

# Strengthening Partnerships and Professionalization in Agricultural Extension in Guinea

Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) Project

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## ACRONYMS

AFD	French Development Agency
AIS	Agricultural innovation systems
ANAQ	National Quality Assurance Authority
ANPROCA	National Agency for Rural Promotion and Agricultural Advisory Services
ATA	Agricultural technical officer
AVENIR	Apprenticeship in Extension, Entrepreneurship and Rural Innovation
CRADER	Regional Consultation Framework for Rural Development Actors
CTA	Agricultural work supervisor
DLEC	Feed the Future Developing Local Extension Capacity project
EAS	Extension and advisory services
EKAP	Kaba Agricultural Service Company ( <i>Entreprise Kaba Agriculture Prestation</i> )
F2F	John Ogonowski and Doug Bereauter Farmer-to-Farmer Program
FEPAF-BG	Federation of Fruit Growers of Lower Guinea
FPPD	Federation of Producers of Fouta Djallon
FT	Farmer-trainers
GFRAS	Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services
IRAG	Agronomic Research Institute of Guinea
ISAV/F	Higher Agronomic and Veterinary Institute of Faranah
MAFF	Management advice for family farms
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
NGO	Nongovernmental organizations
ONCRA	National Office for the Coordination and Regulation of Agricultural Advisory Services
PNDA	National Agricultural Development Policy
PNDES	National Economic and Social Development Plan
PO	Producer organizations
RAAKS	Rapid (or relaxed) appraisal of agricultural knowledge systems
RGTA-DI	Guinean Network on Draught Animal and Integrated Development
SNPRV	Service for Rural Promotion and Agricultural Extension
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAAPP	West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

### *A1. Objectives*

In Guinea, the pluralism of providers is a major development that can contribute to improving the overall supply of agricultural extension and advisory services (EAS) if adequate measures are taken to facilitate complementarities between actors through partnerships and professionalize their activities.

The overall objective of this study was to generate elements of a strategy to strengthen the integration and professionalization of actors to improve access for producers and other value chain actors in Guinea to quality EAS. The specific objectives were to: (i) characterize public and private providers of EAS, (ii) analyze partnership dynamics between actors and, (iii) outline a process to foster professionalization through the setting up of a registration and accreditation system for EAS providers.

### *A2. Methodology*

Interviews were conducted with resource persons and key informants to collect data necessary to characterize EAS providers. The network mapping and relationship matrix tools were adapted and used for the identification and analysis of partnerships between stakeholders. The intensity of partnerships between EAS providers was measured and analyzed. Iterative and inclusive discussions with stakeholders and benchmarking of other relevant experiences of EAS professionalization were conducted to outline the process for the establishment of a registration and accreditation scheme for EAS providers. Other qualitative research techniques including formal and informal discussions with key stakeholders were used. Focus groups discussions were conducted to collect specific contributions from different groups of EAS providers. A multi-stakeholder workshop was organized to enrich, triangulate and complement data collected during individual interviews and group discussions.

## B. RESULTS

### *B1. Main EAS providers in Guinea*

Seven main types of EAS providers were identified, including one public sector actor (ANPROCA) and six private sector actors: producer organizations (PO), nongovernmental organizations (NGO), agrodealers, farmer-trainers, market women and consultancy firms). Six main areas of services corresponding to the diversity of demands were identified: (i) access to knowledge and information; (ii) facilitation, brokering and networking; (iii) capacity development; (iv) organizational development; (v) management decision-making support related to agribusiness; and (vi) expertise on specific or emerging themes. The rate of coverage of these service areas by the various providers was evaluated. None of the providers has the capacity to cover all six areas of service. Despite increasing efforts, the services offered are not yet fully demand-driven and don't meet the diversity of the demand. ANPROCA has the most diversified service, and appears to be the only structure that could potentially cover all of the areas if adequate financial and human resources were available. The other providers seem to have more or less specific niches of intervention. Farmer-trainers are mostly involved in the dissemination of good agricultural practices. Consultancy firms are specialized in capacity development, expertise provision on agribusiness development and, creation and management of agricultural enterprises. PO are more focused on organizational development, facilitation of processes and interactions with other actors. Market women services consist mainly in the provision of updated market information (prices, demand trends, consumers preferences) and the dissemination of information packaging and storage of agricultural products.

Different EAS providers show willingness to consolidate and diversify their service areas. However, developing a complete offer, such as covering all six areas, is not part of their objectives and prospects. The improvement of the overall coverage rate of EAS supply should be envisaged above all through the integration of the contributions of the various providers, which will require the strengthening of partnerships and coordination at both local and national levels.

## *B2. Collaborations among EAS providers*

Partnerships have several potential benefits not only for the EAS providers but also for the users (i.e. producers and other actors in agricultural value chains). They are a means of increasing and diversifying the target audience and the thematic coverage, thereby producing greater impacts and increasing efficiency in a context of scarce funding sources. The services and products exchanged by EAS providers within the framework of collaboration are diversified: logistical support, interface and networking, complementary expertise, information on agricultural inputs and equipment, knowledge on innovations and good agricultural practices, producer awareness, scaling up of experiences and capacity building.

There are partnerships of varying intensity between ANPROCA and private EAS providers. ANPROCA's mission also includes support for the emergence of a dynamic private sector providing EAS. ANPROCA considers partnerships as a means for improving the efficiency of its interventions, increasing its financial resources and mobilizing complementary expertise for implementing activities. ANPROCA plays a central role in the national agricultural extension and advisory system, particularly in terms of capacity development, knowledge management, establishing and strengthening agricultural advisory systems and relationships between stakeholders.

ANPROCA's preeminent role in capacity building is due to the diversity and quality of profiles and skills of its human resources, which enable it to provide trainings in a wide range of subjects for other providers. In the area of knowledge management, ANPROCA holds a central position because of its functional relationship with the Agricultural Research Institute of Guinea (IRAG). Its participation in regional research and development projects, such as the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP), gives it access to innovations that it can then pass on to other local EAS providers. Collaborations with other EAS providers give ANPROCA access to innovative tools and methods and enable it to enrich and renew the skills of its staff, thus improving the thematic coverage of its service offer. ANPROCA's agents assigned within the PO or NGO often benefit from additional training (including on emerging topic) offered and taken care of by other partners of the host organizations.

ANPROCA strongly dominates the landscape of EAS providers. But there are also relatively large flows of services between the other providers. The study identified and characterized the specific contributions and expectations of each type of provider in terms of partnerships.

The other EAS providers consider farmer-trainers first and foremost as a means of ensuring the scaling up of the good practices promoted and increasing performance in terms of the number of producers reached. The role of FT in the system would be even more important if there were a policy of continuous capacity development and valorization of local knowledge and farmer innovations. Agrodealers are a major actor in agricultural intensification. They play a decisive role in making inputs available, disseminating information on their characteristics and ensuring the development of the necessary capacities for their proper use. The complementary expertise that agrodealers, particularly those who are wholesalers, often help to mobilize, including at the regional and international levels, is important for improving the thematic coverage and strengthening the responsiveness of their services. The contribution of consultancy firms to other actors can be structured in two main areas. On the one hand, there is the provision of specialized advice and expertise on emerging themes and, on the other hand, the strengthening of the capacities of other extension systems through training activities, as well as support for monitoring, evaluation and experience capitalization. They nevertheless appear to be the most fragile of all providers.

NGO stand out for their contributions to the financing of activities, particularly for the benefit of PO, consultancy firms and, to a lesser extent, agrodealers. They also play an important role in the introduction of good agricultural practices and innovative EAS tools and methods, and in capacity building for other mechanisms. They facilitate the acquisition of logistical resources of farmer-trainers and are the first partners of consulting firms, which they often mobilize as service providers to support POs and individual producers.

POs are the most sought after EAS providers for developing collaborations. This is mainly due to the fact that they play several roles in the national agricultural advisory system. They are both providers and beneficiaries of EAS, providing interface, awareness raising, capacity building and scaling up. The

contribution of consultancies in partnerships focuses on the consolidation and expansion of other arrangements through support for innovation, capacity building or performance improvement through monitoring and evaluation activities. Consulting firms appear to be the providers that are least solicited for partnerships. Contributions of market women in the national agricultural advisory system includes mainly the provision of up-to-date market information, including prices, consumer demand and preferences. This information is very useful to other EAS providers in their activities to support agricultural entrepreneurship and, more generally, the market integration of producers. Market women are also an important actor for the dissemination of good practices in packaging and storage of agricultural products. Services they received from other EAS providers relate to access to knowledge on good storage and conservation practices (ANPROCA), training on marketing (NGO), and organization and training of producers. Relationships between women traders and other providers would likely intensify over the next few years considering the increasing investments in agricultural value chain development.

The level of intensity of partnerships is not always the same for the parties involved. The existence of asymmetries in the intensity shows the specific interest of each of the providers and the multilateral nature of the current landscape of EAS providers, hence the importance of coordination and partnerships to ensure a better coverage of the demands.

### *B3. Modalities and difficulties of partnerships*

There are two types of relationship arrangements between EAS providers. There are formal and informal relationships. Formalized relationships are those initiated and carried out by two or more organizations and subject to a written agreement or commitment, usually in the form of a convention. Non-formalized partnerships are those that are not embodied in a written document, verbal or tacit commitments and interpersonal relations serving as a basis for collaboration. They are most often the result of initiatives that are more individual than institutional. These relationships generally follow more opportunistic or occasional logics than a real long-term approach. More than 80 percent of current partnerships are not formalized.

All EAS providers recognize the potential added value of partnerships in conducting their activities and improving their performance. But this potential is not yet harnessed. The main difficulties encountered in the development of partnerships are as follows: (i) lack of information on opportunities and potential partners; (ii) lack of human resources; (iii) lack of funding and logistics; (iv) failure to meet commitments; (v) lack of skills for partnership management; (vi) differences in approaches, profiles and skills; and (vii) lack of a conducive framework. The institutional environment is not yet conducive enough to the development of partnerships between stakeholders. But the greatest difficulties are inherent to the weak intrinsic capacities of the actors. Efforts to promote partnerships will first have to start by strengthening the specific capacities of each type of EAS providers so that they are able to play their role more fully in the framework of collaborations.

### *B4. Approach for professionalizing EAS provision*

Professionalization is a necessity in the context of pluralistic agricultural advisory systems such as the one in Guinea, where a diversity of actors with heterogeneous profiles and skills often work to provide the same type of service. It then becomes important to put in place mechanisms to guarantee the quality of services, in particular by precisely defining the profiles and skills required for service delivery.

The proposed approach for implementing a system for professionalization through registration and accreditation of EAS providers is gradual and incremental. It consists of three steps: (i) awareness-raising and pre-registration of providers; (ii) participatory development of regulatory tools and a national capacity development plan for EAS providers (at individual and organizational levels); and; (iii) establishment of a coordinating and regulatory body. Suggestions were made for the preparation and implementation of each of these steps.

The characteristics of the body in charge of registration and accreditation were defined. In particular, this body should be independent, receive a legal mandate from the government, have credibility with EAS stakeholders, and have qualified human resources for the efficient fulfilment of its mandate. There is currently no national body that meets all the defined criteria. Four alternative options have been identified



and explored. Option one is where regulation and coordination activities are entrusted to the country forum of Guinea's agricultural advisory services, a body yet to be created. The second option is the creation of an independent structure dedicated solely to regulation, coordination and capacity building activities for EAS stakeholders. Option three is ANPROCA. It has the specific advantage that it is an institution that is well known, it has good territorial coverage and extensive knowledge of EAS issues in Guinea. Option four is the National Quality Assurance Authority (ANAQ) which already carries out certification and accreditation activities, particularly in higher education and scientific research.

Advantages and challenges of each option were identified and discussed. When making the final decision for a particular option one should consider its specific advantages, but above all the capacity and cost of the solutions that will be needed to manage its constraints and ensure efficiency and sustainability in the medium and long term. Lastly, a gradual approach can be taken, consisting of giving ANPROCA the means to play the regulatory and coordination functions on an interim basis until the regulatory body is put in place.

### C. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is a contribution to the modernization process of EAS in Guinea. The results generated will provide decision-making elements for actors concerned, particularly those in charge of steering the process. The following recommendations are made to ensure that the harnessing of these results is done efficiently and effectively leads to significant progress, particularly in the area of partnerships and professionalization of actors. Two sets of recommendations are formulated, one on partnership development and one on professionalization.

#### *C1. Recommendations for strengthening collaborations among providers*

**C1.1 Strengthen capacities of EAS providers.** Three capacity development actions are recommended. The first action is about strengthening capacity of providers to address the specific constraints that hinder their activities in providing EAS. For this purpose, government and development partners should develop and implement a national plan for strengthening capacity of EAS. The development of this plan will include an assessment of the specific capacity development needs of each category of providers. The second capacity development action recommended is the training of EAS providers on the management of partnerships. This training should enable each actor to develop capacities for seeking complementarities, negotiating and managing partnerships. The third capacity development action is related to knowledge management and communication of EAS organizations. It is advisable for each provider to improve its capacities and performance in the field of communication (especially external communication to make itself known), monitoring, evaluation and capitalization of its experiences, which can then be shared more easily with the other actors. This recommendation is formulated first of all EAS organizations.

**C1.2 Improve the accessibility of information on EAS stakeholders and opportunities.** An interactive platform should be set up for information sharing and knowledge management on stakeholders and EAS in Guinea. That platform will gather information on the profile of actors, their activities and areas of intervention. It could take the form of an interactive electronic directory that will be regularly updated by the institution in charge of registration and accreditation of EAS providers. This recommendation is mainly addressed to the government, development partners and ANPROCA, which has the mandate to animate the national agricultural advisory system.

**C.1.3. Establish and strengthen frameworks for consultation and exchanges.** We recommend that a national agricultural advisory forum be created to serve as an inclusive platform for the various actors to coordinate, exchange information and knowledge, explore and harness opportunities. This national platform should also have regional divisions to pursue, consolidate and feed the consultation and networking processes initiated at the national level. The Regional Consultation Framework for Rural Development Actors (CRADER) that are more or less functional in many administrative regions constitutes a good asset that can be adapted and used. It is recommended that the government and development partners give more support to existing frameworks, even informal ones, which enable actors to meet. Furthermore, adopting the value chain approach as a basis for agricultural investment planning

could help to better mobilize different service providers, while creating opportunities for partnerships and synergies.

## *C.2 Recommendation for professionalizing EAS provision*

**C.2.1. Adopt an inclusive approach and use synergies to develop regulatory instruments.** The approach to use for the development of regulatory tools (code of ethics, norms and standards, etc.) should be inclusive in order to guarantee their relevance and feasibility and ensure that they do not result in the exclusion of some categories of stakeholders. Once the tools have been developed and adopted, their application will be preceded by a period of awareness-raising in order to enable the various actors concerned to comply before the beginning of the enforcement. It is important that the adoption of regulatory instruments be directly accompanied by the establishment and capacitation of the institution in charge of their application. It is advisable to seize the opportunity of the current drafting process of the agro-sylvo-pastoral orientation law to include provisions relating to the regulatory and coordination tools of the EAS in Guinea.

**C.2.2. Update and enrich the training curricula for EAS providers.** The revision and enrichment of training curricula are essential to reduce the gap that currently exists between current EAS and the new vision of professional EAS in Guinea. The curricula should be revised to improve the match between the skills and competencies of extension workers and the demands for services they have to meet. Similarly, it is advisable to develop modular training courses for certification or qualification, enabling extension workers to keep up to date with the demands for services, but also with the norms and standards that will be set by the regulatory tools. The enrichment of the curricula should include modules for development of organizational capacities of EAS organizations in relation to the standards that will be set, and more generally in relation to the capacity development needs of EAS organizations. This recommendation is addressed to academic and professional agricultural training centers, which should make the renewal of curricula part of their internal dynamics to strengthen the adequacy between training and the demands. It is desirable that the implementation of this recommendation should lead to the establishment of a platform for permanent consultation between the academia and organizations that recruit graduates.

Lastly, the context of this study is marked by the global and unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic which poses to EAS the challenge to find suitable tools and methods to continue supporting producers and actors in the agricultural value chains, albeit at a distance henceforth. We recommend that awareness and capacities of EAS providers be strengthened for efficient and sustainable harnessing of the potential of ICTs. Government and development agencies should facilitate and support this dynamic by building the necessary infrastructure and facilitating the consolidation and scaling up of relevant and successful initiatives of use of ICTs in EAS. It would also be important to enrich these local experiences through the benchmarking and piloting of other relevant interesting ICTs tools that have demonstrated their potential in improving accessibility and the performance of EAS including beyond the context of Covid-19.

### **About Digital Green**

Digital Green is a global development organization that empowers smallholder farmers to lift themselves out of poverty by harnessing the collective power of technology and grassroots-level partnerships. Together with our grassroots partners, Digital Green creates digital solutions for rural communities around the world. Before we develop these solutions, we listen closely to people and to data. We seek to understand the local context and build technology that is of the community and for the community. As we do so, we continually test our solutions, adapt them and test them again to ensure their effectiveness.

### **About the Project**

USAID's Bureau for Food Security (BFS) and Digital Green have launched the five-year Feed the Future Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) project, in partnership with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), Care International and multiple resource partners. By collaborating with USAID missions, host country governments, public and private extension advisory service (EAS) providers, rural civil society organizations, and host country research institutes, DLEC helps national extension systems become more effective, accountable, scalable, and sustainable.

# INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

Agricultural extension and advisory services (EAS) provide knowledge brokering functions and facilitate interactions between actors and stakeholders in agricultural innovation systems (AIS). They facilitate not only the identification and expression of demand for information, knowledge, innovations and technologies relevant to producers, but also the participatory development and efficient use of solutions. EAS can contribute to the creation and securing of decent jobs, especially for rural women and youth, and to the sustainable development of value chains and territories (Teysier et al., 2019).

The Government of Guinea recognizes the importance of EAS for the achievement of the economic and social development and, the sustainable environmental management objectives underlying the various planning documents. However, it is also aware that despite efforts engaged in recent years, EAS in their current state still fall far short of the needs (quantitatively and qualitatively) of producers and other actors in the agricultural value chains (MacNairn and Davis, 2017). EAS are not able to fulfil their role as a catalyst for the technical and organizational innovations needed for agricultural transformation as advocated in the National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES), the National Agricultural Development Policy (PNDA) and the various agricultural investments.

Based on this observation, a reform of Guinea's national agricultural extension and advisory system was undertaken in 2019 with the support of development partners (Djamen et al., 2019). This process initially led to the definition of new strategic and operational orientations for EAS thanks to the support of the French Development Agency (AFD). The inventory carried out in the framework of EAS reform highlighted several major transformations that should be considered to make agricultural extension and advisory services more effective.

The dynamics of diversification of EAS providers observed in several other developing countries is part of the major transformation of EAS in Guinea (FAO and KIT, 2015; Djamen, 2019a). The National Agency for Rural Promotion and Agricultural Advisory Services (ANPROCA) is the public organization in charge of agricultural advisory services. Given its institutional mandate, ANPROCA occupies a central position in the national EAS system, but private actors have been emerging for the past two decades (DLEC, 2019). These include the private sector (agrodealers, consultancy firms, individual consultants), nongovernmental organizations (NGO), producer organizations (PO) and farmer-trainers. The latter are interested and skilled farmers involved as agricultural advisers voluntarily and/or in the framework of collaborations with projects, public, private, or NGO extension organizations. Their activities consist in the dissemination of innovations and sometimes provision of advice to other producers in their communities.

Moreover, some private organizations, initially not involved in agricultural development business services, have emerged, and are implementing one or several activities related to EAS. This is the case, for example, of support services for the digitalization of EAS (mobile telephone companies, digital application developers etc.). The emergence of new EAS providers is due to the difficulties of the public service, but also mainly to the increase and diversification the demand for services and opportunities for financing (Djamen, 2019a). Producers no longer only need information on innovations and technologies to increase productivity. They also require support in decision-making for the choice and efficient use of good agricultural practices, marketing of produce, continuous development of capacities and interactions with actors in value chains, and agricultural and rural development. The pluralism of EAS actors in Guinea bodes well for the improvement of the overall supply. Indeed, it has been found in different parts of the world that the services offered by non-state providers are often diversified and complementary to the supply of public services (Umali-

Deininger, 1997). In some cases, the service delivery by private sector even appeared to be more efficient (Ojha and Morin, 2001).

The renewed vision of EAS in Guinea, also reflected in ANPROCA's new vision, recognizes the potential benefits of pluralistic EAS and sees this new situation as a lever for improving the overall supply (Box 1). This new orientation calls for the transformation of EAS from an institutionally fragmented parallel system of public and non-state actors into a well-coordinated, harmonized and regulated pluralistic system with multiple providers responding to the diverse and evolving needs of farmers and other beneficiaries.

*Box 1. Strategic orientation of agricultural advisory services in Guinea*

New vision of EAS in Guinea

“In Guinea, by 2028 (in 10 years) in line with national agricultural, economic and social development objectives: the national agricultural advisory system is dynamic and pluralistic, and provides efficient and coordinated quality advisory support services, responding to the diversified and evolving demands of producers, their organizations and other value chain actors.”

ANPROCA's vision

"A competent and dynamic structure offering, in synergy with other actors, high quality agricultural extension advisory services driven by demand."

Recent studies revealed that the potential benefits of the diversification of EAS actors in Guinea are not yet fully realized (Djamen et al., 2019). The inclusive access of producers to quality EAS services remains problematic. The plurality of providers has not yet produced the expected positive results in terms of integration of services and improvement of the relevance and geographical and thematic coverage of EAS. It appeared that, beyond the issue of the organizational capacities of providers, the deficit in the overall supply of quality EAS is due in particular to a lack of coordination and, more specifically, to insufficient synergies and partnerships between the various providers (DLEC, 2019). In fact, partnerships are important not only for complementarities in service provision, there are also critical in order to take advantage of a wide range of expertise and resources. They generally entail for organizations involved jointly planning and execution of activities with a view to accomplishing agreed-upon objectives while sharing the costs, risks, and benefits incurred in the process (Spielman et al., 2007). Ojha and Morin (2001) highlighted that the promotion of partnerships and the designing of solutions to constraints hindering their development and implementation are key for the efficiency of pluralistic EAS systems. Indeed, the development of partnerships has many potential benefits, but it also requires specific capacities, the acquisition and management of which often present organizations with the challenge of a new learning (Box 2).

Furthermore, the diversification of providers potentially offers EAS users the possibility of choosing the providers they consider most suitable to provide them with quality services. However, it also brings new challenges such as competition for resources, reluctance to share information and participate in learning, duplication of efforts and contradictory messages (Djamen, 2013). For similar types of activities, providers of EAS can mobilize workers with widely varying profiles and skills. This heterogeneity of profiles is likely to affect the quality of the services provided to producers and other value chain actors. Experiences from countries such as South Africa and Uganda with similar problems show that, beyond any measures that can be taken, professionalization is the key solution. Professionalization is defined as the social process by which any business or occupation is transformed into a true profession of the highest integrity and competence. This process involves the establishment of required qualifications, a professional body or association to oversee the conduct of members of the profession and some degree of demarcation between skilled and unskilled amateurs (Wikipedia 2014 as cited by Terblanche, 2017). In Guinea, the reform of the agricultural advisory system has advocated professionalization as a means of guaranteeing the quality of the services provided and also and above all to enable the

recognition and harnessing of the potential of private agricultural advisory organizations. The implementation of this professionalization is still hampered by the lack of an operational strategy.

*Box 2. Skills for Partnership Management at the Organizational Level*

Partnerships require collaboration, cooperation, negotiation, and communication. These elements are skills that can be acquired and managed at the organizational level. The FAO Corporate strategy on capacity development stress the need for relationship capacities by organizations (FAO, 2010). The document goes beyond individual and organizational capacity and also considers enabling environment-level capacities. Relevant elements to partnerships at this level include governance and power structures, which will affect the organizational relations. In a paper entitled “*The New Extensionist*,” Sulaiman and Davis (2012:11) elaborate other skills needed by extension organizations in the area of “relationships.” These skills include “clearly defining authority, roles and responsibilities, and resources; building trust; creating time and space for learning from one another.” Other related competencies for partnerships include networking, alliance or coalition building, advocacy, and engaging in strategies and political processes.

It is not easy to build these competencies within extension organizations. Many of the skills must be learned by doing rather than from a textbook. To be better partners, organizations should first build individual skills among leaders and managers, and then go into partnerships with an awareness of and commitment to developing these skills as they partner.

References: Spielman et al (2007); FAO (2010); Sulaiman and Davis (2012); Windon and Stollar (2019)

It is in this context that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through its Mission in Guinea, committed to support the reform of agricultural extension and advisory services. This support focuses on strengthening pluralism and the effectiveness of EAS providers as a lever to facilitate inclusive access to quality EAS for producers and value chain actors. It is in this perspective that this study was commissioned by the USAID Mission in Guinea and conducted by the Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) project.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this study was to outline elements of a strategy for strengthening partnerships and professionalization in EAS delivery so as to improve access of producers and other agricultural value chain actors to quality EAS in Guinea.

The specific objectives were to:

- i. Characterize public and private providers of agricultural extension and advisory services in order to identify complementarities and opportunities for synergy.
- ii. Analyze partnership dynamics between EAS providers to highlight measures to enhance their effectiveness and sustainability.
- iii. Outline an approach to setting up a registration and accreditation system for providers to strengthen professionalization in EAS.

This report is structured into three main parts. The first part presents the methodological approach that was developed and implemented. This approach was participatory, with strong stakeholder involvement in carrying out the diagnosis, analyzing issues and exploring options for strengthening partnerships and professionalization in EAS delivery. The second part details results generated, including the characteristics of EAS providers, the dynamics of partnerships, and the outlined approach for the registration and accreditation of EAS providers. The third part includes a conclusion and recommendations for the strengthening of synergies and the professionalization of EAS providers and, continuing the process initiated by this study.

# METHODOLOGY

## METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The methodological approach developed to conduct this study was participatory and iterative. It was articulated in three main stages corresponding to the specific objectives (Table 1). The first stage was devoted to analyzing the context and characterizing the actors. The aim was to understand the recent changes in agricultural extension and advisory services in Guinea with the new challenges, opportunities and initiatives undertaken by the government for a better management of the pluralism of stakeholder. This characterization also aimed to highlight the specific roles of each provider in relation to the provision of EAS. It was a question of better understanding activities of ANPROCA, which is the public provider of EAS, but also to have a better knowledge of the different actors that today make up the private sector. Data on features of the different providers, their practices and their intervention environment were necessary for the analysis and interpretation of the partnerships they developed or did not develop with other actors. Interviews were conducted with resource persons to collect data necessary to characterize the actors. The network mapping tool was used (Schiffer, 2007), it is a diagnostic and strategic planning tool for networking. It enabled the identification and description of the main actors including EAS providers in relation to their various interventions that contribute to the formation of agricultural advisory provision.

*Table 1. Different stages of the methodological approach*

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Tools and methods</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>1. Characterization of Actors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Literature review</li> <li>- Network mapping</li> <li>- Interviews with resource persons</li> </ul>	characteristics and typology of the main public and private providers of EAS in Guinea
<b>2. Partnership Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relationship matrix</li> <li>- Definition and assessment of the intensity of relationships</li> <li>- Multi-stakeholder workshop and focus groups</li> </ul>	Typologies of services and products exchanged in partnerships Specific contributions and expectations of suppliers Modalities and difficulties of partnerships Recommendations for strengthening partnerships
<b>3. Outline of the Registration and Accreditation Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Literature review</li> <li>- Interviews with resource persons</li> <li>- Workshop interactions</li> </ul>	Typology of actors concerned with registration and accreditation Approach to the development of the tools and the regulatory body

The second step was the analysis of partnerships between the main suppliers identified and characterized in the previous stage. The tools used for this purpose were the relationship matrix (Rapid (or relaxed) appraisal of agricultural knowledge systems (RAAKS)) as described by Salomon and Engel (1997), a workshop and focus groups. The RAAKS was adapted and used to systematically characterize the interfaces and interactions between agricultural advisory providers (linkages, intensity) and analyze constraints and opportunities for improvement.

The matrix of relationships was constructed and analyzed in a participatory manner. This analysis was carried out in three stages. In the first stage, each provider commented on the existence of relationships with other providers from both the public (ANPROCA) and private sectors. Then, for all the partnership relationships identified, each supplier specified its specific contributions and

expectations in relation to the other actors involved. Finally, the intensity of the different relationships was assessed for each category of supplier.

The intensity of partnerships was operationally defined as the frequency and duration of collaborations that resulted in joint activities. It is an indicator of the importance of the partnership developed for the achievement of the objectives of one or both parties involved in a collaboration. It was measured qualitatively. Three levels of intensity were defined: "high", "medium" and "low."

- High intensity: The partnership is essential for the achievement of the results of one or both partners. This partnership is systematically taken into account in the process of planning and implementation of activities. It is a necessary and long-term relationship.
- Medium intensity: Occasional or intermittent partnership to improve the efficiency of interventions. It is a very useful partnership, but not indispensable for the basic functioning of the agricultural advisory system of the actors involved.
- Low intensity: Joint activities are rare, sporadic or opportunistic. Their impact on performance of organizations involved is generally limited. The complementarities or potential benefits of collaboration are not yet sufficiently perceived or exploited by one or both partners.

It should be noted that the level of intensity of a relationship is not necessarily the same for the parties involved. Collaboration may be more necessary for one of the actors than the other. For example, for agrodealers, collaboration with ANPROCA is crucial for the deployment and expansion of their activities, because ANPROCA, which is well established geographically, facilitates contact with producers. Conversely, the contribution of agrodealers to ANPROCA (information on inputs, and capacity building to a lesser extent) is important, but not essential.

The third step of the methodology consisted in outlining the approach for the implementation of a registration and certification system for agricultural advisory providers. It consisted in benchmarking of and mobilization on relevant examples of EAS professionalization processes, such as in Uganda and South Africa (Zwane, 2014; Terblanche, 2017). In addition, qualitative research techniques such as key informant interviews, as well as formal and informal discussions with resource persons were used. This included establishing the demand for the professionalization of EAS, and more specifically the expected impact of EAS provider registration and certification, the mechanism to be put in place and the gradual process to be deployed in this regard.

*Table 2. Profile and number of actors who participated in the process*

<b>Profile of actors</b>	<b>Number met</b>
ANPROCA staff	7
Consulting firms	4
Agrodealers	8
Producer organizations	6
NGO	5
Farmer-trainers	3
Development projects	4
USAID Mission in Guinea	2
Market women	6
Agricultural training institutions	7
Other resource persons	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>

Resource persons met were producers and representatives of their organizations, ANPROCA field officers and agents, representatives of agrodealers, NGO, technical partners, agricultural training and research, farmer-trainers and consulting firms. In addition, a multi-stakeholder workshop was organized in Kindia on 20 and 21 February 2020 to cross-check and complete the data collected

during the individual interviews. Focus groups were organized to collect specific contributions from different groups of suppliers. All the results of the group work were presented and validated in plenary sessions. The agenda and the list of participants are presented in Annexes 1 and 2 of this report respectively. In addition, the profile and number of actors met in the framework of the data collection activities (interviews, focus groups, workshop) are summarized in Table 2.

#### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The implementation of the study was constrained by a number of factors that affected data collection activities in particular. These were mainly difficulties to travel to certain localities to meet some of the resource persons identified. These difficulties were linked to political tensions in certain localities (e.g., the Fouta Djallon area) or to the lack of material time to reach very remote localities (e.g., Forest Guinea). However, the diversity of EAS providers was represented at the consultation workshop organized in Kindia to complete and deepen the analyses carried out on the basis of data collected from the individual interviews, focus-group discussions and literature review. In addition, relevant information collected during a previous mission on the topic of agricultural advisory services was mobilized to fill the data gap. Thus, the results of interviews conducted in 2019 with the Federation of Producers of Fouta Djallon (FPFD) were integrated into the analyses on the provision of advisory services and the development of partnerships by producer organizations.

The small sample size of the various actors interviewed was not sufficient to conduct statistical analyses and establish more accurately the scope of certain facts described. Nevertheless, the diversity and quality of the actors met made it possible to have a fairly broad perspective and to be able to triangulate the data. It was initially planned to organize a second round of interviews and a final workshop to report the results and discuss the operationalization of the recommendations of the study. The global health crisis of Covid-19, which worsened from March 2020, did not allow this meeting to take place, travels and organization of face-to-face meetings were strongly restricted. Nevertheless, the draft versions of the document were shared with the actors and stakeholders. Their remarks and feedback were collected and used to consolidate the document.

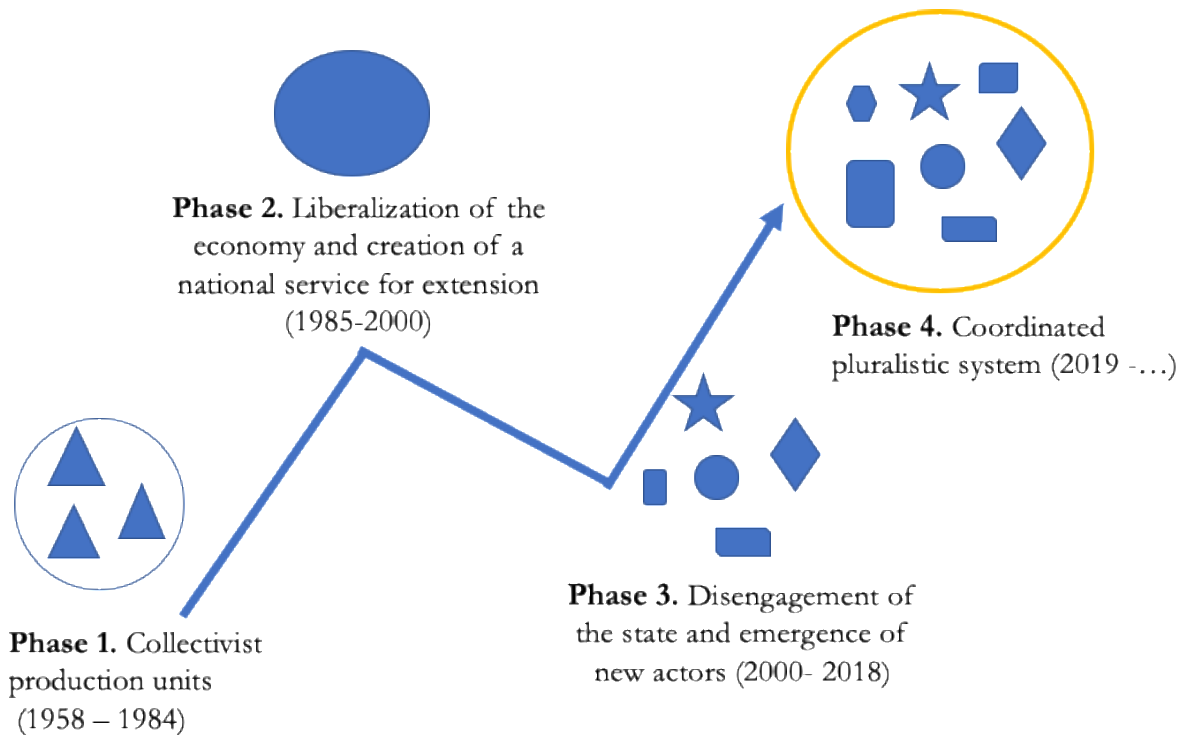


## RESULTS

### CONTEXT AND EVOLUTION OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION IN GUINEA

#### *Evolution of agricultural extension in Guinea*

Most of the material presented in this sub-section is drawn from the document elaborated in 2019 for the modernization of the agricultural extension in Guinea (Djamen et al., 2019). The history of EAS in Guinea includes several evolutions and disruptions, highlighting four distinct periods from the point of view of strategic and operational orientations as well as priority objectives and the configuration of the stakeholders' landscape (Figure 1).



*Figure 1. Different phases of evolution of EAS in Guinea*

The first phase is that of state collectivist agricultural production units. It corresponds to the regime of the First Republic (1958-1984), which was socialist-oriented. This post-colonial period is characterized by a state monopoly on all economic sectors of the country. The State created collectivist production units, notably the Agricultural Production Cooperatives (CAP) in 1960, the Squads for the promotion of the use of draught animal for agricultural and the Mechanized Production Brigades (BMP) in 1975, and then the District Agropastoral Farms (FAPA) in 1978. Important means were deployed for mechanization and motorization, following the example of the *kolkhozes* in the communist countries of Eastern Europe in the years 1945 to 1980. These units were staffed by young people leaving agricultural training centers. During this first period, supervision, capacity development and extension services for collectivist production units were provided by the Centers for Rural Modernization (CMR) set up by the State (Guiella, 2011). Most for the agricultural development officers and managers were mobilized for the operation of these production units. Family farms did not benefit from technical support from the state technical services, but they had to provide part of their production (in-kind taxes) to the administration according to a pre-established system of standards.

The second period in the history of extension in Guinea is that of economic liberalism and the creation of a national extension service corresponding first to the advent of the military regime and

then of the second republic marked by a disruptive and strong orientation toward economic liberalism (MacNairn and Davis, 2017). It ran from 1984 to the late-1990s. During this phase, a restructuring of agricultural services was undertaken with the aim of developing and better harnessing of the potential of agricultural research and EAS as a lever for improving performance of the agricultural sector. This was the end of the state production system and a return to a strategy of support for family farms. The Institute of Agronomic Research of Guinea (IRAG) and the Agricultural Extension Service (SVA) were created and four years later evolved into the National Service for Rural Promotion and Agricultural Extension (SNPRV). The objective of the latter was to contribute to increasing agricultural productivity through the implementation of "Training and Visit" extension method, supported financially by the World Bank, as in several other African countries (CORAF, 1998).

The third phase is that of the disengagement of the state and the emergence of new actors in agricultural advisory services. It begins toward the end of the 1990s and continues until the end of 2010. It is marked in particular by the adoption of the Structural Adjustment Plan in 1989 to curb the economic crisis. This measure resulted in the State's disengagement from most of the productive sectors, including agriculture, and refocusing of activities on the definition of strategic orientations, coordination and regulation. The civil service has been drastically reduced, economic activities have been liberalized, etc. This has led to a significant reduction in the number of civil servants, and to the liberalization of economic activities. The agricultural research and advisory services are seriously weakened and lacking in material and human resources due to the cessation of World Bank financing at the beginning of the 2000s. The difficulties of the public EAS service have coincided with the emergence of new suppliers whose activities have increase in volume over the years. These include the umbrella organizations of producers' organizations such as the Federation of Producers of Fouta Djallon, NGO, consultancy firms, agrodealers and farmer -trainers.

The fourth phase is marked by a pluralistic, regulated and coordinated agricultural extension and advisory system. It began with the reform of Guinea's agricultural advisory system, initiated in 2019. It is characterized by the recognition of the pluralism of actors as a strong and irreversible trend that can be exploited to improve the supply of EAS both qualitatively and quantitatively. It differs from the third phase by the state's willingness and commitment to formalize the pluralism of actors, to better coordinate the diversity of stakeholders and to ensure a strategic repositioning of ANPROCA. This phase is also characterized by a more holistic approach of EAS (global approach of farm, value chain approach, consideration of the diversity of EAS users) and the increased importance given to the market integration of farms and the issues of resilience, particularly with regard to climate change and variability.

#### *Strengthening coordination: A pillar of EAS reform in Guinea*

The strategic framework for agricultural advisory services in Guinea developed in 2019 calls for strengthening coordination among service providers. At the operational level, this translates into institutional reform to broaden ANPROCA's mandate to all rural sub-sectors. This reform will enable it to go beyond the agriculture sub-sector to also intervene in the livestock, fisheries, water and forestry sub-sectors. The strategic framework for EAS calls for the development and implementation of measures to strengthen coordination and regulation. In particular, it is planned to initiate and strengthen the professionalization of EAS through the establishment of a registration and accreditation system for providers. In addition, the reform advocates the establishment of a professional code of ethics, as well as norms and standards for the provision of EAS.

In addition, the reform provided that mechanisms and good practices for strengthening synergies and collaboration between actors should be further promoted to enhance convergence and efficiency in interventions. This implies, among other things, the establishment of a national forum of agricultural and rural advisory service stakeholders and the systematic integration of appropriate coordination mechanisms in programs financed by development partners.

## The national agricultural extension and advisory system in Guinea

The national agricultural advisory system in Guinea consists of a diverse set of actors with specific roles. These actors can be grouped into three main categories: (i) users of EAS services, (ii) service providers and, (iii) support services that represent the enabling environment (Figure 2)

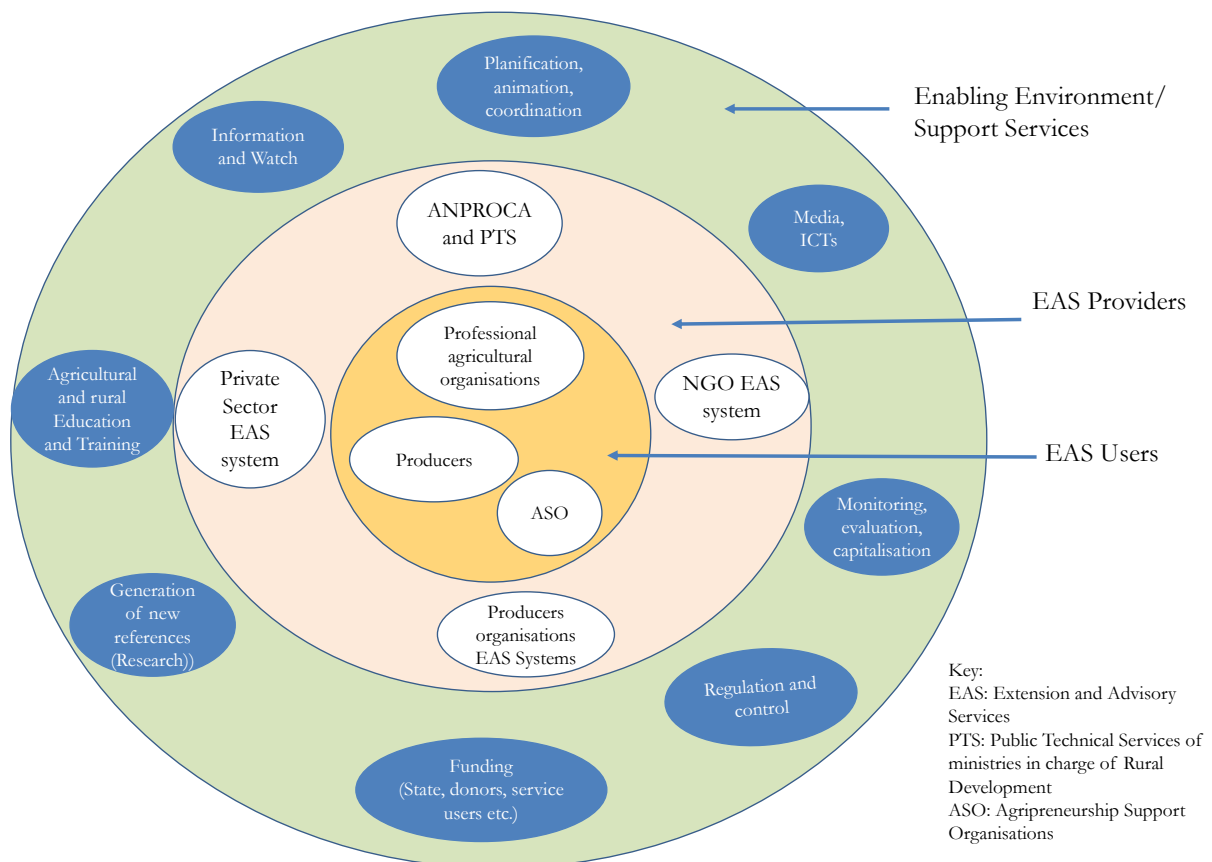


Figure 2. Main actors in the national agricultural extension and advisory system

Users of EAS in Guinea are numerous and can be grouped into three main categories. First, there are producers participating in individual or group EAS. The second category includes producers' organizations, while the third category is made up of organizations providing support for agricultural entrepreneurship (e.g. incubators, banks and microfinance institutions etc.). EAS organizations already have more or less strong relationships with individual producers and even their organizations, but collaboration with the entrepreneurial support organizations is still weak. The potential demands of this third category of users are still little known and consequently little considered by the various providers.

Farm advisory service providers are organizations that offer services related to one or more of the four functions of farm advisory services (information and knowledge, decision support, capacity building and, facilitation of processes and interactions). Four main types of providers of agricultural advisory services can be distinguished in Guinea. The first type is made up of state organizations, in this case the National Rural Promotion and Agricultural Advisory Agency (ANPROCA) and the technical services of the ministries in charge of the other sub-sectors of agricultural development (livestock, fisheries, aquaculture, agroforestry). The second type includes private sector organizations that provide agricultural advisory services with a view to generating economic benefits. This is particularly the case for consultancy firms, agrodealers, and market women. The third type of provider includes farmer-trainers and producers organizations that develop local agricultural advisory activities in addition to other activities they already carry out in the agricultural sector. Finally, the fourth type is mainly made up of NGOs that provide EAS as part of their

humanitarian assistance activities, the empowerment of vulnerable groups or the promotion of social equity.

Support functions are those functions whose effectiveness is critical to the efficient planning and implementation of EAS activities. These support functions include: coordinating advisory systems and facilitating support, coordinating exchange networks, developing financial engineering and managing funds dedicated to advisory services, monitoring-evaluation to capitalize on and learn from field experiences, renewing and enriching references (renewing messages, approaches and tools) through research, training agents, information and monitoring (Teyssier et al., 2019). The modernization of agricultural advisory services in Guinea also involves revitalizing these different support functions. Indeed, several of these functions are currently poorly or not at all carried out because of weak capacities of the actors concerned. For example, the generation of new references and innovations is weak due to the difficulties of agricultural research. Similarly, there is a problem of adequacy between the current agricultural training curricula and the competences needed to enable agricultural advisers to provide quality services that meet users' demands. Coordination and facilitation functions are still lacking at both national and regional level. Furthermore, the geographical distribution of the organizations that have to provide support functions varies greatly, whereas the majority of providers have very localized arrangements outside ANPROCA, which has relatively good territorial coverage (Figure 3).

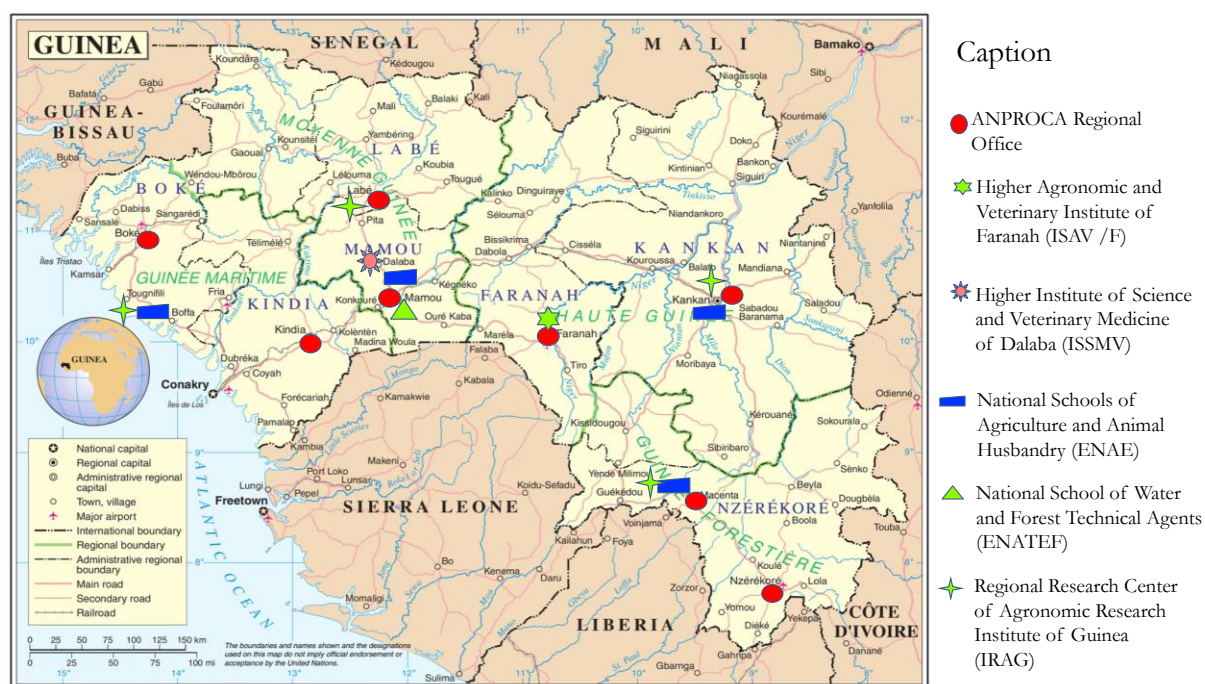


Figure 3. Geographical location of some key EAS support services in Guinea

### Features of providers of extension and advisory services in Guinea

There are no official statistics yet on the organizations currently encountered in the different categories of suppliers. Nevertheless, interviews with stakeholders revealed that not all types of providers have the same weight in terms of field presence or thematic coverage. The analysis revealed that the types of providers most commonly encountered and whose services are most in demand are: ANPROCA, NGO, PO, agrodealers, consulting firms, farmer-trainers (FT) and market women. Therefore, the analysis of partnerships focused on these seven main categories.

### *The National Agency for Rural Promotion and Agricultural Advice*

The National Agency for Rural Promotion and Agricultural Advice is the national structure in charge of providing public agricultural advisory services. Legally, it has the status of a public administrative establishment with legal personality and enjoys financial and management autonomy. It was created by Decree D/035/PRG/SGG/2012 of 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and is placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Its mission is to ensure the design, development, implementation and monitoring of the Government's policy on rural promotion and agricultural advisory services. At the operational level, this mission includes a set of diversified activities that make ANPROCA the central structure of the national EAS system in Guinea (*Box 3*). The level of operationalization of these activities varies greatly. The dissemination of technologies and good agricultural practices as well as capacity building of producer organizations have been relatively well ensured so far. Nevertheless, several other activities such as those related to the development of EAS tools and methods, the capitalization of experiences or the coordination of the national agricultural advisory system are still underdeveloped.

#### *Box 3. Operational variations of ANPROCA's mission*

In accordance with its mission, ANPROCA's main roles are to:

- Design, develop and promote national strategies and programs for the dissemination and adoption of agricultural technologies and practices adapted to family and commercial agricultural production systems in Guinea;
- Develop and disseminate tools and methods for on-demand support-counseling and coaching for producer organizations and other actors in the sector;
- Participate in capacity building of professional and inter-professional organizations;
- Monitor, evaluate and capitalize on programs, experiences and good practices in the dissemination and adoption of technologies and develop regional and international collaboration;
- Coordinate and develop consultation and harmonization of the different approaches and actions of EAS;
- Coordinate regional programs for on-farm trials in collaboration with IRAG;
- support the deployment of the agricultural advisory system throughout the national territory;
- Harness endogenous knowledge and farmers' innovations;
- Provide the required support for the emergence of a dynamic private sector for the provision of agricultural services, supply of agricultural inputs and equipment.

A new vision of ANPROCA has been defined within the framework of the participatory and iterative process of reviewing its organizational capacities and co-constructing strategies and actions to enable it to fulfil its mandate more fully. This vision is also guided by the strategic framework of EAS in Guinea and the national objectives for sustainable agricultural development. It is formulated as follows: "A competent and dynamic structure offering, in synergy with other actors, demand-driven quality agricultural advisory services."

This vision emphasizes that ANPROCA is well aware of its strengths, but also of its shortcomings, and is determined therefore to become more innovative and proactive, and to adopt adjustments necessary at strategic, managerial and operational levels to sustainably increase its performance. ANPROCA recognizes that the nature of the demand to which it must respond is plural, evolving and complex. This demand can come from crop farmers as well as from livestock keepers, producers' organizations and other actors operating in different links of agricultural value chains.

The reformed system is marked by the evolution of the effective offer of services from the current focus on agricultural advice and support for the structuring of the agricultural profession for a more plural range of services. ANPROCA catalogue of service can be structured in four major thematic areas, namely: (i) provision of EAS in their various forms and establishment of a national center of

expertise on EAS, (ii) development and promotion of innovative advisory tools and methods; (iii) management of agricultural knowledge and information; and (iv) coordination of the strategic framework EAS (Figure 2). The evolution of ANPROCA's services is the result of a strategic repositioning made necessary by the emergence of new providers and the plurality enshrined in the strategic EAS framework. The challenge for ANPROCA is also to strengthen and renew its added value compared to other players and to ensure better return on public investment in EAS.

#### *Nongovernmental organizations*

A large number of NGO currently provide EAS to agricultural actors in Guinea. Their interventions are often part of broader agricultural and rural development initiatives that may also include the provision of inputs and credit, or even education or health care services. Some NGO collaborate with agricultural research institutes and farmers' organizations to develop or promote innovations relevant to sustainable agricultural intensification. As already highlighted in other African countries (GFRAS and Triple-Line, 2011), the NGO involved in the provision of agricultural advisory services in Guinea are very diverse. They can be grouped into three main categories. Firstly, there are local NGO operating in one or more regions of the country, for example the Guinean Animal Traction and Integrated Development Network which is based in the Lower Guinea region, but also operates in Upper and Middle Guinea, and to a lesser extent in Forest Guinea. The second category consists of sub-regional NGO operating in several countries of the region. Finally, there are international NGO. They are often based in Europe or United States (e.g. Winrock, Guinea 44) and generally work in collaboration with other local actors (NGO, PO, ANPROCA, agrodealers, agricultural research and training structures).

For a long time, NGO interventions were primarily targeted at the most vulnerable farmers. The main topics addressed were empowerment, food security and livelihood improvement in general. These interventions have become highly diversified. Depending on the NGO, EAS activities may focus on production, management, processing, value chain development, agricultural entrepreneurship, post-harvest management and farm management. In addition, NGO (especially international ones) often support capacity development of their local partners. For example, the NGO Winrock International has organized several capacities development activities for ANPROCA, POs, farmer-trainers and local NGO within the framework of the Farmer-to-Farmer program. The services provided by the NGO are generally free of charge for the beneficiaries.

#### *Farmer-trainers*

Farmer-trainers are producers who have received training in new technologies or good agricultural practices. They are mobilized on a voluntary basis or for a fee to provide extension services in their communities and possibly in neighboring villages. They are mobilized frequently by projects, PO, NGO and ANPROCA due to the deficit of agricultural advisers. Activity of farmer-trainers often consists of running demonstration plots, but they also organize training sessions in-doors or in the field and facilitate field visits. In Guinea, farmer-trainers are not yet structured into associations or networks as in Burkina Faso or Niger, where they are organized and often mobilized for service provision (Belem, 2010). The types of services provided by the farmer-trainers mainly concern the dissemination of technologies. In some schemes, farmer-trainers who have a good level of academic training and adequate skills are mobilized for capacity development and decision support (management) activities. This is the case, for example, of FPFD who is mobilizing farmer-trainers for the implementation of the Management Advise for Family Farms (MAFF) approach.

#### *Consulting firms*

Consulting firms are structures operating under the legal status of companies providing advisory services. The profiles of their staff vary. They may be young graduates seeking professional integration, mid-career executives who decide to self-employ or to carry out activities complementary to their main occupations. Increasingly, one meets young retirees from public or

private sectors who decide to improve their livelihoods through the creation and management of their consulting own firms.

Consulting firms are generally set up by people with a very high level of education (higher education) and with solid expertise in one or several areas. Services offered generally consist of expertise on specific issues. This is in fact specialized advice which generally requires a high level of expertise. It may concern several fields relating in particular to business consultancy: Technical or technical-economic, legal, accounting, tax, organizational, quality management, environmental, management etc. (Teyssier et al., 2009). The current evolution toward a form of agriculture that is more knowledge- and expertise-intensive favors the emergence of consulting firms.

In addition to the services provided to producers, consulting firms play an important role in capacity building and support for other schemes. They often provide training on emerging themes (agricultural entrepreneurship, climate change, value chains, etc.), innovative agricultural advisory tools and methods, and support the monitoring and evaluation systems of other schemes. The services provided by consulting firms are generally paid for. The costs are sometimes borne by the beneficiaries, as in the case of business creation projects. But very often, the services are paid for indirectly by the projects or NGO in the context of their support to producers or their organizations. Consultancy firms are generally located in urban areas and only intervene in rural areas within the framework of specific missions entrusted to them by their clients.

#### *Agrodealers*

Agrodealers are more or less formalized enterprises whose main activity is the marketing of agricultural inputs (fertilizers, seeds, pesticides) and equipment. They can be divided into two main categories. On the one hand, there are wholesalers who import inputs and equipment for resale to retailers and, to a lesser extent, to producers, as is the case with *SAREF International* and the company “*Entreprise Kaba Agriculture Prestation (EKAP)*”, who are the two main wholesalers in the country. On the other hand, there are retailers, commonly referred to as *comptoires agricoles*. They buy from wholesalers and resell directly to producers or to other actors such as PO and NGO.

For agrodealers, participation in EAS activities is primarily part of a marketing strategy. The services provided may vary according to the type of agrodealers. Agrodealers retailers focus mainly on disseminating information on the existence and adequate use of agricultural inputs and equipment. While conducting this type of activity, wholesale agrodealers also carry out capacity development activities for staff of different EAS organizations (particularly PO, ANPROCA and NGO) and the production of communication materials on the use of inputs. Agrodealers’ services are often limited only to the value chains for which the inputs they market are used.

#### *Market women*

The activity of market women consists of buying agricultural products in bulk in the production basins (e.g. Kindia, Macenta, N'Zérékoré etc.) to resell them to retailers and, secondarily, to consumers in the consumption basins or relay markets (Conakry, Boké, Boffa etc.). Market women are mainly involved in the market gardening, tuber and food crop commodity chains. Indeed, fruit and vegetable trading is an activity dominated mainly by women.

The participation of market women in EAS consists mainly in disseminating information to their suppliers (men and women) on product prices, consumer preferences, packaging and storage of the production, and to a lesser extent, new inputs and farming practices. This information is disseminated primarily to their suppliers, but also to other farmers in their production basin. A market woman works on average with 20 to 50 producers. The information is disseminated in particular during purchasing operations or contract negotiations. Sometimes, information is shared through phone calls. The sources of information for the market women are their clients (retail dealers, end consumers) but also their fellow traders with whom they frequently discuss market trends. Information disseminated by market women are considered by producers to be fairly

reliable, especially since there are more and more possibilities for verification thanks to the development of market information systems. There is no payment required from service recipients. Market women remunerated themselves indirectly through the margins generated by their activities

In addition to agricultural information and knowledge, market women provide other facilities and services to their suppliers. These additional services may include the provision of credits, transport of production from the fields to markets or collection points, or the provision of transport facilities of agricultural inputs and equipment. By facilitating the linkages between consumers and producers, women traders appear to be a major player in the development of contract farming and higher insertion of smallholder producers in marketing. Moreover, the dissemination of agricultural information and knowledge to suppliers is important for the activities of market women. This service enables them to secure and retain their suppliers, to strengthen the match between suppliers' production and customers' demand, and to support the development of their suppliers' capacities.

#### *Producer organizations*

Traditionally, the majority of producer organizations (PO) tended to be clients of EAS providers, but their involvement in the provision of EAS, particularly for the benefit of their members, has been increasing over the past years. This dynamic can be observed especially at the level of umbrella PO such as unions and federations. The involvement of POs in agricultural advisory services is all the stronger as they are better recognized and involved in the planning and implementation of projects and other innovations concerning the value chains where their activities take place.

The willingness of PO to set up an internal advisory system meets the objective of improving performance by guaranteeing their members easy access to EAS in order to ensure, among other things, the efficient use of input loans. The services provided generally include the dissemination of innovative agricultural practices, technical and economic advice, facilitation of input purchase and marketing of products. In some cases, there are activities relating to structuring support (creation and functioning of grassroots PO), farm management, creation of farms by youth and agricultural mechanization. The number of commodity sectors taken into account in the EAS provided varies according to whether the PO is generalist or specialized on only a few crops. The activities are very often financed by external funds (development agencies, NGO), membership fees and in some cases by levies on the margins generated by the sale of production. FO's agricultural advisory systems often encounter several difficulties, particularly in terms of sustainable financing, renewal of the content of services, recruitment and retaining of highly qualified human resources.

#### *Potential complementarities between the different providers of EAS*

The characterization of EAS providers has made it possible to identify their main areas of service in relation to user demands. Six main service areas were identified: (i) dissemination of agricultural information and knowledge, (ii) facilitation, including brokerage and networking; (iii) capacity development, (iv) organizational development (particularly in terms of support for the creation and functioning of producer organizations); (v) management, particularly in relation to agribusiness; and (vi) expertise on emerging or specialized topics.

Table 3 summarizes the level of priority given by EAS providers to these different service areas. Dissemination of information and knowledge appears to be the service area that receives the most attention from the providers. It is the top priority for four of the six EAS providers. This shows that the current EAS system is still strongly focused technology transfer.

Facilitation and linkage activities are carried out mainly by ANPROCA and NGO, and to a lesser extent by PO. ANPROCA's strong presence in networking and facilitation is largely due to its good geographical establishment and its connections with other actors in the agricultural innovation system (research, ministries, academia, projects, etc.). PO are often involved in interactions between producers and actors operating both upstream and downstream in commodity chains.



Capacity development interventions are mainly conducted by ANPROCA which, thanks to its diversified expertise, often provides training to extensionists from other organizations. Several NGO provide training for producers as well as for leaders of their organizations as part of their activities to support the empowerment of producers. The need to renew capacities of extensionists on emerging themes is a niche in which consultancy firms have positioned themselves.

Organizational development that focuses on structuring producers and strengthening the capacities of the PO thus created is important for the identification and expression of demand for EAS. This service area is mainly covered by ANPROCA and the PO themselves, especially the umbrella producers’ organizations seeking to consolidate and/or broaden their base and membership.

Table 3. Priority levels of the main service areas at the different providers

	ANPROCA	NGO	PO	Farmer-trainers	Agrodealers	Consulting firms	Market women
Dissemination of information and knowledge	High	Low	High	High	High	Low	High
Facilitation, brokering, networking	Low	Average	Low	None	None	Low	Low
Capacity development	Average	High	Low	Low	Low	Average	None
Organizational development	Average	Low	High	None	None	Low	None
Management/decision support/agribusiness	None	Low	Average	Low	None	High	None
Expertise on specific/emerging themes	Low	Average	Low	None	Low	High	None

Caption. Colors indicate the different priority of service area

Color	Meaning (service area priority)
High	High
Average	Average
Low	Low
None	None

The service area related to management and decision support is particularly important in the current the context of promotion of agricultural entrepreneurship, but it has the lowest coverage rate by the various providers. Only consultancy firms give high priority to this type of service. This situation is due to the fact that management and decision support require a high level of qualification and intellectual skills for advisers. ANPROCA, which has the largest geographical coverage, still have limited involvement in the provision of services related to farm management and agricultural entrepreneurship. This situation is likely to hinder the development of entrepreneurship in certain areas of the country where there are no alternatives to ANPROCA. Therefore, there is need to

strengthen the development of agripreneurship services by ANPROCA and also the establishment of consulting firms in more areas.

Furthermore, analysis of Table 3 shows that currently none of the providers covers all six service areas. ANPROCA has the most diversified range of services, and appears to be the only organization that could potentially cover all areas if the necessary financial and human resources were available. The other providers seem to have specific niches. Thus, farmer-trainers as well as women market are mostly involved in dissemination of information; consultancies firms are specialized in capacity building, management and expertise, and FO are more focused on networking and organizational development.

Various EAS providers express a willingness to consolidate and diversify their service areas. However, the development of a complete offer, such as covering all six areas, is not part of their projects. It is likely that the segmentation of the service offer will continue over the next few years. In this context, the improvement of the overall thematic and territorial coverage rate of EAS services must be envisaged above all through the integration of the contributions of the various providers, which will require strengthening of synergies, partnerships and coordination at both local and national levels.

### PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN PROVIDERS OF EXTENSION AND ADVISORY SERVICES

The previous section of this document presented the characteristics of the main EAS providers, their orientations and contributions to the supply of agricultural advisory services in Guinea. Overall, some specificities of varying degrees of importance have emerged, underlining the potential importance of partnerships and synergies. This section focuses on the identification and analysis of the services that give rise to partnerships, the interests that underlying them, the modalities of their implementation, and the actions needed to ensure their strengthening and sustainability.

#### *Services and products exchanged in the framework of partnerships*

The services and products exchanged by EAS providers in Guinea in the framework of the partnerships are diversified and more or less specific to the different providers. They include logistical support, interface and networking, complementary expertise, information on agricultural inputs and equipment, knowledge on innovations and good agricultural practices, producer awareness raising, capacity building and scaling up of experiences ( Figure 4).

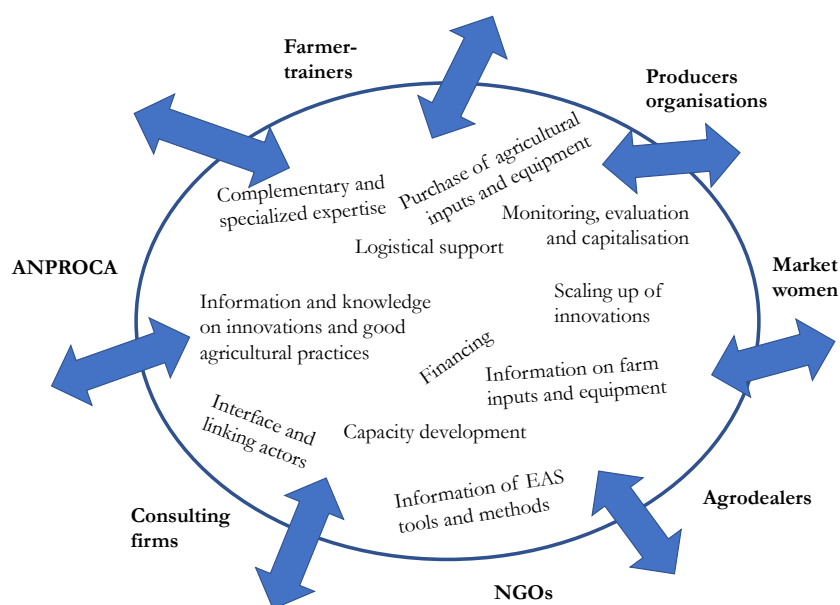


Figure 4. Main types of services and products subject to partnerships between EAS providers

Source: Data collected from actors and key informants met in the framework of the study

**Capacity development.** This service mainly consists in training of actors (field staff, producers, extension managers) in thematic areas where one of the partners does not yet have the capacity. These trainings can cover topics as diverse as crop production and management techniques, agricultural advisory tools and methods, emerging topics (e.g. agricultural entrepreneurship, youth settlement, nutrition, etc.) as well as the appropriate use of new types of agricultural inputs or equipment. Thus, capacity building can aim at improving the thematic improvement of advisory services, but also at improving the efficiency in the conduct of the different activities to increase impacts. Capacity development and continuous training are all the more important as there are gaps in the initial training curricula of agricultural advisers. Moreover, the diverse and evolving nature of the demands of producers and value chain actors requires that agricultural advisers constantly renew their skills to be able to provide relevant and quality services.

**Scaling up experiences and good practices.** These are relationships in which one of the stakeholders commits itself in return for a counterpart commitment to contribute to the geographical extension and increase in the number of beneficiaries of an experiment undertaken by the other party. This is, for example, the case of farmer-trainers mobilized by ANPROCA, PO and NGO to popularize new technologies notably by installing, running and monitoring the demonstration plots to raise awareness and train producers in their communities. In return, these farmer-trainers receive logistical support (agricultural inputs for demonstrations, motorcycles for monitoring the experiments) for the proper conduct of the activities entrusted to them.

**Purchase of farm inputs and equipment.** This type of partnership is mainly found among agrodealers and with producer organizations. Agrodealers organize awareness and training sessions for POs on the adequate use of agricultural inputs and equipment. These training sessions are often partially or entirely funded for (logistics, trainers' and participants' expenses) by the agrodealers. In return, they expect that the POs will place orders for inputs and equipment and the profits generated will help amortize the training expenses incurred. These partnerships have other advantages for the POs such as the possibility of obtaining credit or deferred payments, but they also raise the question of the neutrality and independence of the advice provided agrodealers.

**Linking, interfacing and awareness raising.** Linking consists of facilitating the establishment and development of relations between the partner and a third party, as in the case of an agricultural adviser who facilitates contact between an agrodealer and producers. Interfacing is the situation where the actor who facilitated the relationship becomes the permanent liaison channel between the other partner and a third party. This is notably the case of PO that play an interface role between individual producers and other actors such as NGO, ANPROCA or agrodealers. Awareness raising refers to situations where one partner facilitates activities of the other by ensuring not only mobilization, but preparation of a third party. This is the case of awareness raising sessions for producers on the use of agricultural inputs (pesticides, new seed varieties, etc.) organized by the agricultural advisers of ANPROCA, NGO or PO. These sensitization sessions are an important contribution to activities of agrodealers who will thus be able to register an increase in clientele, and especially to see improvements in the use of inputs by producers.

**Information on agricultural inputs and equipment.** EAS providers who bring technical support to farmers constantly need up-to-date information on available agricultural inputs and equipment and the conditions for their efficient use. For agrodealers, ensuring the availability and accessibility of this information to as many stakeholders as possible is important for the development of their activities.

**Logistical support** includes the means that are made available by one of the actors in exchange for the provision of a service. It can be the supply by ANPROCA, PO or NGO of inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc.) and agricultural equipment to farmer-trainers for the installation and monitoring of demonstration plots. Logistical support also includes travel means that PO or NGO

make available to the ANPROCA agents assigned to them to accompany the deployment of their agricultural advisory systems.

**The knowledge on innovations and good agricultural practices** refers here mainly to the technical sheets on crop management systems and practices as well as good agricultural practices and local knowledge that have been capitalized. This knowledge will be disseminated, with possible adaptations, in the framework of the technical advice provided by EAS providers to producers. In addition to knowledge on crop management systems and practices, there are flows of knowledge on agricultural advisory tools and methods. This is the case, for example, of manuals and practical guides for the use of video in agricultural extension.

**Monitoring, evaluation and capitalization** refers to the support provided, particularly in the management, monitoring, documentation and evaluation of planned activities. This requires specific expertise that is currently rare and can only be mobilized in the case of service provision or partnerships.

**Staff support** refers in particular to situations where one of the partners assigns part of its staff to the other partner's organization to accompany its deployment. ANPROCA agents who are assigned within PO or NGO are the most illustrative example of this type of support.

**Complementary/specialized expertise.** These are relationships in which one of the parties provides the other with skills that it is lacking. For example, consultancy firms ran by graduates of the program called Apprenticeship in Extension, Entrepreneurship and Rural Innovation (AVENIR) provide ANPROCA agents with expertise on subjects related to agricultural entrepreneurship or the production and use of video for agricultural extension. Complementary expertise generally focuses on emerging themes such as agricultural entrepreneurship or climate-smart agriculture practices for which local expertise is still very few or even lacking. However, complementary expertise can also concern traditional themes such as agricultural mechanization or water management for which expertise is scarce.

**Financing.** These are the monetary resources mobilized by a partner in exchange for a service and/or for the operationalization of joint activities. For some providers, the development of partnerships is a way to access financing, which would be complementary for the implementation of their activities. The proportion of own funds committed by providers to partnerships is generally very low. This financing very often comes from a third party. This is for instance the case of development projects that provide necessary financial resources to support ANPROCA agents seconded to the POs.

Services exchanged within the framework of partnerships can be diverse. However, all the services exchanged or received are not necessarily part of the main motivations of the collaboration, some services received are collateral or indirect benefits. For example, when ANPROCA seconded some of its staff in the EAS systems of PO or NGO, its main objective is to support the emergence or strengthening of private agricultural advisory services. The means of operation (vehicle, maintenance costs, communication etc.) provided by the beneficiary structure to the seconded agents are not the primary objective for ANPROCA. Nevertheless, they represent complementary financing and logistics insofar as ANPROCA agents on secondment can mobilize these resources to accompany other producers who are not members of the host organization.

*Partnerships between ANPROCA and private providers of agricultural extension and advisory services*

*General overview*

ANPROCA develops partnerships with other EAS actors in Guinea as its mission includes support for the emergence of a dynamic private sector for the provision of agricultural services. ANPROCA also has the task of ensuring coordination, consultation between actors, harmonization of

interventions and, the development and promotion of national strategies and programs for the dissemination and adoption of agricultural technologies. Additionally, ANPROCA considers partnerships as a means to improve the efficiency of its interventions, increase its financial resources and mobilize the complementary expertise it needs to carry out its activities. This is all the more important given the current context that is marked by rapid and complex changes and the emergence of new players that offer opportunities for synergies and complementarity. Moreover, the diversity of demands for EAS requires an intersectoral and multidisciplinary approach for the efficient development and provision of adequate responses.

Table 4 summarizes the types of services and products exchanged by ANPROCA through partnerships with the other five main EAS providers. The services exchanges are relatively variable depending of the type of partners. It is clear that ANPROCA plays a central role in the national EAS system, particularly in capacity building, knowledge management, linking actors and the establishment and strengthening of other agricultural extension systems.

*Table 4. Benefits and contributions of ANPROCA within the framework of partnerships with other EAS providers*

<b>Partners</b>	<b>ANPROCA contribution</b>	<b>Partner contribution</b>
<b>Producer organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff support</li> <li>- Capacity building</li> <li>- Knowledge on innovations and good agricultural practices (GAP)</li> <li>- Support for strategic and operational structuring and planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identification and expression of demand and beneficiaries of services</li> <li>- Logistics and complementary financing</li> <li>- Interface</li> <li>- Data collection</li> <li>- Sharing experiences</li> </ul>
<b>NGO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge on innovations and GAP</li> <li>- Capacity building</li> <li>- Staff support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information on new consulting tools and methods</li> <li>- Complementary expertise and skills</li> <li>- Sharing experiences</li> </ul>
<b>Farmer-trainers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness raising and training on new technologies and agricultural inputs</li> <li>- Logistical support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collection and feedback of agricultural information</li> <li>- Scaling -up of GAP</li> </ul>
<b>Agrodealers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Linking, sensitizing and training producers on the use of inputs</li> <li>- Capacity building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information and training on new agricultural inputs and equipment</li> <li>- Mobilization of expertise</li> <li>- Additional financing</li> </ul>
<b>Consulting firms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connection and access to consultation frameworks</li> <li>- Information on innovations and GAP</li> <li>- Capacity building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacity building</li> <li>- Information on innovations, EAS tools and methods</li> <li>- Expertise on emerging/specialized themes</li> </ul>
<b>Market women</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information on techniques for the storage of fruits and vegetables</li> <li>- Connection with farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information on products' prices and marketing</li> </ul>

ANPROCA's preeminent role in capacity development is due in particular to the diversity and quality of the profiles and skills of its human resources, which enable it to provide training for other EAS providers. The majority of its staff has a university-level education, with more than 60 percent of them holding a MSc degree in agricultural sciences (Table 5). The academic training received has been complemented and enriched by field experience. In addition, the partnerships that ANPROCA maintains with various research and development projects enable it to consolidate and enrich the skills of its staff, thus broadening the thematic coverage of its services. ANPROCA has

not only technical expertise, but also the mastery of a diversity of EAS tools and methods, particularly those relating to the dissemination of technologies and the strengthening of PO.

Nevertheless, the renewal of these tools and methods is still slow due to institutional inertia and the cost of carrying out reform at large-scale. Partnerships with other providers, especially NGO that are more innovative in terms of tools and methods are important for ANPROCA. For example, it could draw on the experiences of FPF, Guinea 44 and APEK-Agriculture when implementing efforts to further integrate the Management advice for family farms (MAFF) approach into its interventions. In addition, the fact that some of its agents are seconded to PO and NGO constitutes for ANPROCA an indirect means of enriching and renewing the skills of its staff, thus contributing to improve the thematic coverage of its services.

*Table 5. Level of education of ANPROCA's technical staff*

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Number of employees</b>
Doctorate	1
Agricultural Engineer	515
Agricultural Work Supervisor (CTA)	186
Agricultural Technical Officer (ATA)	113

Source: ANPROCA (2018)

In the field of knowledge management, ANPROCA holds a central position because of its functional relationship with IRAG. This relationship has become much looser since the end of the Training and Visit program financed by the World Bank, but it is still relatively strong and gives ANPROCA privileged and rapid access to new technical references in the field of agricultural production. This access to knowledge is all the easier since the collaboration between the two structures exists even at the decentralized level; the regional branches of ANPROCA often participate in agronomic trials conducted by the IRAG centers installed in their intervention zone. In addition, ANPROCA takes advantage of its participation in regional research and development projects, such as the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP), to access new technologies and innovations that it can then pass on to other EAS providers. The reform of EAS in Guinea recognized the central role of ANPROCA in knowledge management and advocated its development through the creation of a knowledge management center within the organization. In the current configuration, ANPROCA also benefits from knowledge flows from other providers including NGO which are also a source of new agricultural practices. A better capitalization of the experiences of the different suppliers would intensify this flow of knowledge.

Partnerships between ANPROCA and consulting firms providing EAS are less developed. However, ANPROCA sometimes involves consulting firms in processes or new initiatives related to EAS such as the reform launched in 2019. In the field, consultancy firms play a significant role in capacity development of ANPROCA agents on new themes (agricultural entrepreneurship, value chain development, elaboration of business plans etc.). ANPROCA is not yet harnessing sufficiently opportunities provided by the availability of skills of consulting firms in the field of monitoring, evaluation, capitalization and project development.

Due to the downward trend in its workforce, the relations that ANPROCA develops with farmer-trainers are only very useful to it for the scaling up of good practices. These relations have become essential for the conduct of traditional extension activities, but also for awareness-raising and training. Farmer-trainers could have been mobilized in the field of identification and characterization of endogenous knowledge and farmer innovations. However, this action, which would have made it possible to enrich knowledge on agricultural practices, has not yet been carried out. The reason is that though ANPROCA recognizes the importance of endogenous knowledge, it has not yet developed tools and methods necessary to identify, support and document them for possible scaling up. Moreover, for farmer-trainers ANPROCA is an important partner for the renewal of knowledge and capacities as well as for establishing links with other actors such as development projects.

ANPROCA is also an important partner for agrodealers. This is due to its strong geographical presence which makes it relatively close to producers. ANPROCA is therefore solicited by agrodealers to facilitate the establishment of contacts, ensure awareness raising and training of producers on the proper use of agricultural equipment and inputs. Furthermore, agrodealers, especially wholesalers such as SAREF International and EKAP (*Entreprise Kaba Agriculture Prestation*), are for ANPROCA one of the main sources of information and training on equipment and inputs. Nevertheless, there is a risk that this presumably win-win relationship lead to a lack of neutrality of the information provided by agrodealers.

#### *Some examples of partnerships between ANPROCA and private providers of EAS*

The results developed in the previous section show that there are strong complementarities between public (ANPROCA) and private EAS. The public sector, through its human resources, its geographical anchorage, its links with other actors in the agricultural innovation system (research, training, public authorities) plays a key role in knowledge management and capacity building, and the provision of basic agricultural advisory services. The private sector complements and extends the action of public services by providing complementary expertise that improves the quality and inclusiveness of supply and contributes to the scaling up of the good agricultural practices promoted by ANPROCA. In addition, the private sector contributes to the renewal of knowledge and agricultural advisory tools and methods. These different areas of complementarity are recognized and valued by the actors as shown by the examples below.

#### *Example 1: Collaboration between ANPROCA and the NGO RGTA-DI*

In Upper-Guinea region, the National Service for Rural Promotion and Extension (SNPRV) which is the predecessor of ANPROCA developed between 1995 and 2007 a strong partnership with the NGO Guinean Network on Draught Animal and Integrated Development (RGTA-DI) around agricultural mechanization. This collaboration was initiated and managed by the local managers of the two organizations with the approval and support of their respective hierarchies as well as the support of development projects. ANPROCA's contribution in this partnership consisted of: (i) ensuring the link between producers and RGTA-DI and (ii) raising awareness and train farmers on harnessed cultivation. In addition, ANPROCA made available to the agents of RGTA-DI technical data sheets and pedagogical support and strengthened their capacities on good agricultural practices and extension methods (for example: installation and management of demonstration plots, organization of guided visits, etc.). RGTA-DI, for its part, trained producers on the training and maintenance of draught animals. It ensured the availability of animal traction equipment (cattle yokes, ploughs, weeding and ridging implements, etc.) for producers who intended to acquire them and trained local blacksmiths in the production of spare parts for the equipment.

Moreover, throughout the implementation of the partnership, ANPROCA and RGTA-DI consulted each other during the programming and implementation of their respective activities, which made it possible to avoid duplication and contradictory messages. This collaboration proved beneficial for all parties involved. On farms, the introduction of the use of draught animal for the implementation of farming activities had led to an increase in cultivated area and economic performance (yields, gross margins) of around 20 percent and 15 percent respectively according to actors who participated in the intervention. Through this partnership, RGTA-DI, which was also selling draught animal equipment, succeeded in strengthening its presence in the area, increasing its clientele and, developing and diversifying its EAS activities. For ANPROCA, the benefits were mainly the development of staff skills in the field of agricultural mechanization, the consolidation of service relations with large farms and the increase of the impact of interventions, particularly in terms of improvement of producers' livelihoods.

The intensity of this partnership decreased significantly at the end of the fifth year. It is still continuing today, but it is less strong, less structured and not formalized. The main causes of this slowdown were on the one hand the completion of the project which had financed certain joint

activities, and on the other hand the reposting of the local managers of ANPROCA and RGTA-DI, whose good interpersonal relations facilitated the collaboration between their two structures.

#### *Example 2: Collaboration between ANPROCA and graduates of the AVENIR program*

Graduates of the AVENIR program were trained in the production and use of video for sharing good agricultural practices. These youths' knowledge is narrower on technical agricultural production issues than ANPROCA's extensionists. In the Kindia region, several ANPROCA advisers and subject matter specialists maintain informal collaborations with young graduates of the AVENIR program that are running their own consulting firms or inputs shops. AVENIR graduates volunteer to build capacities of their ANPROCA colleagues on the use of video in extension, and also support them in the development of business plans for producer organizations. In return, ANPROCA agents provide AVENIR graduates with technical sheets, training materials for extension and, assist them in organizing field visits and monitor of demonstration plots. Through this collaboration AVENIR graduates enrich their knowledge on new farming practices and extension methods.

#### *Contributions and expectations of other EAS providers involved in partnerships*

ANPROCA dominates the landscape of EAS providers. But there are also relatively large flows of services between other providers as summarized in Table 6. There are more or less strong specificities in terms of contributions and expectations for each type of providers.

For other providers, including agrodealers, partnerships with farmer-trainers are first of all considered as a means of ensuring scaling up of good practices promoted and increasing performance in terms of the number of producers reached. The role of farmer-trainers in the extension system would be even more important if there were a policy of continuous capacity development for all extensionists and harnessing of local knowledge and farmer innovations.

Agrodealers play a decisive role in making inputs available, disseminating information on their use and ensuring the development of capacities necessary for their proper use. They appear to be a major player in agricultural intensification. The complementary expertise that agrodealers, especially those who are wholesalers, often help to mobilize, including at the regional and international levels, is important for widening the range of services and strengthening the responsiveness of EAS. Moreover, some retail agrodealers are increasingly developing extension and advisory services activities for crop and livestock farming without necessarily linking these new activities to the sale of inputs. This is notably the case of some graduates of the AVENIR program who have opened input sales shops, but remain interested in production activities. This practice leads input sales companies to develop consulting activities.

The contribution of consultancy firms to other actors can be structured in two main areas. On the one hand, there is the provision of specialized advice and expertise on emerging themes and, on the other hand, the strengthening of capacities of other extension organizations through. There is also support for monitoring, evaluation and experience capitalization. Consultancy firms are thus positioned both as providers of EAS and support services to the national EAS system. This positioning is due to the fact that consultancy firms are mainly run by highly qualified young people, who frequently renew their skills and are determined to generate income through the provision of services to actors in the agricultural sector. Nevertheless, consultancy firms appear to be the most fragile of all service providers. This situation is linked to the weak willingness and limited capacity of producers and other actors to pay for services provided to them. In addition, several consulting firms have not yet found a sustainable and efficient business model for the provision of EAS. The support they receive from the government and development partners is still weak. In fact, support to foster for youth engagement in agricultural entrepreneurship tends for the moment to favor production activities and does not yet include the service sector.



Table 6. Main services and products exchanged between suppliers under partnerships

	<b>ANPROCA</b>	<b>NGO</b>	<b>PO</b>	<b>Agrodealers</b>	<b>Famer-trainers</b>	<b>Consulting firms</b>	
Contributions received from other actors with whom partnerships are developed	<b>ANPROCA</b>	Knowledge on innovations and good agricultural practices (GAP) Capacity development Staff support	Staff support Capacity building Knowledge about innovations and GAP Support for structuring and planning	Connecting, raising awareness and training of users Capacity building	Capacity building Logistical support Knowledge on innovations and GAPs	Linking and access to consultation frameworks Information on innovations Capacity building	
	<b>NGO</b>	Financing Knowledge on EAS tools and methods Expertise on emerging topics	Financing, capacity building Monitoring, evaluation and capitalization	Financing Linking actors Capacity building	Capacity building Logistical resources Linking actors	Funding Training manuals	
	<b>PO</b>	Interface, linking actors, identification and expression of demand for EAS Financing and logistics Data collection	Interface and mobilization of producers Scaling up and sharing experiences		Connecting and raising awareness Purchase of agricultural inputs and equipment	Training Logistical support	Interface, Financing Planning and evaluation
	<b>Agrodealers</b>	Information and training on agricultural inputs and equipment Complementary expertise	Information and training on agricultural inputs and equipment	External expertise Information and training on agricultural inputs and equipment		Information on agricultural inputs and equipment	Information on agricultural inputs and equipment
	<b>Volunteer farmer-trainers</b>	Information gathering and feedback Raising producer awareness	Information gathering and feedback Raising producer awareness	Scaling up good practice	Connecting and raising awareness		Data collection Scaling up good practice
	<b>Consulting firms</b>	Capacity building Information on innovations, tools and methods Complementary expertise	Monitoring - evaluation and capitalization Capacity building Complementary expertise	Capacity building, networking Monitoring and evaluation, capitalization Preparation of financing files	Capacity building Linking actors	Capacity building Linking actors	
	Contributions provided to actors with whom partnerships are engaged						

NGO, especially international ones, stand out for their contributions to the financing of activities, especially for the benefit of POs, consultancy firms and, to a lesser extent, agrodealers. They also play an important role in the introduction of good agricultural practices and innovative EAS tools and methods, and in capacity building of other extension providers. For example, the NGO Winrock International, through its Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) program, has provided support to the development of several PO and local NGO (Box 4). The capitalization of experiences conducted or supported by NGO enriches knowledge on good practices, methods and tools. The main weakness of NGO is that their interventions are generally very limited in time and territory. NGO help farmer-trainers to access and renew their equipment. Moreover, they are also the first partners of consulting firms, which they often mobilize as service providers to support PO and individual producers.

Producer organizations are beneficiaries of support from other providers, and also operate as interface between producers and other stakeholders and EAS providers. They play an important role in identifying and expressing demands of producers for EAS.

*Box 4. Some examples of the impacts of Winrock International's Farmer-to-Farmer Program on agricultural development organizations in Guinea*

*Example 1: Federation of Fruit Growers of Lower Guinea (FEPAF-BG)*

The support provided to FEPAF-BG under the F2F program covered the marketing of agricultural products, financial management and record keeping and organizational capacity development. This support enabled FEPAF-BG to improve its organizational structure, and at least one of its cooperatives has made progress in recruiting staff in key positions to improve its performance. The federation has achieved the goal of introducing a reward system and started to provide loans, motor-pumps and fertilizers. It has introduced production data sheets in member organizations and improved the quality of their production. FEPAF-BG has also identified a name for one of its key products (Fremasogué) and has been more open in its publicity since its participation in the trainings. Initially, FEPAF-BG's annual sales amounted to \$14,239; by the time of the final impact study, they reached \$202,832, mainly from fruit sales. This is largely due to the assistance provided by F2F in to enable members to develop their financial management skills. Annual income increased by \$93,000.

*Example 2: Guinean Network on Draught Animal and Integrated Development (RGTA-DI)*

F2F volunteers contributed to improving the knowledge of the RGTA-DI and strengthening the network's capacity to better serve its beneficiaries and increase household incomes. Through F2F, RGTA-DI deepened its vision and role as an extension service provider, for example by becoming more active in field visits, hands-on training and record keeping. RGTA-DI organized training sessions for its beneficiaries to introduce simplified accounting and agriculture as a business activity. Farmers are now able to take charge of their production and can provide detailed information on their activities, income, expenses and market analysis. After significant improvements, RGTA-DI has also been able to diversify its donor base and has obtained new grants to finance its activities. Through training and assistance provided by F2F in grant proposals writing, RGTA-DI has leveraged \$128,000 in new funds from a variety of new partners.

Source: Winrock International (2018)

Market women play a role that is often not well known or even ignored in the analysis and development of agricultural advisory services. However, they have collaborations with all the other EAS providers except consulting firms (Table 7). Contributions of market women in the national agricultural advisory system includes mainly the provision of up-to-date and generally reliable market information, including prices, consumer demand and preferences. This information is very useful to other providers of agricultural advisory services in their activities to support agricultural entrepreneurship and, more generally, the market integration of producers. Market women are also an important actor for the dissemination of good practices in packaging and storage of agricultural products. They help in the search for markets. The services they receive from other EAS providers relate to access to knowledge on good storage and conservation practices (ANPROCA), training on

marketing (NGO), and organization and training of producers. Relationships between women traders and other providers would likely intensify over the next few years considering the increasing investments in agricultural value chain development.

Table 7. Collaboration between Market women and other EAS providers

EAS Providers	EAS related services provided to market women	Contributions/services received from market women
<b>ANPROCA</b>	Information and knowledge on packaging and storage of fruits and vegetables	Information on markets
<b>NGO</b>	Training on marketing Connection to production	Information on markets
<b>Producer organizations</b>	Mobilization, organization and training of producers Gathering of the production	Information on prices and demands of agricultural products Facilitation of access to loans and farm inputs
<b>Farmer-trainers</b>	Mobilization and capacity development of producers	Information on prices and demand Experience sharing
<b>Agrodealers</b>	Information on inputs and equipment	Linkages with producers
<b>Consulting firms</b>	None	None

#### Intensity and modalities of partnerships between EAS providers

##### Intensity of relationship between EAS providers

The intensity of the partnership is an indicator of the frequency and number of joint activities carried out. It reflects the extent to which the partnership developed is necessary for the achievement of the objectives of one or both parties involved in a collaboration. Table 7 summarizes the intensity of partnership between the different providers. The data in the columns show for each provider the weight of the potential contribution for which it is solicited by the other actors seeking synergies to achieve their objectives. The data in the rows show the weight that a provider gives to the potential contribution of each of the other EAS providers.

Table 8. Intensity of partnerships between providers of agricultural extension and advisory services

	ANPROCA	NGO	PO	Agrodealers	Farmer-trainers	Consulting firms	Market women	Total
<b>ANPROCA</b>		5	10	5	5	2	2	29
<b>NGO</b>	5		10	2	5	5	2	29
<b>PO</b>	5	10		5	10	2	5	37
<b>Agrodealers</b>	10	5	5		2	2	2	26
<b>Farmer-trainers</b>	10	5	10	2		2	2	31
<b>Consulting firms</b>	2	5	2	5	2		0	16
<b>Market women</b>	2	2	5	2	5	0		16
<b>Total</b>	34	32	42	21	29	13	13	

Legend. The numbers “10”, “5” and “2” in the off-line cells and in the "Total" column indicate high, medium, low intensity of partnership respectively; “0” means there is no partnership.

The analysis shows that PO are the providers most solicited for partnership by other actors (total column = 42). ANPROCA, NGO and farmer-trainers (i.e. three of the six suppliers) consider PO as a primary partner, and maintain high-intensity partnership with them. The high solicitation of POs is mainly due to the fact that they play several roles in the national EAS system. They are both providers and beneficiaries of EAS, offering interface, awareness raising, capacity development and

scaling up services. This high solicitation can only be met effectively and sustainably if PO develop good partnership management capacities.

The contribution of PO in partnerships mainly concerns the consolidation and expansion of other arrangements through support to innovations, capacity building or performance improvement through monitoring and evaluation activities. Consulting firms and market women appear to be the providers that are least solicited for partnerships. They score higher on the row than in the column (16 versus 13), which shows that they are more in need of collaboration with other actors than vice versa. This also underscores the fact that other providers are even more concerned with ensuring the basic functioning of their organizations than with seeking to strengthen and expand them. Moreover, services of consulting firms are relatively elitist and not easily accessible, especially for POs. Consulting firms' territorial coverage is also weak, given their tendency to settle more in urban areas. However, it has been shown that there is a strong correlation between geographical proximity and the intensity of partnerships between actors (Turner and Mairesse, 2004). The low intensity of relations between consultancy firms and POs is due to the low capacity of the latter to mobilize the financing required by the consultancy firms to provide services (development of business plans and projects, training of agricultural advisers, monitoring, evaluation, experience capitalization etc.). This situation is less acute in POs which operate in more developed value chains and generate significant profits, which increases the willingness and capacity of member producers to contribute to the financial burden of services. This is for example the case of FEPAF-BG or FPFID.

The priority partners for farmer-trainers are first and foremost ANPROCA and the PO. In fact, these partnerships are functional and even symbiotic since ANPROCA and PO need farmer-trainers for the implementation of a good part of their activities, especially those relating to the extension of agricultural practices. In return, they provide logistic and equipment support, technical sheets and continuous capacity development opportunities which are essential for the activities of the farmer-trainers. The development and renewal of the skills of farmer-trainers depends largely on the quality of their partnerships with PO, ANPROCA, and to a lesser extent, NGO.

ANPROCA is the primary partner of agrodealers, particularly because of its good geographical presence in the country, despite a downward trend in its staff numbers due to massive retirements. This territorial coverage potentially gives ANPROCA the possibility of reaching a large number of producers, raising their awareness and training them on the use of the inputs and equipment they need to conduct their activities. ANPROCA also facilitates the establishment of relations between producers and agrodealers. In addition, ANPROCA provides crucial support to agrodealers (especially retailers) such as some graduates of the AVENIR program who wish to develop advisory activities on the farm creation and crop management systems. ANPROCA's support consists in particular in providing technical data sheets and teaching aids and training on agricultural practices through joint visits to demonstration plots, among other things. The strong relationship between ANPROCA and PO is explained by the important role that PO play in the programming and implementation of ANPROCA's activities.

Farmer-trainers attach great importance to collaborations with ANPROCA and the PO, because it is these two actors who give them access to knowledge and to a good part of the logistical means necessary for their activities. Their collaborations with agrodealers and consulting firms are still weak, due to the still limited number of complementarities. Moreover, for agrodealers, the service they can request from farmer-trainers are already provided with a significant comparative advantage by POs and farmer-trainers. ANPROCA's and PO's agricultural advisers are more qualified than the farmer-trainers and can more easily ensure the sensitization and training of producers on the use of inputs and equipment. The high figure in the total column of the farmer-trainers (22) indicates their significant weight in the current system. This is also in line with a strong trend observed in other countries with an increasing mobilization of producers to compensate for the deficit of agricultural advisers in the public service (Kiptot et al., 2016).

The intensity of partnerships is not always the same for the parties involved. For example, ANPROCA considers PO to be primary partners and maintains high-intensity relations with them. On the other hand, the primary partners of the PO are rather farmer-trainers. The existence of asymmetries in the intensity of partnerships shows the difference in interests of each of the actors engaged and the multipolar or multilateral nature of the landscape of EAS providers. It can be deduced from this that it would be advisable that efforts to improve relations between providers should start first by strengthening their specific capacities to enable them to play their roles more fully when engaging in partnerships. Moreover, a low total score (e.g. consulting firms, market women) doesn't mean that the provider concerned is not interesting for partnerships, but rather that it is operating in a niche which is somehow important but not for most of the other actors.

#### *Modalities of partnerships between providers of agricultural extension and advisory services*

There are two types of partnerships between EAS providers: formal and informal. Formal partnerships are those initiated and carried out by two or more organizations and are the subject of a written agreement or commitment, usually in the form of a memorandum of understanding (MoU). This written document generally includes information on the context, objectives, contributions of each party, duration of the partnership and the modalities of implementation and monitoring of activities. It is traditionally signed by the main responsible in charge of the organizations involved. However, it also happens that a partnership develops and becomes formalized at the decentralized level. Local officials who sign on behalf of their respective structure nevertheless inform their hierarchy and are required in some cases to obtain its approval or opinion before signing. This is for example the case of the ANPROCA regional branches which can sign agreements with projects, NGO or PO operating in their area of intervention.

Non-formalized partnerships are those that are not concretized by a written document. They include verbal or tacit commitments as well as interpersonal relations serving as a basis for collaboration. They are generally the result of individual rather than institutional initiatives, and are guided by opportunistic logics. It has emerged from this study that even in formalized partnerships, the quality of interpersonal relationships between managers of the structures involved is an important factor of success.

More than 80 percent of current partnerships are not formalized. This situation results from the fact that the partnership development capacities are still weak among most of the actors. Moreover, several organizations are reluctant to make a formal commitment as long as they do not have security or visibility over the medium or even long term in relation to their financial and human resources to honor the commitments. The predominance of informal partnerships means that relationships and synergies are often very localized and are not implemented on a large scale. For example, in the Kindia and Faranah zones there are fairly strong relationships between ANPROCA advisers and subject matter specialists on the one hand and young graduates of the AVENIR program who have set up input sale shops or consulting firms on the other. These collaborations recognized as quite fruitful for both parties and also the users of the services do not systematically exist in all the localities where the two actors intervene.

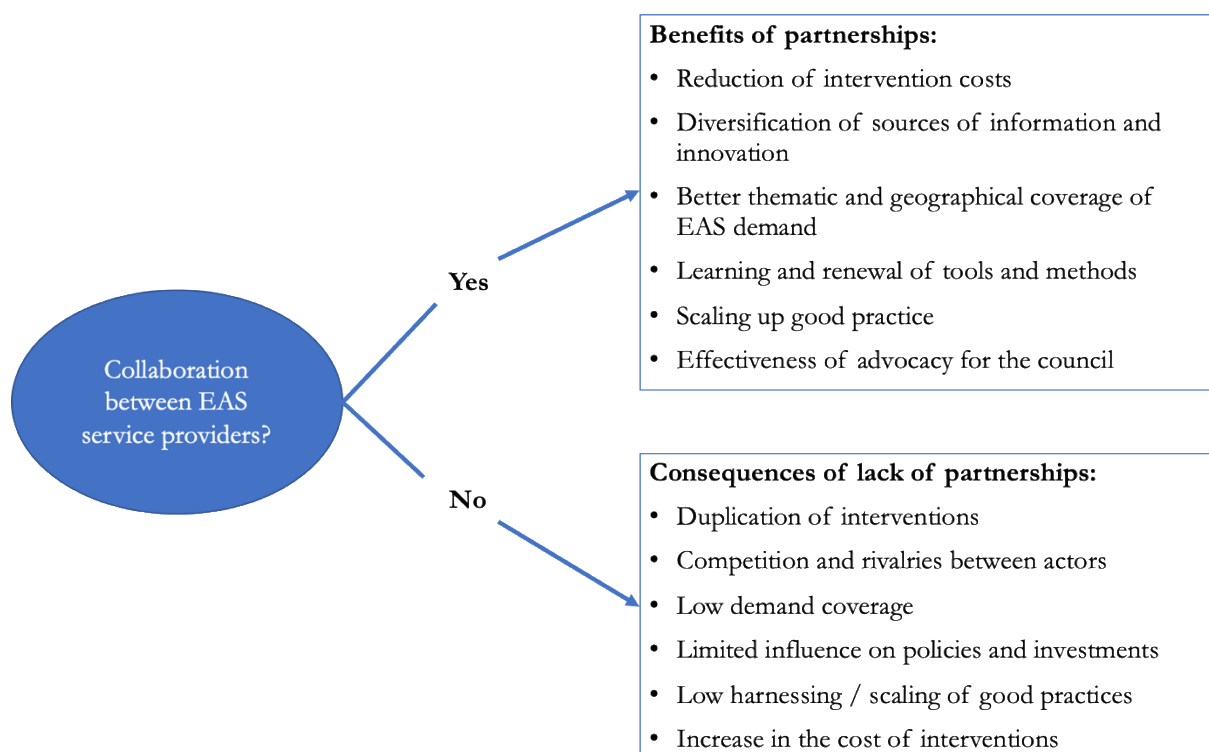
The formalization of partnerships is to be encouraged as they are likely to lead to or strengthen large-scale institutional dynamics and thus create greater impacts. The promotion of formalized partnerships can be achieved by strengthening the capacities of providers on partnership management. It is also important to support informal relationships that currently generate added value for the parties involved. These informal relationships can be seen as a first step toward formalized partnerships. The facilitation of informal relationships can be done by creating or supporting local frameworks or platforms for consultation, sharing and learning. This can include the organization of guided visits or regional workshops of EAS actors.

### *Benefits of partnerships between agricultural advisory providers*

Partnerships have several potential benefits not only for EAS providers but also for the users, that is, producers and other actors in agricultural value chains (Figure 5). For providers, partnerships are a means of increasing and diversifying the target audience and the topics addressed, thereby producing greater impacts and increasing efficiency in a context of scarce funding sources. Such motivations are common in pluralistic agricultural advisory systems (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). Indeed, collaborations can facilitate access to financial and human resources (and implicitly expertise) that providers would not have been able to mobilize, if at all, if they worked in isolation.

Partnership also enables learning from the respective experiences of the various actors involved, which makes it possible, on the one hand, to avoid duplicating interventions and repeating failures. On the other hand, it allows access to good practices that could thus be scaled up and produce greater impacts. For the government and development agencies, the development of partnerships between actors is seen as a lever to facilitate coordination, alignment and a better contribution of EAS to national economic and social development objectives. The potential benefits of partnerships are multiple and may be of a different nature for the parties involved. The benefits are generally effective when organizations involved have the required skills for partnerships management (Box 2).

The lack of collaboration between stakeholders generates many negative effects that affect the quality of services and the performance of the national agricultural advisory system. Competition between stakeholders, particularly for access to financial resources, may increase. The low thematic and geographical coverage of demand, and insufficient alignment between interventions and national priorities are largely due to the disharmony and insufficient coordination of actors at both national and regional levels. The lack of synergies among actors hinders the flow of knowledge and skills that would allow the national EAS system to remain dynamic and to renew itself regularly on through learning and experience sharing.



*Figure 5. Potential benefits and consequences of the existence or lack of collaboration between EAS providers*

Source: Analysis of interview data

The good knowledge of actors on the effects of the existence or absence of collaboration does not yet translate into consequent decisions. Lack of collaboration is not always a deliberate decision by stakeholders, just as unanimity around the potential benefits of partnerships does not necessarily imply that all stakeholders are willing to become more involved in seeking collaborations. A number of factors influence decisions and behaviors; these are inherent to the actors themselves, but also to the institutional environment.

#### *Difficulties encountered in developing partnerships*

All providers of EAS recognize the potential added value of partnerships in conducting their business and improving their performance. However, the development and implementation of partnerships often face challenges. These can be grouped into seven categories: (i) lack of information on opportunities and potential partners; (ii) lack of human resources; (iii) inadequate funding and logistics; (iv) failure to deliver on commitments; (v) lack of skills for partnership management; (vi) differences in approaches, profiles and competencies and; (vii) lack of an incentive framework.

#### *Lack of information on stakeholders and partnership opportunities*

The availability and accessibility of information on partners (characteristics, activities, areas of intervention) and opportunities for synergy are currently very weak. The different providers, even when they operate in the same geographical areas, or on similar or complementary themes, do not know each other sufficiently. This situation is linked to shortcomings in knowledge management and internal and external communication. It is also the result of the lack of frequent consultations and the absence of local or national platforms gathering information on the different actors and their activities. For stakeholders, this gap hinders the identification of complementarities and potential opportunities with other providers. A national directory of EAS providers would allow providers to identify actors with whom they can partner or at least engage in learning and experience sharing activities.

#### *Lack of human resources*

The human resource gap is a constraint both qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitatively, it refers to situations where the number of staff of one or both partners involved in a partnership is insufficient in relation to the scope of the collaboration. This constraint is mainly found among providers who, on the basis of their mandate or thematic coverage, play a central role in the national EAS system. This is notably the case of ANPROCA which receives requests from POs; however, it is currently understaffed and will experience a massive retirement (nearly 40 percent of its staff) over the next five years. In the current configuration, and even if it wished to do so, ANPROCA does not have the capacity to respond to a possible rapid and significant increase in requests for advisers from POs wishing to develop their internal agricultural advisory systems. This situation is also encountered at the level of wholesale agrodealers (e.g. SAREF International) where the number of staff able to ensure capacity building of agricultural advisers from other advisory providers is insufficient in relation to demand.

The lack of human resources is accentuated by the fact that the young agricultural advisers trained graduated from ISAV or ENAE are not yet fully operational at the beginning of their career. The training curricula of agricultural colleges and high schools is not up to date and don't not actually match with the practice, existing demand and the new strategic orientation of EAS. Because of their lack of financial and logistical resources, the training centers no longer give sufficient space to practical work. As a result, EAS generally prefer to mobilize ANPROCA agents who already have field experience rather than recruit young graduates.

At the qualitative level, the human resources deficit refers first of all to the question of staff profiles and their technical skills to cover the diversity of the thematic areas of partnership requests. For example, consultancy firms that support NGO in the areas of agricultural entrepreneurship and

continuing training of agricultural advisers may have difficulty in responding to requests relating to production techniques or new crop management systems. Similarly, farmer-trainers whose expertise is often proven in the areas where they have received training generally have difficulties responding to new emerging demands from the producers they accompany.

#### *Lack of funding and logistical means*

The issue of financing partnerships between suppliers is symptomatic of the overall problem of financing EAS (Katz and Barandun, 2002; Ba et al., 2018). Partnership funding is generally provided from external funds (development projects, multi- or bilateral cooperation, etc.). For example, the operating costs of ANPROCA agents seconded in PO or NGO are mainly covered by funds from development projects. However, there is an emerging dynamic of participation beneficiaries in the financing of partnership. This situation is encountered in the PO intervening in the market sectors. This is for example the case of FEPAF (fruit commodity chains) and FPDF (potato, rice, onion commodity chains) whose members contribute to the financing of the internal agricultural advisory system. The lack of funding influences the volume of activities and the duration of partnerships. Several formal collaborations between suppliers come to an end as soon as the projects that financed the joint activities are closed.

The lack of logistical means is a direct consequence of the financing difficulties faced by the majority of EAS providers. Lack of means of travel (motorcycles, cars) are the biggest logistical constraint, both in terms of quantity and quality. This constraint leads actors to reduce the areas of intervention. The lack or poor quality of logistical resources affects the quality of monitoring of the activities undertaken, ultimately having negative consequences on the accessibility and impact of agricultural advisory services.

#### *Non-compliance with commitment clauses*

Partnerships are often poorly implemented and not renewed because of shortcomings in the respect of the commitment clauses of the various parties. This constraint is caused by several factors including:

- (i) Lack of clarity on the commitments of each of the parties involved; most collaborations are not formalized;
- (ii) Lack of human resources or logistical means to carry out the commitments made within the time limits, which may result from unforeseen circumstances or a poor appreciation of needs and capacities at the time the commitment is made;
- (iii) Cessation or late arrival of external support that was expected (e.g. funding, logistic support) for the implementation of activities.

This constraint is exacerbated by the lack of skills in partnership management. It is difficult to anticipate the challenges mentioned above and to request the other party to review the commitments in order to make corrections in response to changes in the situation.

#### *Lack of skills in managing partnerships*

There is a skills gap within the majority of EAS providers to initiate, manage and capitalize on partnerships. Indeed, partnerships require skills in negotiation, monitoring and evaluation and capitalization. For example, PO, which are the EAS providers with the greatest number of partnerships, often lack personnel with the appropriate profile and skills in their management teams. This lack of human resources is felt in the monitoring and development of partnerships. The transformation of informal relationships, which are in the majority, into formalized partnerships can only be successful if the various EAS providers have the appropriate skills.

#### *Differing profiles, orientations and EAS tools and methods*

Various organizations have also tended to use different methods and tools for extension delivery. Some still focus on technology transfer, while others focus on building management capacity. These



differences in approaches and strategies tend to make collaboration difficult, especially since the profiles and skills of the staff involved are not the same on both sides. One partner may have staff with a good level of academic training, while the agents of the other party have a low academic level but a solid field experience that is often not known or recognized by other actors. Finally, it is important to underline the difficulties inherent in the differences in the partners' centers of interest and geographical area of intervention. Actors often target specific value chains and intervene only in certain municipalities. Moreover, partnerships are often built in an opportunistic way around initiatives (in the case of projects) which are limited in time.

#### *Lack of a conducive institutional framework*

There is not yet a mechanism at the national level to encourage the various providers to adopt an integrated approach in the planning and implementation of their initiatives. Incentives and tools to facilitate partnerships among providers are still lacking at both the national and decentralized levels. The lack of effective coordination of actors is a hindrance to exchanges that often constitute the starting point for partnerships development. To a certain extent, the coordination of actors is part of the mandate of ANPROCA, but the latter has not yet developed enough activities in this sense, especially since it is facing financial difficulties. At the level of different administrative regions of the country, there exist theoretically a Regional Consultation Framework for Rural Development Actors (CRADER) designed to be held annually. In practice, however, few administrative regions, apart from Kindia, manage to organize it on a regular basis. Its format and the wide variety of participants it brings together do not make it very appropriate for in-depth discussions, synergies development, knowledge sharing and learning among EAS professionals. However, the solution is not necessarily to create another regional structure for the EAS, since it risks contributing to the proliferation of structures that are not always sustainable. Rather, it would be a matter of considering the possibility and, if necessary, creating within CRADER, a working group dedicated to EAS.

#### PROCESS FOR THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF EAS IN GUINEA

Professionalization is defined as the social process by which any business or occupation is transformed into a true profession of the highest integrity and competence. This process involves the establishment of required qualifications, a professional body or association to oversee the conduct of members of the profession and some degree of demarcation between skilled and unskilled amateurs (Wikipedia 2014 as cited by Terblanche, 2017). Professionalization is a necessity in contexts of pluralistic agricultural advisory systems such as that of Guinea, where a diversity of actors with heterogeneous profiles and skills often provide the same type of services. It then becomes important to set standards for the quality of services and to put in place mechanisms to ensure their application, notably by precisely defining the profiles and skills required for the different activities.

Professionalization contributes to the improvement of employees' performance and is an important factor for remuneration and recognition of competencies by colleagues as well as by employers and beneficiaries of services (Terblanche, 2017). This recognition of abilities that entitles entry and tacit or formal integration into a trade or community of practice are crucial for actors who face mistrust or skepticism about their skills. This problem is often encountered among young agricultural advisers at the beginning of their careers (Djamen, 2019b). The need for recognition is even more pronounced among agricultural advisers in the private sector. Despite their contributions to the current supply of agricultural advisory services, they do not enjoy official status. The organizations employing them are not yet sufficiently recognized and taken into account as providers when planning EAS development activities. Formal recognition would allow providers to make more full use of their skills and to be better involved in the planning and implementation of agricultural policies and investments.

The response to this concern requires that a real dynamic of professionalization of EAS be initiated. To this end, it is necessary to identify the actors concerned, draw up regulatory texts and create a

structure that will be in charge of applying and updating them according to the evolution of the context. Professionalization does not only concern private sector suppliers, but also those in the public sector. This generalization of the process is all the more judicious since there are flows of human resources between the two sectors that also serve the same producers.

Furthermore, the current reform of EAS in Guinea requires that the services be more widely considered and treated as a profession. Defining and implementing criteria for registration and accreditation would help promote professionalism, accountability and ethical conduct among EAS actors. The aim is not to standardize the profiles of advisers, but to define them more precisely and to set out the skills they require.

This section is structured in two subsections, the first dealing with the different categories of actors involved. The second sub-section presents the proposed approach for setting up a registration and accreditation system for the different categories of providers. Different propositions and advice presented in this section are on discussions with local stakeholders and actors who participated in interviews, focus groups or the workshop. The propositions also built on benchmarking of interesting experiences of EAS professionalization process conducted in countries like Uganda and South Africa. The content of this section was discussed and validated with stakeholders; it should therefore be considered as the agreed outline of the process of EAS professionalization in Guinea. However, it should be implemented with flexibility, taking into account results of interactions with stakeholders, possible additional information on good practices in EAS professionalization, and also new priorities that may be defined by the authorities in charge of the agricultural sector.

#### *Actors concerned with registration and accreditation*

Registration and accreditation concern all natural and legal persons engaged in the provision of EAS to producers and other actors in agricultural value chains. These services can be grouped into four main areas: (i) knowledge, technology and information sharing; (ii) decision support or advice on farm, organizational and agribusiness management; (iii) strengthening farmers' organizations and collective action; and (iv) facilitation and brokering in rural areas and value chains (Box 5).

Providers of agricultural advisory services usually operate in one or more service areas. Registration and accreditation requirements will apply to providers whether they operate as natural or legal persons. At the level of natural persons, it will be necessary to define precisely the profiles and skills required to be attached to each of the sub-categories. For legal entities, the criteria will focus on organizational capacities, and available or mobilizable human resources. In view of the diversity of the profiles, several secondary groupings will be made within each of the two categories.

For natural persons, the following sub-categories will be considered:

- C1.1: holders of an engineer/master's degree or a bachelor's degree in agricultural extension and advice;
- C1.2: professionals holding a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree in agricultural disciplines (crop production, animal production, soil, etc.), environment, forestry, agri-food sciences and nutrition, land management and other areas related to the development of agricultural value chains;
- C1.3: paraprofessionals holding a diploma or certificate or in the abovementioned fields;
- C1.4: bridging producers, experienced farmers, extension workers and community animators.

Legal entities, whether already legalized or informal, will be structured in two sub-categories, namely:

- C2.1: organizations whose main or even sole activity is the provision of agricultural advisory services (e.g. ANPROCA, consulting firms specialized in capacity development and the formulation of agricultural projects, farmer-trainer organizations).
- C2.2: structures which provide agricultural advisory services, but as a secondary or peripheral activity in addition to a main activity in the agricultural or non-agricultural field.

This typology of providers was developed from the analysis of the different EAS providers. It may be refined, with more precise criteria to characterize the different sub-categories later on by the organization that will be established for on registration and accreditation of EAS providers.

*Box 5. The different service areas of farm advisory services*

Area 1: Sharing knowledge, technology and information

- Information dissemination and knowledge sharing
- Real-world testing and application of new technologies and practices
- Promoting learning and innovation
- Connecting farmers with research and innovation institutions
- Support for the implementation of government policies and programs
- Nutrition education, gender analysis, etc.

Area 2: Advice on the management of farms, organizations and agribusinesses

- Advice on market access
- Connecting farmers and buyers
- Development of business management and marketing skills
- Support for farmers' institutional development
- Legal and tax advice

Area 3: Strengthening farmers' organizations and collective actions

- Support the development of formal and informal farmer groups and organizations
- Empowerment of producers, their groups and communities
- Ensuring inclusion - women, youth and disadvantaged groups
- Facilitation of the identification and expression of the demands for services
- Legal and tax advice

Area 4: Facilitation and brokerage in rural areas and value chains

- Promotion of collaboration between actors in the innovation system and the value chain
- Connecting farmers and their organizations with institutions offering training, education or other services
- Facilitation of linkages between farmers, farmers' organizations, the public and private sectors
- Facilitation of access to rural services such as credit, insurance, phytosanitary services and certification
- Mediation in conflicts over natural resources

Source: Blum and Chipeta (2018)

*Approach for establishing the registration and accreditation system for EAS providers*

The implementation of the registration and accreditation system for EAS providers should be considered as medium to long-term process. Indeed, this process requires a great deal of consultation with all stakeholders, but also the development of tools, innovations and reforms at the administrative and legislative levels and the mobilization of human and financial resources. Consequently, it is preferable that the approach to be followed be progressive and incremental. It could be articulated in three main stages: (i) sensitization and pre-registration of providers; (ii) participatory development of regulatory tools and the capacity development plan; and (iii) establishment of the coordination and regulation body. These three stages are sequential, but some of their activities could be carried out simultaneously. For example, the literature review on good regulatory practices could be carried out in parallel with stakeholder awareness raising and pre-registration. Also, discussions with the government and other key stakeholders on the scope and operating conditions of the coordinating and regulatory body (Step 3) can begin in Step 1, continue in Step 2, and be finalized in Step 3 (Figure 6).

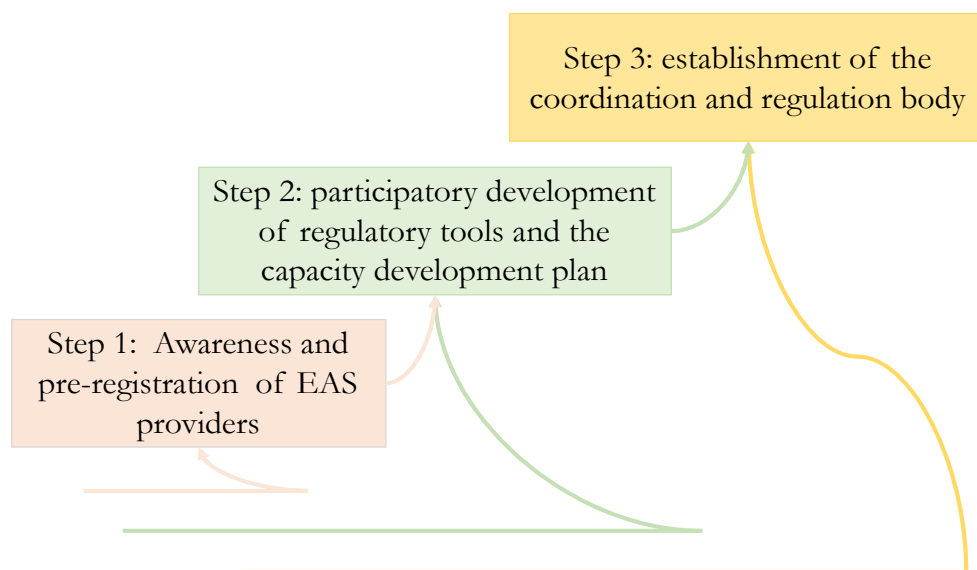


Figure 6. Different stages for the establishment of the EAS providers registration and accreditation system

#### *Step 1: Awareness-raising and pre-registration of providers*

The first stage of the process would be dedicated to EAS awareness raising and pre-registration. It could begin with the publication and popularization in an easy access format of the strategic framework for agricultural advisory services in Guinea developed in 2019, which sets out the main priorities and orientations of EAS for the next 10 years. It would be important that the dissemination of this document be accompanied by communication and information actions to inform stakeholders and actors concerned about the imminent start of the process of developing tools for regulating and coordinating EAS. Appropriate communication channels should be used to reach the various stakeholders. The pre-registration of EAS providers could consist concretely in the constitution of a database gathering information on their profile and activities. Beforehand, the detailed criteria for defining the different sub-categories of suppliers would be defined and validated with stakeholders.

A form including the sections needed to fill in the various criteria and information will be drawn up and published in electronic and paper versions. Suppliers will be sensitized and encouraged to fill in the online form. Interviewers will be recruited, trained and sent out to meet providers and farmer-trainers who would have difficulty filling in the form alone. This first step will be piloted by ANPROCA, which will be able to include it in the framework of its mandate to animate the national agricultural advisory system. However, it would be judicious for ANPROCA to inform and obtain the support of its supervisory authority (Ministry of Agriculture) as well as that of all the ministries of rural development and other stakeholders and actors concerned. In addition, an ad hoc committee comprising representatives of the various stakeholders and resource persons could be set up to steer the process.

The expected products of this first step are a better understanding and ownership of the process by different actors concerned, and a database in the form of an interactive platform gathering information on all EAS providers. This platform could be used for follow-up to facilitate the development of partnerships between actors.

#### *Step 2: Development of regulatory tools and a capacity development plan*

Awareness-raising and pre-registration carried out in Stage I should enable a better knowledge of the stakeholders and prepare the mobilization of their contributions, which are necessary for this

second stage, which will focus on the participatory development of regulation tools. Based on the analysis of the current context and also drawing lessons of Uganda and South-Africa experiences, it appeared that the key regulatory tools needed to start the process of professionalization of the agricultural advisory services are: (i) a code of ethics; (ii) norms and minimum standards; and (iii) manual of procedures for the registration and accreditation of EAS providers (Box 5). These documents will be developed in a participatory manner to ensure their relevance and inclusiveness. A technical team coordinated by ANPROCA but involving representatives of all actors of the other sub-sectors of agricultural development should be set up. It will be able to call on the skills of local or international expertise to support them in their activities. The documents will be drawn up considering the local reality and diversity on the one hand, and good practices developed in other contexts on the other hand.

Once the various regulatory tools would be defined, a capacity development plan based on information collection during the pre-registration step will be developed to enable stakeholders to fill in gaps and bring themselves up to date with the regulations. To this end, an assessment of the capacity development needs of the different sub-categories of providers (natural and legal persons) will be conducted. On the basis of the results obtained, an evaluation of the current offer of basic and continuing training will be carried out to highlight the needs in terms of reforming existing curricula (Box 6), but also to develop offers of training leading to certification or qualification. These various evaluations will be conducted in a participatory manner with the institutions providing academic, technical and vocational agricultural training. The stakeholders' capacity development plan could be the subject of a specific project mobilizing the government and its technical and financial partners. However, the most urgent task will be to precisely identify the capacity building needs and to strengthen the local offer accordingly.

*Box 6. Definition of some concepts related to the professionalization of agricultural advisory services*

**Accreditation:** This is the formal and independent verification by which an individual, program or institution submits to established quality standards certifying that they are competent to perform specific tasks. This may include testing, inspection and certification.

**Certification:** The process by which a company or professional body attests to the professional qualification of an individual, thereby giving him or her the right to practice the profession or trade, after ensuring that minimum standards of education or experience have been met

**Registration:** This is the capture and documentation of the name and other information needed to establish a profile of an EAS provider with the aim of creating a database for use at the national level by various stakeholders at different levels.

**Code of Ethics:** Ethics refers to the accepted morals, values and principles of good conduct for a profession or service area. The code of ethics for the conduct of EAS is a set of rules or behaviors expected of providers. The Code of Ethics is designed to promote integrity, a good public image and trust in EAS. More broadly, it addresses ethical issues specific to EAS because of their unique attributes and the pluralistic nature of the current system involving multiple public and private sector actors.

**Standards:** A set of clear and measurable public criteria that define the acceptable level of performance that can be used as a basis for monitoring and evaluating farm advisory services.

Sources: Adapted from: HRPA (2010), MAAIF (2017), Olorunfemi and Oladele (2018).

*Step 3: Creation of a regulatory and coordinating body*

This third stage focus on the establishment by the government of a national office in charge of the regulation and coordination of agricultural advisory services (ONCRA). Once established, the latter would also ensure the facilitation of the participation of EAS actors in the planning and implementation processes of investments and policies for sustainable agricultural and rural development. In order to regularly update the various norms and standards, this office should develop activities for monitoring and evaluation of stakeholders and consultation on the evolution

of the profession and the national EAS system. It will facilitate the capacity development of stakeholders in order to support the renewal of profiles and skills in line with the evolving requirements of the agricultural advisory profession.

The consultations conducted with stakeholders during the field mission suggested that it is preferable for this structure to be totally independent. To this end, it should receive a legal mandate from the government and have the greatest possible credibility with EAS stakeholders and qualified human resources, that is, mastering the tools and approach for carrying out its mandate.

There is currently no national structure that meets all these criteria. The concern to optimize costs, notably by enhancing an eventual existing structure, but also to ensure its efficient operation have led to the identification of four alternative options. They are summarized in Table 9 and further described below. The comparative analysis of these four options shows that each of them has specific advantages and constraints that will have to be considered for the final decision.

*Table 9. Comparative analysis of options for the structure in charge of registration and accreditation of EAS providers*

<b>Options</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Constraints</b>
<b>Option 1: National EAS Forum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inclusiveness and membership of professional farm advisers</li> <li>- Consideration of the different sub-sectors of agricultural development</li> <li>- Priority given to the development of capacities of EAS actors</li> <li>- - Career guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structure not yet in place</li> <li>- Economic model not yet stabilized</li> <li>- Risk of member influence</li> <li>- Uncertainty about the granting of the mandate by public authorities</li> <li>- - Lack of expertise in certification and accreditation</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2: New independent structure dedicated to regulation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neutrality and independence</li> <li>- Openness to formal and non-formal, vocational training and the acquisition of skills and experience</li> <li>- Consideration of all sub-sectors of agricultural development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation time and start up</li> <li>- Cost of creation</li> <li>- - Sustainability</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3: ANPROCA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing structure</li> <li>- Possesses the coordinating mandate of EAS</li> <li>- Central place in the national farm advisory system</li> <li>- Institutional and territorial anchoring</li> <li>- Recognition and strong collaboration with the different actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential conflict of interest</li> <li>- Mandate focused on crop production</li> <li>- Lack of expertise in certification and accreditation</li> <li>- Distrust/skepticism on the part of some actors</li> <li>- Lack of financial and human resources</li> </ul>
<b>Option 4: ANAQ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing structure with expertise in certification and accreditation tools and processes</li> <li>- Existence of human resources and logistical means</li> <li>- Involvement in agricultural technical and vocational education and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weak links with the major players in EAS</li> <li>- Weak consideration of non-formal education and acquisition of skills through experience</li> <li>- Little direct link with the ministries in charge of rural development</li> </ul>

Option 1 is where regulation and coordination activities are entrusted to the national forum (FNCSA) of Guinea's agricultural advisory services, a structure that does not yet exist. The decision for this option would be in line with the choice of a majority number of members of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) who prefer that activities related to the

professionalization of agricultural advisory services be led by national forums (Terblanche, 2017). This is the choice made by countries such as Uganda, where a national forum has existed for a decade and has had to demonstrate its usefulness and capacities. The FNSCA option has the advantage of being able to bring together all the actors of the different sub-sectors of rural development. Its direct connection with agricultural extension professionals will enable it to be in tune with concerns, but also with trends and thus be able to adjust its orientations and regulatory activities accordingly whenever necessary. Nevertheless, the option of the national forum will require advocacy with the government so that it grants the official mandate and contributes, even if only partially, to the management of human and material resources. Moreover, the choice of this option will have to consider the fact that the implementation of a FNSCA is a process that can take one to two years. The operationalization of the FNSCA varies according to the local context, with emphasis on the economic model, which is not yet fully stabilized.

The second option is the creation of an independent structure fully and solely dedicated to the regulation, coordination and capacity building activities of EAS stakeholders. This could be a national office for the coordination and regulation of agricultural advisory services (ONCRA). This option is guided by the desire to have a more reactive and dedicated structure, as it would not intervene directly in activities that do not directly relate to its main mandate. It is also underpinned by the idea of avoiding mistrust and/or prejudices that would weigh on existing structures. The main constraint of this second option is the time frame as well as the cost for its implementation. Moreover, the current context of insufficient financial resources and the desire to improve efficiency and institutional coordination could work against it, at least in the short term. But in the long term, this option could be the most sustainable and suitable for a substantive and continuous work toward professionalization.

Option three corresponds to the choice of ANPROCA to ensure coordination and regulation. This option has the specific advantage that ANPROCA is a structure that is well known to the various stakeholders, with good territorial coverage and a vast knowledge of the issues involved in the development of agricultural advisory services in Guinea. In addition, ANPROCA has technically steered the efforts undertaken since 2019 for EAS reform. It is well imbued with the renewed vision of EAS and has a very good understanding of the related issues, as well as the operational implications and potential benefits for all stakeholders and more generally for agricultural and rural development.

Nevertheless, this option presents a high risk of conflict of interest because ANPROCA is also a provider of farm advisory services and hires staff with this in mind. Registration and accreditation requirements will apply to it as a legal entity (provider of the advice), but also to its technical staff involved at different levels in the provision of agricultural advisory services (see section 4.1). Furthermore, ANPROCA's mandate is still focused on crop production, although there is more or less strong collaboration in the field with technicians from the livestock, environment or aquaculture sub-sectors. The choice of ANPROCA would require the extension of the mandate to all sub-sectors, but also support to strengthen its financial resources and develop expertise in accreditation tools and procedures. A communication campaign will have to be carried out to remove the mistrust that some actors show toward ANPROCA because of its challenges that have increased in recent years. The risk of conflict of interest could be resolved by the creation of a semi-autonomous committee specifically dedicated to regulation and coordination activities. ANPROCA, while ensuring the institutional supervision of this committee, would not have the right to interfere in the decision-making process. The composition of this committee would include experts (including regional/international), representatives of the various suppliers and the supervisory authorities (ministries in charge of rural development).

Option four is to choose the National Quality Assurance Authority (ANAQ), which is a structure already carrying out certification and accreditation activities, particularly in the field of higher education and scientific research (Box 7). It already has proven expertise, tools and methods for this

type of activity, but will have to adapt them for agricultural advisory issues. This is similar to the registration path taken by South Africa, which entrusted regulation and accreditation to the South African Qualifications Authority (Terblanche, 2017). In particular, it will have to develop tools to be able to consider the cases of non-formal education and skills acquisition through experience, as in the case of volunteer farmer-trainers. Stronger links will have to be established with the various ministries in charge of rural development.

*Box 7: Overview of the National Quality Assurance Authority*

The National Quality Assurance Authority (ANQA) is a Public Establishment with an Administrative Mandate created by Decree N°007/PRG/SGG of 12 January 2017. It is endowed with legal and moral personality, financial, organizational and independent autonomy in its judgments and decisions. The ANQA is placed under the administrative and technical supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and under the financial supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

The ANQA's mission is the evaluation of the quality of education and research offered by higher education and research institutions and by vocational and technical education institutions, both public and private, as well as the accreditation of institutions and programs in order to:

- Define in relation with the Ministries in charge of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Vocational and Technical Education the quality standards to be respected by Higher Education, Vocational Training and Research Institutions;
- Attest the capacity of these institutions to meet the quality standards and the expectations of the beneficiaries;
- Contribute to the promotion of a quality institutional culture;
- Ensure the protection of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of study programs through the production and dissemination of systematic, coherent, credible and publicly accessible information on the quality of education
- Give a technical opinion to the Minister in charge of Higher Education and Scientific Research on the creation, authorization to open and accreditation of higher education and scientific research institutions as well as the study programs offered by these institutions;
- Give technical advice to the Ministry in charge of Technical Education and Vocational Training on the creation, authorization to open and accreditation of vocational and technical education institutions as well as the study programs offered by these institutions;
- Propose to the Minister in charge of higher education and scientific research, policies and strategies to improve the quality of higher education and scientific research;
- Propose to the Minister of Vocational and Technical Education, policies and strategies for the continuous improvement of the quality of vocational and technical education; and
- Maintain partnerships with similar African and international institutions.

The financial resources of the ANQA are made up of: (i) the State budget allocation; (ii) resources from grants, donations and legacies; (iii) quality assessment fees set by the ANQA; and (iv) funds from bi- and multilateral cooperation.

The four options can be grouped into two broad categories, depending on whether the envisaged structure is already operational or not. The first category is that of structures that are not yet operational (Options 1 and 2). The choice of a structure in this category would respond to the desire to place professionalization within a new dynamic which, while capitalizing on the achievements and recent initiatives, seeks to avoid unfavorable prejudices and have the support of as many players as possible. Such a choice would also aim to avoid the slowness and possible complications relating to the reform of existing structures. The second category of option brings together the ANPROCA and the National Quality Assurance Authority, which are already operational. The main advantage of choosing one of these two structures would be rapid operationalization. Nevertheless, the mandate of the structure selected will have to be revised and/or expanded beforehand and it will



have to be provided with the additional human, financial and material resources to fully carry out the new activities.

The final decision on the most suitable option rests with the Government. The analysis presented in the preceding lines may assist in the decision-making process. In all cases, the choice of an option should consider its specific advantages. Above all, however, the cost and feasibility of the solutions to be deployed to manage the constraints highlighted and ensure efficiency and sustainability in the medium and long term will have to be considered. The investment cost for non-existing structures may appear high and prohibitive in the short term. It would be more judicious to take a long-term perspective and above all to consider the capacity of the structure to operate efficiently and generate the expected effects and impacts on the behavior and performance of EAS providers. The administrative decision for the creation of the regulatory structure will ensure that its mandate is extended to include advisory services for all rural sector ministries. This structure would also have to be open to formal and non-formal education and, develop prospective reflections on the evolution of the profession of advisers and the organizational capacities of EAS providers.

Independently of the final choice on the format and identity of the organization that will be in charge of coordination and regulation, its deployment should be gradual. A committee or working group will be set up to lead the process. Adequate resources will be made available to the working group to enable it to carry out its activities smoothly. Given its current central role in the national agricultural advisory system, ANPROCA should supervise this working group, which may be led by a resource person/expert. One of the first activities of this working group might be to carry out a review and analysis of the current legal and legislative texts governing the rural sector. This preliminary work should enable the identification and better definition of the scope of the law enshrining ONCRA as well as possible adjustments to be made in relation to existing texts. It is advisable that the creation of ONCRA be backed by a law adopted by the National Assembly to give it all the authority necessary for the exercise of its mandate. Once ONCRA is created and provided with the means of operation, its first activity could be to proceed with the formal registration of actors. To this end, it may rely on the updated version of the database created in step I (pre-registration), and for that purpose would apply the texts developed (in particular the registration and accreditation manual) in step 2. It might also decide to renew and enrich the various regulatory and coordination tools whenever necessary.

#### *The need to renew agricultural training curricula in Guinea*

In Guinea, extension workers, including those working in the public service (ANPROCA), generally have widely varying profiles and skills. Some have no basic training in agronomy or agricultural sciences. Others have received formal education in agronomy or agricultural sciences, and often hold a Bachelor degree or MSc (agronomist, agro-economist, extension and advisory services). The level of operationality of young graduates is often low due to obsolete curricula and insufficient practical work during training. Some organizations such as ANPROCA organize refresher courses for their young recruits.

The national supply of academic and vocational agricultural training is relatively diversified. There are two higher training centers: the Higher Agronomic and Veterinary Institute of Faranah (ISAV/F) and the Higher Institute of Science and Veterinary Medicine of Dalaba (ISSMV). There are also four National Schools of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (ENAE) and a National School of Water and Forest Technical Agents (ENATEF) in Mamou. There is a process for updating training curricula within the framework of the Project to Support the Improvement of Training and Integration in the Agricultural and Mining Sectors (PAFISAM) implemented with AFD support. In the agricultural sector, this project's support for curricula reform concerns only the ENAE. The latter is harnessing the opportunity of the current reform to create a two years Bachelor training program on agricultural advice. Furthermore, training modules have been developed on agricultural advisory services, and entrepreneurship.

At the level of higher education, there is not yet a dynamic response to the need for reform. The current training program of the Agricultural Extension Department of ISAV was renovated in 2008 as part of the reform for the transition to the LMD system (License, Master, Doctorate). The main objective of this program is to develop the student's skills to be able to: (i) know the natural environment (physical, social, cultural, economic); (ii) effectively manage an area for sustainable use and; (iii) transfer technologies likely to ensure sustainable socioeconomic development and evaluate their impact (ISAV, 2008). The program covers eight semesters with 240 credits and consists of 22 compulsory courses and 18 elective courses. The training is structured in three optional specializations: Land Development and Management (Option I); (ii) Rural Production Techniques (Option II) and; (iii) Agricultural Production and Processing Techniques (Option III).

The curriculum is dominated by modules focusing on technical skills (production, processing, marketing, etc.). There are few modules to enable future advisers to master issues and challenges of their profession, and above all to develop the skills needed to work effectively. There is a lack of courses on recent or innovative EAS tools and methods or on the fundamental skills and competences of modern extensionists as recommended by Davis and Sulaiman (2014). Capacity development, decision support and facilitation, three of the four main classical areas of agricultural advisory services, are not addressed (Box 4). The managers of ISAV and of its Department of Agricultural Extension are aware of the need to reform the current program to adapt it to the new context, which requires expertise in all four main areas of agricultural advisory services.

In general, the different stakeholders in agricultural development (extensionists, ministries, development partners, etc.) consider the modernization of agricultural training as one of the pillars for the success of EAS reform in Guinea. It is suggested to strengthen practical work during training and to revise the curricula to introduce modules that will help to strengthen the match between the skills of agricultural advisers and the demands of producers and other stakeholders in agricultural value chains. In addition, the introduction of norms and standards in the framework of the professionalization of EAS should be reflected in the content of training courses.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### CONCLUSIONS

The trend toward pluralism of EAS providers in Guinea is irreversible. If this change is well managed, it would become an opportunity to meet the challenge of better response to the diverse and evolving demands of producers and other actors in agricultural value chains. The objective of this study was to outline a strategy for strengthening integration of services (through partnerships) and professionalization of providers to improve availability and access to quality EAS.

The methodological approach followed was based on the matrix of relations between providers, and other qualitative research techniques including formal and informal discussions with key stakeholders and actors (interviews, focus group discussions, workshop). It also included the co-development of pathways for the establishment of a regulatory and coordination mechanism for the national agricultural extension and advisory system. This methodology enabled the characterization of stakeholders, the analysis of their contributions and interactions and, the outlining of the process for the development of regulatory tools and the body that will be in charge of their application.

The pluralism of EAS providers has increased in recent decades. Seven types of providers can be distinguished, mainly because of their territorial location and the volume of demand they have to meet. They are: ANPROCA, PO, NGO, agrodealers, farmer-trainers, market women and consultancy firms. The specificities of their interventions confirm the interest of pluralism for the improvement of EAS supply. The diversification and increase of EAS providers reflect less the ease of access of providers to financing than the impossibility for a single category of provider to meet all demands both thematically and geographically. The asymmetry in the intensity of partnerships between providers shows the specific interest of each of the providers and the multipolar nature of the landscape of EAS providers.

Complementarities between public services (ANPROCA) and private sector providers are strong. ANPROCA plays a major role in the emergence, operation and strengthening of private provider schemes. The latter, although still fragile, have a complementary service offer and a very timely contribution to the renewal of ANPROCA's tools, methods and capacities. The role of volunteer farmer-trainers is no longer insignificant, it is becoming increasingly important in scaling up innovations. This role would be greater and more diversified if there were a stronger policy of support, capitalization and harnessing of indigenous knowledge and farmer innovations. Similarly, consultancy firms, which currently operate in a fairly small niche, will play an increasing role with the development of agricultural entrepreneurship and the need to consolidate emerging advisory systems. The agrodealer approach, which is more technical-commercial, will in the medium term raise the question of the separation between advice and the sale of inputs to ensure the neutrality of the services provided. Similarly, the role of market women which is presently very important for the information of producers to updated information on agricultural markets (prices, demands) would likely intensify over the next few years considering the increasing investments in agricultural value chain development.

The different providers are well aware of the potential benefits of collaboration to improve their performance and ultimately the national of EAS system. The predominance of informal partnerships compared to formal relationships reflects frailty as well as opportunistic and occasional approaches. The institutional environment is not yet sufficiently conducive for the development of partnerships between actors. But the greatest difficulties are the weak intrinsic capacities of the service providers themselves. Efforts to promote partnerships will first have to start by strengthening the specific capacities of each type of actor so that they are able to play their role more fully in the framework of partnership.

The need to professionalize EAS is a concern accentuated by pluralism and shared by all actors and stakeholders. The issue goes beyond recognition and professional integration of private providers,

and concerns all providers. The proposed typology of providers (legal and natural persons) is a basis for defining the profiles and skills required for registration and accreditation. This typology may be refined, in particular with regard to the inclusion of providers who have developed skills through practice rather than through academic or professional training in agricultural sciences. This is fundamental given the growing role of farmer-trainers and market women.

The operationalization of the proposed approach to professionalization will have to be done in an inclusive and progressive manner. Raising awareness among stakeholders before the start of the process is important to enable them to prepare themselves accordingly. The development of regulatory tools should be done in an inclusive manner to ensure their relevance and that they actually generate qualitative improvements and not exclusions. In any case, the application of registration and accreditation criteria should only begin after the skills and competences development plan has been drawn up, which will enable providers to fill the gaps. In addition, it will be necessary to ensure that training to update and acquire new skills is effectively available.

The profile and capacities of the organization that will be in charge of regulating and coordinating the EAS system are crucial to the success and impact of professionalization. The different options analyzed in the document provide elements for making an informed decision. The selection of an option should not be made solely on the basis of its potential benefits. Above all, costs and feasibility of solutions needed to manage the organization's constraints and its capacity to generate the expected results in an efficient and sustainable manner must be considered.

The methodological approach followed for this study made it possible to generate the various expected results. It has facilitated the involvement and active participation of a variety of actors (Table 2). This is likely to strengthen the relevance of the results and facilitate their ownership. Moreover, this approach has made it possible to continue and deepen the dialogue with stakeholders on the reform of the EAS in Guinea, launched in 2019. Awareness on the operational implications of this reform, both at the institutional level and among individual stakeholders, has been strengthened. This approach could be consolidated by a more quantitative assessment of the intensity of relations between actors, analysis of collaboration between organizations belonging to the same category of providers. Finally, the results can serve as a basis for dialogue between actors on the actions to be undertaken to develop partnerships that do not exist or are still of low intensity.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is a contribution to the dynamics of modernization of the agricultural extension and advisory services in Guinea. The results generated will provide decision-making elements for actors concerned, particularly those in charge of steering the process. The following recommendations are made to ensure that the harnessing of these results is done efficiently and effectively leads to significant progress, particularly in the area of partnerships and professionalization of EAS actors.

### *Recommendations for the development and strengthening of partnerships*

Strong potential complementarities between the different providers of EAS were highlighted. The effective exploitation of these complementarities through sound partnerships would be beneficial for the suppliers in terms of improving their respective performance. It would also contribute to improving the overall farm advisory offer. From this perspective, it is important that effective and sustainable solutions be found to the difficulties encountered in the development and implementation of partnerships (cf. section 4.3.6). In addition to these specific measures that will be needed, it seems advisable to put in place a real incentive policy to promote and support partnerships between the different providers of agricultural advisory services. With this in mind, the following recommendations are made.

### *Building the capacity of EAS providers*

Three capacity building actions are recommended. The first action is based on the fact that a partnership is only truly successful if each of the partners involved is able to provide the specific contributions expected of it by the other actor. This reality implies that building the capacity of actors to develop and make partnerships work must be preceded by activities aimed at ensuring that each provider effectively plays its role in the national EAS system. To this end, it is important that the State and development partners develop a document about the competences that are needed, and then facilitate the development of opportunities for the acquisition of these competences.

The second capacity building action will focus on the training of actors on partnership management. This training should give each provider the capacities for seeking complementarities, negotiating and managing partnerships. It will concern in particular the main persons in charge at the central and decentralized levels of the various organizations. The heads of units in charge of partnerships (in the case of organizations where this entity exists) will be targeted. The implementation of these training courses will first be the responsibility of each organization. Several organizations may join forces to reduce training costs. Development partners whose intervention foresees this type of action may be solicited.

The third capacity building action relates to knowledge management within agricultural advisory organizations. More specifically, it is advisable for each organization to improve its capacities and performance in the field of communication (especially external communication to make itself and its activities known), monitoring and evaluation and experience capitalization, which can then be shared more easily with other actors. This recommendation is formulated first of all for the various EAS organizations. However, the government and development partners could also include it in their actions for the development of EAS in Guinea, particularly by supporting the establishment of a national platform for the management of agricultural knowledge and information.

### *Improving accessibility of information on actors and opportunities*

This recommendation follows on from the previous one on improving communication by EAS organizations. It aims to enable those involved in providing EAS to know each other better to identify possible areas of synergy or complementarity, and to have up-to-date information on agricultural development opportunities and initiatives. With this in mind, we recommend that an information and knowledge management platform be set up on actors and agricultural advisory services in Guinea. This platform will provide information on the profile of actors, their activities and areas of intervention. It could take the form of an interactive electronic directory that will be regularly updated by the body in charge of registration and accreditation of EAS providers. The platform will operate mainly in its accessible electronic version, but a physical version may be produced regularly depending on stakeholder demand.

Improving the availability and accessibility of information on actors and opportunities will first require a mapping of actors considering all types of providers, both public and private. This mapping will be completed by producing knowledge on the services of the different providers, their performance, challenges and potential complementarities. This recommendation is mainly addressed to the government, development agencies and ANPROCA, which has the mandate to animate the national agricultural advisory system.

### *Establishing and strengthening consultation and exchange platforms*

Establishing a national framework for stakeholder consultation and coordination is essential in pluralistic systems such as Guinea's. The national consultation framework could take the form of a country forum of EAS actors, as it exists in a growing number of African countries through the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria etc.). A country forum (CF) is an inclusive platform for different actors to coordinate, exchange information and knowledge and identify service delivery opportunities. It is also used to advocate for better

investment in EAS and to develop relationships between national stakeholders and other continental and international initiatives.

The setting up the CF is the responsibility of ANPROCA, which will have to mobilize its supervisory authority, the other ministries in charge of rural development, agricultural advisory providers and all other stakeholders. Pending the creation of this forum, it is recommended that the state and development partners provide ANPROCA with the necessary resources to enable it to develop coordination activities. The consultation process that will be initiated at the national level through the stakeholders' forum will be extended to administrative regions. The CRADER already provides a good basis that can be adapted to serve as a learning and networking space for EAS professionals. Should this adaptation not be possible, the option of a regional framework dedicated to agricultural extension and advisory services will then be explored and adopted where appropriate. It will then be carried out by the ANPROCA Regional Offices in synergy with the regional directorates of the various ministries of rural development. The mechanisms will have to be extended to the decentralized levels (prefecture, commune) but in a less formalized format so as not to make the operation more cumbersome. Emphasis could be placed on the organization of joint actions.

In addition, it is recommended that the government and development partners give greater support to existing mechanisms, even informal ones, that enable actors to meet (e.g. workshops, open field days). This support should be extended to joint activities such as guided visits, which allow different actors to meet and exchange views. steering committees, planning workshops and open-door days organized by development projects with an EAS component should develop initiatives to strengthen consultation. Furthermore, adopting the value chain approach as a basis for agricultural investment planning could help to better mobilize different service providers, while creating opportunities for partnerships and synergies.

#### *Recommendations for strengthening professionalization of EAS*

This second set of recommendations deals with agricultural professionalization and places particular emphasis on the steps needed to guarantee the quality of regulatory instruments. In addition, we stress the need to link the local supply of technical and vocational agricultural training with the new vision of agricultural advisory services.). Once the standards and norms will be defined and come into force, the training curricula should also be amended accordingly.

#### *Adopting an inclusive approach and seizing synergies to develop regulatory instruments*

The elaboration in 2019 of a strategic framework for agricultural advisory services in Guinea is an important asset that sets the strategic orientations on which actors should align their interventions. It is advisable that this strategic document be supplemented by operational regulatory instruments to facilitate collaboration and partnerships between stakeholders.

The effectiveness of the professionalization of agricultural extension in Guinea will depend less on the existence of regulatory tools than on the relevance of these tools, their appropriation by the various stakeholders concerned and the capacities and capabilities of the institution in charge of their application. It is therefore recommended that an inclusive approach be adopted for the development of the various tools to ensure their relevance and feasibility and to ensure that they do not result in the exclusion of some categories of actors. Once communicated and adopted, the regulatory instruments should be made available to the different actors concerned so that they can carry the necessary adjustments to comply. To this end, it will be advisable to provide for a period of awareness-raising and administrative tolerance to enable the various actors to comply.

Furthermore, it is desirable that the adoption of regulatory instruments be directly accompanied by the establishment and capacity building of the body responsible for their application. Pending the availability of the required instruments and the structure, ANPROCA will have to be given more resources to ensure, on an interim basis, coordination and awareness raising activities for the actors. It is advisable to seize the opportunity of the current drafting process of the agro-sylvo-pastoral law

to include provisions relating to regulatory and coordination tools of EAS in Guinea. This recommendation is primarily addressed to ANPROCA, which is in charge of coordinating the national agricultural extension and advisory system. It concerns both the government and partners supporting sustainable agricultural development in Guinea.

#### *Updating and enriching agricultural training curricula*

Presently, demands related to capacity development, advice/decision support and facilitation, three of the four main classical areas of agricultural advisory services, are not yet fully addressed by the current extension system which is still too oriented on information and knowledge dissemination on technologies. The revision and enrichment of training curricula are essential to reduce the gap in service provision, mainly due to lack of skills and competencies. That revision is also crucial to consider the new vision of agricultural extension and advisory services as reflected, among others, in the regulatory tools (code of ethics, norms and standards, etc.). From this point of view, it is important that the dynamics of curriculum revision initiated with the PAFISAM project and mainly focused on the ENAE be extended to the ISAV and the ISSMV. Basically, this reform will aim to ensure a better match between the profiles and skills of extension workers and the demands of producers and other stakeholders in the agricultural value chains. It will also aim to enable extension workers to have a good mastery of the new methods of agricultural advice.

In parallel to the renewal of basic training courses, it is advisable to develop modular training courses that will lead to certification or qualifications, enabling agricultural advisers to keep up to date with demand, but also with the norms and standards that will be set by the regulatory tools. These modular training courses will not be provided exclusively by traditional training institutions, but also by any other organization with the appropriate skills and accredited by the regulatory body. Finally, the enrichment of the training curricula will have to include modules for the development of the organizational capacities of extension providers in relation to the standards that will be set, and more generally in relation to the capacity development needs of extension organizations.

This recommendation is addressed to academic and professional agricultural training centers, which should make the renewal of curricula part of their internal dynamic to strengthen the adequacy between training and employment. The recommendation is also aimed at the government which, through its various technical divisions concerned, should facilitate the process, including by mobilizing other actors and stakeholders in sustainable agricultural development in Guinea.

#### *Fostering the digitalization of EAS delivery in Guinea*

The context of this study is marked by the global and unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic which poses to EAS the challenge to find appropriate methods and tools to ensure permanent support, including at a distance, to producers and other players in agricultural value chains. From the discussions with local actors, and also analysis of major adaptation trends in the world, it appears that in Guinea the resolution of the challenge posed by Covid-19 to EAS will require, among other things, the acceleration and strengthening of the digitalization of EAS delivery. Therefore, we recommend that efforts for the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in EAS be strengthened and diversified. Digitization should not be seen as a simple temporal adjustment. It seems wise to include it in a logic of fundamental change, given the multiple benefits that it can generate in terms of efficiency in interventions and improved accessibility of services among others.

We recommend that awareness and capacities of EAS providers be strengthened for efficient and sustainable harnessing of the potential of ICTs. Government and development agencies should facilitate and support this dynamic by developing the necessary infrastructures and facilitating the consolidation and scaling of local successful initiatives of use of ICTs in EAS (e.g. use of video, decentralized digital resource centers, apps for data collection, etc.). It would also be important to enrich these local experiences through the benchmarking and piloting of other relevant interesting

ICTs tools (e.g. Digital Pen technology etc.) that have demonstrated their potential in improving accessibility and the performance of EAS including beyond the context of Covid-19.



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## ANNEXES

*Annex 1. Agenda for the workshop to elaborate strategies to strengthen the synergies and professionalization of agricultural advisory services in Guinea*

**20 et 21 février 2020**

Centre de Vulgarisation Agricole de Bamban (Kindia)

### AGENDA PREVISIONNEL

JOUR 1 : JEUDI 20 Février 2020		
Horaires	Activités	
8h00 – 8h30	Enregistrement et installation des participants	<i>Comité d'organisation</i>
<b>Session 1 : Ouverture et cadrage de l'atelier</b>		
8h30 – 9h00	Présentation des participants, des objectifs de l'atelier et validation du programme	<i>Modérateur de l'atelier : M. Alpha Bacar BARRY</i>
9h00 -9h15	1.1/ Mot de bienvenu du Directeur Régional de l'Agriculture 1.2/ Propos introductifs de la Mission de l'USAID en Guinée 1.3/ Ouverture solennelle de l'atelier	<i>M. Almamy Seny Soumah, Directeur Régional de l'Agriculture</i> <i>Représentant du Chef Mission de l'USAID en Guinée</i> <i>M. Aly Condé, Directeur Général ANPROCA</i>
<b>Session 2 : Diversité et complémentarités entre les différents fournisseurs de conseil</b>		
9h15-10h30	2.1/ Exposé introductif : Atouts et défis de la pluralité des fournisseurs de conseil agricole (15min) 2.2/ Aperçu de quelques expériences de collaboration entre fournisseurs de conseil 2.3/ Diversité et complémentarités des fournisseurs de conseil agricole : points de vue et expériences des projets de développement agricole (10 min par intervenant) 2.4/ Discussions générales sur les différentes présentations (20 min)	<i>Dr. Patrice Djamen</i>  <i>Représentants de ANPROCA, Guinée 44/ APEK, RGTA DI, SAREF, RACA, FPDF (10 min par intervenant)</i>  <i>Représentants des projets AGRIFARM et PDAIG</i>  <i>Modérateur de l'atelier : M. Alpha Bacar BARRY</i>
10h30-11h00	Pause – café et réseautage	<i>Participants</i>
11h00-13h00	2.5/ Synergies et collaborations entre les fournisseurs de conseil agricole : expériences, opportunités, défis et stratégie et de durabilité (travaux de groupe : ANPROCA, OPs, ONG, bureaux d'études, partenaires au développement et projets et programmes)	<i>Facilitateurs des groupes de travail</i>
13h00-14h00	Pause-déjeuner et réseautage	
14h00-15h20	2.6/ Restitution et validation des résultats des travaux de groupe (10min par groupe de travail + 30 min de discussions générales sur les actions prioritaires pour le renforcement des collaborations entre fournisseurs)	<i>Modérateur de l'atelier : M. Alpha Bacar BARRY + Facilitateurs des groupes de travail</i>
15h20-15h30	Pause – café et réseautage	
<b>Session 3 : Stratégie d'amélioration de la qualité des services de conseil agricole</b>		

15h30-16h30	3.1/ Introduction sur l'évaluation de la qualité des services de conseil agricole (15 min) 3.2/ Travaux de groupe (par catégorie de fournisseur) sur l'évaluation et les stratégies d'amélioration de la qualité des services de conseil agricole (45 min)	<i>Dr Patrice Djamé</i>  <i>Facilitateurs des différents groupes de travail</i>
<b>JOUR 2 : VENDREDI 21 FEVRIER 2020</b>		
8h30-9h15	3.2/ Suite des travaux de groupe (par catégorie d'acteurs) sur l'évaluation et les stratégies d'amélioration de la qualité des services de conseil agricole (45min)	<i>Facilitateurs des différents groupes de travail</i>
9h15-10h30	3.2/ Restitution et validation des résultats des travaux de groupe (10 min par groupe, 25 min de discussions générales)	<i>Modérateur de l'atelier : M. Alpha Bacar BARRY</i>
10h30-11h00	Pause – café et réseautage	
<b>Session 4 : Éléments de stratégie pour la professionnalisation du métier de conseiller agricole</b>		
11h00-12h30	4.1/ Aperçu de quelques dynamiques de professionnalisation du conseil agricole en Afrique  4.2/ Pertinence et processus de reconnaissance et d'accréditation des fournisseurs de conseil agricole. Travaux de groupe : (i) certification des conseillers agricoles ; (ii) certification des organisations de conseil agricole et, (iii) profil et financement de la structure de certification	<i>Dr Patrice Djamé (10 min)</i>  <i>Facilitateurs des groupes de travail</i>
12h30-13h30	4.2/ Pertinence et processus de reconnaissance et d'accréditation des fournisseurs de conseillers agricole (suite) : Restitution des résultats des travaux de groupe	<i>Modérateur de l'atelier : M. Alpha Bacar BARRY + facilitateurs des groupes de travail</i>
13h30-14h30	Pause-déjeuner et réseautage	
<b>Session 5 : Synthèse des résultats et perspectives</b>		
14h30-15h30	5.1/ Synthèse des résultats de l'atelier et priorisation des actions à engager pour le renforcement des synergies et la professionnalisation des acteurs de conseil agricole 5.2/ Prochaines étapes 5.3/ Clôture de l'atelier	<i>Modérateur de l'atelier : M. Alpha Bacar BARRY</i>  <i>Dr. Patrice Djamé</i> <i>M. Aly Condé, DG ANPROCA</i>
<b>15h30</b>	<b>Rafraichissement, réseautage et fin de l'atelier</b>	

*Cet atelier est organisé par ANPROCA avec le précieux concours de la Mission de l'USAID en Guinée dans le cadre du projet « Développement des capacités locales de conseil agricole (DLEC) »*

*Annex 2. List of participants for the workshop to elaborate strategies to strengthen partnerships and professionalization of agricultural advisory services in Guinea*

N°	Name and Surnames	Organization	Place of residence
1	Aly CONDE	ANPROCA	Conakry
2	Alpha Bacar BARRY	ANPROCA	Conakry
3	Mariama Sékou TOURE	ANPROCA	Conakry
4	Ibrahima DIALLO	Winrock International	Conakry
5	Gilbert Andéga CAMARA	CNOP-G	Conakry
6	Mamady Hawa CAMARA	SAREF International	Conakry
7	André AFFRO	Projet PAFISAM	Conakry
8	Sidiki KEITA	ANAG	Conakry
9	Dr Vamougné KOUROUMA	ISAV VGE	Faranah
10	Dr Fodé KEITA	ISAV VGE	Faranah
11	Pr. Alpha Mamadou BALDE	ISSMV	Dalaba
12	Mamadou CONTE	FOPVS/BG	Dubréka
13	Jacques KOUNDOUNO	SACA SARL	Guéckédou
14	Fodé CISSE	APEK	Kindia
15	Ibrahima S. GASSAMA	PDAIG	Conakry
16	Emma PEYRAUD	Guinée-44	Kindia
17	Mohammed LAMINE	ANPROCA	Kindia
18	Laye SACKO	ANPROCA	Conakry
19	Fodé CAMARA	DRA	Kindia
20	Mamadou Mountaga KANN	NAV/ Agriculture	Kindia
21	Ousmane BARRY	ANPROCA	Kindia
22	Daouda CAMARA	FOPMA	Kindia
23	Abdoulaye CAMARA	RGTA- DI	Kindia
24	Dr Patrice DJAMEN	Consultant	Ouagadougou