUFRAS); Mekong Extension Learning Alliance (MELA); Middle East and North Africa Network (MENA); Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (PIRAS); Red Latinoamericana de Servicios de Extensión Rural/Latin American Network on Rural Extension Services (RELASER); Réseau des services de conseil agricole et rural d’Afrique de l’Ouest et du Centre/West and Central Africa Network of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (RESCAR-AOC); Southern Africa Regional Forum on Agricultural Advisory Services (SARFAAS); United States National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
Background

• The national platforms include actors from all sectors working in rural advisory services, and work directly with smallholders.

• National platforms help prioritise national-level issues and formulate demands to be taken to the regional and global levels.

• Work through these levels is guided by a steering committee, which delegates operational functions to a secretariat.

• Thematic working groups, which cut across the regions, also contribute to GFRAS’ work to reach smallholders.
Background

• Initial meeting – Trinidad and Tobago Feb 28- March 1, 2013
• Officially launched at Caribbean Week of Agriculture 2013 in Guyana
CAEPNet

• Registered non-profit in Trinidad and Tobago 2017
• Membership open to all Caribbean countries
• Current participating members - Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada Guyana, Saint Lucia, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Guadeloupe, Anguilla, and extensionists with Caribbean heritage based in US
• Supported by GFRAS and FFA at the UWI, St. Augustine Campus
• Secretariat based at UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad
CAEPNet

• **Vision:** Extension rural advisory services (RAS) effectively contributing to sustainable agricultural and rural development in the Caribbean through vibrant innovation systems.

• **Mission:** Facilitation of knowledge sharing and capacity building of agriculture and RAS providers, fostering an enabling policy and investment environment, in order to contribute to sustainable rural development in the Caribbean.
CAEPNet

Facilitation and enhancement of effective and continuous knowledge and information sharing

• Share extension and rural advisory service experiences through all available, practical and sustainable networking mechanisms.

• Supplement knowledge gaps on strategic areas of rural advisory service provision.
CAEPNet

Professionalization of rural advisory services

• Motivate individual extension and rural service providers to aspire to and practice the core values of the Network at all times.

• Facilitate pluralistic extension and advisory services as vital components of any national and rural and agricultural development system and strategy.

• Identify, synthesize and share rural advisory resources.
CAEPNet

Advocacy and support for an enabling policy environment and appropriate investment in rural advisory services

• Advocate for a functional, innovative, and demand-led extension or rural advisory systems.

• Advocate for the use of extension and rural advisory services and systems through strategic partnerships with policy makers, programme implementers and rural and agricultural service providers.

• Respond to demands for requests for support in revitalizing national extension and rural advisory services.
CAEPNet

• Annual face-to-face meetings (In association with)
• Regular Web Based Meetins and Interaction
• Representation at GFRAS meetings
• Website / Social Media
• Establish country forums in Greenada, Guyana, and Jamaica
• Recognition of Regional Extension Officer of Excellence
  Professional development for extension officers
• Extension research and Webinars

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CAEPNet’s Role in Reducing Food Import Bill

• Foster the development of a new and expanded policy agenda for agricultural extension and communication for rural development focusing national attention on food security and income generation of the rural poor.
  • Assist in the Formulation of National Policies for member states
  • Establish Alliances with all Sectors
  • Review Decentralization Options.
  • Enable a Private Sector of Competitive Extension Providers

• Public Financing is Critical at the Beginning.
  • Competitive and contractual mechanisms are two useful approaches to allocating public funds for agricultural extension.
  • Community-driven development funds offer an opportunity for funding extension for agricultural as well as related activities aimed at rural development
CAEPNet’s Role in Reducing Food Import Bill

• Assisting in building a platform to promote dialogue and cooperation among relevant institutions and programmes in all sectors with the aim of developing an extension and information services network for food security and income generation.
  • Organize a Platform for Collaboration
  • Organize a national conference and local workshops involving relevant public sector agencies, NGOs, producer organizations, private sector representatives and commodity groups, as well as donors,
  • Adopt a Nationwide Strategy.
  • Formulate a Communication Strategy
  • Promote Demand-Driven Agricultural Extension.
CAEPNet’s Role in Reducing Food Import Bill

• Assist in activation of institutional change within the public sector, aimed at supporting and promoting the new and expanded policy on extension and food security and the determinations instituted by the nationwide platform.

  • Maintain Ongoing Collaboration with All Agencies and Organizations.
  • Develop Leaders
  • Create agricultural development teams to respond to community-expressed needs.
  • Promote capacity building of all advice providers and users.
  • Establish and Maintain Links between Policy Makers, Support Services, Small Farmers and Markets.

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Conclusions

• Rural development is a complex task. Various pathways out of poverty are possible with comprehensive policy and strategy for promoting rural development.

• Greater use of communication for rural development is a key to provide assistance to rural populations.

• Communication for rural development is often ignored despite its potential for serving both those in rural areas who work the land as well as those who do not.

• There is a great need democratization of the rural sector. Fortunately the importance of stakeholder participation and demand-driven community development projects is finally being recognized and acted upon, as is the potential of rural youth and rural women. In many cases, women do as much if not more agricultural and other work than men, and youth are the generation of the future.
Conclusions

• A new policy vision, backed by institutional reforms and concerted action.

• That governments move to establish multisectoral networks of agricultural extension/communication services, working with public agencies, private extension providers, and third-sector organizations to combat food insecurity.

• Adjust and move forward in a highly competitive, market-oriented environment.