

# Key messages from the discussions in the Open Space

At the Reaching the Millions Workshop, 5th March 2015, Hanoi

## Topic 1: RAS & Market (Demand & Supply) / „How to bring innovation in the RAS to have consistent demand“

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Factors contributing to less efficient RAS-market:

Demand side	Supply side
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lack of awareness</li><li>- Quality of services</li><li>- Accessibility and outreach</li><li>- Affordability</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lack of innovation in services</li><li>- Unawareness of market</li></ul>

Considerations and actionable points:

Demand side	Supply side
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Directory of service provider</li><li>- Use of mass media for creating awareness</li><li>- Demonstration of successful models</li><li>- Farmer becoming ambassador of service provider</li><li>- Output based payment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Regular updation of skills</li><li>- Promote and deliver complete package (input, output)</li></ul>

## Topic 2: Capacity enhancement of service provider to meet the demand

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How to enhance “functional” capacities of (local) RAS providers? (Facilitation, organizing farmer groups, hand holding farmer organization, managing conflicts, policy advocacy, coordination)

### Problems

- Lacking functional/process/soft skills
- Public RAS
  - o Supply driven
  - o Techno-focused
  - o Reluctant to develop capacity of other RAS providers
- No policies on HRD/capacity development for RAS
  - o Not enough resources
  - o No incentives to acquire new skills
  - o No proper planning
  - o No mechanism to evaluate impact
- No mechanism for assessing the demand for ‘CD’ among RAS provider
- NGO efforts -> project specific
- Private sector -> product promotion
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### Solutions

- Review existing mechanisms for CD
  - o Curricula and methodology
  - o Infrastructure
  - o Trainers’ capacity
  - o implementation plan’
- Formulate a policy and on capacity development of RAS based on a need assessment (K,S&A)
- Use the GFRAS position paper “the new extensionist” as a framework for capacity development

#### **Topic 4: Gender and RAS, Women and social groups responsive RAS**

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##### **Organisation level:**

- Membership quota
- Creating gender sensitive working environment and incentive mechanism
- Ally with likeminded social movements i.e. tenure rights, education
- Identity champions (institutions, legislators, CSO, policy makers, independent exchange)
- Provide mandate, authority and resources to gender units / focal point
- Ensure access to information, especially in local language

##### **System level:**

- Ensure existence and implementation of gender sensitive legal framework (i.e. which includes protection, good governance)
- Advocate for political will for gender and social inclusion responsive policy framework
- Provide evidence based data and facilitate dialogue with the decision makers

##### **All level:**

- Facilitate mind set change
- Strength capacity based on need assessment
- Ensure accountability towards results

#### **Topic 6: How to support coordination of an effective pluralistic RAS system?**

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Tops	Flops
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Clarity of roles of stakeholders</li><li>- Stable policy environment for implementation as per role / responsibility</li><li>- Different RAS for different needs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Roles of stakeholders not clear enough</li><li>- Unstable policy environment</li><li>- Lack of hierarchy and market</li><li>- Different understanding and definitions of RAS</li><li>- Food security and commercial production mixed in RAS system</li></ul>

#### **Topic 7: Quality assurance of RAS**

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Overcoming the dilemma of quality vs scale and how to reach millions

- Identify communication system / platforms that are already reaching millions. E.g. ICT. Use it!
- Work with existing people's organisations, association, network. Partner with the leaders / champion!
- Work with children: activities in primary / junior school can change attitudes and reach into the comments. Look to the future!

Some issues:

- Compromise may be unavoidable
- Political will is often a constraint
- We need to demystify RAS – there are many myths about what can be achieved
- RAS can't satisfy all needs

## 6 RAS myths (normative view):

- Most farmers want RAS
- Most RAS actors have a useful service to offer
- There are common goals between government and donors
- Capacity building for RAS is effective
- Pluralistic RAS systems actually exist
- Demand driven services result in equitable development

## Topic 9: Cost-benefit analysis of RAS

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### Flops:

- Complexity of Agri. System
- High dependency on other sectors
- Limited capacity and resources of public sector
- Limited investment from private sector / development partner
- Limited coverage / high cost e.g. upland areas
- Triangle between research, education /training, extension services

### Actions:

- Make availability of commodity costs & benefits
- Follow-up / involvement of extensionists in each step of VC
- Roles clarity for effective coordination (line Ministries)
- Matching demand of extensionist in the market
- RAS education to be up to date
- Valorise the social value / respect to the farming community and extensionists
- Allocate adequate resources to improve effectiveness of RAS

## Topic 10: Roles of local state and government agencies in institutionalizing RAS and sustainability

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### Government agency:

- Capacity building of the service provider
  - o Training, demonstration, camp and FFs etc. , group discussions
  - o Support and facilitate local state for institutionalizing RAS
  - o Monitoring of service system
  - o Policy implementation e.g. citizen centers
  - o Transforming research updates to service providers

### Local state:

- Coordination among different actors
- Allocation of public financing
- Develop and implement policies
- Monitoring
- Capacity development and support to local service providers
- Integrate RAS in local planning process and performance indicator

## Topic 11: Private sector, effective collaboration between private and public sector and civil society for inclusive and pluralistic RAS

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Top	Flops
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Role of private sector is important</li><li>- Regulatory framework is crucial</li><li>- Possibility for government to mandate private sector to provide public services</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Necessity to clearly describe roles and functions</li><li>- Difficulty in dealing with large centralized corporations</li><li>- Ethical issues and conflict or interest</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to support new development approach.</li> <li>4p approach (public, private, producer, partnership)</li> <li>Promotion of NGOS in advocacy and environmental concerns</li> <li>Role of SME's too neglected (local traders)</li> </ul>	<p>between public and private sectors</p>
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## **Topic 12: Strengthening “Demand side” interventions / Strengthening “voice” of farmers in RAS planning and implementation**

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### **Action points:**

- Work with local authorities (engage) -> devolution, community development plan
- Prioritise at local level (voting), participatory!
- Institutionalize farmers ‘voices’
- Work with community plans and organisations
- Private sector service delivery -> embedded services
- Who pays? For the service – giving means to access services <-> accountability (to FOs)
- Farmers organisations (real) role of existing FO, NOT artificial
  - o Member driven and governed
  - o Strengthen leadership
  - o FO objectives – not to receive RAS
  - o Diversify service providers
  - o Farmers to farmers (F2F)
  - o Types of services, not only knowledge
    - Regularly needed serviced
    - Pruning
    - Seeds
    - Linkages to finance, inputs, market, disseminate, influence policy
- Advocacy alliances  
Policy dialogues / inputs
- Policy -> FOs to deliver services to its members
  - o FOs participation in Budgets approval in councils
  - o Local policies, not just at national level
- FOs not just for RAS

### **Farmer Organisations:**

- Strengthen voices
- To access RAS
- To provide RAS
- Inclusiveness
- Millions reaching
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## **Topic 13: How do RAS systems support to apply policies in to actions? How can RAS systems support the application / implementation of policies?**

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### **Issues:**

- Coordination amongst donors, but not only donors, all RAS stakeholders -> how?
- Policies not based on evidence
- Policies need to be known by RAS actors, role of media!
- How are policies made?
  - o Who is included in policy making process? (ownership)
  - o Who is foreseen for implementation of different policies?
- Contradiction between different types of policies!
- How to link farmers to policies?

- Policy is a living document!
  - o Monitoring and evaluation

**Solutions for issues:**

- Ownership needed: Consultation / participation / Negotiation during policy making process
- Capacity development for policy implementation and development
- Capacities /development for management and leadership for implementation
- Understand political economy (to find entry points and create win-win situations)
- Joint vision of all RAS actors
  - o Information exchange as minimum on who does what
  - o Operational manual / guidance sheets as linking document for policies
  - o Harmonization of RAS policies and operationalization
  - o Mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and learning of policies (including feedback)
  - o Action plans and budget allocation
  - o Capacities to adapt plans to local context (see also capacity for implementation and respond to demands (incl. youth and women and...))
  - o RAS policies to be flexible for demand-driven services
  - o Communication strategy to inform about / promote policies and their implementation (inclusive ICT use)

**Topic 14: Research – Extension Linkage (How? Participatory vs non-participatory)**

Problem	Solution
Research objectives are not based on farmers' needs and do not match the reality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participatory assessment of technology needs theory projects</li> <li>- Researcher work closely with farmers (eg on farm trials)</li> </ul>
Research and extension have different objectives	Collaborative assessment of farmers' needs (post-harvest, value addition)
Unfavorable policies	Policies for harmonizing research and extension Intersectoral synergy
Research quality: irrelevant, not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Panel of experts</li> <li>- Collaboration with farmers</li> <li>- Enabling policy and budget</li> <li>- Socially acceptable, locally adaptable solutions</li> <li>- Linkage to indigenous knowledge</li> </ul>
Ineffectiveness of RAS to facilitate transfer of research results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacity building at different levels</li> <li>- Effective communication e.g. via public media</li> </ul>
Lack of M&E of transfer of research results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Farmer feedback mechanism</li> <li>- Project cycle approach</li> </ul>