Volume I

The NAADS Communication and Information Strategy

Also refer to:
Volume II: Work Plan (2003-2004)



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April 2003

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Information System
AMIS	Agricultural Market Information System
ARDC	Agricultural Research and Development Centre
AMIS	Agricultural Market Information System
AV	Audio-visual
CDRN	Community Development Resource Network (NGO)
CBS	Commercial radio station, Kampala
CEEWA	Council for Economic Empowerment for Women (NGO)
CIS	Communication and Information Strategy
COARD	Client Oriented Agricultural Research and Dissemination (NARO/DFID Project)
DATICS	District Agricultural Training and Information Centres
ERT	Energy for Rural Transformation, World Bank project for rural electrification
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IICD	International Institute of Communication for Development, (the Hague)
KKCR	Kibaale Kagadi Community Radio
LGDP	Local Government Development Plan
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MIS	Management Information System
MOLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTN	Mobile Telephone Networks Uganda Ltd.
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Service
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organization
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NIDA	Nkoola Institutional Development Associates Ltd.
PAF	Poverty Action Plan
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PMA	Plan for Modernization of Agriculture
POP	Point of Presence (local dial-up access to email and Internet)
RCFD	Rural Communication Development Fund of the UCC
SODIFA	Soroti District Farmers Association
SP	Service Provider
TD	NAADS Technology Development Funds
TDS	NAADS Technology Development Sites
TEDDO	Church of Uganda, Teso Dioceses Planning and Development Office
UCA	Uganda Co-operative Alliance Ltd.
UCC	Uganda Communications Commission
UHP	Uganda Homepages Inc.
UNFFE	Uganda National Farmers Federation
UNNF	Uganda National NGO Forum
UOSPA	Uganda Oilseeds Producers and Processors Association
UTL	Uganda Telecommunications Ltd.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the support and keen interest offered by the NAADS Secretariat. In particular Dr. Silim Nahdy, Dr.Joseph Oryokot and Dr. Francis Byekwaso were open to suggestions and challenges that I have raised. Dr. David Kazungu, Chairman of the NAADS Board, was receptive and most supportive of the efforts taken during the missions.

I am particularly thankful for the help provided by the staff and consultants of the Information and Communication Unit: Ms. Alyce Nakagwa, Mr. Remigio Achia, Mr. Alexis Turrall (who also helped with editing work) and Ms. Hadijah Nakakande who contributed actively to the work, especially the preparation and implementation of interviews and field activities and looked after all logistical details. I am thankful for Dr. Christine Okali's contribution on gender and communication.

I am also very thankful for support and interest provided by Charles Aben, NAADS District Coordinator in Soroti, Dr. Godfrey Suubi, NAADS District Coordinator in Kibaale, and Dr. Edward Berinda, NAADS District Coordinator in Mbarara. I also wish to thank Stephen for this commendable driving skills and thoughtful support to our fieldwork.

Thanks also go to all the partners who contributed ideas and their time during interviews, a complete list of the people and organizations met appears in Annex 2.

How to read this report

The first section of this report summarizes the major points raised in the Inception Report. The purpose of the Inception Report (presented to NAADS on March 18th, 2003) was to acknowledge the major challenges facing NAADS and how a Communication and Information Strategy can respond to them[1].

The second section describes the pillars of the NAADS Communication and Information Strategy. Emphasis is made on how NAADS can learn its way into the strategy, the importance of phases, sequencing, and readiness and the recommendation that the districts become the main drivers of the communication and information activities.

Section 3 emphasizes the importance of bringing the demand and supply side of agricultural information together. This section complements the training pillar by emphasizing the need to bring multiple stakeholders together to explore how to access and translate agricultural information. A major challenge that the agricultural knowledge and information system (AKIS) faces is how to bring together those who seek information to respond to farmers demands, together with those who design and provide agricultural information in order for them to work out the real opportunities, address transaction costs, and negotiate agreements to overcome barriers.

Section 4 emphasizes the need for NAADS to develop an internal Communication and Information Policy arising out of this mission and allocate its own resources for the implementation of the activities. There is no question in the consultant's mind that this decision alone is the most important next step following the formulation of this Strategy.

Section 5 further details the need for a team to come together within the Secretariat to coordinate and steer the Communication and Information Strategy. The section emphasizes the importance of a learning approach to ensure the Strategy evolves and adapts as opportunities arise, especially in coordination with other projects with compatible purposes (see Annex 8). This section begins to outline how the Communication and Information activities may overlap with Monitoring and Evaluation ones. It includes a management tool for internal accountability and responsibility charting that will help streamline internal information management functions within the Secretariat.

This Report is complemented by Volume II: the NAADS Communication and Information Work Plan.

[1] Annex 1 includes a table that clarifies how the Terms of Reference for the mission were interpreted.

Executive Summary

This Communication and Information Strategy (CIS) is firmly based on the NAADS mission statement: Increased farmer access to information, knowledge and technology through effective, efficient, sustainable and decentralised extension with increasing private sector involvement in line with government policy. The NAADS programme calls for fundamental changes in farmers' and service providers' attitudes, behaviour, skills, and for new relationships among many stakeholder in the Ugandan agricultural knowledge and information system. These very ambitious goals cannot be met without a strategic and innovative use of communication methods and media.

This Report proposes a strategy based on six pillars: 1. making NAADS known and relevant increasingly through the use of stories showing real life experiences, and with a strategic targeting of audiences and messages; 2. having an active listening function through radio and phones to ensure that stakeholders have the opportunity to ask questions, understand procedures, and take ownership over the programme; 3. ensuring NAADS has points of presence and champions at the sub-county, parish and village level, where farmers, especially women and youth can learn about the programme and find meaningful opportunities to work with it; 4. training service providers and farmer organizations in how to access agricultural information and how to translate it into formats and media that can be used for training and learning with farmers; 5. integrating the Agricultural Market Information System as part of this strategy with emphasis on targeting of information to specific audiences; and 6. incorporating the strategy into the internal NAADS information management and learning efforts.

This strategy is presented as a roadmap for the next 5-7 years, not as a finished product. It is expected that NAADS will benefit from learning and exploiting communication through piloting activities and improving on the basis of its own capacity to deliver them. The report emphasizes the importance of phasing in communication activities to reflect the degree of 'readiness' in each context. The District is seen as the key driver for the process over the next few years, as it is at that level that programme rollout is currently coordinated. This is an acknowledgement that NAADS is part of a broader policy system and is compliant with the Local Government Development Plan (LGDP).

A major challenge that NAADS and other agencies in the agricultural sector continue to face is how to make research relevant to farmers. This report recommends that key stakeholders from the demand side (through NAADS) and supply side of agricultural information (NARO/NARS) work together to identify how to make the system more relevant and effective. One side will not be able to predict content, format and distribution of materials without the other; there is scope -and there *are* interested project partners- to build on experience with multiple stakeholder workshops and create Ugandan agricultural information systems that respond to farmers' needs. Attention is made to maintaining the gender dimension present in all communication activities.

Aside from the methodological suggestions, this report emphasizes the importance of NAADS developing its own Communication and Information Policy, with particular attention to the use of internal resources to conform a team of Communication and Information professionals with the resources to respond to the needs of the programme. NAADS is a 25-year programme with a budget of over US$100M for the first seven years; experience to date with investment programmes of this magnitude shows that Communication and Information budgets should reach 1.5% of the global investment if the programme is to have success. This report sets the foundation for this investment and puts a heavy onus on NAADS to internalize the discipline of Communication for Development as central to its mandate.

1. Introduction

Background on NAADS

As it was confirmed during the First Annual GOU-Donors Review Meeting (May 2002), NAADS is guided by a vision, mission and strategy agreed on by its stakeholders. The Communication and Information Strategy will build on this foundation.

The Vision:

> *A decentralised, farmer-owned and private sector service extension system contributing to the realisation of the agricultural sector objectives*.

The mission:

> *Increased farmer access to information, knowledge and technology through effective, efficient, sustainable and decentralised extension with increasing private sector involvement in line with government policy*.

The principles[2] that underpin its operations are:

1. empowering the farmers in agricultural advisory processes and building their demand for both research and agricultural advisory services
2. targeting agricultural services to the poor farmers who constitute the majority
3. mainstreaming gender issues
4. deepening decentralization to bring the control of research and advisory services nearer to the farmers
5. commercialization – including intensification of productivity, specialization and profitability
6. participatory processes in planning, contracting, monitoring and evaluation
7. managing natural resource productivity
8. increasing institutional efficiency through contracting out services, and better linkages between research, advisors and farmers
9. harmonization of donor supported projects with PMA principles

The strategic changes through which NAADS expects to achieve its aims are:

- shift from public to private delivery of advisory services in the first 5-year phase
- empower subsistence farmers to access private extension services, technologies and market information
- develop private sector capacity and professional capability to supply agricultural services
- to promote market orientated farming (farming as a business)
- create options for financing and delivery of appropriate advisory and technical services for different farmer types
- to stimulate private sector funding for agricultural advisory services.

[2] The inclusion of a 10th principle related to HIV/AIDS in under discussion.

The NAADS Institutional Framework

Institutionally, NAADS is grounded on farmer groups at sub-county level. The groups are integrated, through representation, at farmers' fora with a hierarchy that has its base in the parish and ascends through the sub-county, district and ultimately the national level. The fora approve the plans and service contracts. The use of NAADS resources complies with the Local Government regulations.

NAADS Governance and Management

Governance at national level is by a Board that has majority membership from farmers' fora. The Board – through its Secretariat – is responsible for setting and guiding programme policy, strategy and operations. It is established under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries – which has overall national responsibility for the programme – but is also overseen by the steering committee of the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA). The Local Governments are responsible for support, supervision and assuring implementation at their levels; and the Ministry of Local Government (MOLG) ensures that the NAADS complies with the Local Governments Act as well as with other local government development and capacity building initiatives. Primary responsibility for the NAADS at the grassroots level is vested within the farmer groups and farmers' fora.

The NAADS programme is implemented through five components:

1. Providing advisory and information services to farmers
2. Promoting technology development and linkage with market
3. Ensuring quality of services – regulation and technical auditing of service providers
4. Promoting private sector institutional development
5. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

The Information and Communication component falls under the first component: Technical Services which also includes agricultural advisory services and social services.

Dimensions of a Communication and Information Strategy

Background

Communication for Development underlies the design of the strategy

The design of the NAADS Communication and Information Strategy is based on the applied field of "Communication for Development", which is defined as:

> *Communication for development is the use of communication processes, techniques and media to help people towards a full awareness of their situation and their options for change, to resolve conflicts, to work towards consensus, to help people plan actions for change and sustainable development, to help people acquire the knowledge and skills they need to improve their condition and that of society, and to improve the effectiveness of institutions.*[3]

Communication is broader than information dissemination

In other words, the NAADS Information and Communication Strategy is broader and more significant than the conventional dissemination of information, which is an important component task. Communication for Development covers a broader role:

> *To discuss with, inform and motivate the people and create an environment in which target social systems can feel the need for, and demonstrate their commitment to, development activities and thus raise the level of their participation in development projects.*[4]

Communication functions

A Communication and Information strategy includes several complementary communication functions. The main communication functions are summarized below[5], along with examples of possible stakeholders that would initiate each action and some broad indicators of success:

---

[3] Fraser, C. and Restrepo-Estrada, S. 1998. Communicating for development: Human change for survival. London: I.B. Taurus. (p. 63)

[4] Moemeka, A.A. 2000. Development communication in action: Building understanding and creating participation. Lanham, New York and Oxford: University Press of America. (p. 13)

[5] The first three functions are borrowed from: Röling, N.G. 1994. Communication support for sustainable natural resource management. IDS Bulletin (Special Issue "Knowledge is power? The use and abuse of information in development" 25 (2): 125-133

- ✓ ***Policy communication: Managing the external environment***
  Purposes: *Making policies, programmes, and the evolving procedures known*
  Initiated by: *NAADS Secretariat*
  Success is evident when: *Stakeholders demonstrate awareness by applying procedures or suggesting modifications to them*

- ✓ ***Educational communication: Making things known, sharing knowledge***
  Purposes: *Making technical know-how accessible to increase knowledge about the production, transformation, organization and marketing dimensions of agriculture; including price information. Worldwide there is a trend towards a closer engagement by farmers in the technology development and adaptation process in contrast with the conventional role of passive receiver of extension messages.*
  Initiated by: *Service providers and farmers (with training on accessing content and transforming it)*
  Success is evident when: *Service providers able to seek and find information sources and repackage materials for farmer learning. Farmers adopt practices or reject them knowledgeably; farmers utilize communication methods and media to enhance farmer-to-farmer linkages*

- ✓ ***Social or facilitative communication: Platforms for participation and debate***
  Purposes: *Providing platforms for stakeholders to exchange perspectives, explore new ideas and programmes, appreciate differences of opinions, negotiate common goals, develop partnerships, propose changes to programmes and become confident participants able to articulate needs and opinions*[6]
  Initiated by: *Farmer fora, district authorities, service providers, and local groups/organizations*
  Success is evident when: *Stakeholders participate, become empowered, take action, and take ownership over the programme*

- ✓ ***Time sensitive communication***
  Purposes: Keeping in touch with family, prices and weather[7]
  Initiated by: *Anybody, especially those with access to a public pay phone or cellular phone;*
  Success is evident when: *The private sector expands infrastructure to respond to growing rural demand; rural projects and the private sector finds ways to provide agricultural, health and educational content that is time-sensitive in a cost-effective manner*

- ✓ ***Communication for learning***[8]
  Purposes: Listening actively; inviting feedback for course correction
  Initiated by: *NAADS Secretariat; NAADS District staff*
  Success is evident when: The organization adjusts procedures on the basis of field experiences and keeps stakeholders informed about the changes and process for future evolution

[6] The NAADS Master document (2000) makes reference to learning platforms (p. 13). The learning workshops developed with the International Support Group are an example of such a platform. Another example is described in: Fernández, M. & Lusembo, P. 2002. Farmers leading change: A learning approach to involving smallholders in the revitalization of their production systems. NARO.

[7] The business case for many telecentres and for all private telephone operators is based on the willingness to pay by all people for phone calls and services. It is the demand for phone services that drives the expansion of rural and remote telecommunications infrastructure.

Design Principles

Recent efforts by FAO/DFID (2001) to integrate Communication and Information dimensions into the context of the sustainable livelihoods framework suggest that:

> Communication and information are critical components of the livelihoods framework, essential for linking and informing decision-making processes at every level: 1) to facilitate the acquisition and exchange of information by the poor necessary for developing livelihood strategies; 2) to improve communication within and between the institutions responsible for making decisions that affect livelihood options; and 3) to empower poor communities to participate in the decision-making processes. [9]

The following is an integration of principles proposed by FAO/DFID and by IDRC[10]. They will be applied to the design of the NAADS Information and Communication Strategy:

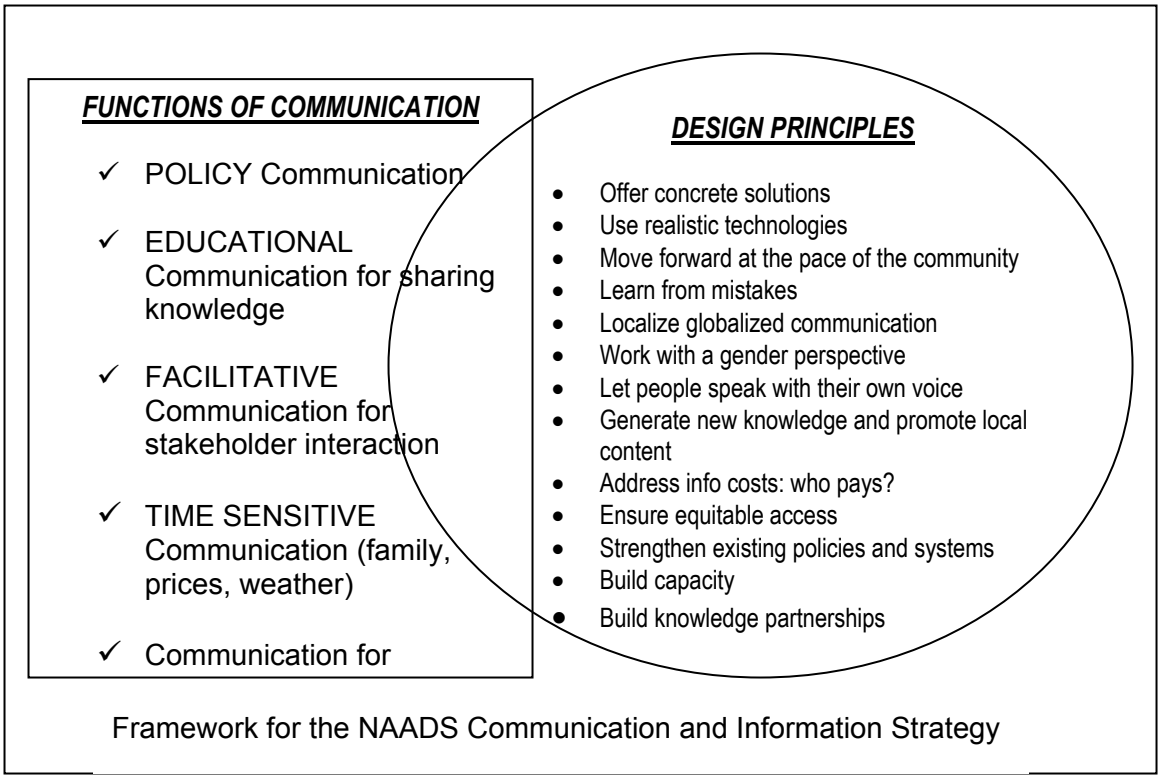
- Offer concrete solutions and use realistic technologies
- Move forward at the pace of the community
- Learn from mistakes
- Localize globalised communication
- Work with a gender perspective
- Let people speak with their own voice
- Generate new knowledge and promote local content
- Address info costs: who pays?
- Ensure equitable access
- Strengthen existing policies and systems
- Build capacity
- Build knowledge partnerships

The Functions and the Principles are the two building blocks of the Framework. They are assembled from experience and have a sound theoretical foundation.

These principles will shape the Communication strategy and should serve as an ongoing list to "audit" the activities proposed in the strategy and/or new opportunities that arise.

[9] http://www.fao.org/waicent/portal/outreach/livelihoods/model-en.html

[10] Gómez, R. and Casadiego, B. 2002. Letter to Aunt Ofelia: Seven proposals for human development using new information and communications technologies. IDRC/PAN Américas, Raíces Mágicas and ITDG: Ottawa. www.idrc.ca



Framework for the NAADS Communication and Information Strategy

Audience analysis

Methodology

Audience analysis included semi-structured interviews with Kampala and Entebbe stakeholders: government ministries and NGOs. We also met with media and telecommunications organizations (Annex 2 includes details). The organizations met were but a sample of a comprehensive stakeholder list prepared by Remigio Achia in preparation for the mission.

The mission traveled to Soroti, Kibaale and Mbarara districts to meet with NAADS stakeholders, especially at the district and sub-county levels. The objectives of the fieldwork were:

- To identify key stakeholders, linkages, and champions on which to build communication activities;
- To identify and build on the communication and information activities already initiated at the district and sub-county levels;
- To build capacity among the NAADS Information and Communication team;
- To test a field methodology for future replication;
- To expose the NAADS District Coordinators to communication planning.

The field methodology was limited to identifying the preferred communication channels by farmer organizations and farmer fora using linkage maps. Audience segmentation was limited to farmer groups, farmer fora at the sub-county level, and to gender differences, and did not include wealth ranking (Annex 4 includes a the field protocol). The number of district level stakeholder contacted was very limited, which meant that in

some districts the analysis is partial; this is especially true for Soroti where more comprehensive research has taken place.

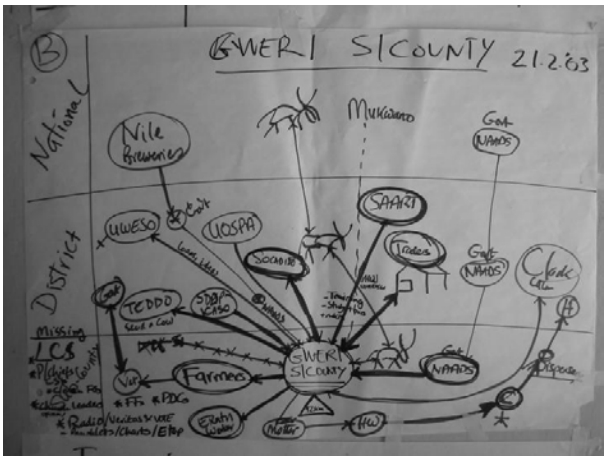
The methodology did not include an agricultural information need assessment for two reasons: there is a significant amount data already available in recent research reports (see Annex 3); and the NAADS Guidelines (for participatory planning to select enterprises for profitable agricultural production) already follow a procedure to determine the enterprises that it NAADS focus on[11].

Lessons from the field

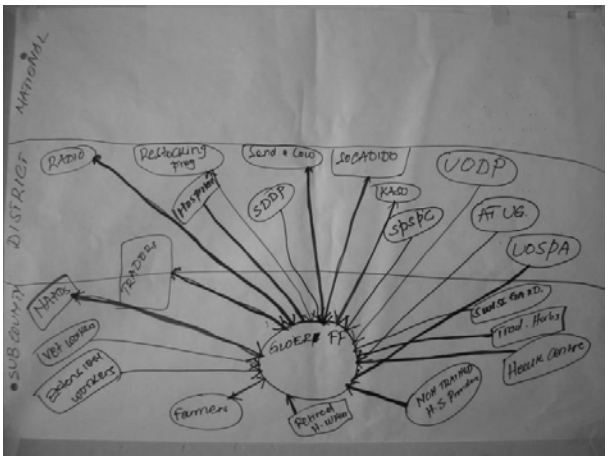
1. The NAADS message is not simple. There is evidence from all levels that NAADS needs to become better known. Each target audience needs specific messages to appreciate how NAADS may become relevant to them. Special attention is needed on stories with examples about how NAADS evolves, how it addresses the different challenges, and how it learns from them.

2. Build on existing communication activities. There are communication activities already happening at the district and sub-county level that NAADS should build on. Local FM stations already do radio phone-ins and competitions; some organizations already produce media for local use (newsletters sold at parish level) and use group communication methods (farmer listening groups using cassette tapes). NAADS can find ways to enhance those activities with attention not to compete with them or undermine their sustainability.

3. Women and men have different preferences for communication channels, and these preferences vary across districts and sub-counties. However some common patterns do exist. Men emphasize national actors and linkages whereas women tend not to. Women have more trusted contacts within the parish and sub-county level, they tend to put less emphasis on the formal / official channels less relative to men, and they favour educational radio programmes in the evening after their chores are done. This has financial implications as some of the radio FM stations charge a premium price for broadcasting during evening prime time slots.



Men's linkages, Gweri, Soroti.



Women's linkages, Gweri, Soroti.

[11] The extent to which these enterprise selection is gender sensitive requires attention; as was reported in the IFAD 2002 study "Gender and Poverty Targeting in Market Linkage Operations".

4. In two cases we observed a contrast in terms of the number and types of communication channels that are accessed by farmer fora at the sub-county level versus farmer groups at the parish level. NAADS needs to be aware of these situations as decisions by a farmer forum on activities to continue or discontinue may not always respond to the real needs of the farmer groups. For example, in one case the farmer forum had decided to discontinue sensitization activities as they were perceived as costly, yet the sub-county stakeholder felt there was still a need to continue them.

5. It so happened that the 2003 NAADS calendar included many photos from Soroti. Not surprisingly, we witnessed an enormous interest in the NAADS calendars especially when people at the sub-county level found photos of themselves, their friends and their farms included. This evidence suggests that more emphasis needs to be place on producing NAADS printed materials locally, for instance local content may outweigh some loss in quality of the paper in that people expect to see familiar farming systems and faces.

6. The methodology used during the district visits to do a rapid audience analysis allowed the NAADS District Coordinators to get a taste of the basic steps in communication planning. NAADS need to find ways to engage the other district coordinators in the same learning process by engaging them in similar field exercises.

7. The media preferences emphasize radio and other farmers as major communication channels, followed by brochures and newspapers which have limited use where illiteracy rates are high, but remain relevant.

2. The Strategy: a framework for learning

A learning approach to communication

Communication and Information strategies can be proposed to organizations as a turnkey package with pre-determined products and deliverables, or they can be presented as a framework to build on with short-term work plans and long-term visions. In recognition of the emphasis within NAADS to a learning approach, and for practical implementation reasons, the consultant recommends the second approach. This report therefore lays out a framework for NAADS to "learn its way" into the Communication and Information Strategy[12].

[12] This approach is described in the management literature as the *interactive* approach to intervention. See: Hecksher, C.; Maccoby, M.; Ramírez, R. and Tixier, P-E. 2003. *Agents of change: Crossing the post-industrial divide.* Oxford University Press.



Communication functions and strategic pillars

The table below outlines four Communication Functions and six Strategic Pillars as the basic structure for the NAADS Communication and Information Strategy. The XXXXX symbols match the functions that are developed by each of the pillars. There are cases where some pillars address other minor parts of the communication functions, and these can be added later with fewer X symbols.

STRATEGIC PILLARS: **COMMUNICATION FUNCTIONS** ⇩	**Pillar 1:** strategic targeting of messages & audiences; use of stories to convey relevance	**Pillar 2:** active listening to give audiences a voice	**Pillar 3:** NAADS champions or local points of presence	**Pillar 4:** Enabling service providers to become agricultural information providers	**Pillar 5:** Strategic targeting of market information	**Pillar 6:** Internal information management and learning system
POLICY COMMUNICATION *(to make policies and procedures relevant and known)*	XXXXX					
EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION *(for sharing knowledge and information)*				XXXXX	XXXXX	
FACILITATIVE or SOCIAL COMMUNICATION (*to allow people to interact and explore issues)* **TIME SENSTIVE COMMUNICATION** ((*to use phone coverage for call-ins)*		XXXXX	XXXXX			
COMMUNICATION FOR LEARNING (*to help organizations internal learning and information management)*						XXXXX

These pillars are the basis for articulating the objectives of the Strategy and they are consistent with the NAADS principles that are listed below with a number of keywords in bold. The bold words have a natural affinity with communication and information.

NAADS Principles

1. **empowering** the farmers in agricultural advisory processes **and building their demand** for both research and agricultural advisory services
2. **targeting** agricultural services to the poor farmers who constitute the majority
3. **mainstreaming gender** issues
4. deepening decentralization to **bring the control of research and advisory services** nearer to the farmers
5. **commercialization** – including intensification of productivity, specialization and profitability
6. **participatory processes** in planning, contracting, monitoring and evaluation
7. **managing** natural resource productivity
8. increasing institutional efficiency through **contracting out services,** and **better linkages between research, advisors and farmers**
9. **harmonization** of donor supported projects with PMA principles

Objectives of the Strategy

Pillar 1: strategic targeting of messages & audiences; use of stories to convey relevance

This pillar addresses policy communication through strategic planning and stories. Policy communication needs to become strategic in terms of the definition of specific audiences and messages and the utilization of stories as examples that people can relate to.

Specific objectives

- Make the NAADS' programme **relevant** to all interested stakeholders
- Make the NAADS' **mechanisms and procedures** known, especially how they evolve
- Make the NAADS' **learning process** known, especially the mechanisms for listening to feedback
- Make the NAADS' **progress** known, especially the sequencing of events

These objectives deserve immediate attention and are included in the work plan among the first to implement in the sequence of activities.

Rationale:
Making NAADS known is a challenge, especially at the sub-county level and below. For example, in the December 2002 report to the PMA by NAADS, reference was made to a District Capacity Assessment Report[13] that indicated that the number of farmer groups had risen from 62 to 282 in four sub-counties alone largely as a result of misinformation leading to misplaced farmer expectations. This experience points towards the need for NAADS to communicate what the programme proposes to do -and what it will not do- to

[13] By NIDA (2001)

farmer communities. At the same time the December 2002 report flags the potential challenge for further confusion in light of the different approaches and content provided by the different NGOs that guide and train farmer groups.

Policy communication needs to address specific audiences with messages that are designed to address particular attitude and knowledge changes. Each and every NAADS communication material –be it a brochure, radio spot or web-site- needs to be designed according to the basic communication planning steps. The two dimensions: strategic communication and the use of stories complement each other well.

We all learn best from stories[14]. NAADS will become relevant when real-life situations are communicated; when people have something concrete to do or plan for as a result.

> *Example:* a farmer group that has already come up with demands and is getting support from an institution playing the role of a service provider. How will NAADS change or improve the relationship as its mechanisms fall in place? What is NAADS doing to develop those mechanisms? Why is it doing this?
>
> *Example:* a service provider that will be made up of extension workers who have yet to be retrenched. What support will they get once NAADS is fully operational? What is NAADS doing to become fully operational? Why is it doing this?
>
> *Example:* if NAADS decides politicians are an important target audience that needs to understand the pace at which the programmes rolls out; then it needs to reach them with messages that will catch their attention. Quotes from enlightened policy makers can be used. The following is a mockup for a newspaper insert that could use a real quote to catch attention and put the programme challenges in context (this one is inspired from a real quote):

[14] The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) has recognized this, see their story website: http://www.iicd.org/stories/



Example: If NAADS decides that schools and tertiary institutions are an important target (they currently house 9 million students), NAADS could strike an agreement with Picfare Paper Industries to include NAADS messages in the hard covers of school materials, as has been done in the health sector.

Pillar 2: active listening to give audiences a voice

This pillar addresses Facilitative or Social Communication to give people the opportunity to confront and discuss information that may otherwise not become meaningful; it is an important complement to Policy Communication. It also reflects Time Sensitive Communication in that it seeks to use phones as one channel for people to contact NAADS through radio call-ins.

Specific objectives

- Enable all stakeholders to contact NAADS by affordable means (through radio phone-ins, writing letters, and in the future through free-phone lines to a call-centre) to ask questions, explore the challenges, understand the

implementation arrangements and begin taking ownership over the programme.

Rationale:
The NAADS message (programme) is difficult to communicate because it calls for significant changes in roles, attitudes, new skills and new relationships. People need the opportunity to confront the information and respond to it. In the Uganda context there is little familiarity with the notion of calling in for information. A possible forerunner could be interactive radio call-in programmes, especially if the phone call is toll-free and where letters can also we sent for those who cannot access a phone. Radio call-ins are already a familiar means for people to make their concerns known. As this practice becomes further engrained it may lay the foundation for other options in the future such as a call-in centre. This activity can be carried out at national, district and sub-county levels.

Example: Radio stations already offer write-in and phone-ins that allow people to voice their concerns, questions and ideas. Those without access to a phone can write in (with the help of literate members of the family or village). Radio phone in shows allow listeners to hear concerns from other people that they may identify with. By having a regular programme where questions can be raised, people begin to have a sense about what NAADS is all about, how it evolves, what problems it faces and how they are being addressed.

Example: the long term it is conceivable to have a free phone number to a call-in centre managed by a private telephone company and staffed with operators that are fully trained on NAADS and aware of the roll-out efforts, problems and evolving procedures. They will be able to clarify some questions about procedures; they can refer the caller to organizations and individuals that are knowledgeable and experienced with NAADS in their district; they take note about questions that require changes/flexibility in procedures and report those on a regular basis to the Secretariat[15]. A major issue that would need to be addressed for a call-in centre service to be viable is whether operators could be trained to respond adequately to NAADS questions and be kept up to date with developments in the programme. This role requires a deep understanding of the procedures, implementation challenges, and new ways to respond to them that are constantly being developed. The operators would need to be closely involved with the programme and its detailed evolution, which is a tall order for a call-in operator.

Example: With a regular synthesis of questions received by radio call-in programmes, NAADS will be able to update the list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and modify the content of its communication materials (posters, web-resources) at a national level, plus it can address district-specific issues through district-specific media (FM radio, a network of champions). See

[15] The mission discussed this service with MTN and UTL (dominant telephone companies) and one private firm who agreed to prepare scenarios with technical specifications and indicative costing. NAADS would become a client to such a call-in centre and could aggregate demand by bringing together other agencies and government ministries. IICD could be interested in exploring this opportunity as an innovative way of using the expanding phone networks in Uganda. This option is not an immediate priority, but as commercial ventures develop, NAADS may find it worthwhile to test the potential of such a service.



Annex 6 for a list that came out of the Mukono and Soroti 2001 sensitization workshops. The value of FAQs is that they save time in that a significant number of questions will fall into this category and staff can dedicate attention to the lesser number of questions that merit individual attention; for this reason the FAQs have an important role to play in the website. NAADS' experience with FAQs suggests the need direct questions on the basis of specific themes in order to avoid the tendency for the question list to become out of date.

Example: A NAADS website that is specific for farmers and service providers and is meant to be accessed through District level computers (slow speed modems at the start). Comments and suggestions from users to make the information more appropriate (language, format, layout, downloads, etc.) can be fed-back by phone to the call-in number. This site can also contain agricultural content, workplans, guidelines that users could download.

Example: As NAADS rolls-out into new sub-counties and new districts, a Base-Line study is contracted. Future base-line studies could incorporate two additional dimensions: identification of local champions and effective linkages (the field research method developed during this mission could be adjusted and incorporated therein) and stories are sought and captured about existing successes (farmer groups able to formulate demands; service providers responding to them) or confusions that NAADS can use or respond to.

Pillar 3: NAADS champions or local points of presence

This pillar addresses Facilitative or Social Communication. It calls for two-way communication channels to give people the opportunity to ask questions and get answers. The NAADS message is complex and people need an opportunity to confront and discuss the information. In doing so they may learn the rationale and begin to appreciate the potential of the programme. The message may otherwise not become meaningful; it is an important complement to Policy Communication. It is also a complement to the second pillar in that this one happens on a face-to-face locally, within someone the person knows at the village, parish or sub-county.

Specific objectives

- Identify local champions[16] through competitions and support them in becoming "NAADS Point of Presence" at the sub-county, parish and local village.

[16] Champions are natural communicators with a community commitment, e.g. teachers, health workers, prominent farmers, religious leaders, local store owners, community development workers, local theatre groups, etc. It is important to underline that the use of the word 'champions' refers to their advocacy role, not to winning a competition. The Oxford dictionary specifies this meaning: "a person who fights for, or speaks in support of, a group of people or a belief." There is scope for confusion as some people may focus on the winner of a competition; which emphasizes the need to find more appropriate words in local languages.



Rationale:
Understanding the NAADS programme can happen through several combined inputs: stories of real-life situations, access to factual information about NAADS, and people of trust with whom to talk about it with (best done face-to-face, if not by phone).

> *Example:* The NAADS Sensitization/Learning workshops are one opportunity where people can explore the NAADS programme, appreciate its elements, understand the immediate institutional consequences and plan for the kind of training and support they will require.
>
> *Example:* The learning approach to understanding NAADS may be strategically useful in two areas: harmonization with other projects, and coordination with the communication strategies and actions of other ministries. The staff of other projects will welcome the opportunity to understand the specific mechanisms that NAADS proposes, to express their own, and to explore the modalities for harmonization (phases, time-frames). The same can be said about coordinating with the communication strategies of other ministries.
>
> *Example:* NAADS needs to have champions at the sub-county and district level. Champions are people and organizations that are naturally inclined to share information. 'Link' or 'contact farmers' are one example. Others may include civil society organizations that are active in community development; information centre operators (telecentres, infoshops, etc), store owners, nurses, teachers, mosque or church leaders, private entrepreneurs, service providers, etc. Champions can offer factual information about NAADS, they can collect real-life stories to use in future communication activities, and they can refer people to upcoming radio programmes, the call-in number and website. They can use the radio call-in programmes to share feedback from those who do not have access to a phone or want help in trying it for the first time. Champions need incentives in the form of attractive information materials to display (posters, calendars), wear (t-shirts, hats), distribute (brochures, stories), or refer people to (web-sources, radio programmes, other people). The incentives could be offered on a competitive basis; through a pilot programme whereby NAADS at the District level opens a competition for information champions to come up with proposals. Attention is given to how these champions innovate and expand their role and the competitive programme can evolve and be funded on the basis of those demands.

Not all education leaders, church or mosque representatives, local businesses or elected LC chairmen are champions. This report recommends that they be identified through competitions advertised through the mass media and with incentives that are particular to each group. The concept of competitive incentives is not new and it is based on the notion that the real champions emerge with some priming[17]. The following table provides some examples of possible champions and incentives to reach them.

[17] Starting in 1996 the Community Access Programme (CAP) in Canada followed this approach: organizations competed for grants to open a public access to a computer with a connection to the Internet and offer training for the public. Some of the winners went on to become sophisticated community networking organizations. The 'champions' inside those organizations are regarded as a key contributor to



Champion	Type of incentives	Rationale	Potential benefits	Risks
Sub-county theatre group	Competition for scripts based on NAADS themes; winners receive T-shirts and/or posters	NGOs warned against the risk of monetary incentives that may create a dependency	Young people in the community displaying NAADS materials and are able to share what the programme is about	The champions move away: limited continuity. The prizes loose prominence.
Sub-county business person	Selling NAADS story book for a small profit Display a personalized NAADS poster or calendar	Local businesses are there to stay.	Could be the start of an information centre. Other governmental information could be channeled through them.	Businesses are staffed by different people, not all are versed on NAADS.
Farmer organization	Competition for stories announced through FM radio	FM stations have had success with this format. Radio call-ins are very popular.	A free phone line (a possible sponsorship by a telephone company) would be a first and would attract callers who may otherwise not try to call.	The volume of stories is high and they have to be chosen at random. People loose interest if their stories are not profiled in other communication materials.
School teacher	Competition for stories announced through FM radio	FM stations have had success with this format. Radio call-ins are very popular.	School teachers have respect and leadership roles; NAADS materials can be posted in their workplace	
Private or NGO intermediary organization	NGOs and private stockists (like ATU or Magric) have regular contact with farmers and like to provide their clients with information	These established businesses and organizations are here to stay.	Having NAADS information displayed in a private work place profiles the link between NAADS and the market;	Limited attention give due to other priorities; clutter with other private enterprise materials on display[18]
Local information centres (e.g. UCA's village libaries)	Pride in having agricultural information for farmers on display	Local information centres are run by communities and offer a place for farmers to discuss and learn about NAADS.	A trusted place for debate among people that know each other.	Manipulation of information by the literate.

The process of identifying champions and keeping them motivated needs to be experimental and tested through pilot activities.

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their success. (Ramírez, R. 2001. A model for rural and remote information and communication technologies: A Canadian exploration. *Telecommunications Policy* 25 (5), 315-330)

[18] Throughout the sub-counties visited we came across the poster by the Uganda Grain Traders Ltd. NAADS could be profiled as a sponsor along with the current ones (Stanbic Bank, Fica Seeds, Harvest Seed) in addition to producing its own poster.



Pillar 4: Enabling service providers to become agricultural information providers

This pillar addresses educational communication for sharing agricultural knowledge and information. It focuses much attention on training service providers and farmer groups in searching and accessing information sources, and in using communication methods and skills to make that information relevant to their clients.

Specific Objectives:

- Provide training for service providers, farmers and NAADS staff on accessing agricultural information sources and on communication methods and media skills.

- Pioneer multi-stakeholder workshops where farmers, service providers, agricultural technology providers, researchers and other information intermediaries could explore ways of collaboration and identify the transaction costs, training needs and common interests.

To begin tacking the first of the above objectives, NAADS needs to develop an inventory of Communication for Development trainers in Uganda (Annex 9 includes indicative TORs to develop an inventory)[19].

Rationale
The following issues merit attention:

Providing service providers –and farmer organizations – with these skills is part of the retooling mandate within NAADS and has important implications in terms of improving the links with research. Service providers need not only the skills, but also the confidence to interact with agricultural information providers and researchers and negotiate more relevant content and appropriate linking mechanisms. In essence, NAADS needs to empower the service providers to articulate the demand side of the AKIS.

The importance of practical experience by communication trainers
Communication for Development is part art and part science; however, a good practitioner will have learned the skills of the trade through apprenticeship and practical experience. It will be important to determine the major strengths of every individual consultant or firm. A firm or consultant may be a very good *producer* of communication materials, but not necessarily be a good *trainer;* after all, production and training are different skill sets.

Balancing training in media production with programme planning
NAADS may find it necessary to gather a team of several trainers with complementary skills. For example, a trainer in script writing for radio may work along with a specialist in communication strategy planning; the first would provide specific writing skills for radio

[19] Such an inventory need not be an activity that NAADS does on its own, especially as other agencies and ministries involved with the PEAP and PMA will have similar training needs as part of their own communication and information strategies. The inventory of communication trainers should be a joint activity and the discussions held on April 9th '03 (when this CIS was presented) demonstrate the willingness for such inter-agency collaboration.



while the second would contribute the planning skills. Having a balance between media production and planning skills is important and requires attention to managing teams of consultants. It will be important to learn from the experience of others (FIT/SEED/CBS; COARD, etc.) to determine different modalities, such as having complementary trainings back to back, or integrating them into a single training event. The different communication methods or approaches used by different trainers will be important to recognize ahead of time to ensure the conditions are there for a collegial training team.

Matching service provider training need with trainers

The NAADS District Coordinators will add communication training as a requirement in the MoUs with service providers. This means that service providers will have a choice of the trainers they engage, however NAADS will play a mediating role in ensuring the service providers are given assistance in choosing the appropriate type of training to suit their interest and needs. For example, a service provider with keen interest in radio may not always need to be trained in radio programme production, but could receive training in radio programme planning. The skill set that the service provider needs may centre on skills for sub-contracting the preparation of radio programmes on agricultural technologies as a support tool to their training work with farmers. The personal interests of the service provider will play a major role in these choices as some are naturally inclined to communication and others are not. The COARD project experience is particularly important to NAADS in terms of their experience bringing researchers and farmers closer together. Service providers may need to be exposed to these participatory technology approaches as another approach that they may need to embrace.

> *Example:* There are some organizations in Uganda that already provide training in Communication for Community Development (in contrast with ICT training for businesses) which follow the strategic planning steps shown above. CEEWA is one promising example; their engagement in training of trainers for service providers may need to take place only when those service providers are already fully in a NAADS-mode and are motivated to seek information on a real demand-basis. Another example is the COARD that has offered training during March-April of 2003 for researchers and service providers interested in learning to produce printed materials.
>
> *Example:* Radio programmes have the potential to convey agricultural information. The existing radio listening groups that SODIFA supports in Soroti district are one example among many. There is also scope for ongoing radio soaps following the experience of the Archers in the United Kingdom[20]. A radio drama can incorporate characters that different audiences can identify with, and real NAADS stories can be acted out to convey messages about programme procedures, about technical issues in agriculture and animal husbandry, and many other topics. The long term financial implications of keeping such a programme operational are important to address from the start. Language and major target audiences will need to be considered.

[20] FAO. 1987. Education through entertainment: the British radio drama series "The Archers – an everyday story of countryfolk."

Pillar 5: Strategic targeting of market information

This pillar addresses educational communication for sharing agricultural knowledge and especially market information. The market information system specific objectives are:

- provide reliable market information to assist farmers in reducing the risks associated with marketing
- empower farmers' ability to bargain for fairer prices and decide where and when to sell their produce

Price information is one of three supply-side constraints to market access. A major additional challenge that has been identified has to do with the demand side: many farmers in Uganda do not fully understand how markets operate and how they can organise themselves to effectively engage in this new environment. NAADS recognizes the need for information to be packaged within an educational framework, such that farmers can use market information most effectively[21].

This pillar is addressed through a specific activity to develop an Agricultural Marketing Information System (AMIS) and is further detailed in Section 3.

Pillar 6: Internal information management and learning system

This pillar addresses communication for learning, and is geared towards helping NAADS **improve its** internal learning and information management. Three areas are highlighted as immediately relevant: document processing, staff responsibility charting, and internal information sharing.

Specific objectives:

- streamline document processing and cataloguing within the Secretariat
- develop responsibility charts for staff teams as a basis on which to decide who needs to be informed about each activity
- design electronic file sharing procedures and directory structure with staff involvement: start with what exists, experiment with file sharing pilots

There is scope to integrate NAADS internal information management with its keys partners. Regular updates in the form of an electronic and printed newsletter could be mailed out to a data base of partners. This lead to one additional objective:

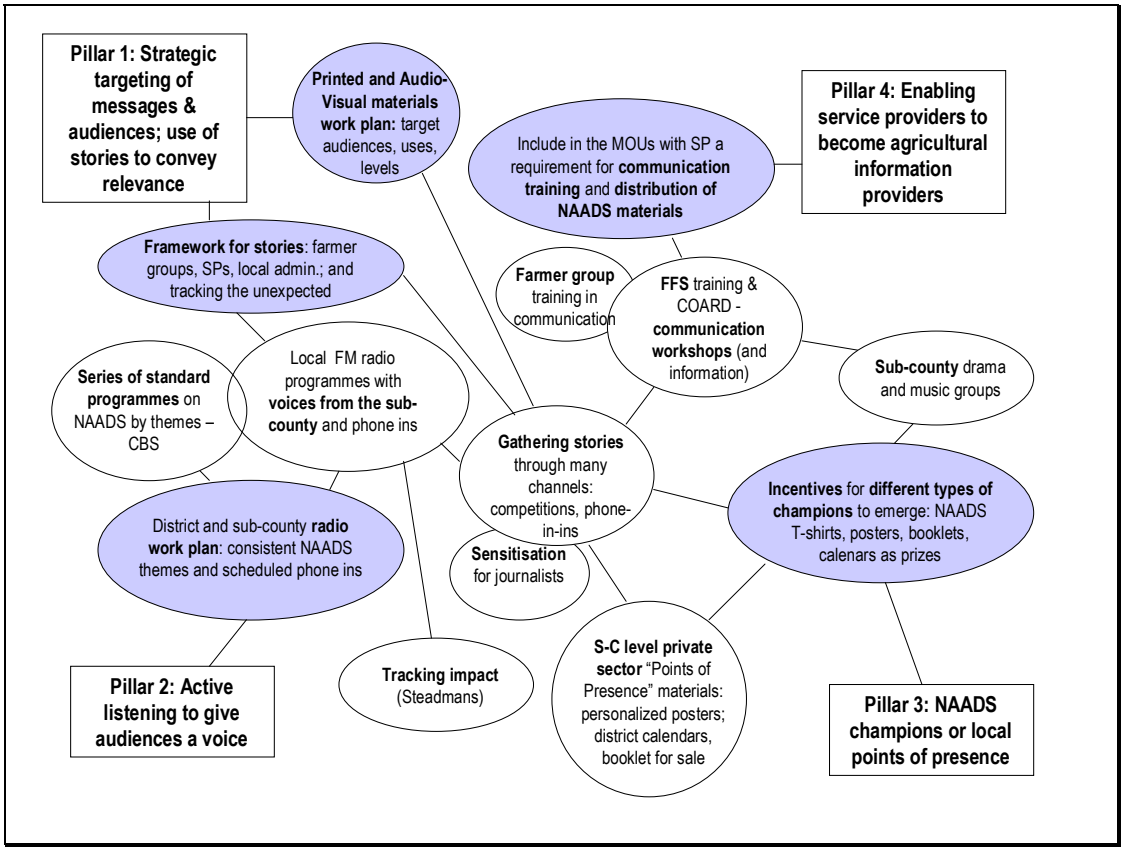
[21] "Market information is near to useless unless it can be analysed, interpreted and disseminated by/to farmers in a useable manner. As well as supplying farmers with timely, relevant market information, there is a need for greater intervention to educate/ train farmers on basic home economics/ supply and demand theory. With this training, farmers can be in a better position to utilise this knowledge more effectively. Market information is not solely about price. It includes other marketing facets which need to be disseminated including information on exchange rates, transport/ taxes/ tariff costs, volumes traded, quality assurance guidelines, weather forecasts, production and price projections of major staples. Specialist AMIS organisations shall need to engage other partners in training and working with farmer groups." NAADS Market Information Service Draft Strategy, 2003.

- pilot a monthly newsletter as a means to inform all staff within the Secretariat and selected partners about programme evolution and progress

This pillar is further detailed in Section 3.

Interrelated activities

The first four pillars and objectives share many common and interrelated activities that can be piloted at national and at district levels. The diagram below shows the types of activities that were explored during the visits to the three districts.



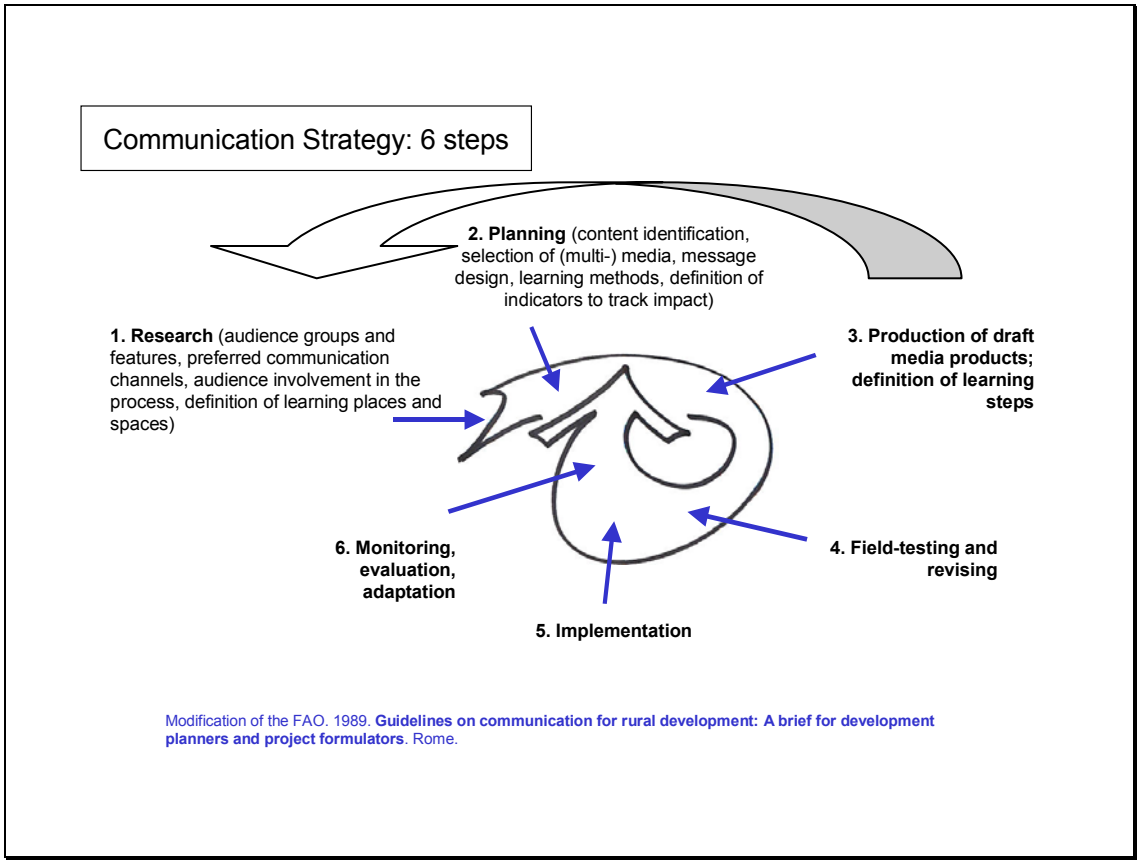
The shaded circles indicate areas for immediate attention in terms of work plan development and in terms of defining procedures for piloting activities. The diagram shows that single activities may respond to more than one of the pillars.
Annex 7 includes work planning matrices and guiding questions for each one of these areas. The following is one example of a Work Planning Matrix that would be initiated by the Secretariat and would target urban professionals (see Annex 7 and the Work Plan Vol. II for details).

Key messages	Target audience	Material(s)	How is it used?	Where is it produced?	How is it tested?	Distribution	How do we gauge impact?	On what basis do we budget?
Become an ambassador: take NAADS back to your home	Urban professionals who return to village regularly	Insert in newspapers	Insert appears in major newspapers once a week for a month	Kampala	Focus group to comment on content, presentation, and language	Urban professional takes insert to village	Requests for more information to NAADS; Informal feedback	Staff time in preparation and pre-testing; newspaper costs
The NAADS website includes names of districts covered and downloadable brochures	Same	Website	Access; regular updating of links with district portals	Kampala with inputs from districts	Focus group to comment on content, presentation, and language	Urban professional seeks additional information on website	Increase in hits and downloads	Staff time in preparation; website maintenance and monitoring; web-hosting and domain fees

A major challenge to address is how NAADS can reach the farmer groups below the sub-county level. The limited trust between farmer groups and farmer fora at both sub-county and district level cannot be ignored. NAADS will need to strike a balance between providing top-down information directly to the grassroots (to enable more transparency and accountability) while maintaining some flexibility when there are positive linkages among these levels.

For each and every activity that falls within the different pillars, a strategic communication approach is required. This means shifting from an approach that starts with the production of communication materials (item no. 3 in the diagram below), to a strategic approach that covers six iterative steps: identifying target audiences, defining messages, determining the media channel combination to reach them, defining how communication materials will be used, determining how the impact of the materials will be assessed.

The tools in Annex 7 and the NAADS Communication and Information work plan (Volume II) constitutes the tool to enable staff at both the Secretariat and the district level to make this shift.



Example: Stories that are packaged into a brochure, a TV programme, a radio programme, a website, a magazine article or a theatre script need to be tested with the different audiences they are meant for before the material is finalized. People tend interpret information differently from what was expected by a scriptwriter, Webmaster or illustrator. On the basis of feedback adjustments are very important to make regarding terminology and language, drawings, photographs, sequence of information, format, layout, speed of access, and tone. These are all specific to local conditions. Whether NAADS produces the materials in-house or out sources them, it remains necessary to address the six steps.

Example: The Champions Activity will evolve as those that are most creative challenge NAADS to explore new opportunities (using different media, striking collaboration with new services). The Terms of Reference for them will evolve and NAADS needs to follow the communication steps outlined above to reflect and adjust accordingly.

The shift towards a strategic approach to communication and information means that all activities are targeted and measurable, which will allow for an integration of Communication and Information activities with Monitoring and Evaluation ones.

Emphasis on the District as the driver

Balance

Throughout this report the consultant emphasizes attention to communication and information activities centering on the district level and below; this applies mainly to the first four pillars. Having said this it is important to emphasize that national level communication activities remain very important and complimentary to the district ones; these emphasize the 5th and 6th pillars, but also address the other four. In turn the district activities need to explore opportunities to make NAADS more 'present' at the parish and village level. The district level is proposed as the main driver for the evolution of the CIS in terms of work plans, the communication products developed, and evolving budgetary requirements. This emphasis may shift in the future if and when communication activities at the sub-county flourish. This will ensure more integration with existing traditional communication networks and local cultural expression.

It is worth emphasizing that NAADS is compliant with local government regulations and therefore the NAADS District Coordinators work closely with the District Information Officers (DIOs) in the implementation of communication and information activities. The DIOs will need to be briefed on the NAADS Communication and Information Strategy and may require some in-service training on communication planning skills to fully appreciate the combination of communication functions included in the CIS.

Another dimension that requires attention is a balance between communication activities that support NAADS policy communication, with support to NAADS areas of priority, such as enterprise development. The different kinds of enterprises that NAADS seeks to support range from farmer production and marketing groups to service providers. They all need business development training and management skills. Tools that already exist, such as the radio-based programmes developed by ILO's Small Enterpise Development Project are available and deserve to be used with the collaboration of local FM stations[22].

This emphasis on the district suggests that this report places more attention to the demand side of communication relative to the supply side of information. Having said this, the supply side remains important: This report acknowledges the importance of continuing to build a user-friendly NAADS website that can be regularly adjusted in consultation with users as they come on board and are able to access electronic information tools.

It will be important to review the balance of resources between Secretariat and district-level work plans with special attention to the audience groups that NAADS needs to keep engaged. This review will need to take place at least once a year as annual Communication and Information Strategy work plans are prepared. The impact of the Newsletter on decision makers, versus the impact of a radio programme on farm groups over the first year may help decide on the balance or resources allocated in future years. These decisions will have important implications in terms of continuity: both a newsletter and a radio drama series gain acceptance when they are perceived to be communication channels that will remain updated and available for the long run.

[22] Contact person is Gavin Anderson, tel. 077-759029, email ganderson@fit-sema.net

Sequencing

The following table shows the relationship between Secretariat and District level activities that appear in a sequence that reflects their immediacy. The work plan in Volume II provides more details on sequencing.

Activity sequence	District	Secretariat
Standard radio programmes on NAADS (policy communication)	Strike agreement with local FM stations for translation and adaptation of standard scripts and airing schedule[23]	Produces standard CBS scripts for distribution to districts; covers the cost of air time
Call-in radio programmes (active listening)	Strikes agreement with local FM stations for call-in programmes and with phone companies for toll-free lines as a means of sponsorship	
Information materials for meetings with GoU and donors (policy communication)	Provides stories to secretariat and selected coordinators and farmers participate in meetings	Produces printed materials for national policy makers; newsletters also sent to district policy makers
District calendars	Districts provide local content in the form of photos, stories, and artwork	Common layout and production contract coordinated in Kampala
Training service providers in communication skills (educational communication)	Identification of service providers for training in communication methods and media	Identification of communication training consultants, organizations, and funding of workshops
Local champions	Pilot competitions for the identification of local champions	Production of materials to use as incentives

Readiness and flexibility

The notions of 'readiness' and 'flexibility' merit some explanation. The pillars provide a framework within which all communication and information activities should find a natural home. 'Readiness' means that every communication and information action needs to be timed with attention to the enabling conditions and state of programme rollout in every district and sub-county. One major issue with readiness is the extent to which other elements of the PMA are in place.

It is important to emphasize that NAADS needs to begin with what is feasible now, especially in terms of using media channels that target audiences already use today (radio, service providers, farmer fora, other farmers). Readiness also refers to the extent to which the NAADS Secretariat and District Coordinators feel confident to pilot communication activities, especially those that may lead to improvement in the delivery of their workload. One very important role for communication is to help NAADS explain

[23] This process was started through a workshop on April 8th.03 in Kampala. Annex 11 includes a short summary of the conclusions; the NAADS Secretariat has a more complete report of the workshop.

what it is doing, why and how. Target audiences need to have information on the evolution of NAADS and an understanding about how NAADS is addressing the many challenges that it faces. The following examples show how specific situations may require particular attention.

> *Example:* A message explaining how service providers will function as private enterprises under NAADS needs to touch base with the current status of extension worker retrenchment. These are delicate messages; if they are not addressed, the target audience will perceive the message as irrelevant or not trust-worthy in that it is disconnected with current affairs.
>
> *Example:* As a district rolls-out into new sub-counties, the investment in sensitization and in training for farmer group formation will depend on the extent to which local groups have already had exposure to NAADS-related training. Some sub-counties, by the nature of their distance from the district capital, or the limited access to communication media, will need a large sensitization effort relative to others. Sensitization activities need measurable goals in order for all parties to agree on when to discontinue them. For example, if 75% adult males are able to list most NAADS principles, in contrast with 40% of women or youth, then it makes sense to focus sensitization activities on those groups specifically (these percentage threshold numbers are hypothetical).

The pillars provide a framework for the NAADS District Coordinators and Secretariat to work in and adjust activities as local circumstances allow. NAADS District Coordinators are in a better situation to gauge what communication and information activities are realistic, what partners are in place to collaborate, and what are the different challenges for each sub-county. A "communication trailblazing" period where different activities are piloted is recommended, for one or two years.

The strategy needs to evolve with emphasis on pilot activities that work and that respond to current media reach and telecom infrastructure expansion. The table below provides an example of phasing-in to reflect the use of different media as it is expected to expand.

Issue	First year 2003-04	Next 5 years	Beyond 5 years
A. Pilot communication activites	Pilot activities on the basis of the communication channels that major target audiences use today	Build on the first year's experiences and begin looking at additional opportunities as telecommunication services expand	Continue catering to the full range of media accessibility that will remain between districts, sub-counties, parish and village
Example1 (Pillar 4): Reach farmers with agricultural information	Districts: Emphasize radio, service providers and other farmers as major channels	Districts: Seek complementarities with info-mediaries who may have access to information centres and data bases	Districts: Seek complementarities with info-mediaries who may have access to the web at district telecentres
Example 2 (Pillar 1): Keep Kampala and	Kampala: Paper versions of the	Kampala: Paper and e-mail versions of the	Kampala: Shift from paper to e-mail and web

Entebbe stakeholders informed about NAADS	Secretariat newsletter	Secretariat newsletter	newsletters, with printed copies only sent to districts

A gender perspective to communication [24]

'Working within a gender perspective' is a basic principle to be applied in the implementation of the NAADS information and communication strategy. What does this mean in practice?

It is certainly important to demonstrate that women need information as much as men, and that sometimes they need different information from that needed by others. It is widely reported that women in Uganda are less informed than men and that person-to-person extension activities favoured men. It is also important to demonstrate that women are not all the same. However, gender is not the same as all other variables like age, education and wealth and a 'communication for all' strategy can also be a platform for advocating a new understanding about the importance of addressing gender relations in order to achieve national production objectives as well as national objectives of equity for all.

Gender relations, relations between women and men, are power relations that are expressed at all levels, from the household, within organisations at community, sub-county, district and national levels, in markets and elsewhere. For NAADS, working within a gender perspective also means addressing these relations of power in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of men and women.

Relations of power are sustained on an everyday basis by societal rules (norms and institutions) that determine how men and women are perceived by society and how they perceive themselves. In large part, everyone, including women themselves perceive themselves as having lower status and, therefore having less rights to control what they do and have, than men. This has implications for how far NAADS will be able to achieve its objective of increased productivity and production for all and especially for the rural poor men and women.

In order for rural women to respond to a call for them to engage in or participate in new activities (achieving a strategic change in their position) or to perform their existing activities in a different way (a practical change), it is important to present to them and to society as a whole, from a different perspective: for example to present 'ordinary women' as 'local champions' or to present 'ordinary women' doing different things and overcoming constraints, as role models.

It is also very important to demonstrate whenever possible, in all communications, the practical constraints on women meeting the challenge of working within this different view or perspective

[24] This sub-section was prepared by Dr. Christine Okali, consultant to NAADS on poverty and gender, at the request of this consultant, after discussing the overlap between communication and gender.

In terms of specific action to be taken, since gender difference gets played out in the roles that men and women perform and activities in which they are engaged, role reversals need to be constantly emphasised in communication, and the fact that the value attached to the role is the same regardless of who performs the role. 'Gender messages' can be demonstrated using all the different communication channels, regardless of the subject matter.

Similarly, the need for women to have access to assets including information, education as well as land, cash, labour of others and other items and control over decision-making about their own labour, even the assets to which they have access, and the product of their work, should be demonstrated as often as possible.

NAADS is committed to addressing these issues by making it clear to women that the opportunities being offered within its programmes, are opportunities being offered to them: even that there are specific 'places' allocated for them as women. The key to rural women, and especially poor rural women, being able to occupy these 'places' and to use them to their advantage, as well as to the advantage of their households, families and communities in which they live, is to change societal perspectives on men and women and to relieve the different constraints under which men and women live.

3. Bringing the demand and supply side of information technology together

Matching technology demands with research and information services

Part of the NAADS implementation is dependent on the privatization of public extension workers (a process of retrenchment) coupled with an effort to retool them as private service providers. Among other issues, service providers will need to acquire the attitudes and skills to actively seek information and translate it. Acquiring these skills and attitudes constitutes a major educational challenge that will not happen overnight. The training methodologies to get service providers up to speed with these skills have important implications about how agricultural technology content is made available and is utilized. The following points are worth emphasizing:

- The NAADS approach calls for farmer organizations to elicit their demands through the farmer fora, though NAADS has specified priority enterprises to focus on. In the broader context, therefore, NAADS will become an important avenue for farmer demands to be brought to the attention of the agricultural community in general, and specifically the agricultural research community.

- There will be a wide range of situations arising in terms of the matching between farmer demands and existing agricultural technologies:

    a) The demands from farmers are well matched with existing proven technologies to the extent that the challenge is the translation of the content into a language, format and media that can enhance farmer-training events. (Examples will include improved seed and animal

varieties; proven disease prevention practices; proven post-harvest practices; market information, etc.)

b) The demands from farmers are matched partially in that the technical know-how is either incomplete, or it comes from a different agro-ecological context, or it was developed from a different problem perspective (production vs. marketing emphasis; farming system vs. commodity emphasis, etc.), or it is at an early stage of development.
c) The demands from farmers are not matched in a significant way with existing know-how and require basic, adaptive or a different type of research response.

The above list is an oversimplification of a continuum of cases that will be more specific and complex, especially those that fall under (b) and (c). In case (a), service providers' tasks will centre on translating the information into formats and communication materials in support of training and learning activities with farmers[25]. The NAADS Implementation Guidelines address some of the above scenarios, especially (b) and (c): the Technology Development (TD) funds allow farmer fora to procure adaptive research services to adapt technologies to local conditions; the Technology Development Sites (TDS) complements the TD and provides resources for on-farm demonstrations[26]. Interaction with organizations within the NARO will become important for (b) and especially for (c).

The above scenarios call for a training agenda to ensure service providers are able understand farmers demands, seek and access information, critically review its relevance, and when appropriate, translate that information into communication materials to use in support of their work with the farmer groups. That work may involve training in known technologies, on-farm demonstrations, or participatory technology development. There are important experiences in Uganda where farmers have been involved in technology development with researchers. The Farmer Field School experiences in Soroti are another relevant example from where NAADS can borrow lesso ns to bring researchers and farmers into a closer working relationship.

The above scenarios also suggest that NAADS play a role in capturing, cataloguing, reproducing, adapting and making available existing resources of agricultural technologies. NAADS cannot make definitive decisions about these issues on its own, it require inter-institutional partnerships to ensure all parties agree on common approaches. These relationships with partners will take on many forms, depending on local farmer demands, institutional capacities, and the skills and attitudes of the different stakeholder (especially the willingness to collaborate).

In other words, NAADS will be a major force in eliciting the demand side of agricultural information. NAADS will also serve as an uptake pathway, an information hub as part of a larger network, and a communicator of agricultural information.

[25] A tested agricultural technology, for example a virus-resistant cassava variety, can be understood as the hardware; what is needed is the software which involves communicating to farmers the management of the crop from field preparation all the way to processing and marketing in such a way that the new variety and its management become part of their knowledge system.
[26] Implementation Guidelines Volume III, November 2002, pp. 35-37

Partnerships for training

- **How to find out what exists** is the focus of one type of training needed. ***How*** this training event takes place and ***with what combination of stakeholders*** merits attention. The experiences NAADS and the ARDC/Mukono have had with multiple stakeholder learning workshops is a relevant approach. Those demanding the information (farmer organizations; farmer fora); those seeking to respond to the demands (service providers); and those who make that information available (research centres, libraries, information centres, NGOs, private sector organizations, electronic resources) need to **come together to determine opportunities, barriers, and the real transactions costs to accessing the information.** This reflection highlights the importance of designing the training events for information searching in such a way that the major stakeholder can negotiate and seek ways to work forward.

- **Translating (repackaging) what exists into a usable material** is a second type of training needed in cases (a) and (b) above, where service providers ***do*** manage to find relevant content and are then faced with the challenge of translating it into training materials to support their work with farmers. In what form is the information? Can it be translated and pre-tested or does it need repackaging? Should the service provider do this internally or outsource it or part of it? This requires training on communication methods (how to conduct a practical training in the field: what to prepare before the session, scheduling the event to coincide with the stage in the production cycle that is relevant, pre-testing training materials before the event) and on producing communication materials (brochures, audio-cassettes, radio, posters or guide books). Most importantly, it calls for follow-up and mentoring to help the service providers become confident at utilizing the new skills and understanding their significance and cost implications for the future.

Both NAADS and the Mukono ARDC have already had experiences with multi-stakeholder learning workshops. The first type of training could be piloted through a workshop that brings together those who demand the information (farmer organizations; farmer fora), those who seek information to respond to it (service providers), those who offer information (research institutes, NGOs, libraries[27], electronic resources), and those who mediate these relationships (NARO, NAADS, MOLG, etc.). The product of these workshops could include: a range of new mechanisms for bringing demand and supply closer together, challenges to the demand and supply areas to become more sensitive to the needs of the other, an understanding of the transaction costs, an identification of intermediaries who can become information brokers, an understanding of the major opportunities and gaps across the broader agricultural information and knowledge system.

NAADS can explore pilot multi-stakeholder workshops with COARD and DATICS, and possibly other partners, and learn from these experiences.

[27] The Uganda Libraries Board is establishing libraries around the country that could become one more repository of agricultural information.

Partnerships for linking demand and supply of agricultural information

Service providers need to access relevant agronomic and marketing information demanded by farmers. Studies done on the agricultural knowledge and information system (AKIS) in Soroti signal the multiple sources of information and linkages that already exist. Service providers will need to become the active users of these resources and linkages. We have outlined some possible training inputs; we also need to address the content issue. The content issue involved several critical questions about:

- *What* materials are collected (agricultural technologies that respond to priority enterprises)?
- W*ho* does this work (with attention not to replicate efforts)?
- *How* is information to be catalogued and reproduced (directory of technologies)?
- In *what media* they are stored, and *where*?
- *Who* distributes them, and *how*?

It is not realistic for this NAADS Communication and Information Strategy Report to unilaterally respond to these questions for two reasons:

1. This is a system-wide issue. The questions at the heart of ongoing discussions about research and extension linkages that involve other important actors and initiatives (NARO, ARDCs, DATICs, universities), and
2. Evolving media. There is the need for an agreement among the different parties as to how to address the tension between the media that service providers can access today (namely printed materials) Vs the media that they will be able to access in the near future (e-mail-based information networks[28]), Vs the long term (web-based).

In view of the above issues, this report proposes a framework to clarify how NAADS can enter into a range of partnerships and it highlights the principles that NAADS would bring to the negotiation.

Framework

NAADS will actively seek to enter into partnerships with other stakeholders in the agriculture research and extension knowledge system to pilot new linkage mechanisms to ensure that agricultural investments in research respond to farmer demands. A range of tools will be available, such as memoranda of understanding that spell out joint activities, pooling of resources, research and applied actions, and collaboration in developing pilot activities.

The TCP project that is being discussed with FAO constitutes one more opportunity through which to bring together the demand and supply side of the AKIS, especially with a view to enhance the capacity of the service providers so that they can engage in a

[28] FAO in innovating with e-mail based information networks with batch transfers in Namibia, backed with a web-based system.

negotiation process with the supply side and agree on specific linkage arrangements that suit local circumstances.

Principle

> In entering partnerships, NAADS will represent the interests of farmers and service providers as the key actors demanding agricultural technology. NAADS will ensure that farmer and service providers are in the "driver seat" so that they learn –through hands-on experiences or involvement in action-research projects- how to use information resources, how to question their relevance and how to begin translating content into useable training materials. NAADS will ensure that they have a say in the decisions on the media combinations to use in any directory of technology. In other words, they will be the voice to make sure that the ***design principles*** in the first section of this report are applied.

The above principle that emphasizes the demand side becomes particularly important as the Ugandan AKIS begins embracing information and communication technologies (ICTs). There is a growing body of evidence world wide that ICTs can only become a poverty-reduction tools when they are developed with a strong influence for the users:

> "ICTs have many revolutionary implications, but in order to achieve their full potential benefits it is necessary to focus on user-oriented and cost-effective applications rather than on technology-driven applications." *Mansell, R. & When, U. 1998. Knowledge societies: Information technology for sustainable development. Published for and on behalf of the United Nations by Oxford University Press: p. 95*

> "...the approach to ICTs must be information centred, integral to its environment, integrated with development objectives, intermediated, inteconnected, and indigenised." *Heeks, R. 2002. i-development not e-development: special issue on ICTs and development. Journal of International Development 14(1): 1-11.*

Recent macro-economic studies on telecommunications across several countries conclude that thus far rural telephony and radios have had a positive impact in terms of poverty reduction among the rural poor, whereas the Internet has not yet demonstrated that it can reduced income inequalities[29]. In other words, this CIS needs to embrace ICTs, but through a critical perspective to ensure users are truly able to benefit.

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[29] Forestiera, E.; Graceb, J. & Kenny, C. 2002. Can information and communication technologies be pro-poor? Telecommunications Policy 26 (11): 623-646

Abstract: There is over 20 years of accumulated cross-country evidence on the link between telecommunications provision and economic growth. Looking at micro-studies from a range of countries including Bangladesh, Botswana and Zimbabwe, there is also some evidence that provision of telephony has a dramatic effect on the income and quality of life of the rural poor. This paper examines cross-country evidence to discover if teledensity (the number of telephones per capita) has a pro-poor growth impact fostering increased average incomes while reducing inequality. It also examines the impact of telecommunications rollout on quality of life variables including infant mortality and literacy. It finds that, historically, telecommunications rollout has had a positive and significant impact on increasing inequality and little impact on quality of life variables. A reason for this is tested and preliminarily confirmed that rollout has (historically) only benefited the wealthy. The paper will then turn to emerging evidence on the role of the Internet in poverty relief and statistics on the access gap in provision between rich and poor,

There is room to improve on past AKIS studies by directly engaging the stakeholders in exploring what content exists, how it is catalogued, what opportunities already exist for service providers to use it and what barriers need attention.

The barriers will likely be a combination of the following[30]:

- Mental access: lack of motivation or anxiety to go to a resource centre, library, computers, data-bases
- Material access: physical or economic barriers to accessing hardware
- Skills access: limited or lacking strategic, informational and instrumental digital skills
- Usage access: limited or lacking experience using computer applications

In the short term, service providers may determine that there is value in using information intermediaries, or 'info-mediaries'. The scope of their work, the cost, and their training role for the service providers needs to be negotiated. Info-mediaries may have a longer term role in challenging information providers on formats, language and presentation of content.

In our Kampala interviews we met with one private company that seeks to become an info-mediary and plans to use its own growing collection of information materials. It is realistic to expect a wide range of info-mediary services to emerge.

An individual with familiarity with information sources and a cell-phone could do searches on contract for service providers, until the time when the service provider has overcome the barriers to do this job directly.

A number of agencies (ARDC's, DATICS, CDRN, etc.) could hold workshops in coordination with NAADS for service providers to become acquainted with major sources of information (resource collections, on-line catalogues and databases, websites and search engines).

The above includes a range of activities. In terms of sequencing, the most immediate refer to training service providers, both in information gathering and in communication skills, so that they can articulate their demands and provide critical insight at each and every opportunity where linkages are explored to improve the performance of the agricultural knowledge system.

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suggesting that this new ICT will also be a force for income divergence. Using the results of the cross-country analysis on telecommunications, the paper will conclude with a discussion of potential policy responses (such as sector reform and universal access programs) to turn telecommunications from a source of growth that also increases inequality to a source of growth that diminishes it.

[30] van Dijk, J. 2001. The ideology behind "closing digital divides": Applying static analysis to dynamic gaps. Paper presented at the IAMCR/ICA Symposium on the Digital Divide. 15-17 November, University of Texas, Austin.

Rural radio: a proven tool for today

Rural radio deserves special attention as a tool to share agricultural extension with farmers -in addition to its powerful role in policy communication. The audience research confirmed that radio remains the major medium of choice in Uganda, as it is in many other African countries. As radio remains a key channel to reach farmers –though not the only one by any means- NAADS needs to give priority to budgetary allocations for regular radio programming at the district level. The amounts shown under Outputs 1.7 and 2.1 in the work plan (Vol. II) are really not that high when we consider that these are the major means by which NAADS will communicate with its rural stakeholders. Indeed, the amounts may be only the bare minimum if we consider the importance of paying for slots in the evening prime. Evening slots were the preferred times indicated by women in the districts visited during the audience research and it is strategically important to respond to that.

A recent report on radio in West Africa emphasizes the potential of radio as an extension tool, both through educational programming and through drama series (see paper by Chapman et al. in Annex 3). There are several approaches worth exploring in terms of educational programming through radio. They range from local productions of content, such as the school on the air experience in the Philippines, to the translation and adaptation of existing programming world-wide. NAADS can begin by exploring the databases maintained by agencies like Panos in the UK and the Developing Country Farm Radio Network (DCFRN) in Canada. This issue is also highlighted in the work plan (Vol. II).

The liberalized regulatory environment in Uganda has led to a significant growth in FM stations. These stations are private commercial enterprises, however the major audiences of many of them are rural. To articulate a coherent strategy with radio, NAADS convened a meeting with major radio stations to coincide with the second mission of the international consultant. Annex 11 includes the major lessons from the April 9th '03 workshop.

Websites and information centres: emerging possibilities

The NAADS Website is in an early process of evolution and could become a major agricultural information portal for Uganda in addition to supporting NAADS policy communication. However, when analyzed through a planning matrix (see Vol. II), it is clear that for the near future the website is mainly a policy communication tool for decision makers in government and donor agencies, in other words it caters mainly to urban professionals. In addition, its feedback function is an example of active listening and a section with frequently asked questions (FAQs) may save staff time, as was explained before, though a thematic theme to guide the discussions appears as a promising option. It is important to recognize that having an up-to-date website will likely give NAADS credibility in the eyes of internet-literate professionals.

In the next five years, the website could become a tool for distributing agricultural technology materials for those service providers who learn to access the Internet through

public Internet sites. A stripped down version for faster downloads may be important to test for wider use. User involvement in testing such a site is required.

The Uganda Home Pages contract to design district portals for UCC constitutes an opportunity whereby NAADS can ensure agricultural content is made available from the start. As privately run district telecentres begin to operate under the auspices of the Rural Communication Development Fund (RCDF) of the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), NAADS has a role to play in sensitizing the operators to the NAADS challenges and engaging them in training, orientation and sensitization workshops for NAADS stakeholders on a commercial basis. The other existing telecentres in Uganda need to be approaches on a district by district basis; for example the telecentre operated by the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in Kabale is already in contact with the NAADS District Coordinator and they are discussing possible common interests in terms of putting service providers in touch with information sources. (Annex 3 includes materials by Etta et al. 2002 and by Mayanja, 2001 with recent reviews of these telecentres.)

The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) has established an I- Network in Uganda and offers a platform to support training, sharing of experiences, policy advice and coordination. IICD is in the process of deciding whether to support ICT training in health or in education in Uganda. A meeting with the IICD representative and the Hon. Johnson Nkuuhe is recommended in Annex 8 on projects to collaborate with. What may have been missing until now is a clear agenda or strategy to help the NAADS coordinators appreciate how to harness those opportunities. (Annex 3 includes a review of IICD activities in Uganda.)

The FAO TCP project that NAADS and NARO are preparing could take lessons from other countries and adjust them to the Ugandan context[31], with special attention to engaging the service providers as users whose needs should shape the design of the site. This Report suggests that the TCP could address a number of preparatory steps. The TCP could be one among several projects that could provide the opportunity to bring service providers and agricultural information suppliers together to jointly explore the opportunities and barriers to linking farmers with research. Decisions on how to make agricultural information relevant and available (in terms of focus and content, language, publication, media combinations, storage facilities, databases, electronic file transfer, e-mail networks, or web-based tool) should be made with the direct engagement of service providers. For this to happen there is a need to even the playing field by enhancing service providers' skills and confidence before they can confront researchers and challenge them to shift their plans to respond to the demands from farmers. After all in the past, this relationship was marred with profound professional and power differences. NAADS can take the lead in ensuring that the demand side of the AKIS becomes increasingly confident and able to articulate demands and gain the respect of the research community.

[31] FAO's Vercon experience in Egypt and the email-based network in Namibia are relevant examples. There are many additional current examples being discussed in the I-NARS discussion site hosted by IICD and ISNAR. To join by email, send a blank mail to join-inars@dgroups.org or via the web at http://www.dgroups.org/groups/inars/index.cfm?op=dsp_join



The agricultural market information system

NAADS has contracted IITA's Foodnet to implement an Agricultural Market Information System (MIS)[32] that aims to enable farmers to acquire knowledge and subsequently make informed decisions about what and how to market their produce. The AMIS concept is based on the assumption that the availability of reliable market information is a means of assisting farmers to (a) reduce the risks associated with marketing; (b) empower their ability to bargain for fairer prices and (c) to decide where to sell their produce.

A DFID commissioned a study, entitled 'Community Access to Marketing Opportunities' (by NRI) included a series of workshops in five Ugandan districts that were attended by local stakeholders – farmers, traders, local government officials and NGO representatives. The three most important constraints to agricultural marketing that were identified were: **poor roads**, **inadequate market information** and **poor means of transportation.**

NAADS is faced with several challenges regarding its engagement in an MIS:

- How to train farmers to become critical users of market information? Can the farmer field school principles apply to farmer study groups on this subject? > This challenge is being addressed through collective market training as part of the memorandum of understanding with Foodnet.
- How will NAADS support farmers with regards to the other real constraints: road and transportation barriers? > This is a challenge that lies outside NAADS and is part of the PMA; the NAADS District Coordinators face the challenge of explaining to farmers that infrastructure and credit, among others, are components of the PMA that have yet to become fully operational.
- What stakeholder groups will the NAADS' AMIS privilege - especially when NAADS focuses on poverty alleviation and many of the poor farmers have a profound distrust of traders?
- At what level (national, district, county, sub-county) should NAADS design a multi-media strategic dissemination and feedback strategy?

As NAADS explores the role and scope of its involvement in an AMIS, some of the above questions will need a policy agreement. This Communication and Information Strategy emphasizes some issues that the NAADS Market Information Service Draft Strategy has also recognized:

- the need to dedicate special attention to engaging farmers in learning how to demand, use and translate market information;
- the importance of building on what AMIS services may already exist and stand a chance of being sustained;
- the importance of using a combination of methods and media to encourage farmer exploration about the scope and potential of an AMIS, and
- the importance of having anecdotal evidence (stories) of success to convey the potential of the service to others – as well as making their limitations explicit.

[32] NAADS Market Information Service Draft Strategy, 2003.

A major challenge remains regarding gender. The findings of the IFAD "Gender and Poverty Targeting in Market Linkage Operations" for Uganda (conducted in Mpigi, Hoima and Apac districts) suggest that men and women control different products. Women control beans, cassava, sweet potato, sorghum, sunflower, goats, chickens, clay pots and kitchen utensils; whereas men control cattle, sesame, soybeans, ginger, tobacco, cotton, groundnuts, bicycles, radios and wheelbarrows. Further MIS studies should make use of the IFAD resource kit (NAADS has a copy). NAADS has already been involved with FAO activities in the region regarding the AMIS.

4. Implementation

Inter-agency coordination

This Communication and Information Strategy outlines activities that merit coordination with several other agencies and ministries. At the national level there is scope for harmonizing communication strategies across several organizations: the PMA, the other six component programmes of the PMA, and several other ministries (namely Finance, Local Government and very likely Health). There is scope for pursuing common actions when and where needed, be it at the sub-county, district and national levels. These initial, practical steps could ensure that communication messages are not contradictory with those of other agencies; it can also ensure that efforts are not duplicated. In the long term, these collaborative activities may pave the way towards the development of a national Communication for Development strategy[33]. FAO has already sent NAADS copies of case studies describing the steps required to come up with a National Communication for Development Strategy and future technical assistance in this field could be relevant. During the April 9th. '03 meeting where this CIS was presented, representatives from both the PMA and the MFPED responsible for communication activities offered to convene follow-up activities to ensure the coordination takes place.

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Example: learning how to engage champions (who can disseminate government information) at the sub-county level and below through radio competitions will be of interest to several of the communication strategies among the stakeholders described above.

Example: ensuring that the NAADS web-based resources are linked or included in the development of other government-on-line initiatives. For example, ensuring NAADS content is included in the development of district portals that Uganda Home Pages is development under contract with the UCC.

Example: Piloting a call-in centre may only have potential if several ministries are willing to explore the service, aggregate the demand, and thereby help a

[33] There is a National ICT Strategy in the making, and a National Communication for Development would be an important complement.

commercial operator build a business case. The different ministries would be clients to that commercial company and would ensure operators are trained on the specific subject matter, language groups, and referral services

Policy implications within NAADS

This NAADS Communication and Information Strategy report proposed a number of activities that would best be outlined within an internal NAADS Communication and Information Policy statement[34]. A NAADS Communication and Information Policy statement would constitute the response to the consultant's reports and recommendations. This could take the form of an official approval of the Strategy document and its release as a NAADS document (with the appropriate editorial revisions for the general public).

There is a significant amount of follow-up verification to ensure the Work Plan (Vol. II) is coherent with NAADS District Coordinators' plans; it will take some time for them to take full ownership over the strategy. Internally, NAADS needs to formalize the procedures by which District NAADS Coordinators will build their work plans and learn from pilots.

NAADS needs to formalize an ongoing commitment (in the form of staff Terms of Reference) to keep a "live antenna" for identifying information and communication resources (projects, human resources, institutions, strategies) as they arise and putting them in touch with NAADS communication and information needs and work plans.

Dimensions: time and levels

NAADS is a 25-year programme that has been 'trailblazing' for two years. Having a Communication and Information Strategy starting at this stage suggests the need to learn about what works through several piloted activities; essentially this means having a communication trailblazing period. The communication and information work plans will vary across districts in relation to the state of rollout, and the extent of 'readiness' in each context.

During the first year more emphasis is placed on making NAADS known. As the Districts become more familiar with designing and coordinating communication activities in this area, the focus on communication training for staff, service providers, and farmers will need to become more central. However, the testing of multi-stakeholder training workshops to develop linkages and agree on mechanisms to improve how information is offered, accessed and translated can begin immediately (more details below).

Complementary activities will be driven at each level: the Secretariat, the Districts, and below. As the CIS matures, the trend will be to increase communication and information activities that take place at lower levels. For the moment, the District NAADS Work Plans appear to have promise as the main driver for the evolution of the strategy. In the future, as other projects and as information and communication infrastructure and services expand; additional attention to accessing information sources (e.g. web-based)

[34] The section on Institutional and Management consequences provides additional arguments.

will merit more attention. In places where projects have already brought those resources to the local level (e.g. Acacia telecentres supported by the International Development Research Centre, IDRC) there is scope to pilot training activities to familiarize service providers and farmer groups on the potential of this information channel. In essence, there is a need to sequence activities as technologies advance along with the skills to exploit them.

Procurement

The Work Plan (Vol. II) includes the communication activities (outputs) to be implemented at Secretariat and District levels, with details in terms of what is outsourced, how materials are distributed and used, and the indicative costs. Volume II provides NAADS with a tool to inform donors about the yearly work plan in communication and information. An initial approval will enhance the speed at which no-objections may be cleared. This is critically important as delays can undermine the timeliness of delivery that communication materials require. Current experience by the consultant with communication activities in comparable projects in Bolivia (demand-driven extension under the SIBTA programme) and Mozambique (communication strategy for the demand-driven rural water programme) show the damaging results in the form of delays that can result when procurement decisions are not forthcoming.

It is strongly recommended for NAADS to seek donor approval for the yearly communication work plan in order to streamline procurement of the activities and avoid unnecessary delays. In doing so, it is important to build a contingency fund as there is always the need for adjusting communication activities and budgets. There is a precedent with the approval of the training work plan that is important to refer to.

5. Institutional and management consequences

C&I team & continuity

The staff in the NAADS Communication and Information Unit was already stretched to capacity even before the CIS consultancy began. Consultants have been supporting the unit but their engagement is not permanent. The FAO consultant (Mr. Remigio Achia) and the Makerere University intern (Ms. Hadijah Nakakande) were the only two people who were available throughout the first mission by the international consultant. Mr. Alexis Turrell was able to join us for most of the Kampala and Entebbe missions and for field preparations – where his inputs were most useful. Ms. Alyce Nakagwa, much as she would have liked to join us, was kept away from our programme of interviews and field visits due to a heavy workload within the Secretariat.

As indicated in Section 2, the consultant feels that a learning approach to communication and information strategy development is appropriate for NAADS. This learning approach began with the visits by the international consultant to Kampala and Entebbe stakeholders, where we explored the challenges, heard suggestions, and looked into emerging opportunities; and continued with the district visits.

The NAADS Communication and Information Strategy will only work if there is a team overlooking the different dimensions proposed, and just as importantly, when there is continuity from the current work by extending Mr. Achia's involvement as long as possible. Without a team effort, and without the continuity, the initial investment in formulating the strategy will be undermined. A desirable scenario would be for NAADS to allocate national consultancy resources to ensure that the C&I Unit has this continuity and a team effort for the next two years.

FAO's experience with Communication and Information components of large investment projects indicates that the communication budget should be no less than 1.5% of the global investment by the time the programme is completed. In other words, there is ample justification for increasing the human resources required to carry the CIS forward.

Training

Human resources within NAADS

The Communication and Information strategy will require in-house NAADS trained staff in communication for development. In the short term, keeping Mr. Achia involved will allow him to share with the staff the process and tools used to develop this strategy. With this experience he is in the best position to help coordinate the work planning effort to get pilot communication activities underway. The pilot activities will be one important foundation for human resources development within the Secretariat.

The NAADS District Coordinators will need training in communication strategy; those who collaborated in our field visits (Soroti, Kibaale, and Mbarara) benefited from some – in-service training. They will need more support and mentoring and the other coordinators will need to be brought up to speed with the general approach. In addition, they will need to brief the District Information Officers about the CIS and engage them in relevant training opportunities that may arise.

In the longer term, NAADS will benefit from staff with graduate training in communication for development. There are short-term courses in communication for development available for mid-career professionals (University of the Philippines at Los Baños, Cornell) and there are Masters level programmes in several countries (Denmark, the UK, Canada).

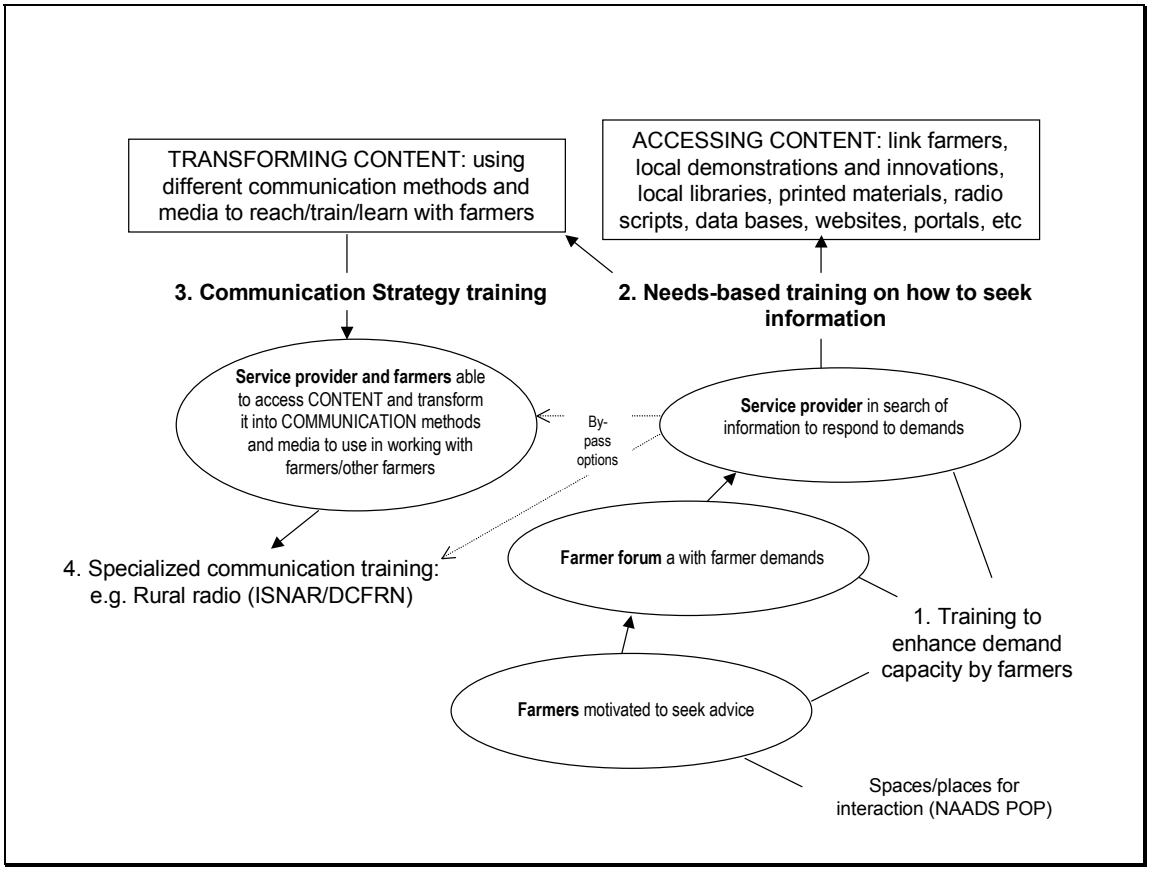
FAO has a large body of published materials including case studies and guidelines. The NAADS Secretariat and each District Coordinator, as well as Makerere University must have as complete a set as possible as reference materials for consultation. The consultant will request that FAO send these materials to Uganda.

Service Providers and Farmers

The training component for Service Providers to learn how to search for information and how to use communication methods and media to translate that information into

materials to enhance and complement practical training with farmers merits special attention.

During the February '03 mission, several opportunities were identified; the diagram below illustrates some of training-of-trainer topics that the Danida-funded project working with the DATICS will support (namely *2. Needs-based training on how to seek information*, and *3. Communication Strategy training*).



Beyond DATICS, the COARD project in Serere has offered to train service providers recommended by NAADS during the three of its four upcoming communication training workshops to be held in Jinja between March and May.

In Soroti and in Kibaale, the NAADS District Coordinators are looking into including a requirement for communication training in any MoU or contract with a service provider. In Kabale, the Acacia telecentre is exploring future roles in information dissemination in coordination with the NAADS District Coordinator. It is likely that in each district or region, opportunities will arise for a range of communication training events. Annex 8 includes an initial list of possible projects to consult with.

NAADS will need to have a cadre of communication trainers. Uganda has had many communication experiences, especially in the health sector, and there is a need to have an inventory of organizations and individuals that can provide training. Annex 9 includes

some tentative Terms of Reference for the preparation of such an inventory in the very near future.

Budget allocation and evolution

Indicative amounts

The NAADS budget for the first 7 years of operation is US$107.92 million which brings together a basket of donor funding[35]. The NAADS Core Document specifies that Component 1- Advisory and Information Services to Farmers is worth US$69.8 million (65%of the total) and will fund four activity areas: Orientation and Group Mobilisation; Participatory Planning; Farm Advisory Service Contracting; and, Information and Communications. The 2002-03 amount spent by the Secretariat was US$50,000 approximately; while each district received US$2,000. The total amount allocated to communication-related activities is higher because several other budget lines are tapped: personnel, training and sensitization (which includes workshops), vehicles, equipment, and operational budgets. NAADS also used additional, separate project resources to cover some items, as is the case with AV equipment from a Danida project that is not part of the basket funding[36]. The indicative figures allocated for communication operations for the 2003-04 fiscal year are US$105,000 for the Secretariat and US$36,000 for the NAADS Districts, ($2,400 each).

Allocation procedure

During the last two fiscal years, the amounts allocated to communication and information has not been based on work plans. The district amounts are the same for all districts and do not reflect either the number of sub-counties covered in each nor the extent of programme delivery in each. In contrast, the allocation for sensitization activities does have a multiplier based on the number sub-counties plus other factors including presence of other extension projects that have yet to be harmonized with NAADS. This example is relevant as in future it will be necessary to allocate funds for districts to reflect the extent and stage of roll-out in each one. Several of the NAADS District Coordinators have already identified the need for additional funding, especially to pay for broadcast airtime through private FM stations. In our discussions, the Finance Department expressed flexibility to increase funding if the needs were justified in the Communication and Information Strategy and Work plan. For 2003-04 the Secretariat will take the lead in preparing the Work plan. The allocation process in future years will need to be based increasingly more on district work plans. The Secretariat will need to communicate these decisions to the NAADS District Coordinators and get them engaged early on in the work planning process before the next fiscal year which begins on July 1st.

[35] World Bank Project Appraisal Document. 2001.

[36] To put this amount in perspective: the PMA Communication Strategy for the first three years is budgeted at UK£1,087,319, of which half is to be spent on the first year. The amount does not include the proposed full time communication specialist.



FAO's experience with large rural development investment projects indicates that up to 1.5% of the total cumulative investment should be allocated to Communication and Information activities. The proposal is to have the budget grow to that ceiling on the basis of the organization's capacity to implement cost-effective communication action plans with emphasis on the District as the driver.

The major budget items to consider include:

Item	Components	Decisions
Personnel	full time, part-time, short-term advisors	Define the budget source for staff
Production	Print, radio, TV, video, theatre, other	Sub-contract; demand field-testing of all drafts. Seek complementarity between Secretariat from District level production.
Broadcast and dissemination	Post, radio, TV, replay	Sub-contract (though not always for video playback). Separate Secretariat from District level broadcast and dissemination.
Training events	Secretariat staff, District coordinators, farmer organizations, service providers, others	Budget real costs even when other projects may provide scholarships (e.g. COARD)
Equipment	Focus on: digital cameras, audio-cassette players, rechargeable batteries and chargers, computers, printers and accessories, VCR playback units and UPS, consumables and incidentals	Outsource all video production. Purchase production equipment only when outsourcing does not make sense[37]. Consumables and incidentals need to be budgeted by district.

For NAADS to learn its way into the strategy, there is a need to start with the activities that each Districts can absorb and pilot. During the second mission in April we prepared a Secretariat work plan and we outlined possible district level work plans (Vol II). We were able to engage all NAADS District coordinators in reviewing the work planning tools that are provided in this report as Annex 8 as a first opportunity to plan for communication activities strategically. However, there is a need to follow-up with each coordinator, after all their engagement in the planning will be the only way for them to take ownership over the district activities. This is especially important as we emphasized the important of moving towards more local production of printed materials. In several cases we agreed to produce some materials centrally but use local content: this is the case with the district calendars and the radio programmes.

[37] If the Secretariat already has purchased equipment, only give equipment to districts on the basis of the strategic activities and attach a training requirement.

The balance between how much is done in-house and how much is outsourced will depend on each district coordinators' affinity with communication materials and methods. In all cases, the six steps of communication planning need to be covered. It is from these activities and the measured impact from the pilot activities that the NAADS communication budgets will evolve during subsequent years.

This means that the rationale and budgeting mechanisms will evolve from the experiences. Other district coordinators will need to be brought up to speed with this process as soon as possible; an action plan for that up scaling needs to be developed.

Learning process for monitoring & evaluation

Terms of reference based on work plan deliverables

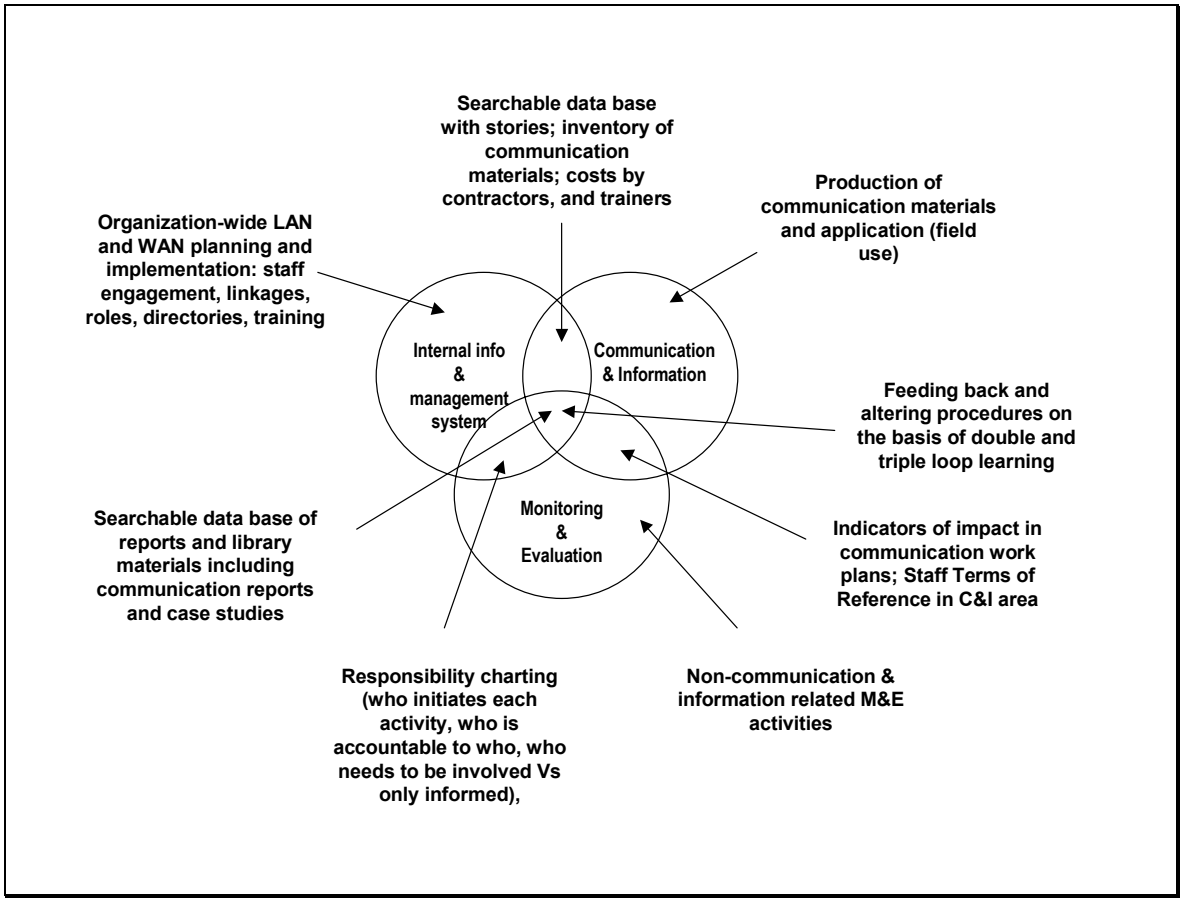
This proposed CIS puts additional responsibilities on the Secretariat staff as well as the NAADS District Coordinators. The work planning instruments will help define deliverables. We will be able to specify the Terms of Reference accordingly as each communication activity in the work plans defines products, use of the materials and measurable results.

The justification for having a C&I *team* will become increasingly evident as we develop the work plans. Even when communication activities are outsourced, the monitoring of the contractors' obligations takes staff time. Staff will need to ensure that contractors carry out the communication planning steps adequately; and this takes skill and experience. It is expected that the current staff will not have the time nor the range of skills to take on all the jobs; priorities will have to be set while additional staff can be added to the C&I Unit and as staff training opportunities are pursued.

Boundaries and overlap across units and functions

The CIS includes several dimensions that overlap with Monitoring and Evaluation functions[38] as well as with internal information management. The figure below shows some of the areas of overlap and some of the boundaries.

[38] In the Inception Report some examples are explored.



Accountability and Responsibility Charting

The above two sections show the urgent need to define who is accountable, responsible, needs to be consulted and needs to be informed in each activity area, or output. It is evident that NAADS Secretariat management configuration deserves attention.

The facts are that:

1. There is substantive overlap between the activities in Technical Services and in Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation;
2. The volume of information handled by the NAADS Secretariat is significant and is bound to grow exponentially;
3. These facts place pressure on staff as they try to allocate time to stay informed while implementing their tasks.

Accountability and responsibility charting is a participatory management tool designed to help organizations define who does what (see Annex 10[39]). Accountability and responsibility charting has the following advantages:

[39] A powerpoint presentation entitled "The Accountability and Responsibility Charting 'Tool'" will be shared with NAADS with permission from the management consulting firm SMG (www.smg.se), and with acknowledgement for the original work contributed to the slide show by Tom Bilmore (www.cfar.com).

it provides a road map that has been traveled before by others
it is objective and thus avoid arbitrariness 'cooked up on the spot' by outside consultants or advisors
it provides structure for discussions and analysis
it helps order the outputs of the discussion
it defines in advance the purpose and scope of an intervention
it provides a non-person-based vehicle for an intervention, with 'no hidden agendas' built in
it is testable and thus allows the organization to check out the intentions and type of knowledge of a outside consultant
it is a commonly held, participatory tool, and thus not the exclusive property of one party
if well managed, it defines how much and what personnel will co-produce, and where they will be merely consulted
it allows the organization to "do it themselves" next time around

The purposes of the responsibility charting tool are:

- To find out what each department (or each person) in an organization (or a part of an organization) is doing;
- To co-design what each department or person in an organization or a part of an organization SHOULD be doing;
- Either of the above can then be used to develop job descriptions (for the head of the department and, optionally, subordinates);
- To identify what is now delegated to subordinates in a firm or department;
- To identify what should be delegated to subordinates in a firm or department;
- To sort out inter-departmental, inter-organizational; or supplier-producer, or producer-client, interfaces (particularly useful when these are complex or involve 'turf battles');
- To design appropriate 'work sharing' formulae; and
- To test how well 'service management' principles are built into every day operations in an organization.

In the short run this tool will help the NAADS Managers come to terms with the specific roles of staff around major activity or programme areas by defining who is:

Accountable (or "Approving"): A person who either signs off or vetoes a decision before it is effective, or chooses from alternatives developed by the 'R' (responsible) role: (this person's) 'neck' on the line (i.e., if anything goes wrong);
Responsible: The person who takes the initiative in the particular area, develops the alternatives, analyses the situation, perhaps makes the initial recommendation, and takes action;
Consulted: A person who is (i.e. must be) consulted prior to a decision being reached, but who has no veto power;
Informed: A person who must be notified after a decision is taken (but before it is in the public domain) and who does not need to be consulted;

It will also signal: **blanks** to indicate no relationship to the particular output and **'?' or DK (for don't know)** indicate difficulty or ignorance (as opposed to no relationship), to be sorted out at a higher level in the organization.

The responsibility charts will help define who needs to read a report or be part of a meeting. It may also help NAADS define how it wants to develop its LAN and WAN configuration; and how it will process and store documentation in its library.

Types of learning

In general terms there are three complementary types of learning in organizations:

- Learning how to improve what we already do
- Learning about the conditions that enable or limit the performance of what we do
- Learning about the process by which we learn

The three types of learning can help NAADS improve what it does, how it does it, and how it learns to learn. The Communication and Information work plans will specify messages, target audiences, media and channels, use, and indicators of impact for each communication activity. The indicators of impact address the first type of learning, also known as single loop learning. An additional set of guiding questions are needed to address the second type of (double loop) learning where one seeks to understand how the context blocked or enhanced the performance of each activity. The third type of learning requires a broader analysis about the process by which we design and monitor communication activities; it too will need specific guiding questions. The table below outlines the types of learning, and some of the parameters to operationalise them.

	On what basis	Who initiates	Who responds	When
Single loop	Indicators of impact and means of verification in the communication work plans	NAADS District Coordinators; Secretariat (for its own work plans)	Secretariat C&I Unit and M&E staff	According to the work plan schedule
Double loop	Guiding questions	Secretariat C&I Unit staff	NAADS District Coordinators and M&E staff	On the basis of regular reporting
Triple loop	Guiding questions	M&E staff	NAADS District Coordinators and C&I staff	On the basis of regular reporting

Further assistance and possible inputs – short term scenarios

This Communication and Information Strategy report –and the associated Work Plan- sets a process in motion. The following are tentative one-year scenarios:

Scenario	Policy and resource	Staff skill and	Field implementation

	allocation	confidence	
1. Best case	An internal Communication and Information Policy is approved by the Board; Funds are allocated from internal resources for the work plan and additional staff	A Communication and Information team is in place; The district coordinators assemble realistic work plans; and The Secretariat is able to adapt the work plans and brief other districts	Pilot activities in the districts are implemented; Feedback begins to trickle in showing short term gains in awareness and understanding about the programme; and Impact studies quantify positive gains
2. Intermediate	An internal Communication and Information Policy is prepared but approval by the Board is delayed; Funds are allocated from internal resources for the work plan but procedures for disbursement are not in place; Additional staff is secured on a short term consulting basis	A Communication and Information team is in place but depends on short-term consultants; The district coordinators assemble work plans that require much backstopping; and The Secretariat is able to adapt the work plans delays CIS support to other districts	Pilot activities in the districts are implemented; Feedback begins to trickle in showing short term gains in awareness and understanding about the programme; and Impact studies are deferred
3. Worst case	An internal Communication and Information Policy is not prepared; Funds are allocated on a case-by-case basis from internal resources for the work plan; External funding is sought for additional staff	There is not a Communication and Information team in place; The district coordinators do not receive support to assemble realistic work plans; and The Secretariat improvises work plans for other districts	Pilot activities in the districts are delayed; Feedback shows limited gains in awareness and understanding about the programme; and Impact studies are not carried out

The type of further assistance and inputs that NAADS will need to be adjusted to the scenario that develops. The following are themes where further backstopping may be necessary:

Policy and resource allocation

- Coordination of a National Communication for Development Policy
- Cost-benefit review of impact

Staff skills and confidence

- Masters' level training for staff in Communication for Development
- Backstopping to help staff review the lessons from the first year of:
    - pilot activities;
    - training events;
    - definition of Terms of Reference for impact studies (outsourced)

Networking

- Ongoing updating of relevant projects and training opportunities that can be brought into the work plan



- Engaging NAADS in presenting its accomplishments in regional and international gatherings
- Sharing NAADS lessons through web links and external publications

Annexes

1. Clarification of TORs
2. People met (internal versions)
3. Documents consulted
4. Field protocol
5. Data base
6. FAQs
7. Work planning matrices
8. Projects to collaborate with
9. Indicative TORs for Inventory of communication trainers
10. Accountability and responsibility charting tool (PowerPoint)
11. Summary of the Worskshop with FM Radios, April 9th. '03